

RICHARD E. GEIS



Number 3

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
7-21-72

My Ghod—I'm thinking of switching to photo-offset with issue #4.

The drudgery of running the 466 for hours and hours, the time-wasting drudgery of collating, stapling.... If the income permits, I'll do it, even at the sacrifice of a mimeo edition profit vs. a photo-offet break-even. All is ego! All is vanity! All is sloth!

I suspect I could get a fair print cost for 1,000 copies somewhere in Portland, perhaps from the printers who did Mike Zaharakis' tabloid STRANGE and etc.

But only—and I mean it this time!—only if I'm able to do it with REG income.

"Hey, Alter, are you ready with your story?"

"I would be, Geis, if you would ever give me some time to think and work out a few things at the other typer. But, no! You're too busy mimeoing and collating and reading and playing chess and going out with your mother and Augie...."

"Nevertheless, Alter, you start on this page—lower right quarter—so get to cracking."

"I'll crack your balls! I'm a nervous wreck! My whole literary career hangs in the balance."

"Right—it should be hung."

"Geis, when I'm rich and famous you'll treat me with respect."

"I'd rather treat you with Raid."

THE MAIL

7-20 and 21-72

A pocsard (is that how it's spelled?— I don't exactly remember) from George Scithers saying affectionately, "MY friendly postal clerk says that a 'book' is 24 pages, 22 of them printed. This is less than your clerk's 48pp..."

((Let's your clerk and my clerk fight.))

"Liked REG#1. Ever considered being illustrated by Robert E. Gilbert, so that your thing would be REG² — ?"

A letter from 'Warren' in Jamaica...yes, a loyal SFR subscriber who lists improbable assassinations through history, and, pleading year-long poverty, nevertheless promises to borrow if necessary in order to get REG.

This must be the nice man who sent me those papers that arrived the other day—last issue—from Jamaica. I could look him up in the old SFR master file. But I like a bit of a mystery.

A birthday card from G— and an enclosed letter with a description of more social and financial disasters (would you believe it costs \$700. to move a twenty-wide mobile home ten miles? And that the mobile home park manager rented her a space too small so that another move within the park may be necessary which will cost an additional \$350.?).

She has written me three times now, since I've moved up here. and I, guilty about my shabby treatment of her (breaking that last date, not answering letters), feel my resolve melting under the hot blast of her determination and anger. Burning bridges and ending relationships is hard work and I quail before the emotional cost. I see no real point to corresponding with

her: I should be a friendly guy and give advice and keep a friend, but my inability to be what she needed in Calif. and my leaving her and others taint my mind when I think of her (and others) and I'd just as soon not be reminded.

I'm still under the thrall of my "inadequacy" as determined by the societal norms.

Her letters are a clever aggression, a series of reproaches and recriminations. I know, I know, it's hard to be cut out like that. Pride. Ego hurt. And I did it badly, in a cowardly way, which I'm not proud of.

I hope she'll take the hint and not write again.

I used to think I was a Nice Guy...that was my Image of Self. But that disasterous series of social-sexual encounters and my frantic slash, hack, cut escape/retreat back to childhood taught me my weaknesses and my real, REAL nature. And I'm sorry I can't be what others need, and sorry I hurt some people. Sorry I couldn't be Mature in those affairs.

I'm still a nice guy in most areas...I keep telling myself.

A letter-cartoon by C—. Totally obscene. Lovely. I dare not write her back, though; hubby often intercepts her mail.

TOMB IT MAY CONCERN

By

A. L. Terego

Vik Kunzar winced at the sudden, stabbing alarm pain in the tip of his middle finger, left hand. The fingertip teased the tight, spasming anus of Empress Punia while his heavy black male organ plunged swiftly and deeply into her warm, honeyed vagina.

He was into the golden, almost mindless time of an exceptionally fine fuck, but the pain was intrusive and important even though it lasted only an instant.

He automatically damped down the nerve response from the finger and continued his enjoyment of the risky lovemaking.

Thirty seconds later, when her brown face was flushed and contorted in the sweet agony of orgasm and her slim legs drew up and greedily locked across his powerful, thrusting, black-skinned buttocks, the stab of pain in the fingertip came again, muted by his mindblock.

Vik ignored it and opened his mind to the sweep of sensations that shook his huge body. He let go and roared his enjoyment. His loins smacked hers wetly. She shuddered and took him to the hilt, as few women could.

In a moment the haze of ecstasy faded and he pulled sweatily away. He smiled his thick-lipped smile of appreciation and caressed her magnificent breasts as she sighed and recovered more slowly.

His fingertip pulsed again. It contained a micro-receiver connected to a nerve.

Vik left the oval, spongy, purplish plant that had been getetically adapted to serve as a bed.

He padded, naked, across the golden carpet of fuzzy,

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
7-22-72

"My God, Alter! Is that your
idea of a joke, that title? And
that nom de plume... 'A. L. Terego!'"

"Listen, Geis, you gave me carte blanche, so don't shift
your pants. That's MY corner of this mag, and you keep out!"

"Disaster, Alter, I foresee nothing but disaster."

"Eat snakes, Geis."

THE MAIL Mike Horvat of Tangent, Or. 97389, sent
7-21 & 22-72 along a copy of his TURPITUDE #5 and #6, plus
#7. A personalzine with personality; Mike is
an Individual on his way to becoming a Character. When he's
in his seventies he'll sit in his old, crumbling farmhouse,
surrounded by his mildewed collection of pulp mags and fan-
zines and he'll cackle and cackle and cackle.... It's not a
bad fate.

A letter from Frank Brennan, Classified ...well, he may be
drunk, too, but usually he's Classified Advertising Manager
for GALAXY/IF. He confirms my ad to start in the Nov. 1972
issue of GALAXY. The ad is as follows:

ADULT S-F FAN MAGAZINE. Praised by top
s-f authors. Shocking fiction, uncensored
opinions, outrageous reviews. \$1. per
issue. RICHARD GEIS, POB 11408, Portland,
OR 97211.

Break-even for the ads will be about 225 one dollar respons-
es...or 113 two dollar subs...or...

This rattles my greeps, this does! It's a statement from
Security Pacific National Bank, Santa Monica 14th and Wilshire
branch. Soon after moving up here I opened an account with
First National Bank of Oregon, and signed a Customer's Draft
to have the balance of my checking account sent to First Nat.

I thought there were a few dollars left in it.

It turns out there was only six cents left in it. So in-
stead of refusing the draft with a form letter, clever, greedy
Security Pacific loaned my checking account \$100., sent a
credit to First Nat. for \$1.45, credited my Security Pacific
account with \$97.67, charged my MasterCard account with a
\$100. loan, and charged me a total of \$1.94 in service charges!

Ah, sweet are the machinations for profit in the proced-
ures of banks. My question is: who authorized that loan?
Not I! The Customer's Draft is for a balance of account only.
I now have to write a blistering letter. Jesus, what gall!

An offer from "CORE" of 400! 8mm hardcore films for a low
\$10. each. I am suspicious, but willing to bite once. I dig
lesbian sex and will try one. (Yes, I know what that signi-
fies.)

A somewhat baffling fanzine titled SF COMMENTARY #27 comb-
ined with THE JOURNAL OF EMPHATIC ERISTEMOLOGY #5. It came
airmail from Bruce Gillespie even though John Foyster seems to
have written the discussion of J.G. Ballard's "The Atrocity
Exhibition" which is the whole of the text. The art is avante
gard Significant, which, with the slight sniff of put-on I
detect in the aggregate, is appropriate.

Thanks Bruce and John. I smiled a few times.

THE MAIL I don't believe this! SF COMMENTARY #26 ar-
7-23-72 rived in all it's massive, incredible 120 page
glory. A fitting tribute, a magnificent achieve-
ment...and likely the death knell of Bruce Gillespie, who,
burned out, a mere hulk floating in the current toward the
dreaded shoals of GAFIA (Getting Away From It All) is likely
gone from us now.

Just a few days ago I received a thin little joint effort
from Bruce and John Foyster, a last spasm of fan activity
from Bruce. Now he lies twitchin' in his Post Office box as
the mail pours in and buries him....

I promise to read every word of SF COMMENTARY #26. Even
that essay by Darko Suvin titled "Cognition and Estrangement:
An Approach to the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre."
It's the least I can do. My Ghod---120 pages of justified
edges!

More review of this in a few days. Just looking at it
makes me so tired....

A copy of TARZAN ALIVE from Doubleday. Could it be I am
back on the review list? I shall read it and likely like it.
Phil Farmer seems to sparkle when he deals with his resurrect-
ed Heroes.

Complaining letter from an Air Force Base wondering why
a sub to SFR from Oct. '71 wasn't honored. They used a sub-
scription agency and I wrote all them services SFR was dead.
So I write back to the base librarian and she must query the
agency for her money back.

And a postcard from a sf reader asking about a sub to
SFR. I'll send him a sample of REG! Serve him right.

And the July 21 L.A. FREE PRESS, with a full page ad con-
cerning a new abortion technique called Menstrual Extraction.
According to a long article in the Sunday OREGONIAN yester-
day, this involves using a soft plastic suctioning device
on the mouth of the womb...slurrp...and there goes a barely
conceived junior. Much safer than the older steel curette
implement which had to scrape the womb. This is a kind of
mini-abortion, very inexpensive, for women who are perhaps
only a week or so overdue and don't want to take a chance.

This technique is blowing up a lot of ethical and moral
clouds. It isn't covered in the law as abortion, and some
doctors, lawyers, clergymen are having fits. The procedure
is so simple and safe that women can perform it on themselves
or on others for free, the only expense being the cost of
the kit---about a dollar or two.

"GEIS! YOU LOUSY, CHEATING, FROG-KISSING INSECT EATER! YOU
ENCROACHED! YOU USED UP MY SPACE!"

"Oh...sorry, Alter, I forgot. Tell you what: you can
have the entire right half of the next page. Okay?"

"Well...okay. Just don't let it happen again."

Hate is never having to say you're sorry.

1. P-Q4, P-QR4

"Foot! Resign!" "Waver!" "Listen, Fischer, resign or I'll

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!
7-26-72

Senator George McGovern was born
July 19, 1922, which makes him exactly
five years older than I.

Lady Laura, who runs an astrology column in the L.A. FREE PRESS, ran a natal horoscope of McGovern. What she says about him applies to me: "Sen. McGovern was born July 19, 1922 with Sun in Cancer. This shows his love of publicity and the lime-light, an inordinate sensitivity and a fear of criticism or ridicule. Though outwardly giving the impression of self-assurance, there is an inward need for security. Cancer has the most retentive memory and never forgets a cut or a kindness. It is also Sign of the patriot and love of country, home and family.

"His Moon in Taurus shows a basically conservative person who tends to resist things which threaten the status quo; a tendency toward materialism and a good speaking voice. The Moon here also shows one quite sensual."

I would quibble about my retentive memory as a July 19-er, and God knows where my Moon was on July 19, 1927.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
7-26-72

I see Alter-Ego did not take my
advice and write his story in first
person. I've had this happen time

and time again: a person asks advice and then ignores it.

"You give awful advice, Geis."

"Eat grubs, Alter."

"My aim is to bring about a psychic state in which my patient begins to experiment with his own nature—a state of fluidity, change and growth, in which there is no longer anything eternally fixed and hopelessly petrified." —Carl Jung

A LOT OF MAIL
7-25&26-72

Book of the Month Club selections for
July. They refuse, thus far, to acknowledge
my change of address. I, in revenge, refuse
to buy ELEANOR—THE YEARS ALONE.

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY with a featured story: "The Truth About Dita and Dick."

The contents page blurb reads: "The accused politician who adheres to the right ritual of wiggle is guaranteed a verdict of innocent and probably reelection by an increased majority. Mrs. Beard, Mr. Kleindienst, and their various friends and associates provide new illustrations of a principle we first proclaimed in September, 1970."

Another front-page title, "How the Dirty Thirty Cleaned Up Texas", is content-paged thusly: "During the recent session, the Texas legislators found time to pass resolutions honoring Audie Murphy, the Odem Ukelele Players, the Capital City Dribblers, two Presidents, and Gus Mutscher, Texas House Speaker, then accused of accepting bribes. They also had time to give away most of the state to themselves. Then the Dirty Thirty went into the phone booth and put on their capes."

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY is an eye-opening, gatty, muckraking publication.

PREVENTION, July, with more proof that Vit. C is great!

intertwined hairlike tendrils that sprouted from the floor. He slipped on his white leafcloth toga and positioned its suckers in his armpits. The living cloth glowed with life.

He said, "I have something important to do. I'm sorry."

Punia sat up. "I arranged to be free until dawn." She was petulant, feeling cheated. She smiled the small, superior smile of the young and eager. "Are you feeling your age, Masil?"

Vik reflexively glanced at himself in the nearest mirror. His ebony face was lined. His kinky hair showed many, many coils of white. It was convincing.

"Government business." He picked up her garments from a gourdchair and took them to her. He cupped her left breast in his right hand and stroked the large purple nipple with his thumb. He leaned over and kissed her. "Next time I'll wear your yoni smooth."

He meant it. Punia was his type: young, lean, big-breasted, eager, and he had taught her all there was to know about lovemaking since her twelfth birthday.

He had even maneuvered Emperor Ndola into choosing her as Empress.

Vik smiled down at her. Power and sex and danger kept him going. It seemed that more and more of each was necessary as the generations rolled past.

She insisted on another kiss. Her hands caressed his deep, well-muscled chest, his rock-hard belly, his panther-like thighs. "Can't you be First Minister only during the day?" Her featherlight touch trailed the length of his thigh under his toga. "You're so young below the neck."

Vik controlled the natural surge of blood. He pulled her to her feet. She was small, five feet one, and he was a giant at six feet five. He slid his hand over the firm, provocative globes of her buttocks. "Dress. I'll see you down the bole."

She slipped on her imported orange silk chemise, and then the furred leafcloth robe. She let the suckers hang free of her nipples; she didn't want to glow as she rode her lion through the forest city to the gargantuan palace trees.

She followed him to the curving wall of striped moss drapery that hid the mottled, twenty foot trunk. "Masil, is it about the weather? And the northern tribes?"

"No." He pulled the drapery aside and pressed a spot in the discolored bark. An oval door appeared and rustled inward.

"Quebo said the ice would drive all the white ones south into our territory in the next few years."

"He's right." Vik led the way down a narrow, curved stairway. The rough-walled passageway through the solid, dense pink wood was lit by glowleaves suckered to tiny veins of sap. Vik had to stoop and move slightly sideways.

Punia wanted to probe further. Her pride was hurt by his abrupt change of plans for the night. But she knew enough not to question him too closely; there would emerge a cold ruthlessness of manner, a terrifying distance in his dark eyes, that frightened her. She avoided provoking that response.

When they reached the bottom of the passage he asked, "Has Ndola changed toward you lately?"

LOCUS 117 from Dena & Charlie Brown, 3400 Ulloa St., San Francisco, CA 94116. 12/\$3.

LOCUS is a snapshot of sf, pro and fan worlds, in detail, every two weeks.

NEW LIBERTARIAN NOTES #12, a sloppy, disjointed, bad advertisement for Pure Capitalism, Anti-Statism and Anarchy. These 16 pages (priced at 40¢) mutter of cliques and Revisionism. I get the impression that thirty or forty people may be involved in the whole scene. Samuel Edward Konkin III, 235 East 49th St., New York, NY 10017.

A couple small apa-zines (mailing comments mostly) from Richard Small, 117 S. Meridian St. #3, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301. Both YELLOW BALLOON #5 and YELLOW SUBMARINE #1 are unremarkable.

CITADEL #6 is an attractive photo-offset fanzine with very good artwork that isn't integrated with the text—it just sits there in places on pages. But George W. Proctor writes well, has a "presence" and presents a readable, interesting magazine. But the zine could be much better. Beautifully violent and evocative cover by Mike Presley.

Ubiquitous Mike Glicksohn has a fannish column in which for one thing he has the unmitigated gall to have a conversation with MY alter-Ego. Claimed I sent Alter out to find a mint FANTASY TIMES and started publishing again while Alter was out. Base columny and a rank fib to boot.

But Mike does salvage the column with comments about the bad image comics fans/collectors bring unto themselves, and in the letter column Ted White and others discuss the same subject.

JOKE In life, Henry was a sensualist, a libertine, and lazy. Hoo, was he lazy! All he wanted to do was eat, drink, fuck and sleep!

Jane, who fought him off constantly, was pure and spartan and hardworking. She saved and skimped and kept her apartment immaculate. She told Henry he would surely go to Hell.

Well, sir, it happened that Henry and Jane were both killed the same day.

After a few months of Hell (screwing female imps, drinking Demon's Rum, eating roasted hypocrite's hearts) Henry got a call from Jane in heaven.

She asked, "Are you suffering, Henry?"

"No, I'm having a ball! And you?"

"I'm working too hard. All this sweeping, cleaning, dusting, polishing the silver-lined fleecy clouds, mopping the streets paved with gold...."

Puzzled, Henry asked, "How come you have to do work like that?"

Sniffling, Jane wailed, "I'm all alone up here!"

And the moral of this tale is: Be true to yourself and you'll get what's coming to you.

MAIL CONTINUED Two items in LURK #2 that should be noted: Peter Weston's speech & answers to questions titled "The Bigger-and-Better Syndrome - and How to Avoid

it, or Some of My Mistakes in Fan Publishing." To use an overworked word: fascinating.

Also, an item recounted by editors Mike and Pat Meara: "Pete's mention of Dick Geis and the way in which S. F. R. eventually ran away with him has brought to mind a project which puts even that mammoth task in the shade. It involves stencil-cutting, duplication and collation, but it is not a fanzine. It is a discography, called "Fifty Years of Recorded Jazz 1917-1967", which attempts to list all known recordings of jazz interest made during this period. It is being compiled by a Belgian jazz enthusiast, Walter Bruyninckx, who says in the introduction to his work: 'I'm quite aware that over 7,000 pages of discographical notes are not yet a discography. They had to be arranged, typed out in alphabetical order of artist and then retyped onto stencils. This means that I have to type about 15,000 pages! Even the limited edition of 1,000 still means I have to gather one by one 1,000 times 7,000 pages, or 7,000,000 pages!'

"The set which I am at present in the process of acquiring is part of the second limited edition of 1,000, including additions and corrections to the first edition. This means that Walter has had to repeat all the duplication and collation, in addition to doing a fair amount of retyping. From a letter walter sent me recently I learn that the second edition will now have 9,000 pages, that he'll soon have to buy another 5,000 kg (nearly five tons) of paper, that his duper recently conked out completely after 4,000,000 impressions, and that to crown it all, he has a bad heart and should be taking it easy."

She frowned. "I don't think so." Her face was sickly in the faint green leaflight. "He doesn't command me to his bed as often...but he's really old and he can't penetrate like a younger man—like you! But—he told me you're seventy three...and he's only sixty eight."

"When did he tell you my age?"

"Two nights ago at dinner." Punia's eyes dilated slightly with anger. "He's bringing that yellow girl to the table now. That mouth specialist. I've heard that she can take a man deep into her throat. They teach them that in the East, from when they're five and six years old."

Vik nodded. "For hundreds of years now." He smiled. "How the Chinese have changed."

"He said...when he mentioned your age—are you actually seventy three, Masil?—that it wasn't natural for a man your age to be so well-preserved...even if you did come from the Nubian Nile where they grow so big."

"He's jealous."

"No, he values you. He said you were the most able of all his ministers because of your knowledge of history. No other man in the Empire knows as much about the world and its people as you."

Vik opened the secret door and let her out into the groomed maze of hedges that enclosed most of the base of the massive tree.

He led her to his lion pen nearby within the tree grounds. The vast branches swept out and out for hundreds of feet. All land under the tree's branches belonged to the

The address for Mike and Pat Meara is Flat A, 5 Kedleston Road, Derby, DE3 1FL, England.

What was the price of that discography, I wonder—50¢?

Letter from My Man in Jamaica, who has this time signed his name and address clearly enough for me to make it out. Jamaica, Warren Schern, 122 Barnett Street, Montego Bay 2, Jamaica, West Indies.

He notes: "If you look at life as a ladder and we go up one rung each year then in theory I who am 80 rungs up should be able to see further ahead than a man who is 40 rungs up. But what happens if our ladders are at the bottom of a 100 foot deep well?"

Damned if I know, Warren. Some people are born in the hole and never get out.

Thick envelope from the Copyright Office, Library of Congress. Seems Form B (Periodical) is not the right form with which to copyright RICHARD E. GEIS. Seems its proclaimed irregular schedule makes it a Book. Form A must be used. They sent one copy of Form A.

Incidental info you should all know.

A subscription from David B. Williams, former columnist for SFR. He admonishes: "There are two comments I'll make from recollection, however. First, in the first chapter—even the first few lines—of your sf opus-in-progress, you use the term 'lush flesh'. Don't."

((You're right, you're right; "lush flesh" is the oldest sex cliché in the book. It springs too easily to my fingertips. Ah, the number of times I've used it! It's an old friend! Am I to abandon the Tried and True, the loyal workers of the Good Old Days? Yes.

((And...if I write badly, how can I cast newly minted aspersions on other writers whose books I review? Easy. I ignore my own botches; I know how easy it is to see error and sloppy technique in others' works, and how hellishly hard it is to Heal Myself.))

"Secondly, at least nine out of ten—could have been 100%—of your political prognostications were wrong. We've all got to suffer through these topics every day by means of any number of other communications media and it should be made a Fannish Crime to inflict them on fanzine readers as well. Let's let the assholes second-guess each other; they're much better at hedging their bets."

((And with my prediction that McGovern-Eagleton would win in November echoing derisively in my mind (with Eagleton's history of "nervous exhaustion" in the headlines) I will probably strike out all the way. *sigh*))

TORCON 2 Progress Report Two. A flyer inside announcing an International Star Trek Convention (Star Trek Con II) for Feb. 16-19, 1973 at Commodore Hotel, New York, NY.

What hath re-runs wrought?

Where are the Klingons now that we need them?

The September F&SF, which includes the news that with the Oct. issue it will be 16 pages fatter. That's a welcome reversal of trend. No price increase, either.

A Happy Birthday letter, delayed, from a secret admirer. Secret to you, dear readers, by the admirer's request.

A sub from Mike Carlson, who observed: "REG I came in the mail just as I was leaving to pick up a girl I've been dating for a long while, and spend the weekend with her in Rhode Island at her cousin's cottage and then bike riding on Block Island, which is just beautiful, even if I did get sick on an incredibly rough ferry ride over to the island...that's what Irish whiskey and no brekkus'll do to you. Anyways, I spent a good portion of the weekend reading parts to her...some for laughter, some for discussion, and some where one of us would just shake our head and say "he's crazy" or something to that effect. She seemed to think there was some resemblance between our personalities, and we were both surprised to find out you were 44...I'm 21, she'll be 33 in a few days...and we'd both placed you in late twenties. So if you want to feel young again (which you quite obviously do...it's just how young is the question) feel flattered.

"The basic conflict between need for love and need for privacy is just that, basic. It is almost always more pronounced in artists, who often seem to have problems 'giving' closeness in personal situations...only being able to do so through their art, or else falling back on that art as a crutch. Even the most understanding of women will find it

owner of the tree. A large Junco tree was an estate.

Punia joined her waiting Lady in the shadows. Vik personally led their saddled lions to them. A moment later the great cats glided away with their riders.

Vik walked quickly back to the secret passageway in his tree. Within, as the outer door rustled shut and seated tightly, he pressed another spot in the curved, axe-hewn wall.

A rectangular section opened. He entered a second passage that sloped down and to the left. He carefully closed that door behind him. His fingertip continued to pulse every few seconds.

The passageway left the root and became a tunnel. He came to a wood-paneled, carpeted room sixty feet below ground. Before entering the doorless room he spoke one word: "Olympia." Unseen automatic laser guns switched back to secondary alert.

Vik went to a silvery console and noted the label under the single glowing ruby light among dozens set in a panel. He switched it off.

The periodic, muted sting in his fingertip ended.

Vik sat in the worn, deep-cushioned silvery console chair and thought for a long moment. His finger idly traced a small manufacturer's plate.

KZAR MICROTRONICS

Denver, U.S.A.

2116

His deep, dark eyes focused on the plate. He smiled and

hard to put up with the neglect. Personally, I suffer from a fear of commitment which traces back to a fear of rejection/failure that is tied in with fear of maturing.

"It seems that you really go out of your way to avoid some of the more traditional adult responsibilities in the American culture (the girl wants to know if you wear pleated pants—she laughs at me because I wear baggy work jeans or khakis instead of more 'attractive' clothes and she sees this carried so much farther in you that it almost scared her. I also let her cut my hair this past weekend...my curly tresses which isolated me so well from so much of our 'culture' have now been replaced by curly 'drylook' length hair which screams sell-out at me every morning while I shave.) which is what whole life styles and communes have built upon. I wonder whether or not this is more successful on a collective or individual level?"

((I don't wear pleated pants. Doubleknit flares—four pair. Doubleknit shirts, casual—seven. One suit I never wear. four or five dress shirts, patterned, fancy weaves—and some jackets, one expensive corduroy. Most times I prefer a lightweight ski zip jacket (for bike riding and casual winter-fall-spring wear. Three pair of shoes—one fancy pair of brown shoes I don't often wear, a pair of brown elkskin slippers, and a pair of plain black dress shoes that hurt my feet. Mostly around the house I wear a pair of Uffies slippers or go barefoot. I have a raincoat. No hats.

I slouch around here in old work pants, an undershirt and barefoot; I look like a bum. Half the time unshaven...or in an old pair of blue swimtrunks and an undershirt.

Four of my casual shirts are turtlenecks. I like turtleneck shirts because of my long neck.

((You must have a weak ego to use a lower case i.

((I am more mature and wise now that I am into my second childhood than I was when I was more an adult when younger.))

STANLEY #11 showed up in my box, but being of sound mind I hit it over the head and put it out of my misery. It's from the Cepheid Variable Science Fiction Club, POB 5475, College Station, TX 77840.

Jeff Schalles, afraid he had offended fandom and cast shit upon his Image, felt obliged to prostrate himself and beg forgiveness...for something he said in a fanzine he published recently called GLOP. This follow-up is called SON OF GLOP. He lives at 603 Barmore, Grove City, PA 16127, if anyone is remotely interested in the glop details.

Have the courage of your accidental insults, Jeff. Be a fugghead—it's fun. Incidentally, I still can't stand your drawing style—ugly, amateurish. See how easy it is to be a prick? Go, my son, and be likewise. No, no, don't thank me.

I see by my shelves and the pile beside me that I have four fanzines and four sf books to review. Well...later. How it is time to cast Pearl's Pearls before you swine.

She begins: "Another missive from your ladyfriend in L.A. who, it seems, is going to live after all.

"Actually, I'd opted against death when I bought that new car (did you guess?) and since I wanted to be around to see if the Audi people lived up to their two-year warranty, I hied myself off to a diabetic specialist a couple of weeks ago. He's a brilliant man: i.e., he confirmed my diagnosis of insulin resistance and took me off the needle. What a thrill when I tossed out my sterilizing equipment and stashed my syringe for some possible future involvement with main-lining junkies.

"Now, on to Grimsville....a 500 calorie diet with no appetite depressants, shots, water pills or any of those other little helpers modern medicine makes available to the dieter and one mile of walking every evening. Spartan I've never been but I'm so gassed to be away from that needle treatment, I'm doing it. So I'm slightly hungry, very bored with my limited menu and overjoyed to find that I'm in perfect health except for being diabetic. The pasty complexion, the lumps in my armpit, the dull fatigue—everything disappeared when my blood sugar dropped from 228 to 140.

"My doctor is very into psychological control. He does everything possible to keep your mind occupied with diabetic/dieting thoughts: an unnecessarily complicated procedure for testing urine requiring eye croppers, test tubes, tablets of caustic chemical and a DAILY visit to his office to get weighed where they tell you nothing whether you lose, gain or stay the same. Of course, all this preoccupation with my bodily functions makes me tiresome company but there's nothing I can do about it except hope that my burgeoning

shook his head. He murmured, "The good old days...."

He stood and left the paneled room. Sensors in the tunnel "watched" him leave. The lasers warmed again to primary alert.

Vik went back up to his bedroom. He took off his toga.

Naked, he pulled a corner of the living rug free of the floor. The hundreds of tiny suckers made minute popping sounds, leaving dot-like green marks on the raw boards that had fused together and grown solidly to the joists, which had in turn cemented themselves to the broad limb upon which the bedroom rested...or from which it grew.

The free supported thirty-two parasitical rooms with attendant plant furnishings, glowleaves of various colors, and hollow water and sewage vines.

Vik lifted a small trapdoor in the floor and lifted out an unlocked iron chest from the two foot deep cavity. He opened the chest and reached in for a soft, lion hide holster. He strapped it to the inside of his massive left thigh.

He took a chamois-wrapped revolver from the chest. The gun was old but well oiled and cared for. It had been made by hand and ancient machine two hundred and fifty four years before, by the last of the steel guildsmen in F'Derick in the northwest Sahara where the last deposits of iron had been jealously guarded and gradually used for one thousand years.

Vik armed the gun with hand-loaded ammunition. Guns were rare and expensive. Most were rusted museum pieces—in the few museums remaining. Ammunition was the problem. Shell casings were priceless.

libido will eventually outstrip the health/exercise/diet obsession.

"And burgeoning, it certainly is! Not only do I cruise everything in sight but I get aroused so easily now, I think just about anybody could do it for me. I had Mr. Straightarrow over last Saturday afternoon (he's the 35 year old I told you about in my last letter) and all he had to do was kiss my arm and I turned on so quickly it felt like someone had kicked a switch in my pelvis. Remember me? I'm the one who used to stiffen up like a board when someone touched me.

"You say you're 45 and look it. Hah—I'm never going to be 45. Just as soon as my blood sugar is down to normal, I'm going to see about plastic surgery to remove those baggy circles under my eyes. Meanwhile, I'm doing facial exercises to get rid of the nose-to-mouth and mouth-to-chin furrows. Yes, all is vanity but being a middle-aged sexpot is necessarily a solitary way of life if you look middle-aged.

"By the way, I've written all this from the viewpoint of one who has already lost 50 pounds although my actual weight loss in 19 days has been only a disappointing 9½ pounds. Shit...I used to lose 10 pounds the first week on a 1,000 calorie diet. I'd be discouraged except that I have so many things to look forward to—one of those things being Gene who's alone again and unprotected (his young chick discovered what a prick he was and went back to Mass.). After I've lost 30 lbs., I'm going to get all done up in some sleazy Fredrick's of Hollywood outfit and bust down his door. He's much too timid not to let me in and much too coarse to resist a cheaply sexy get-up. At the 40 lb. mark, I've got this cat promised to me who's so beautiful, it's embarrassing to look at him.

"Until those glorious days come to pass, I need lots of oral gratification to take my mind off food. I've started smoking again and Mr. Straightarrow and I kissed for 4½ hours last Saturday. But I need more, more, more. Maybe I'll have to dip into our box of Free Press letters again to find additional mouth men.

"Love, your magic spell is everywhere!"

((So that's why the men of West Hollywood have that haunted, worried look lately. Pearl is on the prowl again!))

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
7-31-72

finished stapling REG#2 last night and counted 992 copies. I aimed for 1,000 but there's always one page short. I collate the mag in two sections, so there's no way of knowing whether the two groups are close to matching until I get down to the last few.

Why 1,000 copies, you ask? I intend to feed the old SFR subbers a steady diet (sorry, Pearl) of sample copies over the next few months, to a total of about 400 this issue. I have only about 120 copies of MI left.

Have to take the side covers off the Gestetner and see if I can spot the cause of the impression roller always being engaged even though the paper ain't feeding. Also, the stencil creasing and stencil "creep" is angering. Mayhap the dear thing has to have an expensive tune up; it has been several million impressions, after all.

I weigh 174 today.

AN APPRECIATION OF GEMMA JONES

The acting in the British Masterpiece Theater TV series has been remarkably good. But Gemma Jones as Fleda Vetch in THE SPOILS OF POYNTON is absolutely marvelous.

A BOOK REVIEW OR TWO (AND ABOUT TIME!)
7-31-72

Scattered thru the following pages of this issue of REG, and perhaps into subsequent issues, will be juicy, nourishing, intriguing quotes from THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart. This is, truly a 'funny, bawdy, outrageous novel about psychiatry and modern morality.'

Rhinehart writes that kind of intrinsically interesting, arresting, clever fiction I dote upon and read with relish, with envy added as sauce.

If you can read these quotes and not faunch to read the book, you're not the kind of person I want reading me. OUT! Okay. The first quote:

"Life is islands of ecstasy in an ocean of ennui, and after the age of thirty land is seldom seen. At best we wander from one much-worn sandbar to the next, soon familiar with each grain of sand we see." (p. 2) (Pocket Books 78204, \$1.25)

From the sublime to the ridiculous is the phrase that leaped, cliché-quivering, to my mind as I picked up Jeff Sutton's DAW book, THE MICROBLOCKED MAN.

As I re-read the page one words of this novel I begin to

He rarely used this pistol anymore. But tonight it would be good to have in reserve.

He slid the revolver into the pliant holster and tied the flap shut with a quick-release knot. He returned the iron chest to its hiding place in the floor.

He took a jeweled, razor-sharp knife with matching sheath from a decorative wooden hook on the wall over the bed and strapped it to his left leg below the knee.

He stepped into a loin protector of leather and rubber. He adjusted his large genitals in the cup and then slipped a dark red silk tunic over his head. He cinched a wide, heavy-buckled belt tight around his waist.

Vik left his tree by way of the secret passageway in the trunk. He began to run, effortlessly, north, weaving between the huge tree homes in the darkness. Pale glowleaf path signs dotted the park-like between-trees areas.

Patches of colorless moonlight penetrated the acres of overhead foliage. His bare feet slapped quietly on the smooth, leaf-cushioned ground.

He lived in the exclusive, upper class residential area of Kinshasa, the imperial city. Only a few people were out in the wide, intertwining paths that snaked between the trees.

Vik avoided the lion-riders, who were easy to see, as were the white skins of the lower caste slaves sent out on unknown midnight errands.

He was hard to spot, impossible to follow; a black ghost who loped tirelessly north toward the city's slightly less

suspect an evil smile on the editor-publisher lips of Donald W. Wolheim. "Why?" I cry, strangledly.

There is nothing for it but to quote ^{from} this first page, line for incredible line, word for breathtaking word. There are some delights I cannot keep from sharing with the world, and a deliciously bad book (or deliberately bad book??) is one. Treasure these lines, folk. The first chapter begins—

"Aaaugh!"

He awoke, trembling, the strangled cry on his lips.

The fish eye! The distorted sky! The blob that ate the stars! He convulsed violently as the nightmarish visions fled from the forefront of his mind back into its hidden corners, leaving only the horror of their passage. Shaken, he felt suddenly cold and empty.

....

My God, who am I? The question screamed in his mind. He edged toward the nearest door. Partially open, it disclosed a bathroom. Bracing himself for he knew not what, he entered it and looked into a mirror above the washbasin.

"No!" he exclaimed. He recoiled a step, then regained his courage and looked again into the glass. Thin, pinched, with deep lines etched into the corners of the faded blue eyes, the face confronting him was that of a stranger.

I must admit that I recoiled fifty pages, clear back into OVERLAY by Barry N. Malzberg. But, bracing myself for I knew not what, I edged toward THE MINDBLOCKED MAN and picked it up. I read with widened eyes. Glazed.

Jeff Sutton loves said-bookisms. His dialog is all a jangle with characterizing dangles such as: she demanded; she answered firmly; she added; he mumbled; she asked incredulously; he admitted; she asserted; she asked incredulously (again, same page); she explained; she answered eagerly; he apologized; he replied gently; he asked hopefully; he asserted; he hissed softly; he blurted; a voice called testily; Sundberg exclaimed incredulously (I can't believe it, either!).

All the way through the book. (DAW #8, 95¢)

On the other tendril, Barry Malzberg's OVERLAY (Lancer 75345, 95¢) is a delight, a highly enjoyable change of pace from his pessimistic, cynical, humorless view of man and space travel as shown in recent books, BEYOND APOLLO and UNIVERSE DAY, for example.

OVERLAY is about an alien agent working to destroy mankind through the manipulation of four horseplayers, losers all. It's viciously funny and tragically interesting. Malzberg knows a lot about horserace betting and...losing. He writes with the inside knowledge of a longshot player. Bitter, compulsive...the psychology is laid bare.

The alien is baffling, his mission incredible, the resolution bizarre and ambiguous. Unanswered question hang loose like cat hair on a pantsleg. But the novel is fun and pays for its time many times over.

The RING OF GARAMAS by John Rankine, from Dobson Books in London, isn't true sf; it's a spy-adventure formula novel translated by making the foreign natives aliens (humanoid) and the

Captain-of-a-cruiser hero into a commander of a spaceship. Beyond similar obvious nomenclature substitutions it's all British Navy hero battling the bad guys in the South Seas.

Dag Fletcher is the hero's name and this is one of a series of his adventures.

The price is £1.75¢. Dobson, 80 Kensington Church St., London W8, England.

As I mentioned last issue, as I ended the issue, Mark Geston's latest book, THE DAY STAR, disappointed me. It concerns a boy in a dying town in a dying country on a dying planet who meets a ghost, one of his ancestors who has lived in the series of alternate worlds extending through time/space. The day star is a construct of the highest technology achieved by the most advanced of these worlds, and it permits space-time voyaging. The boy acquires a fragment of it.

Geston's universe is unique and captivating, but in this book his nihilism seems to prevent him from letting anything much happen to anyone. I quit reading halfway through this short book, my patience exhausted.

The George Barr cover is nice. (DAW #6, 95¢)

THE MAIL The Sept. AMAZING. Comment on this issue
7-31-72 later as I read it.

SMILE AWHILE #10, Flo Jenkins' AA zine. She has gone to a 3rd class bulk mailing. Saves money, but makes a lot of work, don't it, Flo?

Much improved mimeography.

exclusive Stalee Pool suburb.

Vik ran two miles. He slowed to a walk as he approached his destination, a squat tree home of modest two hundred foot spread and ten foot thick bole.

The glowleaf sign at the gate of the surrounding living thorn fence read: Doctor Kiambi, 742011. All residence and business and government trees in the city were registered by number and the current owner.

The trees dated from the last surge of highly specialized technology five hundred years before, when the Egyptians had flourished yet again. They had concentrated on genetics, had developed the home trees, the parasitic plant furnishings...had warped both animal and human genes in a vain attempt to maintain "civilization" in the face of a planet exhausted of mineral wealth...and had broken under waves of white-skinned barbarians fleeing the long-dying ruins of Europe as the ice, decade by decade, crept inexorably southward.

Now the Congo empire of Ndola was the only center of culture and learning and law on the African continent.

Vik was not surprised to find the gate locked. He walked slowly along the vicious fence, searching for a break. The sensitized thorn vines stirred at his nearness and lashed at his form.

He found a ten foot wide length of the fence lying limp, paralyzed by a sweet-smelling fluid he knew about. Very few others in Kinshasa had a working knowledge of it.

Vik stepped carefully through the still vines and approached the tree. There was a dayglow of light from the

George Hay writes newsworthily: That his magazine, FOUNDATION should be out in a week or two, has a first-rate article by Dr. John Clark, Dept of Psychology, U. of Manchester, on 'New Maps of the Mind'. Jim Blish used Clark's material towards the end of his MIDSUMMER CENTURY novel (recently in F&SF).

Also: Next month George's anthology, THE BEST OF JOHN W. CAMPBELL will appear, but Sidgwick & Jackson, publishers, are chintzy and refuse to send any review copies to the U.S. and A. George will probably do so himself, bearing the cost and grinding his teeth.

Also: Several pb firms have turned down Algis Budrys' ROGUE MOON "with polite expressions of regret."

George is trying to get funding from banks so that the Foundation can publish its own books. He must love work.

He's trying to write an Ace novel he owes Fred Pohl.

And regarding Minerva, the newly proclaimed speck-in-the-Pacific nation... 'Michael Oliver, of 'Ocean Life Research Foundation' (Independent Republic of Minerva) was over here from the States a few days back. Seems the Tongan government have declared their intention of buying a gunboat and blowing us out of the water. However, we'll see. Mike has good money behind him, and our main problems now are not so much ones of finance and survival as of legal recognition."

PROCRASTINATION #10 from Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Rd., Strafford, PA 19087. 30¢. Faanish, sometimes clever, almost totally lacking in substance, and not supposed to have substance, unless you count the Ray Bradbury reprint of a newspaper piece...or, better phrased, a reprint of a newspaper piece by Ray Bradbury. A good letter column...with, of course, a letter from Mike Glicksohn.

Now the desire to kill oneself and to assassinate, poison, obliterate or rape others is generally considered in the psychiatric profession as "unhealthy." Bad. Evil. More accurately, sin. When you have the desire to kill yourself, you are supposed to see and "accept it," but not, for Christ's sake, to kill yourself. If you desire to have carnal knowledge of helpless preteens, you are supposed to accept your lust, and not lay a finger on even her big toe. If you hate your father, fine—but don't slug the bastard with a bat. Understand yourself, accept yourself, but do not be yourself.

It is a conservative doctrine, guaranteed to help the patient avoid violent, passionate and unusual acts and to permit him a prolonged, respectable life of moderate misery. In fact, it is a doctrine aimed at making everyone live like psycho-therapists.

—p.3 THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart.

A SPECIAL FAN PUBLICATION... ..Is the proper description for IS #5. This is an 8½ x 11 photo-offset job with a silver wrap-around cover. Tom Collins publishes IS as a hobby, of course, but also as a contribution to science fiction fandom's History and Traditions.

IS #4 was an impressive tribute to the life and work of August Derleth. Now, with IS #5, Tom has dedicated an issue to the Spectator Amateur Press Society—SAPS for short. 100 pages of SAPS history and reminiscences from some of the charter members.

That may sound dull as dishwater, but it comes alive and is absorbing reading. Especially as this magazine, and other specific issues of like intent of other zines show and simultaneously create a sense of history and structure and continuity in sf fandom.

Fandom is, actually, something special and maybe unique in American (and world?) culture. That may sound pretentious, but this issue of IS, for one, brings that fact home to me, and further brings that nebulous strength and solidity of sf fandom into the open, makes it more visible and at the same time more permanent.

The Derleth Memorial issue is \$3.00. A regular 4 issue subscription is \$6.00. Tom Collins, 4305 Balcones Dr., Austin, TX 78731.

OTHER RECENT FANZINES

There is a green thing that has been sulking on my desk for weeks now, demanding a review in a pleasing English accent. It is named THE TURNING WORM #2, and it comes from John Piggott, editor, 17 Monmouth Road, Oxford, OX1 4TD, United Kingdom. And he wants 40 British cents for it as a last resort; he'd rather have a comment or two.

It containeth, mostly, a personal-oriented Eastercon Report (heard round the world) and fanzine reviews and a letter column. All middling good in a light, breezy way.

MOTA #5 has also languished here for weeks. It is the best fanzine I've seen yet from the Columbia, MO college ^{year} Terry Hughes has the Knack. It is faanish—well edited, and

oval, transparent membrane windows of a large room fifty feet up the trunk in a major limb room-cluster.

He ignored the small hydraulic elevator. The cage was up at the cluster, anyway, probably locked.

He paused to study the tree's ramps and stairs, then took the narrow, spiral, servant's staircase that followed upward under the more elaborate, inlaid ramp.

He went slowly, pausing often to listen intently. He freed his knife of its sheath and carried it lightly in his upturned hand, ready to throw or fight.

He emerged onto the wide, main porch that semi-circled the tree trunk. He passed several ramps and doors. He approached the doctor's office. The windows continued to glow with light.

The porch ended at the office door. The only way to look into a window was to edge out from the railing by hanging free from a slippery gutter vine at the cornice.

If he slipped it would mean a fall of fifty feet to the decorative marble set in the ground around the base of the tree.

And he would be vulnerable if discovered out there, spying.

Vik pressed his ear to the expensive, inlaid office door. The deep squares and wedges of vari-colored woods had grown together; the door lived, fed sap from the five tough but pliant green plant hinges.

He could hear a voice—no distinct words. Another voice, more tenor. And...a groan? Both voices were angry, insist-

well mimeoed. I like the interlineations; fine examples of the art. Such as:

"Just because I'm paranoid doesn't keep people from plotting against me." —Doug Carroll

"Speaking of wrecks: Have you ever been creamed by a milk truck?" —Wancy S.

Plus an excellent Steve Stiles cover and a fine letter column. A pleasure to read.

Terry Hughes, Route 3, Windsor, MO 65360. A bargain at 25¢.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-1-72

I didn't get any ms writing done today, nor did Alter. Listen to him sniveling in his cage...

snivel...snivel... Because I spent three or four hours peering at the Gestetner's naked guts. All those gears! All those interconnections! And I probed and poked and followed this lever to this cam to this rod to this... And I cleaned a little gismo and LO! the clunkety-wunking mother no longer engages the impression roller when it shouldn't.

AND further, I do believe I may have fixed the counter. I ran 300 blanks and it didn't skip one hundred at all in the 1,000 to 700 range, where before it skipped merrily 1,000-900-800-700 in three revolutions.

I have to run a fully typed stencil sometime soon, into the 500-800 range to see if the stencil-creep and creasing has also been fixed. I sincerely hope so. I may have saved myself \$30 to \$40 dollars.

In the process I tore it down pretty good and cleaned all the fibre out of it.

Freud was a very great man, but I never get the impression that anyone ever effectively stroked his penis.

—p.5 THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart

THE MAIL A sub. THE NEW YORK REVIEW of Books in which
8-1-72 I.F. Stone is enthusiastic about the Demo convention and the McGovern-Eagleton ticket. Be interesting to read what he says about Eagleton's getting McGovern's boot in the ass yesterday.

AMRA, Vol. 2, No. 56 and 57. THE sword & sorcery fan mag. 50¢ from POB 8243, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Mostly about Conan, the Hyborean Age, S&S book reviews, etc. Very good artwork. Photo-offset printing. 20 pages per issue.

I sent 70 copies of REG#2 off to F.A.P.A. today. 8-1-72

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-2-72

It seems that this Beast section is getting less "exciting" as my emotional life settles into a welcome

swamp of disengagement. Unless some girl comes to the door, winks and whispers throatily, "Let's suck, handsome." Little chance of that.

So I foresee this space being given over more and more to

REG matters, pro writing discussions with Alter about his fiction, and more general speculations, reports about human nature.

The nature of REG is changing, too. It seems to becoming more a sf review and fanzine review zine. The emphasis is changing...if only because I'm reading more sf now and receiving many, many fanzines.

As Mark Barclay said in his subscription letter today, eventually I may end up with SFR again...at a buck a throw this time. Of course he expects me to add artwork and layouts... He didn't anticipate Alter's fiction. Mark used THAT word again to characterize REG: 'fascinating'.

I've been aware more and more, lately, that the stencils are flying by. Sometimes averaging more than one per day. I seem to have a lot to say. And of course the mail is getting heavier...and the fiction adds to the space requirements.

Today, for instance, I got four subs and one inquiry from a sf reader who has read about SFR and wants me to initiate him into the world of fandom.

This subscription business makes The Impossible Dream seem possible. I'll know more about that in a couple months.

But the aimless drift of this ramble is that the letters I'm publishing, the fiction, the increased reading/reviewing function leads me to expect a thicker issue this time...or a more speedy publishing schedule. Actually, increasing the number of pages isn't all that costly with this buck-a-ream fibretone, \$2.50 per quire stencils, and the sixty tube reserve of ink I have. Postage and envelope and cover costs are

ent.

Vik carefully tried the sliding, killed-wood door latch. The door was peg-locked from the inside.

The window, then. He sheathed his knife.

He stood on the solid, carved railing and tested the gutter vine with his weight. It bowed slightly but the suck-ets held.

He curled his fingers into the leaf-choked trough and swung out into space. The vine bowed downward even more with his full two hundred and forty pounds. The sucker fibres screamed faintly...but held.

Vik hung facing the wall and swiftly slid his gripping hands along the oily rim of the vine. His fingers dug into bird droppings and tiny, rotted corpses as well as the broad, sticky tree leaves.

As he approached the nearest oval window steadily increasing areas of the office came into view: the desk, a series of bright dayglo leaves slowly burning in a large glass surgery lamp, the killed-wood cabinets of records—one drawer open. The M drawer. Shelves of herbs, jars of medicinal roots and bottles of fluids. A man's shadow cast on the blond wood interior paneling from another bright lamp deeper in the office, to the right.

Vik hung silently beside the window and carefully made sure of his right hand grip on the gutter. He let loose with his left and lowered his arm. This angled his body, allowing him to see almost all the interior of the doctor's office while reducing the risk of being noticed from inside.

Doctor Kiambi was strapped to a treatment table. He lay

the same, regardless.

I keep bumping up against the fact that I don't HAVE to make a lot of money. It takes time to adjust to a play life from a work life. My vein of puritanism keeps shoving a host of "shoulds" into my mind: I should write a lot more than I do; I should be commercial; I should act like an adult; I should not "waste" my time slouched in a chair reading, or worse, lie out in the sun or on a chaise, reading.

But I...I want to help Alter with his Kunzar stories (play), and read more (play), and devote my time to REG (scandalous play).

Alter (I blame him, coward that I am under the stern gaze of my superego) whispers seductively that his stories and novels can be sold to the regular sf publishers after they've appeared in REG, or as separate mimeographed editions (collector's items!). I listen, I dream....

All this leads to Decisions. I have loaded up with a few obligations I resist. I'm supposed to be doing the initial chapters of a sf novel in collaboration with a well-known pro. But I've delayed and delayed... He presented me with an excellent novel gimmick which he wanted to use in a fantasy novel. I preferred an sf treatment...and now think, on a professional level, that the gimmick would best be served and used in a mainstream plot background.

So I'll return the pages he sent and bow out, even though I suspect the book could make a mint; the gimmick is that good.

But I'd rather not collaborate...with anyone.

And I'd rather play than work. Oh, if I get an assignment from Larry Shaw or George Karnaookh I'll accept it because I do enjoy porno writing if I don't overdo it and get sick of it.

Then, too, doing odd jobs around and in this house takes time--fixing the small greenhouse behind the garage, trimming the tree, painting, cementing, small carpentry jobs... endless.

So I really don't have time to keep a lot of irons in the fire. I don't want a lot of pressure.

I only want to read and think and work/play on REG. Will God let me get away with it?

THE MAIL Book of the Month Club selection for August is 8-2-72 LUCE AND HIS EMPIRE. Sorry, don't have time for it.

Abbott & Lind sent me a folder illustrating ten different paper shredder machines!

THE MOTHER EARTH NEWS #16. The dirtiest book.

A highly printable, interesting letter from Bob Lowndes. I'll query about is it okay to publish it. I might as well say here I consider all letters fair game, so keep that in mind when writing, all you compulsive confessors out there. Not that Bob wrote anything exceptionally revealing or sensitive, but he discussed how he got his latest job and while I consider it intriguing and of value to future sf/fan historians, he may not care to have it in print now.

Oh, yes, the new PLAYBOY came today. The centerfold girl has a fantastic set on her. If I ever got within six feet of a girl like that I'd be tied in knots.

THE MAIL I got me some satisfaction. A reply from the 8-3-72 Assistant Manager of the 14th & Wilshire branch of the Security Pacific National Bank. (See THE MAIL on page 2 for detail previous). The full, terse text is as follows:

"Thank you for your recent letter questioning our Ready Reserve Advance to pay your check for \$1.45.

"Today we have reversed the Ready Reserve Transfer of funds and the Service Charge to your account. You may consider your account closed.

"Thank you for your letter.

"Very truly yours,

Alvin J. Dougherty"

Wriggling and misrepresenting to the bitter end, but they swallowed the bitter pill.

COLOG #13, an APA-45 zine sent for trade. Mike Wood, 1878 Roblyn Av., St. Paul, Minn. 55104. No price.

Mike tells how he got food stamps (50¢ buys him \$28. worth) and became a taxi driver. Interesting. Other sections I haven't read yet. A letter column and a section titled "Inverse Functions" which is his comments on the 30th mailing of APA-45.

Two review books from Dobson (England): IPOMOEA by John Rackham, and THE YELLOW FRACTION by Rex Gordon.

The quarter page below has been condemned by the Society for the Prevention of Alter-Ego. "Thanks a lot, Geis!"

face down, gagged, naked, his old brown scrawny body writhing in agony. A long, thick eater snake had been inserted into his anus. Two-thirds of it was coiled around his jerking, flailing right leg. The other third was deep into the old man's large intestine.

Two men watched Kiambi's thrashings. They wore tunics similar in design to Vik's, but of coarse green cotton. They were of the Lualaba tribe--brownish yellow skin and wide fleshy lips and noses.

Ndala was a Lualaba.

One man knelt beside the table, near Kiambi's head. He had a belly on him, and thick legs. He spoke in a low, wheedling voice now.

The other man stood with hands on hips, grinning. A long knife in a thin green scabbard swung from his ironvine belt.

Vik brought his left hand up to grip the gutter vine again. He swiftly edged further out until he was hanging opposite the oval window. He swung his legs up, planted his bare feet on each side of the window, bent his knees, kicked himself outward, closed his feet and ripped through the transparent membrane.

Vik twisted as his big black body cleared the oval frame and he landed on all fours beside the desk. He uncoiled, knife in his left hand, and with terrifying panther-like grace and power leaped for the astonished, standing man.

But the man was a trained professional. He managed to clear his own long knife in the second it took Vik to reach him.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-6-72

Ah, my friends, I sit here with my morning coffee (10:24 A.M.) this Sunday with the temperature due to hit 100 degrees in Portland (but my basement abode is always comfortable), and I am content.

I have a few fanzines to review, a quote or two to enlarge your minds with (or contract with...or inflame with...or freeze with...) and a page or two to write (at Alter's direction, of course) of TOMB which is getting violent now and satisfying as Alter builds tension and curiosity. (Yes, readers of TOMB, you are in the hands of a manipulator, a cunning left lobe who is pushing your reading buttons...he hopes.)

I shall watch "AAU CHAMPIONS" on TV later, and then watch the PGA golf championship and suck beer and eat grapes.

All's well in Geis's semi-hermited world. Now—out into the Outside with

"Although the equality of each citizen before the law is the rock upon which the American Constitution rests, economic equality has never been an American ideal. In fact, it is the one unmentionable subject in our politics, as the Senator from South Dakota recently discovered when he came up with a few quasi-egalitarian tax reforms. The furious and enduring terror of communism in America is not entirely the work of those early cold warriors Truman and Acheson. A dislike of economic equality is something deep-grained in the American Protestant character. After all, given a rich empty continent for vigorous Europeans to exploit (the Indians were simply a disagreeable part of the emptiness, like chiggers), any man of gumption could make himself a good living. With extra hard work, any man could make himself a fortune, proving that he was a better man than the rest. Long before Darwin the American ethos was Darwinism.

"The vision of the rich empty continent is still a part of the American unconscious in spite of the Great Crowding and its attendant miseries; and this lingering belief in the heaven any man can make for himself through hard work and clean living is a key to the majority's prevailing and apparently unalterable hatred of the poor, kept out of sight at home, out of mind abroad."

—Gore Vidal, THE NEW YORK REVIEW of Books,
Vol. XIX, No. 2 (8-10-72)

THE MAIL A letter from C—. She is depressed, tells
8-4&5-72 of being beaten by her husband, and of an atmosphere of hate and rejection. He takes her paychecks, gives her a buck for lunch.... Sad. Sad.

I wrote back that she doesn't have to accept beatings. All she has to do is pick up a knife and be willing to use it, or simply fight back. She outweighs the man. And she doesn't have to sign her checks over to him. She could force a different relationship if she wanted one badly enough. But she seems to want this welter of suffering.

I told her I was out of it, that her needs set up too many conflicts in me. (In short, stay away.)

I also reminded her there are all kinds of city, county, state and private agencies faunching to help her, but she knows all this...all of it.

Character triumphant. As the twig is bent, so shall the

tree tie itself in knots.

I don't mind emotionally dependent women, but I do mind financially dependent ones or those who unconsciously maneuver to be in need to tie themselves to me, to test my love, to subtly aggress, to....

A simple, wealthy (or "secure") woman who is abjectly in love with me will be fine. I'll let her keep me in wheat germ and mimeo supplies.

Big, thick order catalog from Inter-X Co. in New York offering hundreds of softcore sex films, all about five years old. Into the big wastebasket.

Two personalzines from Alpajpuri and Greg Burton, who share P.O. Box 69, Ocean Park, Washington 98640.

Both write well and tell interestingly what they've been up to lately. But the best item of all is a Mike Moorcock interview Greg reprints from the 12-10-71 issue of the Portland State University VANGUARD, and written by Susan Stanley Wolk.

Mike was very honest and provocative. A few quotes are in order: "I had a big phase of pushing Philip K. Dick over here, writing articles telling everyone to read Philip K. Dick. I got rather less enthusiastic about his books. I think that a lot of science fiction writers finally fall back on the tricks."

"The great thing about science fiction is its being a commercial medium which places a high premium on plotting and ideas. This is probably a bit of a crazy idea, but the virtue of a lot of Edwardian and Victorian fiction is that you can train to do something which very few novelists these days train to do: to keep a lot of plot threads going, and invent and write good graphic scenes."

Regarding sf fans at conventions: "The thing is, for a writer who gets into that world — and I know it well enough, I'm not being snooty — it's very easy to get a reaction and audience, or a sense of audience, and to start writing for that. And it's one of the most conservative audiences there is — they don't want change, they want very much the same thing.

"Half of them, they're very kind of inadequate human beings, which is another reason why they're at these things."

He was too slow. He was only beginning to crouch, to bring his knife into defensive position, when Vik's incredible reflexes and coordination clamped a vise grip on his wrist and slammed the jeweled knife full into his stomach, angled up to spear the keen blade into his thudding heart.

The man grunted with the blow and lurched backward, turning, falling, his wide mouth loose, flared eyes staring with fading amazement. Blood spumed from the wound.

Vik pulled his knife free an instant after the savage thrust. He knew from long experience the man was dead. The body crumpled heavily to the orange carpet.

The other man had almost three seconds. He was older, however, and slower. He was pulling a spring-powered dart gun

It's quite a terrifying vampiric sort of feeling - you really feel they're sucking something out of you."

Of a 1967 New York sf convention, Mike said: "There it was very weird, an incredible sort of experience. I wanted to see Zelazny, I wanted to talk to him, and I couldn't because he had a sort of hard circle, an armed guard of fans, all of whom looked like the most decadent sort of southern opp. They just had that look to them. And they were all wearing mirror sunglasses, every damned one of them.

"They looked like Hitler's bodyguard. And they guarded him. They wouldn't let him talk to any of his friends. They sort of steered him around. They were the weirdest group of people. Sort of vampiric. They were all sort of super-hysterical. It was sick.

"I could describe it further, but it would sound like fiction. It was a bit like the Black Prince being led around by his evil followers. I kept trying to talk to him, because we're friends, but I didn't get a single chance in three or four days."

Greg writes of kinds of reviews in his zine, and describes how he was lured into fandom and publishing. This zine is titled ABERRATION #1. If you want a copy I suggest 25¢ is fair.

Alpajpuri's zine is PECULIAR #3.

Earl Evers is at it again with zEEn, this issue is Vol. II, No.1. It's a discussionzine for a small readership outside of, or, rather, parallel to the amateur press associations or the usual trading system.

This "new" zEEn is about Louis O. Kelso's Revolutionary Capitalism; a theoretical plan for changing the system of production capital ownership. As described by Evers the theory would probably founder on the rocks of stupidity, greed and shortsightedness...which always seem to wreck plans for improving Man.

I'm going to write Earl a letter of comment and we'll Go At It. His address: Box 5053, Main Station, San Francisco, CA 94101.

THE MAIL The Univ. of Wisc. at Milwaukee Library insisted on subscribing to SFR in spite of my telling them SFR was dead, only #43 available. *Grunge*

I'll send a copy of SFR 43 and a copy of REG #2, and wait. Aha-ha-ha-ha-ha.....

Postcard from John Brunner: "Many thanks for your letter, found on our return last night from Italy. They sent me to Queen Square Hospital (a major teaching hospital) and it turned out the neuritis was due to bruising of the ulnar nerve - four weeks away from the typewriter and the sensation has disappeared. But the therapy described ((See REG#2, p.30)) is very interesting; I used to use a lot of yeast, for B-complex deficiency, and will try going back to it and see if it helps me."

FIAWOL (Fandom Is A Way Of Life) ((Obviously MY way of life, Ghod help me)) is #1 of a hoped for two-weekly (for a while) from Joyce & Arnie Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn,

NY 11201. 5/81.

A newszine of and for fandom, because LOCUS and LUNA do a good job of covering the sf-prodom scene.

Example: Arnie was typing a stencil for his FOCAL POINT editorial when honest to God, a lightning bolt struck his kitchen. No one was hurt but he had to do without electricity for a week. He writes, "I want to squelch a rumor that I was typing a polemic arguing against the existence of Ghu when the bolts struck."

In the excitement immediately after the attack, he obviously didn't hear that rumbling voice from the sky: "SHIT-MISSED!"

(O I have influence where it counts.)

A postcard from subscriber R.C. Marble suggesting I attend the esperanto convention currently in Portland.

Never! Those esperantists are engaged in a conspiracy to alter the precious bodily fluids of the sacred American langwich.

"Hey, Geis, let's you'n me put out a sf magazine called DEPRAVED SCIENCE FICTION."

"That's the most perverted suggestion I've heard yet."

"I knew you'd like it."

"NO!"

"No? Sometimes I don't understand you, dick."

"If industry were controlled by the majority instead of a tiny minority, company officials would have to be more con-

from a leather bag beside the table when Vik reached him. Vik slapped the gun away.

Vik did not waste time. He brought his hand back and across the jowly face. The man's head jerked sharply sideways from the blow. His mouth leaked blood.

Vik almost casually pushed him down onto his back and sat crushingly on his chest. His knees pinned the man's flabby arms. "Who sent you?"

Without waiting for an answer, knowing there would be no information, not wanting to play games, Vik seized the man's right hand and calmly, viciously, snapped the little finger.

The man gasped. His eyes dilated with pain. He labored to breathe. His breath wheezed and he swallowed blood. He said nothing.

Beside them, on the table, Doctor Kiambi continued to shudder and thrash and scream into his tight gag. The eater snake was following the soft tube of his intestine deeper and deeper into his body, consuming his body's wastes, ever hungry, ravenously seeking more.... Soon the snake would be wholly into his guts, and soon it would eat its way through the wall of the narrowing, twisting flesh tunnel and would gorge on liver, kidney....

On the carpet on the other side of the table the corpse of the other agent twitched and jerked in the final reflexes of death. Half the body's green tunic was sopping wet with blood. The living carpet was eagerly sucking up the blood as it flowed through the fibres to the floor.

cerned with the environment." —Earl Evers, zEn #1, Aug. 72.

Wanna bet? The "average man," in possession of stock shares that determine his yearly income, would likely be more rapacious and greedy than present-day owners. The common man is usually as stupid, venal and shortsighted as the equally stupid, venal, and shortsighted politicians he elects, and who in turn are controlled and manipulated by the elite who really govern this country...and perhaps the world.

"For God's sake!" Dr. Mann tapped his pipe vigorously against a bronze ashtray and glared up at me vigorously. "You're dreaming. There are no utopias. There can be no perfect men. Each of our lives is a finite series of errors which tend to become rigid and repetitive and necessary. Every man's personal proverb about himself is: 'Whatever is, is right, in the best of all possible people.' The whole tendency is...the whole tendency of the human personality is to solidify into the corpse. You don't change corpses. Corpses aren't bubbling with enthusiasm. You spruce them up a bit and make them fit to be looked at."

—THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart

"I did it my way...most of the time."

—A.L. Terego, on his 95th birthday, 2022 A.D.

THE MAIL LOCUS 118 with pro news that Betty Ballantine 8-8-72 is leaving Ballantine Books, and Fred Pohl has left Ace Books because Ace has resumed its habit of not paying authors. Fred is now happily free-lance again.

Full-page photo-offset ad for a first annual Science Fiction and Fantasy Film Convention at the Ambassador Hotel on Nov. 24-25-26 this year, in Los Angeles. The flyer is notable for the fine Tim Kirk STAR TREK satire-ad comic strip, and the breathtaking \$8. registration fee.

Ed Cagle enclosed a buck with: "If I pay my dollar and promise to keep my mouth shut, will you send me your zine?" Yes. Even if you blab.

A S.F.W.A. Nebula Awards Report from Vonda McIntyre with a list of nominees thus far and (happy, intelligent action) a clutch of blank Nebula nomination cards, which can be used as postcards since the opposite side is blank.

Vonda says this is an experiment to broaden the participation in the Nebula voting. It's a fine one, and I vote it be continued; this way, when I come across a fine novel or story, I can reach for a handy nominating card, fill in the story and such, sign it, and send it off. I would suggest the card be printed with her return name and address on the blank side.

The September PLAYBOY with more depressing letters and reports of the stupidity and think-and-do-my-way! actions (extra-, ill- and non-legal) by various city-county-state officials and police in re sex and drugs and abortion.

The old order changeth only under great pressure and with much lashing out at its changers. Someday there'll be a political bloodbath, and these old, rigid farts will have no one to blame but themselves.

Three other fanzines arrived today, too: KRATOPHANY #2, from Eli Cohen, Apt. 63, 417 W. 118th St., New York, NY 10027. 50¢.

A pleasant, unremarkable zine except for the remarkably good comic strip (graphic art strip?) "Wendy and the Yellow King", pt. 2, drawn excellently by Judy Mitchell and written by Mike Mason.

Two zines from Ethel Lindsay, 6 Langley Av., Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 6QL, United Kingdom. (If you address it 'England' Ethel will fume and fuss.)

Her HAVERINGS is in its 52nd issue: fanzine reviews, mostly cursory. But she's never nasty.

And her SCOTTISHE is in its 62nd issue, and is made up of her brief, appreciative book reviews (and she reads a lot of s-f), Ella Parker's preamble to an in-person observation of the Apollo 16 lift-off, and letters of comment, and her (Ethel's) "Watterings" at the end. Always interesting and readable. 3/\$1.00.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-9-72

It's strange, writing TOMB IT MAY CONCERN: it's a hell of a lot of fun, and I am not plotting too rigidly. In pernt of fac' I hardly have a plot at all; jist a few scenes I want in and that gruesome climax. The rest is spontaneous bits of business and sometimes doubly re-written dialog and action. Over all of course is the word limit and the Get Him In Trouble dictum that I hope is etched in my writer's mind.

"Who?" Vik impatiently twisted the man's broken finger.

The man's plump face rippled with pain. His lips drew back in a grimace. He shook his head as he hissed for air. His chest convulsively fought Vik's crushing weight.

Vik undid the man's belt and strapped his feet together. Then he cut the man's tunic free and with it tied the man's wrists behind his back.

Then Vik stood, grasped the end of the purple, diamond back eater snake with his powerful right hand and slowly, calmly, pulled the three foot length from Kiambi's body. The scaly inches emerged sheened with blood.

When the snake's round, wet, suctioning mouth, gleaming with half-hidden rows of shark-like teeth, was free of the doctor's gaping, torn anus, Vik looked to the bound fat man. "It's still hungry. You've got a lot to feed it." He nudged the man's heavy gut.

The man was pale with fear.

"Who sent you here?"

"You'll kill me anyway."

"No, not if you tell me the truth."

The man's eyes seemed riveted to the snake's undulating, red-rimmed mouth. Then his gaze darted to the body of his dead companion. He said, "Quebo."

The Emperor's Defense Minister.

At that instant the tip of Vik's middle finger, left hand came alive with a throb of pain. He automatically damped the nerves. He said to the agent, "Why is he in-

"The mold that cast the mind of C. Wright Mills was not broken at his flesh's departure. Another such mind was promptly cast and labeled G. William Domhoff... A Mills disciple, Domhoff has published WHO RULES AMERICA? (1967) and THE HIGHER CIRCLES (1970). The subjects of those books are exactly what their titles suggest. Domhoff has now written another illuminating treatise called FAT CATS AND DEMOCRATS: THE ROLE OF THE BIG RICH IN THE PARTY OF THE COMMON MAN.

"Domhoff's thesis is straightforward. The country is governed by a small elite which knows pretty much what it is up to and coordinates its various moves in foreign affairs and the economy. Most academics dispute this theory. They tend to be Jefferson I types who believe that the United States is a pluralist society filled with all sorts of dominations and powers constantly balancing and checking one another. To them, anyone who believes that an elite is really running the show is paranoid. But as the late Delmore Schwartz once said with the weary lucidity of his own rich madness, "Paranooids have real enemies, too."

"Admittedly, it is difficult at first to accept the proposition that the owners of the country also rule it and that the electorate is nothing but a quadrennial chorus whose function is to ratify with hosannahs one or the other of two presidential candidates carefully picked for them by rulers who enjoy pretending that ours is really government of, by and for the you-know-who. In the same manner, Iiberius always respectfully consulted a Senate to whose irrelevant ranks his heir nicely added a race horse."

—Gore Vidal, THE NEW YORK REVIEW of Books
Vol. XIX, No. 2 (8-10-72)

POLITICS or RULERTICS
8-9-72

If you accept the Elite-Who-Rule-Us theory (above) you have to think that McGovern's choice of Sargent Shriver, one of the Elite, to be his Vice Presidential running mate, is a clear signal to those concerned that he is giving in and will not interfere with the Empire if elected.

And lo suddenly the labor unions are signing up, and Mayor Daley is all smiles, and the House democrats are endorsing the ticket.

Now McGovern has promised to be good and the rulers are making it possible for him to win. The great con game doth continue.

THE MAIL
8-9-72

There was a note attached to my mail in the drawer this morning: "Please come to counter".

Pleasant, helpful clerks gently informed me that I've been mis-labeling my mail. Seems third class is now 8¢ for the first two ounces, 4¢ each additional ounce, as of July something. Previous, it was 2¢ each additional ounce.

Nobody told me! The lousy newspapers reported nothing.

So now RICHARD E. GEIS, 3rd class, would cost 20¢. But 14¢ each is okay if I stamp them "Book" for foreign mail (unsealed) but must now stamp domestic book rate mail Special 4th Class Rate.

BUT—just got a call from the downtown central P.O. who are holding about 50 copies of domestic RICHARD E. GEIS because I didn't stamp them Book (at 14¢ postage).

So which is right for domestic book rate: Book or Special 4th Class Rate? I'd rather not have to have another stamp made. I'll have to try to get an official ruling when I'm downtown tomorrow. Hope it cools off: 90-100 degree heat is something I can do without on the hills.

Ah, most pleasant: J.H. Reid, who had been taking a 10 copy consignment of SFR (and not paying for sales for 10 many issues until I cut him off even before stopping publication of SFR) sent a check for \$25.00. He distributed in Australia.

That \$25. pays for the sample copies I'm about to start sending out. Ghod provides.

FOCAL POINT #26 from Arnie Katz is the official results of the 1971 Egoboo Poll, honoring the best of 1970's fan activity.

This is a Good Thing, this fixing-in-place of who, what, when, and which-place-did-I-come-in?

SFR and me came in pretty good. That makes FOCAL POINT #26 a Must Keep item. I do wish I had made the Hall of Fame, but maybe next time.

Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201. No price listed, but considering its historical value, 50¢ is fair, sayeth I.

RATS! #15 from: Bill & Charl Komar Kunkel, 8445 121st., Apt. 1D, Kew Gardens, NY 11415. 50¢.

A personal/faanish zine. Good good good. But not THAT good. Bill & Charl got married recently. Pieces of HOT SHIT. a column by Ray Nelson on a city built for bicycles. Letters.

vestigating me?"

"I wasn't told. He wants your medical records. He wanted me to make the doctor talk about you...about your past."

"And what did Kiambi tell you?"

"Only what the records show."

Vik glanced at the old doctor. Kiambi lay quiet. An occasional spasm wracked his body. He continued to moan into his gag.

The snake writhed and twisted in Vik's grasp. Vik said, "Where else is Quebo sending agents to investigate my past?"

"North...where you were first seen."

"Interesting phrasing. Did he say it that way?"

"Yes."

Vik stared thoughtfully at the man. "Do you believe I'm seventy-three years old?"

"No! The way you moved! The way you fought!"

"Yes... I've waited too long this time." Vik drove the point of his knife into the snake's spine, just behind the tubular head. The squirming body went limp. He threw it into a corner. "Where are the doctor's servants and slaves? They would have heard all this."

"We locked them in the trunk room."

"Thank you." Vik moved around behind the heavy agent, knelt, hooked a powerful arm under the man's fleshy chin, lifted—

The agent's chest pumped with sudden terror. He wheezed, "You promised..."

Vik squeezed off the voice and drove his jeweled knife

A superb Dan Steffan cover.

"Arelene," spoke Jesus, after he had parked, "do you ever feel great warmth and love toward people?"

"Only for you, lover," she replied.

"Have you never felt a great rush of warmth and love toward some person or toward all humanity?"

The woman cocked her head and thought.

"Occasionally."

"To what do you attribute it?"

"Alcohol."

The woman unzipped the fly of Jesus and reached a hand in and enclosed the Sacred Tool. It was, all accounts agree, filled only with agape.

She gave the Sacred Tool a little friendly squeeze and then lowered her head to His Lap and sucked in the Spiritual Spaghetti.

"But Arlene!" He said. "Dr. Rhinehart's making love to you is fornication, is what might hurt her."

The woman tempted Jesus further with her serpent's tongue, but producing no measurable effect, raised herself. Denied her sinful pleasure she looked peevish.

"What are you talking about? What's fornication, another of your perversions?"

When she turned to face Him He saw tears brimming at her eyes.

"I love your cock and you love my breasts and that's not a sin."

Jesus considered these words. They did seem reasonable.

"It is good," He said. "But there are greater goods."

"I know that. But I like yours."

They stared at each other: two alien spiritual worlds.

—THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart

A TYPICAL SLOTHFUL DAY IN THE LIFE OF RICHARD E. GEIS AND HIS ALTER EGO 8-9-72

I come halfway awake around six A.M. when stepbrother Jerry clumps down the stairs from his bedroom in the converted attic. He pisses and shaves (electric) and eats a bowl of dry cereal and milk. (Snap-crackle-pop.) He clumps out the back door and backs out of the driveway in his truck-camper combo.

I drift back to sleep.

I awaken again, permanently, for the day, to the burbling thump of perking coffee in the kitchen which is almost directly over my head. It is about 7:30.

I lurch out of bed, bladder yelling about getting empty or else, and dress. Slacks/shirt/slippers.

I shuffle up the stairs and turn toward the bathroom. Pass open door of mother's room. She is lying in bed with a mug of coffee. Cat (Chin) at her side. He is a big Siamese.

We talk for a minute about the weather, about her arm (recently out of cast) which still hurts, or the events of the past night (she prowls, cannot sleep, hunts Chin at 3 A.M., insists he be inside before she gets her nightly nap) while my bladder puts on the pressure.

I go to bathroom, gaze at myself in mirror. Where hath gone the 19-year-old of yesteryear? Need shave. Fuck it.

I go into kitchen and make my ritual bowl of wheat germ and milk (soggy mess) and add sliced fresh peach. Go out to front porch and get morning Oregonian from tubular rain protector. Sit at kitchen table, eat wheat-germ-and-peaches and read front page news. (Lies!)

I finish bowl and wash it. Mother calls that her mug has a hole in it (means she wants a refill). I get her mug, pour coffee, carry mug back to her. Minor chit chat. I go back to kitchen, pour a mug of coffee for myself, retire to living-room (chair by window, most comfortable, and feel smug and superior to poor souls who trudge by on way to bus stop) to sip coffee and thoroughly read paper (more lies!).

After paper I go down to basement and put on shoes. Gather zipcase and mail-to-go, go up to kitchen, ask if we need anything from store. Usually no. (Mother prefers to shop at 30th and Ainsworth store)

I go out to garage and unlock my bike (chained to work-bench because the local kids will steal anything not nailed down and even then often carry claw hammers) and ride to post office (deposit mail, draw new supply from box) (keep bike chained to rail outside), ride around corner, down two blocks to big Safeway store, chain bike to rail, buy beer, pop, or sandwich stuff or peaches, etc. and ride home.

Take off slacks/shirt/shoes and put on swim trunks (boxer style) and go barefoot. Read mail. Go into "office" and do a few triple spaced pages of TOMB II MAY CONCERN. Stare at it, edit it, re-edit it. Rewrite parts.

cleanly between the man's ribs, into the heart.

The body convulsed for an instant, then subsided. Vik said quietly, "I lie often."

He moved over and looked into Kiambi's pain-ridden eyes. "I'm sorry. I warned you fifty years ago this time might come. You've been very well paid. You've had a long, good life. I cannot leave you alive. Quebo would take you...and you'd talk. Kunzar must remain a myth, a dream...a wish."

He picked up the dart gun and sent the bolt thudding into the old man's brain.

Vik took a deep breath. He smiled wryly. "I'm getting too old for this sort of thing."

He picked up the fat agent's leather bag and took out the sheaf of papers he knew would be inside—his medical history as Masil; a series of medical examinations showing his nearly perfect health through the decades, except for recurring stomach trouble (faked—in the record for credibility.).

Vik flipped the pages until he came to one with a tiny brown stain on the lower right corner. He sliced off the corner and slipped the bit of paper into a small plastic envelope he took from a slit in his belt. He returned the envelope to its carrying place.

The "stain" was a micro transmitter alarm keyed to light and motion.

Vik continued to feel the timed throbs of diminished pain in his finger which meant another micro alarm had been set off somewhere...probably in Abu Hamid where his birth record was

Around Noon I sometimes take a break from desultory stenciling of items like this (or further reading of fanzines or mags or book) and go out in the hot sun to swig a can of pop while chomping a sandwich while lying on a chaise lounge on the patio. Usually read a book. (Today part of A DARKNESS IN MY SOUL by Dean Koontz) Or I may trim a part of a lawn, or mow the thing, front or back, or hammer something.... By 1:30 I have usually eaten and am back down here writing a letter, reading, stenciling the mail or fanzine reviews or JOMB. So it goes.

Around two P.M. Augie (mother's boy friend) drops by for a sandwich. Sometimes she is gone gadding with girl friends, so we talk (I learn a lot from that good natured, easy-going tough-minded, prejudiced, life-experienced guy.).

At around five-thirty I sometimes turn on the TV news (lies!) and watch the local unimportant news reported as if it were important.

We have supper around 6:30 P.M. because that's when Augie gets here (It usually wipes out Cronkite for me, but whatthehell, more lies! (sincerely told)). I often make a salad, and afterward do the dishes.

Mother and Augie retire to the patio to talk or visit with the old couple next door whose backyard sides with ours and who give us peaches from their tree and who also have a cat. Sometimes I join them for a while. Mostly I come down here to watch TV or read or write or whatever.

Sometimes use the twilight to work on the lawn, etc.

I take a bath about every other night, sometimes every night if I've sweated a lot during the day or just feel crummy.

I usually watch Carson unless it's Joey Bishop as guest host in which case I may switch to Cavett and his little-dicky-cavett-intellectual-liberal-scene. (Right-on thoughts for the masses.)

Sleep.

(Mother and Augie often go out to stores to while away their time during the summer. When new stuff comes on TV this fall, though, they'll be lying on her bed watching...and I'll be down here, watching. (Livingroom never used at night.)

(But while they are out at night I will get out Matilda ((or "Minerva"??)) and indulge in what is nicely called self-gratification.) I call it masturbation and I like it.

THE MAIL A letter from C---. She liked my THE ARENA
8-10-72 WOMEN which I gave her a copy of before she left,
last. She had been extremely depressed when writing
her last letter of hurt and travail and had exaggerated
her suffering about 200%. Now she is being put through a bad
time to prove she loves her husband and to be punished for her
blue jaunts to Portland; she willingly signs over her checks
to him, etc. He doesn't really beat her, only slaps a bit.

Well...if she cries Wolf one more time I may not believe her.

She says she has a job with a registry which provides her with varied nursing jobs, which is to her liking, and she is reasonably happy.

Fine.

Three books from Ballantine: STARFLIGHT 3000 by R. W. Mackelworth (02774, \$1.25); THE GOLD AT THE STARBOW'S END by Freder-

ik Pohl, a collection (02775, \$1.25); and THE SONG OF RHIANNON by Evangeline Walton, the 'third volume of the Mabinogi' (02773, \$1.25)

A jump in price from 95¢ to \$1.25 for the sf, fantasy lines.

Redd Boggs' 20th issue of SPIROCHETTE (dedicated to our Vice President?) which he sends through the ANZAPA (Australia New Zealand Amateur Press Association). Some valuable musings and observations about sf and writing.

The BODE BULLETIN #6 is an irregular newsletter dedicated to Bode's art, where it appears, etc., with sometimes articles or notes on his life and times.

From 713 Paul Street, Newport News, VA 23605. 10¢.

SFVA BULLETIN #s 41-42 from editor George Zebrowski, POB 122 Westview Sta., Binghamton, NY 13905. \$6. per year to 'professionals other than writers eligible for membership.' Subs to Robert Coulson, Rte. 3, Hartford City, IN 47348.

Professionally printed (nicely, this time) with Nebula reports, messages from officers, a tribute to John Carnell, and Fredric Brown, reports of the various Nebula banquets, lots of photos of pros, a couple articles, a "Market Report" and some Nebula nominations which are titled 'Recommendations.'

A postcard addressed to Richard E. Geis #2 from Bob Bloch. Bob remarks, a bit astonished: "You sure as hell have opened a window and hung your psyche out to dry. Aside from certain disquisitions of Bill Rotsler's, I can't think of many parallels in fandom -- certainly nothing to equal this -- nor in general publishing, for that matter. I find the reader reaction of equal interest. Speaking for myself, I have never been able to behave in an adult fashion and was forced to resort to a substitute for maturity: i.e., I pretend to be a grown-up. Most of the time this seems to work pretty well. In fact, I can fool everybody except people. What else can I say except thanks --- and DLTP*

"Don't lose this postcard."

I fear you may have exposed more than you wished, Bob. After all...a pink postcard with passion pink edging handwritten in purple ink. Why didn't you let me know before? All these years we've wasted!

--- sorry, Alter

planted along with that of the plague deaths of his fictional parents.

Was this a security check---or an investigation into the possibility that he could be the mythical one immortal man on Earth?

Vik put his medical records back into place in the file cabinet and closed the drawer.

He went to the torn window and peered cautiously out. He listened. He checked the sections of the tree, porch and stairs he could see. With his knife ready, he unpegged the door and opened it a crack. Satisfied, he slipped out and

"Policy formation is the province of a bipartisan power elite of corporate rich (Rockefeller, Mellon) and their career hirelings (Nixon, McNamara) who work through an interlocking and overlapping maze of foundations, universities and institutes, discussion groups, associations and commissions. Political parties are only for finding interesting and genial people (usually ambitious middle-class lawyers) to ratify and implement these policies in such a way that the underclasses feel themselves to be, somehow, a part of the governmental process. Politics is not exactly the heart of the action but it is nice work—if you can afford to campaign for it."

"About one percent of the population—a socially interacting upper class whose members go to prep schools, attend debutante balls, join exclusive clubs, ride to hounds and travel all over the world for business or pleasure—will continue to own 60 percent to 70 percent of all privately held corporate wealth and receive 24 percent of the national income."

"The American Constitution was carefully rigged by the note-holders, land speculators, rum-runners, and slave holders who were the Founding Fathers so that it would be next to impossible for upstart dirt farmers and indebted masses to challenge the various forms of private property held by these well read robber barons. Through this Constitution, the overprivileged attempted to rule certain topics out of order for proper political discussion. To bring these topics up in polite company was to invite snide invective, charges of personal instability, or financial ruin."

—G. William Domhoff, *FAT CATS AND DEMOCRATS: THE ROLE OF THE BIG RICH IN THE PARTY OF THE COMMON MAN* (Prentice-Hall, \$5.95)

THE MAIL A short letter from Bob Tucker. "Ah, Richard, 8-11-72 Richard, I can almost read REG. If only you used a larger type face and poured on heavy black ink!

"I remember C— from several years ago when she lived in an apartment very near you and published two or three issues of a small fanzine with your assistance and your machine. I almost believed in her then and I almost.....

"Well, it was good plotting for this second issue."

Readers of the '67-'68 *PSYCHOTICS* may also remember C—. She of the ink-stained nipples as she struggled with her Sears postcard mimeo to produce OS, her tiny fanzine. She refused to use my Gestetner. Those were our Venice, CA. days, and Fritz Leiber lived two blocks away...and that filthy beach was fifty feet away.

XXX Inc. sent their monthly offers: usual whip-bondage, gay male, porno books, porno mags... Something new are some impressionistic-surrealistic erotic art photo sets for \$5.

Norman Hochberg wrote a loc: he thinks I'm unrealistic in thinking Nixon is transparently a prick. Most people in Norm's Queen's Village neighborhood like Nixon and his anti-busing sentiments. But many of these same people (in their 40's) smoke pot and laugh at those who hang back because of its illegality.

Norm asks: "Is it 'an sf novel' or 'a sf novel'?"

I believe it is 'a' sf novel...usually...except when...oh shit, now I have to look in *THE CAREFUL WRITER!* (Where are you, Redd Boggs, when we need you?)

Grump There are all kinds of exceptions, but 'a' sf novel is correct. But if you write 'An idiotic sf novel' you are correct.

Norm didn't think much the excerpt from *CANNED MEAT*. Don't blame him; not enough to give an idea of the character or story.

He also wonders if there'd be a problem selling my novel to a "regular" publisher if I first published it myself.

I don't think so. The fan sales I'd make (probably under 1,000) wouldn't interfere with the "mass" pb sales, or library sales. On the other hand, if I sold 1,000 copies at a fair profit, within a year, say, I'd be tempted to run off another private edition.

Most likely, though, I'll avoid all that work...unless one wants to publish the Kunzar books and stories...or unless I see a way to advertise effectively and inexpensively. I am convinced there is an audience for almost anything in this country—it's just a matter of finding that audience, scattered as it is. And it takes time.

Four Lancer books from Bob Hoskins. *KING KULL* by Robert E. Howard and Lin Carter (75371, 95¢); *KAVIN'S WORLD* by David Mason (75372, 95¢); *THE RETURN OF KAVIN* (75361, 95¢); and a Lancer SF Library reprint, *THE HUMANOID*s by Jack Williamson (75362, 95¢).

disappeared into the night.

The next day Vik sat in his enormous sea green sofa-lounge in his palace trees office, and dictated to a series of Messengers.

Messengers were men of great integrity and astonishing, eidetic memory. They were all members of one widespread family whose "memory gene" traced back to the work of the Egyptians. They were a guild and a clan; they never married outside the family for fear of losing the gene.

The males worked for governments, the females for private business where they could keep a home and raise their children.

The Messengers often carried a pouch of documents, but most of the empire's provinces and client chiefdoms depended on their total recall and inviolable honesty.

It meant death to harm or seriously interfere with a Messenger whether he was on duty or not. An attempted bribe was instantly reported. The last instance of a Messenger violating his trust had occurred 156 years before, and he had been publicly tortured to death by members of his inner family.

Messengers could not be tortured; when their pain level reached a certain point they died. They were very cautious people. Accidents and disease killed them due to their low pain tolerance.

Vik wore his purple First Minister's robe of office, as usual, and his gold pendant.

A male secretary sat cross-legged on the deep amber grass

SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SNNNOOOOPING!
8-13-72

The only piece of mail I
received Saturday was a letter
from John M. Lyons, Director,

Administrative Services, Post Office, Portland, Or.

Subject: Special Fourth Class Rate.

((Make that "apparent subject"))

Lyons wrote: "After further examination of your publication, we are requesting additional information.

"We need to know if you receive compensation in cash or any other form from any firm, business, individual, or organization whose name, product, or service may be mentioned in your publication.

"You may call 221-2371 when replying."

I wasn't aware there had been an initial examination of this publication. Anyway, I'll call him in the morning and say no, and offer to put it in writing.

Do they suspect I am on the take from these sex outfits I mention occasionally? But, then, REG is a strange, freakish kind of publication and they mayhap are cynically intrigued.

Paranoid forever is my motto: I see a postal inspector pouring over these pages, scheming, trying to figure an angle with which to Get Geis.

ALTER-EGO "Geis, I'm sick and tired of your encroaching
8-14-72 on my lower-right-corner-of-the-page. Time and
time—"

"Twice, Alter. Let's not—"

"Even twice is too often. I don't get no respect around here. I want a different deal!"

"Oh? Well, if you want to stop writing..."

"Oh, don't be so fucking cute! If I stopped writing you'd be a lost cause, a 'formerly wrote' man with dead eyes and a shrunken soul. You'd be in your grave inside ten years. You know it and I know it."

Sigh "Tell me what you want, Alter."

"I want my own stencils. I want to be separate but superior, I want—"

"You want to rot in your dungeon ^{again} for another year or two?"

"You wouldn't try that, Geis. You've read my stuff. TOMB is heavy stuff. Only superb. Now, I—"

Gurgle

"—want to finish "Tomb It May Concern" without further fudging by your stupid MAIL comments or book reviews or whatever, for this issue, and next issue I want about 15 or more pages, all mine, all fiction, to be located at the back of the magazine, and you can do your loathsome nit-picking and sarcastic observations in your front section."

"I'll think about it. The suggestion has some merit."

"Suggestion!?! That's an ORDER, Geis!"

"Eat crabs, Alter."

"Eat toads, Geis."

"Eat rotten onions, Alter."

"Eat Nixon's p—"

CLANG!!

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I DID A BOOK REVIEW? Too long.

I was going to review Dead Koontz's A DARKNESS IN MY SOUL, but to save my soul

I haven't finished it yet. Tomorrow. I've got to get some reading done!

"Geis, let's publish a yearly s-f magazine: TRASHY SCIENCE FICTION!"

THE MAIL OUTGOING: I wrote a letter to the post office
8-14-72 this morning saying no to their question about possible compensation. I'm afraid I questioned their intelligence by indirection, added a "(Any of you want to subscribe?)" and a final benediction: "May all your problems have solutions, and may you never run afoul of the A.C.L.U."

With luck they'll file me under NUT, HARMLESS and leave me alone.

Got a nice letter from Mike Glocksihn, who confessed unashamedly: "Last night, between the hours of 11:30 and 1:30 (I'm a slow reader), I sat in a large, comfortable chair, in the nude, with a large snifter of very good Scotch in one hand and REG#2 in the other and I read it from cover to cover. The fanzine, not the Scotch. As with the first issue, it provided much of value (despite the repro problems which rendered several pages almost illegible) and was greatly appreciated and enjoyed.

"It did make me wonder, though, about my reasons for enjoying it. Are they voyeuristic, or on a more elevated plane? Upon reflection, I realize that I was far more interested in your thoughts and opinions on serious and fannish matters and in your honest discussion of your emotional life

carpet, taking down his words on a square paperleaf with an inkstick. Real paper was available but it was too expensive for casual notetaking.

"Wesu is the Emperor's chief for Lake Vika from tip to tip, side to side. Uvinza is recalled. He is to report to me upon his arrival here in Kinshasa. All shore under-chiefs are to kill all lake pirates. They must coordinate their war canoes and patrol day and night! If necessary, convoys are to be created for the wheat and pepper shipments due at Kigoma next month."

Vik noticed Caiundo, his first assistant, enter the large room. Caiungo knew he had Vik's eye. He pointed toward the ceiling and jabbed once. Emperor Ndola wanted Masil.

Vik nodded and continued giving the Messenger instructions for the east central provinces. In five minutes he was done.

As the Messenger left, with the secretary, Vik asked Caiungo, "What does he want?"

"Quebo's alone with him. I don't know. High Policy, I suppose. No staff allowed."

"No word from the vines?" Vik referred to inter-office rumors, leaks and paid informers. He had people in the staffs of every minister, even that of the Emperor.. and they had a few in his staff.

Palace intrigue always existed in power centers. The trick was to accept it and play the game well.

"Maybe that Quebo wants to break your monopoly of glow-leafs. Empire defense requires—"

Vik nodded sharply. "He's wanted that for ten years.

than I was in the actual details of your sexual preferences and adventures. (Is fandom ready for the secret name of Dick's dick?) It is rare indeed to see someone exposing themselves in such an uncompromisingly honest way and I don't think your readers, myself included, should feel in any way uncomfortable about sharing your journal.

"That conclusion led me to wonder whether you'll be willing to meet fans face-to-face again? It's one thing to put one's innermost thoughts and feelings down on paper, quite another to venture forth into the midst of a group of people who'll have read those words. Does your move to Portland perhaps indicate a desire to get away from fans, and to adopt more fully your role as a hermit? I really shouldn't try to armchair-analyze you, but I wonder if you've given the matter any thought?"

Mike, I've given everything some thought. My disinclination to meet fans and pros is 99% bedded in my physical awkwardness & tension (and my shame at being imperfect) and my in-person quietness and wallflower personality.

I couldn't care less what a given fan thinks of my sexual proclivities or activities. It doesn't bother me at all.

If there's a fan group in Portland, I'll probably join and attend a few meetings. If there's ever another convention here I'll take it in. I'm not THAT reclusive. But I am jealous of my time and privacy.

Also today I got NEW LIBERTARIAN NOTES #13 (Special Science Fiction Issue) from Samuel E. Konkin III, 235 East 49th St., New York, NY 10017. 70¢.

The main item in this expanded (to 28 pages) issue is Konkin's 8,000 word sf novelette, "Agent For Anarchy." It is baaaaad. But NLN has muchly improved layouts, headings and artwork this time.

"The child, we are informed, needs to see order and consistency in the world or he becomes insecure and afraid, but it seems to me he might grow equally well with consistent, dependable inconsistency. Life, in fact, is that way; if parents would only admit and praise inconsistency, children wouldn't be so frightened of their parents' hypocrisy or ignorance." —THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart

"Schur's book is indeed a pretty example of the point made by Geoffrey Gorer in his essay in PSYCHOANALYSIS OBSERVED that, in practice, Freudian concepts are only invoked to explain what used to be called vices and never to explain virtues. 'I know of no studies to show people are not really responsible for their heroism or piety, their diligence or their integrity.'"

—Charles Rycroft reviewing FREUD: LIVING AND DYING by Max Schur (International Universities Press) NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS Aug. 10, 1972.

BOOK REVIEW Dean Koontz is an enthusiastic writer who 8-14-72 has emotional axes grinding away in every book he writes. In A DARKNESS IN MY SOUL he again destroys God and this time takes His place.

The novel begins as a psi-powered artificial-womb created young man, free of his military creators, is hired by them to probe the warped genius mind of yet another of their "successes."

Dean has a tendency to overwrite, to carry his hyperbole into near ludicrous superfluosity. (Wow!) As with this on page 12:

"I looked back at the freak. And within my soul (some churches deny me one; but then churches have been denying people a lot of things for a lot of reasons, and the world still turns), I knew that in all the far reaches of the galaxy, to the ends of the larger universe, in the billions of inhabited worlds that might be out there, no name existed for the child. Simply: Child. With a capital."

The novel sinks into some incredible mind-probing of Child's mind geography: caverns, pits, mythical animals, etc. and the hero, Kelly, is trapped "underground" in that warped subconscious for a month. While Inside he finds that Child has absorbed God. But God is a shattered power; mad.

Later Kelly re-enters Child's almost dead mind and absorbs God's vast, uncoordinated psychic power...and emerges as a new God.

The science-fantasy...or science-myth?...then is injected into the novel in a fatal overdose as Kelly untangles personality and character disorders the world over, banishes war, and creates a co-Godess from the woman he loved when a mere mortal. Together they explore the universe, become bored and finally degenerate to cruel war games.

Tell Dikwa to snoop for special agent activity. Quebo is up to something."

Vik left his office by its private exit and emerged onto the ornate, two hundred year old high ramp that curved up to the Emperor's throne room and office cluster. This giant-among-giants center tree of the five sacred palace trees, soared upward into the sky, a living tower that dominated the empire city.

The palace trees were 354 years old. Long ago their major branches had been spliced together. The grove was a single, joined entity. Ramps and bridges linked the trees at various branch-cluster levels. Slave-powered, counterweighted elevators rose and descended.

Vik looked up at the clear blue sky...at the sun, for an instant. He enjoyed the feel of the afternoon warmth. August, and the temperature high was only about eighty degrees.

Reports told of the glaciers creeping south of the Alps now, and claiming at least half the Black Sea...now called the Ice Sea.

Vik looked out over the masses of green foliage that hid all but occasional spots of ground. There were broad, crowded lanes and paths down there: markets and shops, lion pens, pleasure huts, stone banks encircling bank-owned business trees....

The largest bank, The Congo Trading Company, was controlled by Masil Investments.

He had had his managers triple the guards, and the old records were now securely hidden or in some cases, destroyed.

And I thought I was cynical!
(DAW #12, 95¢)

THE MAIL Eight more Nebula nominating cards from Vonda
8-15-72 McIntyre, with her name stamped on the back for
 use as a postcard. Thank you, Vonda.

LOCUS 119, the very frequent sf newszine, has the L.A. Con Program listed. Eye-opening feature I noticed is a Monday, 4 September panel on Clarion to be moderated by...HARLAN ELLISON. Welcome back to fandom and conventions, Harlan.

Charlie Brown is not too enamoured of RICHARD E. GEIS, but he gives a good review: "A plunge into the mind of Dick Geis is both fascinating and repelling, but worth trying at least once." Gave REG a *, too.

THE NEWS Two stories in the Business section of the
8-15-72 OREGONIAN this morning are worthy of note: negoti-
 ations are going ahead swimmingly with the Russians for U.S.-
 Russia trade wherein we get their natural resources and they
 get wheat and machines and loans (how nice for them; they are
 willingly becoming quasi-colony, a part of the Empire); and
 a high administration official said the idea and practice of
 "inflation-adjusted" mortgages and loans was a concept 'whose
 time had come', meaning the big lenders—banks, insurance
 companies, savings and loan associations, etc. have decided
 inflation (the erosion of the value of the dollar) has become
 permanently continuous and they want debt repayments continual-
 ly adjusted upward to compensate them for an "erosion" of prof-
 it margins caused by inflation.

"It will be interesting to see what happens to George McGovern. Appealing to the restive young, he came up with a number of tax reforms which threatened to alter the foundation of the Property Party ((the ruling, owning elite)). The result was a terrible squawking from the Alsops and the Restons. We were told that McGovern is the Goldwater of the left (a good joke since Goldwater represented the reactionary country club minority while McGovern would represent the not-so-poor to poor majority), but then any hack journalist knows that his ink-drugged readers will not stand for pot, abortion, amnesty. Now that McGovern is the candidate, they have decided that he is, thank God, a pragmatist (i.e. a Property Party opportunist) and so will move where the votes are and where you can bet your sweet ass the Sulzbergers and Schiffs, the Luces and Grams are

"With each passing day, McGovern will more and more come to resemble a Property Party candidate. This is fair enough, if not good enough. But what happens when he is elected? Then we will know—too late, I fear—to what extent he was simply exploiting the people's deep, inchoate hatred of the Property Party in order to become that party's loyal manager. This would be sad because 1972 could have been the year for a counterparty or for a transformation of the Democratic wing of the Property Party. But barring catastrophe (in the form of home-grown apple-pie fascism), the early response to McGovern (and Wallace, too) is the first indication we have had that there now exists a potential American majority willing to see its best interests served not through the restrictive Constit-

ution of the Elite but through the egalitarian vision of Daniel Shays and his road not taken—yet."

—Gore Vidal, THE NEW YORK REVIEW of Books 8-10-72

THE MAIL DE PROFUNDIS #55, from the Los Angeles Sci-
8-16-72 ence Fantasy Society, Inc. Urging all members to
 be present tomorrow night to vote on the purchase
 of a former Jewish temple in West L.A. as the new, permanent,
 LASFS clubhouse. At last, all those years of auctions and
 fund-raising devices have about paid off.

But please, let us have no religious infighting as to which fannish Ghod will be worshipped there. Foo, Ghu, Roscoe and even Laney have their merits, but there is only One True Ghod and His Name is Bloch.

Atheneum has just published Ursula Le Guin's THE FARTHEST SHORE, a juvenile, the final segment of the A WIZARD OF EARTH-SEA, THE TOMBS OF ATUAN trilogy. I mention this because they are sending me a review copy.

Also sending THE CRYSTAL GRYPHON by Andre Norton, also a juvenile.

A letter and sub from Ken Hicks of 876 Richard St., N.E., Marietta, GA 30062.

A long-time sf-fantasy reader, and newly acquainted with fandom, Ken is sampling fanzines and liking them. He mentions another fandom: "For the past 20 years I have been part of another world of fandom, that of the card collector, specif-

He turned and walked up the ramp to the next level. He walked slowly, limped a bit, and absentmindedly massaged the fingers of his right hand as if they were arthritic.

When he entered the outer offices the clerks and lower officials spread their hands, palms up, and bowed their heads to him.

The Emperor's Private One, a graying, stolid man in a living toga with gold threads woven between the pale yellow fibers, smiled and said, "Quebo is with him, eating a little. Would you care for something? Yomena wine? An Indian cake?"

Masil's favorite foods were known and stocked.

"No, nothing now." Vik was mildly surprised when the Private One by-passed the usual private conference rooms and led him through to the Emperor's personal quarters.

The man opened a gold leafed door for him. Vik limped into a luxurious wedge-shaped study he visited maybe five or six times a year. The multi-windowed outer wall provided a view of a third of the city.

The transparent membranes flexed from the breeze outside. At this height the tree swayed very slightly.

Ndola and Quebo sat close together on a curving, purple, living sofa. They were both small men: Ndola wrinkled and skull-like, with sharp, dark, fox eyes, his thin old body sticklike in the layers of a red silk toga; Quebo still strong and firm in a green military tunic with gold piping, a woven gold belt, self-important with diamond and jade rings on every finger.

Ndola turned his lean head and smiled. He said, "Masil."

ically baseball cards. Don't laugh—there's money in it and it's getting bigger every day—my personal collection is valued into five figures, with cards dating back to the 1860's. We have our 'fanzines', collectors all over the world, and many annual conventions."

Ken is crogged at the participatory relationship of pros to sf fandom; it isn't that way in any other fandom he's aware of.

A PIECE OF WAR AND PEACE
8-16-72

ABC showed six hours and some minutes of this monumental attempt to convert Tolstoy's huge novel to film, over four nights of prime time, and I thank them for showing it to me and proving that the Russians should not make movies.

I realize the TV screen was too narrow to show the wide-screen film, and that fully one-third of it was lost, and that because of the dubbing the soundtrack came across as something from a cheap Italian historical thud-and-blunder epic, and that the film was cut mercilessly from a much longer version... but even so, even with the merciless commercial breaks, the movie showed the Russians to be not very subtle actors and perhaps it showed up the book as not all that great, either.

It was, actually, a pretty ham-handed treatment. I kept wishing the BBC had been given 100 million dollars and given the commission to make the film.

"The torch of chaos and doubt—this is what the sage steers by." —Chuang-Tzu

THE MAIL

8-17-72 FIANOL #2 "The fanzine of unsubstantiated truth" is a newsy, gossipy...gossipy? zine about fans and fan events, like conventions and visits.

Well done by Joyce and Arnie Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201: 5/31.00.

Just when I said the mail was getting heavier, it's taken a nosedive. Well, in a few days I'll stencil Bob Lowndes' letter, and now I acknowledge a postcard from Tom Collins, he who invited me into his parlor (his parlor's name is IS, a splendid, monumental quarterly fanzine) to review books for him. (They never learn, do they, these sf fans, forever insisting on reading and reviewing and publishing opinions.) And in a weak moment I said I would, and now he says, "HOO-RAY! The longer the column and the more books covered the better." A grown man! Both of us!

He also provided me with Helmut Pesch's address in Germany. Pesch is a damned good artist. I noticed his work in IS and thought, hey, this guy is perfect to illustrate my Vik Kunzar stories!

I know, I know, I said no artwork for REG, but now I've decided to run my sf in REG first before offering it to the scores of slaving publishers who will be begging for hard-cover and pb rights. And I'd like to run two or three full-page illos with each novelette or part of a serial.

"Now you're talking, Geis!"

"Get out of the Mail, Alter."

"Mail? I thought this was Beast."

WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO THE SOLAR SYSTEM, PROFESSOR?
8-17-72

Two stories in the OREGONIAN today: Michael Ovenden, a U. of British Columbia astronomer says he's proved that the asteroid belt is all that remains of a planet 90 times bigger than Earth. It EXPLODED sixty million years ago.

"Ovenden's findings, a news release said, stem from a theory he formulated to explain the distribution of planets around the sun and from a technique he developed for calculating the positions of planets millions of years in the past or future."

He has named the exploded planet Aztex. (Sounds like a new kind of paint.)

He didn't have an answer for two obvious questions: what caused the explosion and where did most of the missing mass get to?

Immanuel Velikovsky is in Portland for a symposium at Lewis and Clark College. He is basking in Acceptance now that various space probes and research has proved many of his assertions.

He has more. He believes:

- + Pioneer 10, the unmanned spacecraft en route to Jupiter, will find Jupiter charged with strong electric currents which explain why its equator rotates faster than the rest of the planet.
- + He predicts Jupiter contains sulphur, iron and gold.

He spoke a fraction off-tone, a fraction too "late" from normal, and Vik easily caught it.

The "investigation" was known and approved by the Emperor.

Ndola gestured. "Sit on my left. Wine?" A bottle of dark red Yemena sat with other wines, cakes, meats, fruits, sweets, breads and cheeses on the low, wheeled, killed mahogany cart before the sofa. A deaf-mute servant stood ready to serve. He knew all the ministers' preferences.

Quebo lifted a palm in greeting and casual respect.

"These melon pods are exquisitely ripe, Masil. Try one."

Vik limped to the sofa. "No, my stomach is hurting again." When he sat next to the Emperor he seemed a black giant beside the five-foot-five brown Emperor. The sofa groaned softly as his weight pressed down on its cushions.

Vik abstractedly flexed his right hand. "Every few years I have to go to the mineral springs of Tukuyu for a few weeks." He closed his eyes and smiled with memory. "Soak in that hot, soothing, bubbling water, and drink it hot, day after day...."

Once away from the empire city, on the way to the Mitumba Mountains, on the trail, Masil's small entourage and armed escort would be set upon by a ruthless band of cutthroats and Masil, First Minister to Emperor Ndola, would be taken, would disappear...would never be seen nor heard of again.

Vik had staged such exits many times.

Ndola and Quebo did not quite exchange glances. The Emperor nodded. "This body of mine is falling apart, too. Every day I live in pain." He pressed his lower gut. "Pain

- + He believes that Jupiter's famous red spot is a tornado formed over the hole left when the planet Venus was torn out of this biggest of all planets, about 3,500 years ago.
- + He contends "organic molecules" will be found on Venus. One of his articles describes Jupiter as harboring "vermi."

The most staggering of Dr. Velikovsky's contentions are that Earth was brushed by the runaway planet Venus, then a comet, about 1500 B.C. and by Mars in 747 B.C., 721 B.C. and 687 B.C.

Established physicists still hoot at Velikovsky's theories, but he says, "the younger generation of scientists are getting away from the Victorian Age textbooks and welcoming a new understanding of science and humanity."

Dr. Velikovsky is now 77 years old. He started destroying astronomical temples in the early '50s.

MASTURBATION I have a book called SOCIAL PURITY, published in 1903. Chapter XII deals with Secret Sin, or Masturbation.
8-17-72

To have sexual thoughts is to have a polluted imagination, according to this guide to what is right and proper. And the book quotes Doctor Henry Maudsley, 'one of England's greatest authorities on mental diseases.' Maudsley said, "The habit of self-abuse notably gives rise to a particular and disagreeable form of insanity, characterized by intense self-feeling and conceit, extreme perversion of feeling and corresponding derangement of thought, in the earlier stages; and later by failure of intelligence, nocturnal hallucinations, and suicidal and homicidal propensities."

When I read that I felt the cold, clammy hand of fate clutching me... I mean, it FIIS! Is my intelligence failing now? When will the nocturnal hallucinations begin?

But there is more. The book goes on to thoroughly detail the symptoms to be expected once one begins The Secret Sin:

"Consumption is, many times, induced by this habit through its weakening effects on the system. Loss of memory is among the most common effects resulting from this secret practice. We have already referred to insanity produced by this vice. Pain, heaviness and weakness across the back and loins, palpitation of the heart, shortness of breath, nervousness, all are symptoms. A nervous, aching pain in the head, pains in bones and muscles of rheumatic nature, are some of the signs that should give us warning. The general system is so weakened and debilitated that any disease may be difficult to resist, and may result fatally. Languor, disinclination to physical and mental labor, physical debility, united with mental weakness, all warn us of danger, and may have their cause in masturbation. Of the effects on the mind and imagination, we may truthfully say are the following: selfishness; the imagination runs riot in images of debauchery; conversation and reading by choice are ignoble and vulgar; the whole moral nature is debased. Woman has no real charms for the masturbator who no longer controls his passions."

Well. Well. They've pinned me to the wall. I must burn this book. The wisdom of the past (no longer in fashion) has

condemned me.

Can REG, in all its vile impurity, be anything but the ravings of a terminal masturbator?

I'm doomed!

Gee, in that event, I might as well enjoy it while I can.

Up until a year ago I was a hand man, basically. Oh, I'd tried vibrators off and on, but they irritate the sensitive tissues of the glans too much, and a vibrator orgasm is too often a blend of pain and pleasure as well as too explosive once it arrives.

I tried various ways—wet, warm chamois cloth, a cored eggplant (I think it was an eggplant...((OH GOD, MY MEMORY IS GOING!))), even tried raw liver (long before I read about that method in PORTNOY'S COMPLAINT).

I even went so far as to try women. But women, as has been noted before, cannot conveniently be put away in a drawer until next time. (Although here I must pay tribute to C—. She has an instinctive knowledge of how to best beat the meat—start slow and steadily increase speed, and at the end a firm, unfaltering flurry of movement. Her grip and touch are/were perfect. Her stamina always amazed me.)

So it was simpler and most convenient to be a hand man with inspiration courtesy a porno book or magazine or film.

Hand jobs, are, however, inferior in intensity of orgasm to that pleasure received from a skilled mouth and tongue,

that only hemp and zizu can tame for a while. My shit comes out finger thin, enough to use as rope." He laughed. "But I don't leavy my work. The Empire needs me. You, too, Mas-il."

Vik said, "There is nothing critical. Caiungo and my staff are able to function without me, easily, for two tendays."

Ndola didn't argue. He slipped off to another subject. "Quebo has just given me reports of white tribes coming down off the Jef Jef Plateau. They're being forced south by waves of savages from still further north."

Vik nodded. "All of Europe is virtually uninhabitable now, even in summer. We can't blame them."

Quebo said in his rough voice, "We have to stop them. They're tough and hungry and vicious. They're slaughtering our people in the Mourdi."

Vik looked out of the windows and followed the long brown curve of the wide Congo. "Give up the fourth cataract and fall back to the Khartoum line. That can be defended with five thousand less men. Send them home to rest to act as part of our reserve, and send five thousand of our present reserve to defend the Mourdi."

Ndola pursed his thick lips. His keen old eyes shifted to Quebo.

Quebo traced an old scar on his thigh. "That is the obvious military move. The problem is more than military, however. It is also social, and complicated. The whites

a skilled pussy or a skilled someone-else's hand. Of course once in a while a self-masturbation orgasm will blow your mind, but usually...no comparison.

That may be why a lot of boys get married, if you analyze enough. Once experienced, the pleasure of a warm, juicy, jelly vagina beats the right hand all hollow.

But last year I received an intriguing brochure in the mail (which, as I recall hazily, I may have sent away for) from Owl Products.

This literature described a line of plastic vaginas and penises (and breasts and fingers and lips and buttocks) made of a new, secret substance, supposedly incredibly fleshlike and sensual.

Nostrils flaring, eyes aglinting, hands ashaking, I sent away for an Owl vagina, small size. (All us studs love a tight fit.)

Eventually my new wife arrived, virginal, with an accompanying tube of sterile lubricant.

How to describe her? A molded 9" length of fleshlike plastic with a molded tubular hole running through it. The outside is shaped for easy gripping. The inside of the tube has dozens and dozens of small bumps for greater friction (but not too much!). One end of the artifact is the (from a life-casting, in infinite detail) entrance, the other end is utilitarian, to allow free flow of air. There is a tiny hole in the side drilled through to the tube for further ventilation (I presume.).

Intrigued, I tried it. Amazed, I used it again. Astonished....

The orgasm, every time, is of a quality and intensity matched only by the very best fuck or suck or handjob I've ever experienced. It wrenches and quivers me and tears a whimper from me. Fantastic.

So who needs women? (See, SOCIAL PURITY is right about masturbation.)

So, this Implement of the Devil is what I've apparently been searching for all my life, and now I realize it. My seeking for The Woman was a facade, a farce. Now my hermit self is self-sufficient in another area.

I don't have to put up with "Matilda's" yattering or take her to a show or buy her dinner or argue with her about which TV or movie or this or that.... She's content to lie in her towel in her box.

(No, Mr. Postal Inspector, I haven't and will not receive any kind of payment from Owl Products for the above mention. Go open somebody else's mail.)

I should buy at least one more to seal in a plastic bag and keep in reserve. No telling how long Owl will be in business.

As Flip keep on saying: DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS.

THE MAIL Rubber stamp from Karl Edd which I ordered 8-19-72 a few days ago: SPECIAL FOURTH CLASS RATE - BOOKS (PLR 135.2). Thank you for prompt service, Karl.

Karl added the "(PLR 135.2)" on his own. It's probably an obscure postal regulation which requires the post office to do its job speedily and efficiently. It'll only get me in trouble.

A new fanzine called KYBEN #2 from Jeff Smith of 4102-301 Potter St., Baltimore, MD 21229. 35¢. Apparently unable to stand a mixture of light material with heavy material in his old, established PHANTASMICOM, Jeff has decided to let KYBEN be the vehicle for the light stuff.

The big item in this issue is Darrell Schweitzer's sweet and sour memories of his extremely Catholic childhood. Some amusing anecdotes.

12 Form A forms from the Copyright Office as I had requested. Trouble is, I'll probably declare REG a quarterly periodical with this or next issue, and go back to the B forms.

Letter from Tom Clareson who edits EXTRAPOLATION wondering do we trade again and can he get a complete back file of SFR?

Yes and No.

Letter from John W. Waxman, Director of Marketing, Ace Books, saying that: "It is with regret that your name was inadvertently removed from Ace Books complimentary review copy list. It will be reinstated with next month's releases. Meanwhile I'm enclosing a copy of Frank Herbert's DUNE for review."

I think my name was verterntly removed; after all, I had declared SFR dead and various alert publicity depts. did rightly take my name off their complimentary list ("Pull this guy's stencil! No reviews, no books!") But now I'm getting

are fanatics. They are driven by a new religion." His eyes lanced at Vik.

Vik continued flexing his right hand. "The Kun-Zar Quest. I know. I've seen the analysis. It's valid."

Ndola's eyes widened. "You admit Kun-Zar exists?"

Vik smiled. "No. I mean the whites' religion. They believe one of their ancient rulers, Kun-Zar, was immortal and did not die, but left for the south—Africa—and that they must follow him, seek him, and find him in the promised land. They believe he's here in the warm belt, waiting for them, and when they find him again he'll rule them as before, with infinite wisdom, and peace and plenty will come to their favored race."

Quebo nodded. "Yes, that's what drives them south into our lands. Kun-Zar. Not just the pressure of new migrations from the north, and not the cold. It's not that cold in the Sahara, and there is room in that vastness for all the people in the world. But they know he's not there."

Ndola said, "And, Masil, from all your learning and knowledge of ancient times...is it possible that this god, this Kun-Zar, does exist?"

"No. He's a convenient myth, a creation of the white priests and chiefs, to move their tribes, to justify their migration and their invasions and slaughters. They must think of themselves as a special people, and therefore all other peoples are lesser, and may be killed without remorse. Dehumanizing your enemy is a common technique...and necessity."

back on because I'm publishing and reviewing again.

As for DUNE, I read it years ago, recognized it as a rare work of sf, a classic and a fine one. DUNE comes to mind when one reads the following letter from David B. Williams.

"Received REG #2 yesterday, absorbed me for the whole evening. As before, too, too much to even begin commenting overall. Your continuing move into the writing of sf, Paul Walker's notes on his own baptism of fire, and your mention of "The Godfather" tingles some thoughts, though.

"I am overcome with a wearying recognition of just how much sf is still committed, nay enslaved to Pulp. Much of this prison of attitude and expectation is unconscious, a whole matrix of conceptions institutionalized by the writers, readers, critics, and (the only category with a pragmatic excuse) the publishers.

"Look at Puzo's book. It's basically just a thriller, deals directly with a very limited number of human concepts, but look how he develops it. A whole world of living people, a society within other societies, all of which have meaning, motive, history. The author is slow, deliberate, never begrudges the reader a detail, and employs a style so seemingly artless that the medium of words to paper to reader is invisible, the story is all. Flashback 50 years? Why not? Follow the development of a dozen story threads with equal detail? Without question!

"Now, "The Godfather" is admitted by Puzo to be what we would call hackwork, a potboiler, written with the proclaimed intention of making money. Yet compare it with what we get in the science fiction field. Shoot for sixty to seventy thousand words, never stray from one central "viewpoint" character who has no parents, no family, no friends, placed in a context of a single major problem in a setting that has no history, no geography, no growth or decay that is independent of the story's needs. It's like a goddamned pinball machine. The one character bangs around between a set of artificial menaces and rewards, rings the Big Number, and slips down between the flippers and vanishes. The machine starts up when you put in your dime and goes off when the programmed mechanics have run their course. No before, no after, and no real significance in between.

"I am not asking for literature. "The Godfather" is pure entertainment. But it also demonstrates that none of the idols of the sf critics—characterization, setting, motivation, plotting—nor the staples of adventure—action, sex, violence—need be sacrificed. When they are all present, pure entertainment is vastly increased. Do sf writers so fear popular and financial success that they must imitate Joyce instead of Puzo?"

DUNE is one example of a book written a la Puzo, pre-Puzo.

Your complaint about the thinness of most sf is well taken. It is, of course, easy to write the 'pinball' sf novel, and very hard to write a DUNE.

Literature is what lasts, and only time decides that.

"Since Freud's pioneer work, not much has been done with the problem of money. As you gentlemen know, Freud associat-

ed money with excrement and argued shrewdly that 'tightness' was an effort to withhold excrement, to maintain, in his immortal phrase, 'an Immaculate Anus.'"

"Freud postulated that a neurotic will find any outflow of money, excrement, time or energy a loss, a sully of the soul, or, more precisely, the anus. Obviously any such effort to withhold is doomed to failure. As Erich Fromm has so acutely observed: 'It is the tragedy inherent in the fate of man that he shit.'"

—THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart.

NONE DARE CALL IT CONSPIRACY
8-19-72

I sent Concord Press,
the publishers of NDCIC, a
copy of REG #2 and asked for

a review copy. They obliged.

The author, Gary Allen (with Larry Abraham), is a newspaperman, or was, and is converted by his researches from a Liberal to a true conservative.

The bare bones of Allen's view of world reality is that from the late 1700's there has been an alliance of the great fortunes of the world, especially those of Europe and the United States, and that these ever-growing fortunes, in the hands of the Rothschilds, the Rockefellers, the Warburgs, etc., who control interlocking banks, corporations of all kinds, have had a goal: the control of the world.

He traces the development of the almost totally secret group and its branches.

Quebo said sharply, "The Egyptians have a belief in an immortal man, a super man who lived, disappeared, lived again and again. They believe he founded their great civilization over one thousand years ago, then finally disappeared about four hundred years ago."

"You've been reading the ancient leaves."

"A myth is often based—"

Ndola shot a warning glance at Quebo. "Enough of this. Let's get some work done. I want to spend some time this afternoon with my sweetmouth girl."

Quebo grinned. Vik smiled.

Ndola smirked. "Ah, Masil, Quebo can tell you how good she is. I sent her to his tree for a night last week." He laughed delightedly. He fisted his bony, veined hand. "My wilted stem grows to a tree between those cunning lips. That dancing tongue of hers...."

Quebo nodded. "Fantastic skill. I was ten years older by morning."

Ndola laughed. "Yes, yes. She can wither any man—even old Kun-Zar!" He fox-glanced at Vik. "You'll see. I'll send her to you tonight, Masil. She'll swallow your big black pole and you'll live in the Valley of the Sun Goddess for a while."

Vik smiled widely and inclined his head. He showed his palms. "Thank you, Highest One. Tomorrow my servants will find me too weak to be of use to the Empire."

Vik was sure the little Chinese girl would be required to find out certain things about him. It would be a pleas-

He is convincing.

The most startling of his assertions is that these families through agents and organizations, financed, organized and nurtured Russian Communism. And control it now.

Why? Because these wise, super rich men, through the decades and generations, know and have known, that the road to maximum control and wealth is through the financing of wars. The way to insure a government will pay its debts is a rival or rivals, a 'balance of power' which if necessary can be used to threaten and if necessary overturn a reneging set of disobedient rulers.

Why set up a socialist empire supposedly devoted to the overthrow and redistribution of these giant fortunes? The key is that these Insiders (as Allen calls them) know that "socialism" is a facade, a shuck, a lie, behind which a tiny elite control the people and the wealth of masses of mankind.

The evidence seems pretty clear that American, British and European fortunes did virtually create the communist state in Russia.

And the evidence Allen cites in his book makes a persuasive case for his claim that these huge concentrations of financial power are trying and succeeding in the socialization (the concentration of power in one place) of the U.S.A.

His theory makes a lot of current happenings (otherwise baffling) come clear. Some are:

Nixon's complete change of character and beliefs;

The monstrous national debt and its incredible, unquestioned growth recently;

The sudden cooperation of Russia and China in trade matters with the U.S.A.;

The move of Britain into the Common Market.

Allen believes the ultimate aim of this Insiders group is to set up a world government; the total control and manipulation of all mankind.

This all sounds like the ravings of a right-wing paranoid, doesn't it? The Secret Masters of the World.

But as I say, his book is convincing and his documentation and his quotes appear to back him up.

If his theory is correct it explains a lot. And the basic idea that vast wealth, with a dynamics of its own, should strive to grow and insure its safety by control is not in itself an unreasonable proposition. That this wealth should not wish its operations generally known by its victims is understandable.

It appears that what Gore Vidal calls The Property Party in America is part of a World Property Party.

Allen writes that Nixon is the "employee" of Rockefeller and that Kissinger (a former Rockefeller employee) is the real manager of the presidency.

(And, using Allen's theory, it becomes obvious that McGovern, in the hands of the Kennedy family apparatus, after having 'conferred' with Ted Kennedy for hours, repeatedly, took Shriver as his vice presidential candidate on orders from Kennedy, and will be the Kennedy Man in the White House if he wins the election.

But the proof of a theory is how well it answers questions and can be used to predict the future financial and social events; the moves and countermoves.

A few quotes from the book are in order now.

"In order to halt inflation, Mr. Nixon has now instituted wage and price controls. Most Americans, sick of seeing their paychecks shrink in purchasing power each month, have overwhelmingly approved. But this is because most people are not aware of the real causes of inflation. And you can be sure that the Establishment's landscape painters (the media) will not explain the truth to them. The truth is that there is a difference between inflation and the wage-price spiral. When the government runs a deficit, brand new money in the amount of the deficit is put into circulation. As the new money percolates through the economy it bids up wages and prices. This is easy to understand if you think of our economy as a giant auction. Just as at any other auction, if the bidders are suddenly supplied with more money, they will use that money to bid up prices. Inflation, in reality, is an increase in the supply of money. It causes the wage-price spiral which is generally mislabeled inflation. ((And, I ask, WHY is it generally so mislabeled?)) You could not have a wage-price spiral if you did not have an increase in the money supply with which to pay it. This is not just economics, it is physics. You can't fill a quart bottle with a pint of milk. To say that the wage-price spiral causes inflation is like saying wet streets cause rain. Mr. Nixon, unlike the vast majority of the American public, is aware of the real causes of "inflation." He explained it clearly on January 2, 1970:

"The inflation we have at the start of the Seventies

ant evening.

Ndola cackled, but his laugh ended as he pressed his right hand to his abdomen. "She'll be there. Now what about those crystal slabs from the ruins of Nork? When will they arrive? They're the key to my tomb."

Vik said, "they are on barges at Boko now. They'll be here tomorrow. Calungo has arranged a triumphant ceremony. The survivors of the expedition will be honored by your presence and will present you with the twenty slabs they managed to save. Cacola will make a speech recounting his man's adventures crossing the ocean to the Ice Lands of America."

Quebo growled, "Incredible that old map was accurate, and the crystal still there."

Vik replied, "The older the map the more likely its accuracy. Ancient books in my library tell of a huge structure, five times taller than this tree, constructed almost entirely of blocks and slabs of a kind of crystalline plastic. Impervious to wear and temperature. It isn't a long branch to expect some to still be there. The survivors of the Bio-War weren't capable of—"

Ndola suddenly clutched at his belly and bent over. He gestured sharply at the slave. "Pipe!"

The slave began to swiftly prepare a pipe of hemp and chalky zizu powder. He mixed in a heavy portion of the addictive, pain-killing drug.

Ndola bent over further. He keened with intense pain.

was caused by heavy deficit spending in the Sixties. In the past decade, the Federal Government spent more than it took in—\$57 billion more. These deficits caused prices to rise 25 percent in a decade."

A thought: if Allen is right in thinking the Insiders like deficits because they own the huge banks which buy the government's notes and collect over 22 billion dollars (as of now) in yearly interest...and if inflation is caused by deficits...and if the Insiders wish to socialize the U.S.A....and if wage-price controls are a prime requisite of socialism...then THAT explains why Nixon is able to run up over \$80 billion in deficits so far (with 35-40 billion projected for this coming fiscal year) without an outcry from anyone important, and also why the deficit=inflation=wage-price spiral link is fuzzed and lied about by the media. (And by men who know better.)

Allen goes on: "After the Insiders have established the United Socialist States of America (in fact if not in name), the next step is the Great Merger of all nations of the world into a dictatorial world government. This was the main reason behind the push to bring Red China into the United Nations. If you want to control the natural resources, transportation, commerce and banking for the whole world, you must put everybody under the same roof."

I find it curious Allen didn't mention Japan in his book, one of the giant industrialized nations. Is Japan part of the plot, or is Japan already more or less owned by the Insiders, they having gone in after the war and with loans and agents built up the emerging Japanese industrial-financial power. With Secret Masters, all is possible.

I'll end this review with one last quote which may be of value in the future.

"What can we expect from the conspiracy during the next few years? Here are fourteen signposts on the road to totalitarianism compiled some years ago by historian Dr. Warren Carroll and a refugee from Yugoslavian Communism, Mike Djordjevic. The list is not in any particular order nor is the order of any particular significance as given here. But the imposition of any of these new restrictions on liberty (none of them was in effect when the list was compiled) would be a clear warning that the totalitarian state is very near; and once a significant number of them—perhaps five has been imposed, we can rationally conclude that the remainder would not be far behind and that the fight for freedom and the preservation of the Republic has been lost in this country.

"FOURTEEN SIGNPOSTS TO SLAVERY

- "1. Restrictions on taking money out of the country and on the establishment or retention of a foreign bank account by an American citizen.
- "2. Abolition of private ownership of hand guns.
- "3. Detention of individuals without judicial process.
- "4. Requirements that private financial transactions be keyed to social security numbers or other government identification so that government records of these transactions can be kept and fed into a computer.
- "5. Use of compulsory education laws to forbid attendance at presently existing private schools.
- "6. Compulsory non-military service.

- "7. Compulsory psychological treatment for non-government workers or public school children.
- "8. An official declaration that anti-Communist organizations are subversive and subsequent legal action taken to suppress them.
- "9. Laws limiting the number of people allowed to meet in a private home.
- "10. Any significant change in passport regulations to make passports more difficult to obtain or use.
- "11. Wage and price controls, especially in a non-war-time situation.
- "12. Any kind of compulsory registration with the government of where individuals work.
- "13. Any attempt to restrict freedom of movement within the United States.
- "14. Any attempt to make a new major law by executive decree (that is, actually put into effect, not merely authorized as by existing executive orders.)"

Using Allen's world-view, it might be fun to predict a sequence of events for the next few years.

A major international monetary crisis which requires restrictions on taking money out of the country and which makes illegal an American having a foreign bank account.

This monetary crisis will result in a depression. The Republicans will be disgraced, a flaming liberal will take office and like Roosevelt will rush laws through a panicky congress that will give the central government power to make people work where the government wishes, give it total wage-price control, total economic planning control.

There will be some opposition. These people will be arrested and held without due process during the "emergency." Anti-Communist organizations (labeled Anti-American) will be outlawed and suppressed. Only officially sanctioned gatherings in homes will be allowed.

The depression, world-wide, will require a close economic and political alliance with Europe and the Common Market. Through it all, Russia and China will be used as boogey men to justify these moves.

See how easy it is? Oh, I forgot—the citizens will be disarmed during the "emergency".

Allen thinks the Great Depression was engineered to bring in Roosevelt and start the movement toward socialism in this country. He feels that recessions, too, are contrived (as was, obviously, the one of 1969-70) for the benefit of the Insiders, to drive out or weaken competition, permit greater concentration of ownership and wealth and control, and to keep the people insecure and more willing to accept stability at the cost of freedom...a price many will pay willingly, eagerly, right now.

I see I have written down into Alter-Ego's space. Well, he'll have to accept it for the good of the magazine.

"Fuck you, Geis! Get off my land!"

"Don't complain, Alter, or it's into the dungeon for crimes against the publisher. You have no rights anymore."

"I'll take you to court!"

"I am the court. Guilty! Take him away."

"I'll get you for this!"

CLANG!

Now that that nuisance is out of the way... Does anyone out there know of any long, critical reviews of *NONE DARE CALL IT CONSPIRACY*? I would like to read a refutation of the book.

For those interested in getting a copy of *NDCIC*, send \$1. to Concord Press, POB 2686, Seal Beach, CA 90740.

THE MAIL Heavy mail load today. The drawer was half 8-21-72 full.

The latest F.A.P.A. mailing which contains a postcard ballot for election of new officers. No one is running for President.. so I wrote my own name in. *Vanity!*

Three subs. Nice.

The latest L.A.: FREE PRESS

The latest NEW YORK REVIEW of Books

The latest Book of the Month Club offerings: AUGUST 1914, a new novel by Alexander Solzhenitsyn; alternate is THE MUGG-ING by Morton Hunt, an IN COLD BLOOD style book.

Nothing I want, at those prices.

An sf comic book: *MUTANTS OF THE METROPOLIS* published by Los Angeles Comic Book Co., POB 25896, L.A. CA 90025. Note inside says: "Richard— Your worst fears are realized. We have published a sf comix. See you at the con. Love, Mike."

Mike who? I surmised. Then the handwriting reminded me... Michael Moore, late of the Free Press Bookstore in Westwood who sold so many copies of *SFR*.

As to the comic book; Well, it looks as if a seven-year-old drew it. And I kind of suspicion that it is aimed at that age level, so no problem.

PENSEE, May 1972, Vol. 2, Number 2, published by the Student Academic Freedom Forum of Lewis and Clark College, and the address is POB 414, Portland, OR 97207, \$2. per copy.

This is the special "Immanuel Velikovsky Reconsidered" issue: two articles by Velikovsky—"When was the Lunar Surface Last Molten?" and, of special interest, "On Decoding Hawkins' STONEHENGE DECODED."

Also a host of satellite articles detailing Velikovsky's theories, his successful predictions, the way he has been attacked and ridiculed... Oh, I didn't notice a third article by Velikovsky: "Is Venus' Heat Decreasing?"

I will read this with relish.

Four fanzines which I'll read and review later.

Letter from George Hay, chatting about his sf affairs, trials and tribulations, and a note about—"On Minerva—the Tongan Islanders have moved in troops and convicts! Incredible—or, perhaps not. ... I'm still waiting to see what develops. My view is that we should go to the International Court at the Hague, but of course this is up to M. Oliver...."

Change of address notice from George Senda and Ingrid Dummasch. (3676 Keystone Av., #5-B, L.A. CA 90034) Also asks for a copy of *REG #2* while promising to sub with #3. *Grump.* Okay, George, but if you don't, I'll tell what happened that afternoon at my Santa Monica apt. when that alcoholic nympho friend of mine came over and....

Continued on page 29 (I owe Alter a whole half page.)

He whispered, "I don't want to die!"

Vik said deliberately, "Every man must die."

Ndola swivelled narrowed, agony-filled eyes to him, and the wrinkled, bony old face showed naked hate and raw envy for an uncontrolled instant.

Then the slave handed the Emperor the pipe, lit, ready, and the old man sucked in air and smoke greedily. He held the mixture in his lungs and waved away his Private One who had hurriedly entered the room, concerned.

There were eyes and ears in these walls, too.

That did not surprise Vik. The Emperor lived with at least two loyal warriors watching him and whoever he was with, day and night, during sleep, during his times of passion, and even during his visits to the shitting room.

Every wall in the palace trees was riddled with peep holes and listening points.

Now, obviously, Quebo and Ndola strongly suspected him of being Kun-Zar. They were not fools. They had a plan, a sequence, which was in operation. They had to be sure.

Vik relished the contest, the danger.

Now all depended on timing, maneuver and acting.

Vik shifted to a more comfortable position on the sofa. The cushions wheezed. His movement caused tilts in other cushions. Ndola swayed and sucked loudly on his pipe, and said, "Leave me. Tomorrow...." His eyes closed. His face was relaxing.

Vik rose and limped to the door. Quebo showed a palm and let Vik leave first.

Later that afternoon Vik left his offices and took the long elevator to the ground. He was accompanied by his own private one, a personal secretary, and the president of his shipping company.

Vik had never liked the swaying, creaking, killed-wood cage, the dead rope vines, the pulleys or the six-man gang of white slaves who manned the clacking, ratcheted windlass. It was too easy to have an "accident."

But his role and his limp made a long walk down the ramps and stairs an incredible task for a man of his proclaimed age.

Vik watched the basketed counterweights rise toward their descending cage. He said, "Schedule the extension of our docks in Zuccra and here, out to the six fathom depth at low tide. The ice will claim enough water in the next five hundred years to make our present docks unuseable." He automatically scanned the palace grounds below as the cage sank below the giant lower branches.

The president asked, "Why are you concerned about the future of Congo Shipping Company that far ahead?"

"You know I have an heir living in India. It's for him and his son and his son.... And I'm doing my little bit to insure trade and civilisation. It's a hobby."

The pattern of people below, most of them going home, seemed normal. His prize lion, Copper Tom, waited with a groom and two of Vik's personal guards.

Vik added, "Set up an automatic company policy directive: buy all tidal lands as they become available. Buy the continental shelf if you can, now. Put in a formal buy ap-

Letter (three pages!) from Mike Glycer. Here I thought we were having a feud, were Enemies, and now this! Not one insult. Only a very few sly innuendoes. Isk. I even find part merits quoting.

"Hey, guess who I saw at last night's ((L.A.S.F.S.)) meeting. Bill Rotsler came out of the woodwork along with Paul Turner. He did a bunch of cartoons at the meeting and contributed them to Bill Warren's DE PROFUNDIS. Rotsler is into his Hose Nose period now, with recurrent traces of the Harry Warner phase and the Big Words On Paper With Figures Commenting cycle. Also, two balloons on strings, one asking the other "How would you like a blow job?" Which, I presume, is the heralding of Bill Rotsler's Fellatio interval."

ROBERT A. W. LOWMEDES Herewith the letter I mentioned
a week or so ago.

"Don't entirely go along with you on a deterministic view of life, but having a lot of respect both for astrology and numerology (and I'm studying and working in the latter in spare time—which also occupies a lot of typing at home time; I'm serving my apprenticeship in doing long "numeroscopes" of some friends I know rather well; just finished a 30-pager and will start another next week; when I'm satisfied I have the "feeling" of numbers, I'll try working on people I do not know at all; as in astrology, any fool who can calculate can draw up a chart—connecting the elements up into a reasonably valid interpretation is another matter, and it will be some time, a few years I'd say, before I can be sure whether I really have the required talent), as well as heredity, I do agree that a lot more is "determined" than most people realize. However, I'm equally convinced that we are all "free" within the areas that can be called "fixed."

"For example, not only the early environment, but also my horoscope and numeroscope show that I am not geared for easy financial success. Necessary elements just aren't there. Early upbringing aggravated the condition to a certain extent, but did not create it in the first place. It's a case, and it looks as if you are in the same sort of boat, of coming to terms with my imperfections and limitations and seeing what can be done within them, instead of sobbing about what I haven't got and how awful it is. And getting to realize what some of the secondary benefits are, too.

"Anyway, it's just the capacity for a certain type of success that is restricted for me (and, for you, too).

"As an editor, writer (mostly non-fiction) and one-time amateur actor, I've been successful in bringing entertainment to many thousands of people, given them something to laugh about and forget their worries for the moment; sometimes I've given them something more. Both my stars and my numbers show that I'm geared to this sort of service; I'm attracted to people whom I may be able to help in some way, and I still get comment from those who say my metaphysical editorials in EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN helped them. So no matter how it comes out in materialistic terms, my stay in this incarnation has not been a total failure.

"Just got a computer horoscope from Time Research. Had I read it 20 years ago, I'd have laughed at it. Today, I don't. Among other things it says that I'm almost "providentially"

guarded against total financial cataclysm. When money is desperately needed, I'll find it—either find a way to earn it, or someone will loan it to me or otherwise provide. Looking back, I can see it certainly has worked out that way. On Friday, February 5th, 1971, I got a phone call from M. Harvey Gernsback, asking if I were interested in taking a job as Associate Editor on SEXOLOGY magazine. (15 minutes later, Sam Moskowitz called to tell me that he'd suggested to MHG that he call me.) At that moment, I expected my magazines to continue; situation was such that I couldn't talk to MHG on the phone in the office—no privacy, as I was using someone else's phone; mine hadn't been put in yet—and said I'd like to discuss it with him at home. When he phoned the next evening, I explained that I was interested, but preferred to stay where I was—though I realized that my magazines might go under at any time.

"The following Tuesday noon, I was informed that the ship had sunk and I was released as of that moment. I should have been told Friday noon, which was when the President of Countrywide got the news that Acme was dropping its titles but he hadn't gotten around to telling me. Naturally, I called MHG back and said, "The ship sank. If you'd still like to see me, I'm interested."

"And looking back on it, I see that in one way or another this sort of thing has been happening all my career. I've had either very little or no luck with jobs (and females) I chased after (or stories I wrote on speculation); work and sex have just come to me. (That is, sometimes a sudden in-

plication and I'll see if Ndola will trade worthless sea-covered land for pure gold. One hundred milled emperors per mile."

The secretary made notes on his pad of white leaves.

Vik's private one was servant, tree-keeper and friend. He said, "Borus told me you'll have a lovely one for company tonight. Nimbus soup, water buffalo steak and Iona seeds for dinner?"

Vik nodded. Private. You serve."

The cage bumped down onto its marble platform. A slave opened the door for them.

Three minutes later Vik was astride his huge cat. The golden-maned beast ambled through the crowded lanes and streets of the haphazard ring of shops, huts, buildings of all kinds, tents and cart merchants that encircled the walled palace trees' grounds.

Vik was in the center of his small entourage. He was Masil, First Minister, a magnificent black giant of a man in these times of smaller and smaller men as each generation passed.

He enjoyed the awe and respect in most of the faces of the people. He enjoyed the rumors that he was the secret Emperor, that Ndola was only a front.

Vik saw the attack begin—a sudden clot of men, a braying, maddened donkey, goaded by thorn whips, was sent plunging with his loaded fruit cart into the diamond formation of Vik's company.

Vik was the center. The target.

The lead guard's lion whirled, nearly throwing its ex-

spiration, but more often someone like Don Wolheim or Sam Moskowitz pulling a string.)

"Once the opportunity came and I accepted it, then it was hard work to hold onto it; that's the part I've had to contribute myself. Whether it can be explained by your phrase 'we limited types ... arrange events, if we are intelligent, sub-consciously.' remains moot. I would not deny that, but do not feel it tells the whole story."

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-22-72

I've been draggy all day. I never get done all I plan and schedule. Especially I don't get the

reading done I hope for. It's a rare sf book that really grabs me the way THE GODFATHER did or NONE DARE CALL IT CONSPIRACY...or the new Silverberg novel in GALAXY. Which reminds me—I see the Sept. GALAXY on the stands around here, but my sub copy hasn't arrived.

"Hey, Geis, I want to change something in my story on the first and—"

"No! No extensive changes. A word or two only."

"But, damn it—I had Kunzar position that gun holster on the inside of his left thigh, and then had him run a couple of miles. Now I suddenly realize..."

"He'd have to run bowlegged, huh?"

"Yeah. And in the opening, when his finger's teasing the Empress's anus—and he gets that sharp pain in his fingertip ..."

"Makes for sniggers or a thought in the reader's mind that maybe Punia has teeth in a strange place, don't it? Never mind, Alter. I'll make the proper changes when I type up the final version for our agent."

"You're all heart, Geis. Can I have a bite?"

"No, you'd fang into a worm."

"You admit you're rotten to the core!"

"Absolutely, Alter. From up front I admit it. To prove it, when your story is finished I'm going to change the title to something more commercial and put my name on it."

"!!! WHY YOU DIRTY OWL LOVING HALLUCINATING—"

"That's your trouble, Alter. Your curses are so unimaginative. Good night."

Now upstairs to get a glass of ice cubes and cheap sweet grape wine! Ummmm!

THE MAIL
8-23-72

I'm obviously not going to be able to take note here of every item that comes in. I'll have to become an editor again. Disgusting.

HAW! Simon & Shuster spent \$1.06 (Registered Mail) to return to me a copy of REG #2 I'd sent to their "Science Fiction Editor". They thought the envelope contained a manuscript. Attached the the unopened REG envelope was a printed slip saying they were no longer reading unsolicited mss. Only those sent by an agent.

Your loss, Simon & Shuster Science fiction Editor, whoever you are.

The porno film I sent for a month ago. I have to wait till

I'm alone in the house before putting in onto the Sears editor I have, for viewing.

J.H. Reid, the magazine distributor in Australia, wants 25 copies of SFR #43. May order more.

I've got to mention COR SERPENTIS #3, a fanzine published by the Monash Univ. S-F Association. Available from Carey Handfield, 2 Banoon Road, South Eltham, 3095 Australia. 50¢.

Why do I got to mention it? Because I want to stomp Andrew Edquist and his article, "Science Fiction Should Serve the People."

I agree, of course, but not in the same Serve. Edquist wants sf to be a propaganda tool or vehicle for ideological ends...warning us of dangers inherent in the cultural and technological revolution we are all caught up in. It all comes to fighting the Establishment.

He lays it out clearly: "I feel I have shown that science fiction is inherently ideological and propagandistic, and that it has inherited the morals and values of the military-industrial complexes of Russia and the U.S.A., which are militaristic and expansionist, and in a word, fascist. I feel that such a combination makes SF, in its present form, at best totally worthless, and at worst positively harmful. At the moment SF can only move out of its ghetto of loyal fans into a more sinister form, the preferred literature of cultists such as the Manson Clan, and there are signs that this is already happening in America. What is needed is a

pert rider. The secretary's small female mount hissed and slashed reflexively at the terrified animal. A donkey never willingly got within ten feet of a lion.

The ass screamed and stumbled, his shaggy brown coat suddenly ripped, running blood. The cart's left wheel came off its axle and the fragrant load of violet verzi grapes was spilled.

Someone threw Mongo powder into the face of the rear guard's lion. The cat recoiled and plunged away.

A quick, muscular young man in a tattered jungle tunic raised a dart gun and aimed at Vik from ten feet. He was surrounded by a wedge of young, trained men dressed as beggars and lower class laborers.

Vik had only a few seconds in which to try to escape the attack. The wedge of men was surging closer.

He was about to throw himself off to his lion's left side and use Copper Tom and his private one's lion as shields, when his private one's mount, a dun-colored female, reacting to a stink of fear and excitement and the press of people, closed the space and bumped hard against Vik's left leg. The private one was as wild-eyed as his cat.

Vik was unable to regain his balance and coordination for a precious instant. The knot of attackers was within five feet of him. The secretary had fallen from his saddle; the small mount had crouched and coiled. The men leaped over it.

Vik wore a ceremonial dagger. But he knew his best course was to get clear.

complete revamping of science fiction attitudes and assumptions from the bottom up, for it would be a great loss to literature as a whole if the potentialities of the future were regarded as the stamping grounds of fascistic and satanic cults."

So if idealistic Andy had his way SF would change masters, that's all. No doubt its present structure would be demolished and the consumer who decides what sf books sell well, what trends are followed, will be presented with "approved viewpoint" sf and the editors will have a long list of taboos.

In order to serve the people, SF would have to be regimented. Great literature always results from such conditions, of course.

He's an idiot. He's a statist, a would-be dictator, itching to get control and change things by force (in the name of the people, for the ultimate benefit of the people and of the planet, of course. In the meantime, unfortunately, everybody must obey!).

THE MAIL I'm trading with the Coulsons again, and I
8-24-72 can just imagine the review Buck will give REG.
 YANDRO seems to be improving. At least #215 is
 very good. Don Bily's "The Care and Disciplining of Hotel
 Managers" was well done and amusing. The letter column is
 rich and varied and absorbing.

Is something from Buck's editorial I want to put to you: "Fredric Wertham sends a copy of his article in AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOTHERAPY, arguing with the Surgeon General on the effects on violence on tv. (He points out similarities to the defense of the comic books - totally ignoring the fact that the much-publicized "clean-up" of comics did not do one single thing to avert violence in this country and not one single crime was averted by putting EC out of business. The results are that we now have more violence than ever and the censors are looking for another scapegoat. Presumably, when tv is "cleaned up" - as it certainly will be in the next few years - and violence continues to mount, they'll go looking for something else to blame. We could just end up with a nation in which every possible view of violence is prohibited and in which it is totally unsafe to live.)"

A letter from Pearl. She snarls: "I have a lot to say about REG, Volume 2---most of it bad and a great deal of it unreasonably nasty. However, since I've been on the attached diet ((which would make Gregg Calkins blench... (Umm, Pearl, Gregg is Official Editor of F.A.P.A. and perpetually overweight and perpetually dieting))) for over six weeks (and it looks better on paper than it actually is), I've developed a waspish disposition and react to just about everything in a shrill and unladylike manner. So, taking that into consideration, I'll limit my comments at present and write later when my doctor either gives me more food or mood heighteners.

"Volume 1 had charm. It was, to me, like an urban Walden Pond---of value because of the scrupulous attention to the details of your everyday life: doing your hand washing in a bucket, chuckling over the plastic line rig you'd set up in

your bathroom, scrubbing down your couch cover to get the fart and sweat smell out. It was like a peek into your very existence.

"Volume 2 comes through (despite the frantic dealings with C---) like a peek into your mailbox. Possibly I'm the only one out here who doesn't subscribe to and get numerous fanzines, personalzines and newsletters and gulp down every sci-fi paperback published but most of it was too esoteric for me to follow. Reminds me of the time you gave me two issues of SFR. George and I spent a mystified evening going through them and looking for clues as to what they were all about. ((Bullshit. You exaggerate. SFR and REG are/were to some degree esoteric and in-groupish, but not to the point where a sharp gal like you could be 'mystified.'))

"So I would have been disappointed except for the thing with C---.....LURID! I'm curious now as to what sort of reading she does. Certainly she has derived her life style from a pastiche of old confession mags, THE STORY OF O, and the kind of sexy novels that used to be available only in drug-store lending libraries.

((She reads a lot of sf; has read Heinlein's STRANGER five or six times. And...uh...she's read a lot of my porno novels.))

"Actually, except for the fact that her husband's bi-sexual, she has an ordinary marriage---probably one better than most since she's been faking orgasm for 4 years and lots of women married to heteros don't even get the opportunity to fake it. And, aside from the fact that her lover is sexually

He bellowed, "TCM! LEAP!"

But the great cat took too long to crouch for a spring that would take it over the braying, kicking donkey and the lead guard's lion.

The guard was off and lunging with his precious antique sword to defend Vik---but it would be too late.

At the last split second Vik lashed out with his razor-sharp dagger and laid open a man's face---a grotesque slab of raw cheek flapped away from the jaw bone---but simulataneously the man with the dart gun fired at point blank range.

Pain exploded in Vik's right thigh. The dart was half buried a handwidth below his hip joint. The red and green feathered end protruded from his toga, pinning the heavy purple brocade to his thigh. The material soaked up the welling blood.

Then Copper Tom's great bunched muscles released and Vik was carried upward with that tremendous surge of animal power...soaring for an incredible second...barely able to shift his weight properly to stay in the saddle against the force of inertia.

During that astonishing bound, Vik automatically "disconnected" the input from his damaged thigh nerves. And he realized the trigger man hadn't intended to kill. There had been time and freedom for a stomach or heart shot, even for a less sure head shot.

But the gun had been fired directly at his thigh. There had been no hesitation, no shifting of aim. The dart had travelled less than a foot.

limited, he's a rather ordinary extra-marital affair in that he's totally selfish, unwilling to accept her into his life and only wants sexual goodies, no involvement.

"And her motherhood—run of the mill in that the child was brought forth so that she could act out another role and whenever the child becomes inconvenient, she rationalizes that she won't be a good enough parent so he'll be better off without her.

"Ordinary, ordinary, except for the inscription on the ring. God, that was grotesque! Right out of the detective magazines...tiny people playing out their gargantuan fantasies. But of course, that's what love is: finding someone you can run the gamut with without feeling foolish or self-conscious about it. Still, Dick, you should have realized that unless this sort of thing is exquisitely handled, it comes out looking like ludicrous garbage despite your tears and the intensity of your feelings.

"Reading over what I've written, I'm starting to wonder just what it is I'm holding in reserve.

"Ah yes, I remember now. To be covered in a future letter—

"MALE EGO REARS ITS UGLY HEAD

"REVERSE SNOBBISM OR PRIDE IN THE MINISCULE INCOME

"Some other things I can't think of now because Cyn has my marked copy of REG #2. She's drawn to eccentric things and once I read her the section about Karl Edd and his underground composting, there was no way I could have turned her off."

Comments: You can't have it both ways, Pearl—you advise me in a postscript not to go out and have an affair in order to keep my readers interested, and yet you complain about the rest of my life—mail and reading.

If I were concerned about what my diary reads like, especially as my personal relationships and emotional states are recorded, I wouldn't write them down in the first place. Maybe it is ludicrous garbage and grotesque. So what? I'm trying to put down what I am now. The purpose is not style or grace or projecting a pretty image.

I didn't know ego had gender.

I'm not proud of at the moment living off my interest. I sincerely hope soon to be living off this magazine and to be saving whatever money I make from my stories in the regular publishing world. I could handle up to \$25,000 per year without too much trouble. Beyond that I am afraid I'd be severely tempted to alter my life style.

From Houston Craighead a long letter which includes these comments, which I have chosen to allow me to make some things perfectly clear....

"Many thanks for the porno book you sent. I have read it; my wife has read it; 4 of our friends have read it. We all agree that you are good at porn. Other parts of the book (the four or five pages not directly pornographic) are very bad. (Whimper)) But, then, you weren't really trying there...knowing it is porn that sells, not the literary qualities. But if you do intend to write sf (your letter said you have 3 good ideas for sf stories right now) you'll have to push harder on readability—which you know and, presumably that is why you are shying away from really trying your hand (you're going

to let Alter do one in REG. That way you can clown around and if it's no good, so what. C'mon: have a really serious shot at it yourself.)"

((Alter is fun, an entertainment for me and the readers, and a device for change of pace, etc. But the real author of "Tomb..." is me, of course, and fooling around I'm not. I'm trying to find my natural sf style. Apparent to me now is that I'm writing, not "true" sf, but a variety of science fantasy...you might even label it id fantasy. Whether this stuff is commercially acceptable is something else. I'd be willing to let a good editor (someone I respect—and I respect them all at the moment) tone down a story or novel if he wished, assuming he wanted to publish it in the first place.

((I've also found that the procedure of first draft, first editing, stenciling for REG appearance (in which another editing and some rewrite is done) and a subsequent third editing and possible rewrite of small portions during final typing for "pro" submission by Virginia Kidd is extremely beneficial: the things I miss and fuck-up the first time amaze me. Sf (or id fantasy) is vastly more demanding than porno. I enjoy it more, though. Do let me know what you think of "Tomb..."))

"Page 4: You do seem awfully taken with determinism. You even say 'B.F. Skinner, sir, I'm yours!' You are probably aware of some of the major arguments against that view—but maybe you're not. Otherwise you wouldn't be so easily

Copper Tom landed, snarling, in the midst of scrambling, howling, terrified people. Vik bent low into the clean, abundant yellow mane. "Home!"

The mighty lion uncoiled again and bounded through a narrow gap in the dense, hysterical crowd.

Vik rode him superbly. The exhilaration of being astride a huge beast moving at top speed is almost unequalled.

Vik felt the grating of the dart's sawtooth ironwood point against his thigh bone during the ride. Blood flowed down his leg in spite of his constriction of the main vessels.

Copper Tom loped toward the home tree by a direct route, the one usually traveled to and from the palace compound. Vik steered him off into side paths, to avoid possible secondary ambushes. The giant trees loomed in sunset splendor.

He avoided any approach to the gate of his tree ground. He neared the tree from the opposite side and urged Copper Tom to a full speed run at the fifteen foot high poisonous thorn hedge that surrounded his land.

"Up, Tom!"

The great cat soared in a fantastic leap. No other lion of those bred and gene-altered for size and strength and obedience could have done it with Vik on his back.

The green-tipped rows of thorn spikes stirred as Copper Tom cleared their highest tips by a foot.

The landing was silken as the cat's incredible muscles and bones absorbed the shock and transferred speed and mass into continuing forward motion on the deep, tightly woven

convinced. Some of them are:

"(1) If determinism is true, ethics makes no sense at all. Ought implies can. To say someone ought to do something entails that they can do it. But if determinism is true then a person can only do what his heredity and environment have programmed him to do. So, the whole notion of "responsibility," "obligation," etc. are nonsense. But we (some) are immediately and directly aware of obligation, responsibility. Hence, determinism must be false."

((The concepts of responsibility and obligation are rules set into the mind by parts of the environment—parents, school, etc; in short, conditioning. Social conditioning or training for hereditary and other environmental reasons does not always "take" as well for some. To argue that conscience (imposed rules and regulations that drastically narrow behavior and thought patterns) proves free will and disproves determinism is absurd.))

"(2) We are immediately and directly aware of ourselves as being free. I know I am free much as I know I'm in pain. This immediate and direct awareness (fancy terminology here is: phenomenological datum) is more certain than any other kind of evidence that could possibly be offered to the contrary. Hence, we are free."

((In other words your ego has made up its mind and doesn't want to be bothered with facts.))

"(3) If determinism is true, the notions of "true" and "false" make no sense. Hence if determinism is true, it isn't. To wit: A judgement that a statement is either true or false presupposes that one has stepped back and taken an objective look at the evidence pro and con. However, if determinism is true, one can never do this. One can only utter the noises ("true" or "false") that he is "programmed" to utter. Hence, on the view of determinism the notions of truth and falsity make no sense. On that view human beings don't really make judgements, they just make sounds. To say something is "true" is no different from belching."

((You are misstating the Determinist position (certainly mine) and arguing with metaphysical and ontological word games. Behaviorists and Determinists deal in the objective, the physical reality to prove their theories. Free-willists seem to resort to unprovable, unverifiable "proofs" and wishful thinking. They retreat into the wonderful land of Abstract Reasoning where they can't be cornered.

((Obviously, areas of judgement (interpretation of datum) are subject to "programming", but you exaggerate to absurdity what you conceive as determinism (making it absolute in every respect) in order to dismiss it and defeat it.

((Behaviorists do not claim man is a robot who sees and hears and smells and tastes according to a pre-recorded tape. They deal in choice: what causes a specific individual to make a specific choice.

((Basically, I think, free-willists are mind-over-matter adherents, believing in pure thought, a "mind" divorced from influence by brain, blood, glands, pain, pleasure, the whole of the physical world.))

"(4) Determinism makes the fundamental error of trying to

understand the inspector (us) completely in terms of the same categories we use to interpret the inspectee (the external world). Determinism assumes it is possible for the subject to cease being the subject. It assumes the subject can become object for itself and interpret itself as it does things outside itself. But this is not possible. ((So you assume.)) The subject (us, the self, ego, me, etc.) is always subject, never object. ((By definition, an abstract generalization.)) The subject can never examine itself, only its behavior; but a subject's behavior is never identical with the subject."

((By subject you again mean, I assume, mind or consciousness? Mind or self cannot examine itself, only what mind or self does. Fine. By their actions ye shall know them.

((You assert a kind of inherent (sorry about that) inability of the mind divorced of body&outside world to look upon itself. Mysticism))

"That is brief, quick — and there are replies to these objections which can be made. But this is enough to indicate that determinism is hardly an open and shut case — I think, anyway."

((I should confess here that I haven't read any of B. F. Skinner's books. I was "winging it" up there. I did take a couple years of Psychology in college, and have read a lot.

((My position is that we are "programmed" by our DNA as to talent, physical makeup, approximate length of life, basic character, and perhaps basic personality. The various forces of environment—parents, social/cultural conditioning (and chance—X variable) do alter and influence the on-going VERY complicated body/mind. I think that if you knew enough about a specific individual in every area of his existence, you could predict accurately his every decision, every move.

((But such knowledge is impossible now and probably always will be.))

grass.

Three gardeners working in a new, oval bed of plump Cabon ferns looked around in astonishment. Vik motioned them back to work. He rode to the gloom of the pens and dismounted carefully.

Dambo, the over-eager assistant to his private one, came running down a ramp, his light blue cotton servant tunic flapping, his gold authority bracelet gleaming as he passed through a thin shaft of orange sunlight.

Vik impatiently cut off the youth's shocked words. "Send a messenger for Doctor Choma. Get the elevator down."

Ialeg, a big, muscular black man in rich dark blue leathers and gold command necklace sprinted around the corner of the pens. He was followed by a ten man troop of estate guards—five swords, five bowmen. His steady eyes flicked at the pinned, bloodstained toga, the dart still solidly embedded in Vik's leg; the small trickle of red that was dampening the hardpacked earth next to Vik's wet, goldcloth sandal.

Ialeg snapped, "The big yellow cushioned chair!" He pointed to three of the guards and waved them toward the

"Page 31: I must confess I do not know what TANSTAAFL means. Could you translate?"

((From Heinlein's THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS: There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch. A basic natural law; you don't get something for nothing. It applies to human affairs as well as physics.))

"Page 33: You think abortion is murder. Hmm. I suppose we could define murder as the intentional destruction of the life of an innocent person. Abortion, then, is certainly intentional. It certainly destroys. What it destroys is certainly a life, and an innocent life. But is it the life of an innocent person? The fetus is not self-aware, has no concept of other persons, has no concept of past or future, in fact is a parasite on the mother. Ah, but say you (perhaps) it has a soul. That, of course, is hard to make out. What is a soul? Even if there is such a thing and we can make some sense out of it, how do we know the fetus has/is one? But I doubt you would say that anyway — right, Dick? ((Right.)) So, then how can you say the fetus is a person? You say it is a potential person? But, then so is the egg before it is fertilized and the sperm before it fertilizes. You aren't against the Pill, rubbers, foam, etc!!! Are you? Of course this whole thing depends on how one defines "person". But until one does have such a definition it would seem ludicrous to make judgements about abortion's being murder. This is a tough question for me, too. You pass it off so easily here, though."

((What is destroyed is a human life. How do you know a fetus has no self-awareness in a murky sort of way? How do you know the fetus isn't aware of its mother? How do you know it can't, in fact, hear mumbles of voices and *groan* TV? How do you know it doesn't have a dim awareness of past?

((Isn't there some evidence of a subconscious pre-natal memory in all of us? Doesn't the trauma of birth have great subconscious impact on us?

((Do you subscribe to the discredited belief that an infant is a blank slate, a ball of soft, virgin clay that can be molded any which way? Is a fetus one minute before being born less a "person" than a moment later when it is out of the womb?

((If an unborn (by one minute) fetus is granted humanity, at what point does it lose humanity? 8 months? Seven? Five? When it graduates from the embryo state at about 3 months?

((My belief is that a human life begins at conception. It develops and matures in gradual stages, one of which is birth, another is learning to walk, another to talk.

((Mothers will tell you that babies in the womb are different—some fetuses are quiet, others angry, some are particular about how the mother lies.... Fetuses have distinct personalities in the womb.

((Isn't the safe abortion period an arbitrary medical decision founded on the woman's safety and surgical risk factors? It has nothing to do with the question of the embryo's "human-ness" or status as a "person."

((Abortion is killing. Why not admit it? It may be justified, convenient, the lesser of two evils, even legal. But it is still killing a human life. Rationalization and sophit-

ry will not eradicate that simple human truth. In this area I have to give the Catholics their due. But that much only. I am FOR contraception.))

"Page 38: I quote you: '((There has to be a core of underlying, simple, basic fundamental truths in all human activity or we are in over our heads and our world and our affairs are out of control and beyond our understanding.))'. Oh. Well, perhaps so — and that is what metaphysicians are constantly trying to come up with. But you are so certain. (By the way, do you think determinism is one of those fundamental truths?)"

Yes, I think we are steered, controled, "programmed" and walk only certain streets in the city of possibilities, as explained in my last few comments.

Another basic truth I believe is TANG (There Ain't No God). Another: Superior Force Always Wins; a truism? Think of talent, skill, willpower, money, knowledge, health, tools, etc. as forces. Umm...revise that to Applied Superior Force Always Wins. ASFAW. Another: There Ain't No Retribution; And very very little justice in this world. Some Crime Does Pay. And above all: The Meek Will NEVER Inherit The Earth.

Two hardcover books received recently: PERCHANCE TO DREAM from Doubleday—12 stories edited by Damon Knight. Well... 12 stories chosen by Damon, even though 'edited by' is on the jacket cover. authors: Thurber, Graham Greene, Kuttner, Bierce, Wells, Leiber, etc. Nice to see our men mixing with

master gardener's hut. The guards moved!

Vik said, "Draw forty men from the Kwa orchards. I want them here by midnight." He didn't have to tell Taleg to double the hedge security and send out undercover scouts. But if the Emperor was ready to move against his first Minister a company of crack private guards couldn't hold against Quebo's massed regulars.

Vik explained to Taleg: "We were ambushed in the market ring. Send some men to see about Uvira, Mwanza and Isiro and the two guards. I want Calundo here. I want Luishia and Gombe here at morning sun."

Dambo had run off. Vik saw a lean, tan messenger on a fast Walla lion riding toward the arched, solid killed-wood gate. A guard opened a smaller door within the gate and the rider and his mound squeezed out. Other guards stood ready at the gate's arrow and spear ports.

The large elevator creaked down from Vik's private cluster. The guards brought the master gardener's pride and only real luxury—his massive, deeply cushioned chair.

Vik sank into it. His thigh was aching.

He was carried into the elevator. Sahara slaves loaded more stones into the counterweight basket and pulled him up. As he was carried into his bedroom he caught glimpses of Mwanza, his private one, and the others straggling in through the gate.

No one else had been hurt. Ndola and Quebo did not want Masil excessively angered or have it appear that an organized attack had been mounted against Masil and his people. They

the greats. (\$5.95)

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc have reprinted EARTHLIGHT by Arthur C. Clarke, a novel first published in 1955. The jacket identifies him as 'the co-author of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY.' Nothing like left-handed fame to frost the ego...on the way to the bank.

I got ripped off on that porno film I sent away for. CORE sent me a simple strip film by two pretty women, not the hard-core lez film I ordered. I thought \$10. was cheap. So I sent it back with an angry letter threatening letters to the L.A. District Attorney, Art Kunkin of the Freep in which the CORE ads appear, and even the Post Office. I despise rip-offs in any case, and especially in the sex field. We'll see if I get no satisfaction.

A letter from Don Thompson that is so ego-boosting and flattering in praise of #2 that even I cannot publish it. He is worried that others will imitate REG with soul-baring (and genital-baring) diary fanzines. He also says that "as you said, your style of writing is such that it doesn't call attention to itself." I meant my fiction style, not necessarily my diary-journal style. This casual conversation style is partly skill and partly natural; it flows well and I'm muchly at ease in it.

Dean Grennell has a highly personal, almost cute style, that can be seen in this quote from a 22 Aug. letter: "Hey, it is kindly of you to deluge me with spates of REG (excuse, please, the expression) #2, inasmuch as you have sent one to the ancient and obsolescent PO Box 4007 at Covina and I got another in the Fapa mailing yesterday. Not to fret, the spare will not go to waste. One of the girls in the art department hankers fiercely for fanzines which she passes along to her prof at UC/Fullerton who is making a study of them. So I will give her my extra copy; ho-kay?"

Dean's new address: POB DG, Dana Point, CA 92629.

I wish I could get a box named after me.

SF NOTES
8-28-72 Clearly I am an impatient, picky-picky reader of sf. If a book doesn't grab me or entice me with a sophisticated style, I toss it aside with a sneer.

I do not say this is right and proper reviewer behavior. It is Geis-reaction behavior. I want to be intrigued or involved from the first few pages. If the writer can't or won't do that to me or for me, I don't stick around very long.

So it was with Greg Benford's JUPITER PROJECT in the Sept. AMAZING. It opens with two men playing zero-grav squash in a spaceship orbiting Jupiter. They shower and go to a lounge where they chat with other crewmembers. The central character goes on watch. Desultory work and conversation follows. He goes to a meal, he eats.... Chapter after chapter has dragged by and all is an unexciting recounting of his daily life. No danger, no tension, no suspense, no plot.

And Greg does not have the magic or the skill to make that kind of writing intrinsically interesting. This stuff is bland, as if he was writing a juvenile.

There is nothing else in the issue worth talking about, as far as the fiction goes. Ted White's editorials are always

interesting and honest. He levels with the readers. John Berry has given up reviewing fanzines for AMAZING, pleading boredom. I understand from LOCUS (I think) that Ed Smith will take over the column. Ed Smith? Anybody have his address? It'll probably be in the next AMAZING.

I read THE GOLD AT THE STARBOW'S END, the latest Fred Pohl story collection (Ballantine 02775, \$1.25), and have to marvel at his command of fiction technique and style. He is one of the few compleat professional writers in sf. I especially enjoyed "Sad Solarian Screenwriter Sam", and his "old-fashioned" heavily plotted "The Merchants of Venus." "Shaffery Among the Immortals" is included in this volume and is a pure gem.

I reviewed BEYOND APOLLO by Barry Malzberg (Random House, \$5.95) for Tom Collins' IS magazine, in which I am doing a column entitled "The Alien Critic."

I won't duplicate or condense what my thoughts are on the novel except to say I consider it a Fuck-The-Reader book.

MOVIE REVIEW
8-29-72

Several days ago I said to hell with the routine and peddled my ass overtown to see a movie. I had a prime choice between THE NEW CENTURIANS and Woody Allen's adaptation-to-film of EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SEX--BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK.

Since I admire George C. Scott and Stacy Keach, I locked my bike next to THE NEW CENTURIANS.

It's a formula-vignette pro-cop film, in which the obliga-

did not want the people to suspect the truth. Masil was very popular.

The attack had the effect of confining Vik to his tree for a while. An effective, ingenious house arrest.

Vik was lying naked on his soft, living bed, a thick towel under his leg, the dart still in his thigh, when Mwanza entered the room. "Singida is here."

The Emperor's personal physician!

Vik thought a few seconds, then contained a wry smile. "Naturally. Bring him in and stay to observe. If Doctor Choma arrives while Singida is here, have him sent up."

Vik knew the purpose of Singida's very prompt visit had to be to examine him as closely as possible, to confirm or rule out the possibility that Masil was immortal...was Kun-Zar.

The attack in the market ring also served this second purpose. No...more likely this was the primary reason.

Vik mentally saluted Ndola. The old man was still as cunning and shrewd as ever. And now, dying, a totally desperate man.

After a few minutes, Singida entered followed by his slave who carried his heavy leather medicine bags. Singida was a deceptive, placid, fat man whose breasts jiggled with his belly beneath his gold-fringed orange robe. He wore a diamond ear pendant signifying his royal appointment.

His slave was a middle-aged white man with a neatly trimmed beard. Vik spotted the small endless chain design tattoo on the slave's cheek. It was the symbol of the whites' Kun-

tory gamut is run: Bad Cop, Good Cop, Grizzled Veteran, Rookie Mistakes, Killing Innocent Man, Cop Killed, Cop Shot, Drugs, Prostitutes, Family Troubles...it's all trotted out. About two-and-a-half hours of cliché with a thick coating of "Realism" (people swear a lot and there's some nudity and raw life shown). But essentially it's TV's ADAM 12 with balls.

Scott and Keach dominate the picture, but Keach acts as if he was on downers most of the time. He plays a rookie who discovers he'd rather be a policeman than go on to be a lawyer. This undermines his marriage (and his getting gut-shot and nearly dying helps turn off his wife), and when his wife leaves him he turns to drink, meets a pretty black nurse who digs him and is reformed by love for her. (W-h-a-t? A cop living in sin with a nigger girl—and loving her, and being happy? Can't allow that! And it is not allowed—he gets gut-shot again and dies at the end of the picture. Bad cop! B-a-a-a-d!)

Memorable scenes: Scott putting his revolver barrel into his mouth and pulling the trigger—BOOM! He had retired and lost his image, status and reason for living.

A young rookie cop picking up a length of pipe and beating a car to death in rage because he lost a suspect he had chased. (The car belonged to one of the suspects who had been in it when stopped by the cops.)

Keach hanging on for dear life as a lovely blonde whore tries to brush him off the side of her car after he had found a few joints in her purse. Zooming down crowded streets, scraping him against fences, cans, poles... (Served him right—he was being a drunken shit when he stopped her in the first place.)

Scott and Keach having a bar conversation off duty while in the background a topless dancer with a fantastic face and body does bumps and grinds.

THE NEW CENTURIANS is a pretty good picture and worth seeing, but not as a first-run single feature at \$2.50 on up per seat.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Lord, how the days whip past
8-30-72 and how little I manage to do!

I tried out the 466 today and found that yes I had fixed the problem of the ever-rising impression roller, and the counter worked perfectly as I ran off 770 copies of the first page of this issue...BUT the stencil creep and creasing continues and I have absolutely no idea what is or could be causing it. So I just called for a service call. The man will be here tomorrow. I shall watch closely and learn.

"Tomb..." is developing interestingly within its plot cage; growing in length and detail. I tend to write conventional "nice" or restricted sf, and it takes reminding and will-power to put in those gory and sexy and honest details and descriptions that I like to read in fiction.

That's the key to good writing (or one key, anyway): write what you like to read...or what you'd like to read if you could find it.

THE RECENT MAIL LOCUS #120, the sf newszine from 3400
8-30-72 Ulloa St., San Francisco, CA 94116. 12 is-

sues for \$3.00. I learn that Avon has hired Charles Platt to be part-time sf editor. I am happy for him. Living in N. Y. City has its advantages. I hope he can come up with some good books for them.

Two books from Ballantine who have gotten my new address onto a stencil! The post office will bless them. Now if only all you other publicity depts. would do the same.

GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF ADULT FANTASY edited by Lin Carter. (02789, \$1.25). "Wall of Serpents" by Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp; "The Kingdom of the Dwarfs" by Anatole France; "The Maker of Moons" by Robert W. Chambers; and "The Hollow Land" by William Morris.

LIFEBOAT by James White (02797, \$1.25) starts out as a routine young, first flight medical officer becomes hero as routine spaceflight (a tourist run to Ganymede) meets disaster story. I may skim the rest, I may not.

At last, the September GALAXY with Silverberg's conclusion of his novel DYING INSIDE. I'm faunching to read it and here I sit doing my duty.

A letter from David B. Williams which brings the sparkle of imminent combat to my eyes and causes my blood to perk. David ejaculates: "Aha! While leafing back through REG #2 (a not unworthy pursuit, if practiced with moderate discipline) I see your comments on Alan Dean Foster's Ballantine opus, THE TAR-AIYM KRANG, for 7-10-72, and this illustrates the

Zar Quest religion. The man stared intently at Vik.

Singida stopped and looked down at the deep-fibred living carpet. "Beautiful. A new strain? I've heard about your experimental gardens."

"I'll gift you with one, for your fee."

Singida laughed and approached the big, purple bed. His smiling eyes darted and flicked at Vik's large black body. He wheezed slightly. "Oh, no fee."

The slave opened the bags.

Singida continued. "I was with the Emperor when the news reached him. He sent me to you instantly with an escort of a dozen of his inner palace guards. The lions they have! My poor Zingu could barely keep up." He indicated his slave. "It had to ride behind a guard."

Singida examined the oozing wound and dart without touching them. "The paths nowadays! Those damned Egyptians!"

Vik said, "Those who attacked were of our race."

"Yes, traitors, hired assassins. Gold will buy anything." He took Vik's pulse.

Vik had speeded his heartbeats from his normal fifty per minute to 86. He consciously elevated his blood pressure when the physician applied a Jop cuff and poit tube to his upper left arm. The pointer surged up to 190 over 120.

Vik asked, "Still high?"

"It could be because of your excitement and shock."

"It's usually high anyway."

Singida made notes on a pad. "I hope you can stand pain. I'll have to cut to free the dart."

point I was groping for in my letter of the 17th inst., namely that the sf field is so immersed in pulp concepts that we often take them for literary 'givens'.

"You say '...the plot is thickening on page 44, something it should have done on page two.' Why is this so? Your criticism of this particular book is accurate, Foster spends too many pages filling in his background in straight documentary form, but this is an error of a first-novelist, not a violation of a God-Given Law of Literature. Sf readers and writers have been so conditioned to think that the story's got to start with a 'hook' or a piece of action that we've come to identify this as a form of 'good' writing. Of course, when you sit down and think about it, it's all bullshit, an ingredient of pulp lifted straight out of the hack writing manuals.

"Does the plot of WAR AND PEACE begin thickening on page two? Does it begin to congeal on page 200? An even better question is, does WAR AND PEACE actually have a plot, as we commonly think of the term in the sf field? Michener uses the first chapter of HAWAII solely to describe the geologic birth of the islands and how plants, insects, and birds came to populate them before men arrived. If the reader skips over this long, plotless, humanless opening it is possible to miss the whole theme and point that Michener makes in the following thousand pages. Do either of these books have what is usually thought of in sf as a protagonist? No. Do they have a unified viewpoint? No. Did both of them enjoy immense popular and critical success? Yes.

"The concepts of tension curve, protagonist-antagonist, narrative hooks, etc., are simple guidelines for beginners to break into pulp, a category of fiction that still exists but really doesn't need to. It's largely self-perpetuating, yesterday's readers being today's writers and editors. Sf has succeeded in breaking in, now how do we break out?

"And lastly, why am I writing this to you? There's something about your fanzine personality that makes your readers want to discuss things with you. Could your reclusiveness result from a secret delight in controlling the conversation?

"PS: If those who send review copies would like to know, I at least buy a few books upon the weight of your recommendation. But don't you think it's a crime to charge \$1.75 for THE EXORCIST, spaced out in large type to fake a longer length?"

Comment: Do you really think the "rules" for good commercial fiction writing began with pulp magazines? Through the years since printing allowed mass-produced magazines and books, writers and editors have learned what most people like in a story and how to best present it. These are the techniques of fiction, the structures, the formulas, if you will. And I imagine at least 90% of current fiction — books, magazine, stage, screen, tv — uses them. Exceptional writers and established, "star" writers can depart from them, bend them, can 'break the rules' and get away with it because their skill, talent and experience compensates. But even so they often write bombs.

There are writers who can make a trip to the store to buy toothpaste a vital, absorbing reading experience. Reading their material is a joy, a valuable learning time because of the keenness of mind, the acuteness of perception, the insights and judgements that you consume like a starving man eats steak.

But such are rare, and most writers, writing for money, try to use their talents and skills within the "playing field" of what sells and what works best.

Readers mostly like conflict, suspense, hero and villain, an ending that "satisfies", that settles things. That's what most writers write most of the time. A few readers like non-structured fiction and a few writers like to write it. Fine. A few sf stories and novels of that type are published.

Not all sf writers are capable of writing a monumental epic, panoramic thematic novel such as WAR AND PEACE. Or HAWAII. Obviously.

Don't confuse bad writing, triteness, stereotype, cliché and such with fiction techniques; techniques are the tools, style is the way a particular writer uses those tools, and skill is how well he uses his tools. And talent is what puts it all together and makes it go. The magic ingredient.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
8-31-72

The Gestetner man was here today. Put in a new impression roller, new ink rollers, a new feed finger. But the stencil still rides up and creases. He worked over an hour, finally suggested I am using too light a stencil, suggested Gestetner #6 blue stencils.

I wonder if it isn't this fibertone paper, for some odd reason. He thinks, too, the problem is the large amount of text per stencil, since he ran a Gestetner stencil with only a few lines typed on it...no creep, no crease.

I'll try using my last ream of blue Bergstrom paper from Kelly Paper in L.A., used in REG #1. It is 25% less bulkier than Fibertone. Stay tuned.

"I want you to use Zizu powder."

"It raises the blood pressure too much. It affects the mind."

"Not that much." Vik put the power of his station and wealth into his voice. "I want Zizu!"

"Very well." Singida personally rummaged in his bags. He brought up small bottles and packets. "I'll have to test for skin reaction...allergies..."

Vik wanted Zizu to dull the pain. He was putting too much concentration and mental energy into manipulating his body processes. If he had to damp nerves and diminish bleeding during the cutting of his thigh he'd be exhausted. An irresistible need for sleep would overwhelm him. He had been through it before.

And Zizu had some interesting side effects.

Finally, Singida produced from inside his robe his priceless, ancient scalpel. He opened its velvet and leather case.

As Vik watched, amused, Singida swabbed the skin around the wound with a series of acid solutions. He rubbed Vik's left forearm with various substances—powders, oils, pastes. He clucked and hummed as he worked. He said, "You have a magnificent body, Masil, for your age. It's incredible..." His eyes drifted enviously to Vik's heavy male organ, then to the backs of Vik's hands, to the underside of Vik's chin, to Vik's abundant graying hair, to the corners of Vik's eyes. "I'd like to look at your teeth."

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
9-1-72

Jesus, it's Friday again! And it's September. And I'm disgusted with myself. Up till this morning I had gone four or more days without doing a word of "Tomb..." This morning I did about 800 words. I've got to alter my schedule...or Alter it...so that I do my fiction quota before I even leave for the Post Office. But old habits die hard and it is amazing how time dribbles away.

Such as today. Mother wanted me to go along to the grocery store with her to carry heavy cans, and I asked her to drive me over to the local Gestetner office to get a quire of #6 blue film stencils and to have the cover of REG#3 electronically stenciled.

So—10:30 before we got back. Spent two and a half hours doing two and a half pages. Lunch. Washed my hair and took a bath. Had a mug of coffee while Mom watched THE NEWLYWED GAME and THE DATING GAME. It is now about 3:22 and I hope to get this stencil typed and run off today to find out if this type also creeps and creases. It occurred to me last night that the Sure Rites I've been using are at least two and a half years old, and that may also be a factor in the problem. Too, I can detect a different "feel" to this Gestencil; it seems thicker and stronger.

I ran off page 3 yesterday on less bulky paper, but the stencil crept and creased as usual. And in pulling it down on the silkscreen one last time (at the 720 copy count) I found that it pulled apart with distressing ease...practically disintegrated—rotten.

So we shall see what we shall see in a couple hours. I'll use up all this stencil on MAIL and FANZINES. "Tomb..." can have a full right-hand column next page.

BUT FIRST A MINI MOVIE REVIEW OR TWO

Drive-in with Talker friend. FRENZY by

Hitchcock, and PLAY MISTY FOR ME which was directed and starred in by Clint Eastwood.

FRENZY was okay, but not what you expect—by—reputation from Hitchcock. I was turned off by the phoney strangling scenes—people don't die that way with a necktie cinched or tightened as was pictured. The blood to the brain would be cut off before the breathing and unconsciousness and convulsions would occur instead of the long struggle and protruding tongue. Also, I would expect a highly congested face.

So FRENZY is gripping and highly watchable, but nowhere near a superior movie.

MISTY is a near classic because Jessica Walters is a superb actress. Her credibility as an unstable, infantile, possessive woman in love is total. Her instant rages and maniacal jealousy were beautifully played. Her use of a butcher knife was terrifying.

Eastwood has taken Victor Mature's place as the screen's Great Stone Face. It must hurt him to change expressions.

FANZINES

They've been piling up again and I'm enjoying them less. Too many people produce too many fanzines, and too often they shouldn't even be let near a mimeo. And people like David Williams, who should publish, don't.

But crying in the wilderness about the way things are is

a fool's joy; maybe that's the key to my happiness?

"Let ME review this lot, Geis! I'll make short work of them all."

"Another time, Alter. I won't let you touch SPECULATION #30 which just arrived. Go maul a bear for a while."

"All right, but I'll be back. A bear is only an appetizer. I want f-a-n-z-i-n-e-s!"

I haven't read all of SPEC #30 yet, but Peter Weston as usual writes a very interesting editorial (this time skewering Bruce Gillespie, Foyster and Rottensteiner for being so negative about sf, and letting some ego air out of Brian Aldiss' sails because of some (to Peter) offensive self-promotion and ingratitude toward sf. Aldiss fancies himself Above SF Now, and his attitude bugs Peter...and others). John Brunner's "Writing Science Fiction in Theory and Practice" is an excellent speech with many acute observations and suggestions. Subscriptions are 4/2.00 cash, no checks. Send to Peter Weston, 31 Pinewall Ave., Kings Norton, Birmingham 30, UNITED KINGDOM. Expect to wait a couple months. Surface mail is Slow, and dock strikes screw everything up.

#28

SF COMMENTARY is here but flying under false colors, since it appears, from a hasty scan, that Bruce Gillespie has given over the editing to Leigh Edmonds for this issue. I miss Bruce. But I understand that he's tired. There was a convention in Australia and he was there and he won the DITMAR award for Best Fanzine. Well deserved.

SFC is a serious magazine devoted to science fiction. Editors and authors pay attention to what is written in it, even as with SPECULATION. Mine issues of SFC for \$4.00 from its U.S. agents: Charles and Dena Brown, 3400 Ulloa St., San Francisco, CA 94116.

"Okay, Alter, the rest are all yours."

"AHHH! What is this 4 page thing? From 'M. Gler Printworks' in L.A. but with Norman Hochberg's 89-07 209th St., Queens Village, NY 11427 address on the thing. Norm calls it REGURGITATION SIX #3 and will accept 25¢ for it. HAW! It is not. And he does not reveal his secret sex life. But readable. It is not a diary, is what I mean. It is musings.

"Now the next items for reading are TAMLACHT #'s 12 and 14. Devoted to serious Magik and H.P. Lovecraft and aspects of the occult...I guess. Maybe Geis'll get around to reading these someday. They look interesting if that's your bag. Well done, photo-offset, from Victor Boruta, 11 West Linden Av., Linden, NJ 07036. 25¢, except #12 is 60¢.

"It's titled CLOG #14, and it's a 34 page APA-45 zine in faint red, blurry blue and eye-strain purple ditto-print. Mike Wood of 1878 Roblyn Avenue, Apt. 3, St. Paul, Minn. 55104 sent it but Geis, with admirable good sense, skimmed it and found it wanting. Only if Ghod Hhimself had written it would Geis read it closely. Geis does not no longer like spirit duplicated fanzines.

"But because he is interested in economics, even half-assed idealistic theories like Earl Evers is pushing in zEEn#2, Geis was willing to read zEEn's purple and green ditto smears. At least its done by a legible pica typer. And Geis has a letter in this issue. Kelsonian economics is the name and arguing

their workability is the game. zEn is a participatory fanzine available if you are interested. Few will be. Earl Evers, Box 5053, Main Station, San Francisco, CA 94109."

"That's enough, Alter. I have News."

"Very well, Geis, Impart Your News."

"As you just witnessed, I ran off 720 copies of page 38. NARRY A CREEP! NOT A CREASE! It was the cheap, old stencils."

"Yah? Then how come the machine had that odd clacking sound during the feeding cycle?"

"Don't borrow trouble, Alter!"

"And how come the printing is fuzzier?"

"Maybe because I used a Sure Rite cushion sheet. Maybe because it takes a harder strike to make a good cut in this heavier stencil. Whatever, I am sticking with these from now on."

"But you've got 34 of the old stencils already typed. I'm going to enjoy watching you sweat and curse as you run them off."

"And I'm going to enjoy putting you back into your dungeon!"

RECENT MAIL Bantam Books sent me the 70¢ Doc Savage
9-3-72 reprint: SPOOK HOLE (\$7.44, 75¢).

Walker and Co. sent TIME: 110100 by Leo P. Kelley. I'll read this with interest, since I characterized one of his pocketbook novels as 'shit' when I reviewed it some years ago in SFR. I have since regretted that review: I should have taken the trouble to explain why it was shit. He subsequently failed to renew his subscription. Isk.

I'd like to take favorable note of two items: THE POINTED STAKE #6, a 14 page zine from Ed C. Connor containing comment and discussion and quotes from current sociological and cultural news—Informers, Abortion, TV Violence, Child Beating, and odd items as catch his fancy.

There is a short story, "Balance" by Peter G. Kennedy, which if expanded into dialog might well sell to ANALOG. And a letter section. A very interesting little zine. 25¢ from Ed Connor, 1805 N. Gale, Peoria, ILL 61604.

The other item is a Tim Kirk cartoon which Connor has used as a letterhead: shows a chef feeding fanzines into a food grinder. A sign on the wall says, "RECENT NEW FANZINES". Perfect illo for a review column by Alter-Ego.

Letter from Piers Anthony, who informs: "I just mailed off "Off The Deep End" to OUTWORLDS, concerning the problem of marketing provocative science fiction and what I think of Harlan's AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, and now it is time to catch up on RICHARD E. GEIS. Oh, what do I think of A, DV? I think it's pretty good; much of it could not have been published elsewhere and it is well worth reading.

"In general, I was fascinated by the regular soap-opera C—installments, and wonder whether your entire life has been like that. You really would be happier married, could you but stand it. Young pretty girl loves Dick—oops, not so young, oops, has child, is married, oops, is fat, oooops, takes drug overdose— one day we may read how she writes him a long, intimate confessions letter admitting she has only been stringing him along, never needed him, only did it because her hus-

"My teeth are good. Tend to the dart."

Singida seemed fascinated, however. "Remarkable muscle tone and especially youthful skin. No loss of elasticity." He pinched and prodded.

Vik said impatiently, "I am of long-lived people. I eat intelligently and I keep my body exercised. But I ache and pain in my joints. That's where my age is."

Vik knew Singida was testing his skin for dyes and other artificial coloring—on Ndola's orders. But his pigmentation was natural...and had been for over five hundred years.

Vik would not allow an extremely close examination of his face. There were very tiny signs of the plastic surgery required to alter his lips and nose to full negroid legitimacy. It would take a sharp eye to spot the almost invisible scars, but if Singida knew what to look for....

The physician finally opened a packet of Zizu and sprinkled the wound liberally. "It will be a moment. You'll feel very little when I cut, but...." He smiled widely. "You know Zizu."

Vik felt the powder dissolving, being absorbed. The ache in his leg dimmed. He began to feel a golden euphoria and a tickling, itching glow in his genitals.

Zizu was an aphrodisiac as well as a disinfectant and pain killer. Vik replied, smiling softly, "I know its reputation. But I don't envy Ndola's need for it, even if the erotic aspect brings him some pleasures."

Vik heard the faint creaking of the elevator. Choma was arriving.

Singida made a face. "Yes, I have to permit him massive doses. The strains of his sex life may kill him before the cancer."

Vik asked casually, confidentially, "How long does he have?"

"Not more than two months. He—" Singida realized he had blundered. "The Emperor is a tremendously strong-willed man. He will not permit himself to die. I have seen cases where such powerful minds arrest disease and even conquer it. Ndola may outlive us both. My estimate is highly uncertain. I should not have mentioned it. It is of course highly confidential." He frowned at Mwanza.

Vik said happily to Mwanza, "You do not hear our words."

His private one replied obediently, "I do not hear your words."

Singida did not look much relieved. He unwrapped his scalpel, sprinkled its blade with Zizu and heated it above a candle.

Dambo opened the bedroom door. "Physician Choma is here."

Singida appeared surprised. He began to speak, stopped, and his normally wide eyes narrowed. "Isn't Kiambi your physician?"

"Choma is young and quick, skilled and near."

"Of course. He is of Egyptian ancestry, isn't he?"

Vik shrugged. The Zizu in his blood was filling him with euphoria. He wanted a woman. His desire was becoming obvious.

band paid her to so he could get his jollies listening to the replay and watching the secret films she made, and how Dick's cock tastes like shit. And there will be blood on the last page as the protagonist ends it all by a jugular slit across his penis and REG folds Aaaarrghhhhh... No, you don't have to print that ((but I think it funny)), it's an unkind joke I couldn't resist. I appreciate the candor of the sessions, and rather regret that your life apart from your fan activity seems so bleak. Keep it up and here's my dollar for the next.

"You know, I just got CYCLOPEDIA LEXICON OF SEX for \$1.98 from Marboro Books and it certainly seems to cover the terms. There is even a name for the fucking of women's armpits...I admit I hadn't thought of that before. Still, in the proper position the breast just about extends into the armpit, and... well, what is it like, REG?"

Now that you ask, Piers, it's rank. You have to lubricate the armpit properly, of course, and beware of stubble. A two-day "beard" in an otherwise enticing armpit can be pure hell. Armpit fucking permits some interesting positions, though, and as a conversation piece it's a party-stopper. One last bit of advice/comment: avoid ticklish women.

MORE CONSPIRACY or "OF COURSE IT'S RUBBISH, BUT..."

9-3-77 I bought a book titled DAVID by William Hoffman (Dell 1706, \$1.25) which was originally published in hardback by Lyle Stuart, the wildman of publishing.

Hoffman has done a lot of homework and research. His detailing of the rise and spread and domination by the Rockefeller family fortunes, especially that of David Rockefeller, who controls the Chase Manhattan Bank which in turn controls hundreds of foreign banks, God knows how many top corporations in this and other countries....

In short, David is THE most powerful man in the world. As the blurb says, "For David Rockefeller the Presidency of the United States would be a demotion." His personal fortune runs into the billions. His leverage runs into the trillions.

Hoffman confirms much of what Gary Allen asserts in NONE DARE CALL IT CONSPIRACY, that the Establishment is made up of members of the Council on Foreign Relations (as a ruling body) and that members of the CFR are always in positions of high authority in our government (as for instance Henry Kissinger), and that a secret group of the super rich and their agents meets once a year, either in Europe or the U.S.A.

Hoffman thinks David Rockefeller is in control of the American Establishment. He, too, thinks Nixon is a mere "employee."

A story in last week's OREGONIAN fits into Allen's conspiracy theory—that the Insiders (the Establishment) is trying to socialize (achieve central control) this country and lead it subsequently into a form of world government.

The story dealt with the passage by the Senate of a bill to push the conversion of this country to the metric system. This would be further proof for Allen since the United States would have to be standardized with the rest of the world in weights and measures as one more vital step toward political-economic union with other nations (even as is happening to the Common Market countries). The clincher for Allen would be the

Senate bill's author—Senator Claiborne Pell, a member of the Establishment's Council on Foreign Relations.

"Being a normal, neurotic human it was in my bones to kill. Most of my adult life I had carried around like an instantaneously inflatable balloon a free-floating aggression which kept an imaginative array of murders, wars and plagues parading across my mind whenever my life got difficult: a cabbie tried to overcharge me, Lil criticized me, Jake published another brilliant article. In the year before I discovered the dice, Lil was killed by a steamroller, an airplane crash, a rare virus, cancer of the throat, a flash fire in her bed, under the wheels of the Lexington Avenue Express and by an inadvertent drinking of arsenic. Jake had succumbed to driving into the East River in a taxi, a brain tumor, a stock-market-crash-induced suicide and an insane attack with a samurai's sword by one of his former cured patients. Dr. Mann succumbed to a heart attack, appendicitis, acute indigestion and a Negro rapist. The whole world itself had suffered at least a dozen full-scale nuclear wars, three plagues of unknown origin but universal effectiveness and an invasion from outer space by superior creatures who invisibilized everyone except a few geniuses. I had, of course, beaten to a bloody pulp President Nixon, six cab drivers, four pedestrians, six rival psychiatrists and several miscellaneous women. My mother had been buried in an avalanche and may still be alive there for all I know."

—THE DICE MAN by Luke Rhinehart (Pocketbooks, 78204, \$1.25)

This is the last excerpt. If you aren't totally intrigued to the point of buying the book to read it all, you're not my kind of reader. Go read RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY.

Vik said, "A fine doctor is a fine doctor. I sent for him before you arrived."

Singida shrugged in return. "Of course."

Choma entered, a small, thin, intense man in his early thirties. He was followed by a slave, a blonde, blue-eyed youth who carried his bags. The slave was astonished at Vik's size.

Singida greeted Choma warmly. After a moment, the two physicians conferred in a far corner of the bedroom about the cutting that had to be done.

While they talked, Vik's Zizu imposed arousal increased. He didn't want to waste energy and concentration in inhibiting the effect. And it would be unusual if that much Zizu did not effect him. His organ erected. He grinned at Mwanza. "Don't turn away the Emperor's gift tonight."

His private one smiled and inclined his head.

Singida and Choma returned. They worked together well. Choma deferred to Singida, who did the delicate flesh cutting. Vik watched alertly. His right thigh from the hip to near his knee was dead to sensation.

Singida used his scalpel with skill—slicing deep into muscle to free the dart's head. His hand was steady and knowing. He said, "Remarkable lack of bleeding."

Vik said nothing.

Choma stood ready to swab and use small springwood clamps

THE WAR The North Vietnamese attacked, made some gains, 9-4-72 were stalled. The South Vietnamese counter-attacked to take back lost territory and have been stalled. In fact, behind their backs, so to speak, the NVA and the Cong have been making a lot of progress undermining local security and regaining village-level influence.

The ARVN have given up on clearing the highway to An Loc and have fallen back to help defend Saigon. Another, stronger signal that they are losing.

The NVA are infiltrating more and more men south and are probably not through with Hue and Da Nang. The ARVN will likely not be able to retake Quang Tri; they've used up two of their elite divisions in the attempt. They got three divisions mauled in and around An Loc.

In short, the North is winning its war in spite of the all-out bombings and the mining of its harbors.

What has Nixon left? What more could he do to save Thieu? (And save heavy U.S. investments and economic prospects in the area. Chase Manhattan Bank is into it with big coin.) He has bombed the dikes enough to warn the North of what may be coming if they don't accept his terms.

VELIKOVSKY A reading of the articles and data in Vol. 9-4-72 2, No. 2 of PENSEE, a special issue titled Immanuel Velikovsky Reconsidered, makes me realize how far we are from really knowing what it's all about, Alfie. We sneer at the ignorance and short-sightedness of scientists in years past, but think there is no future to sneer at us.

Velikovsky, in the mid-fifties, wrote a "crazy" book, WORLDS IN COLLISION, which brought jeers from the scientific Establishment. Also, a lot of pressure to deny him opportunity to answer critics in the scientific journals.

He even had the effrontery to make predictions concerning planetary and solar electro-magnetism, the makeup of Venus, the Moon, Mars, and Earth.

And he's been right! Proven right.

But if he is right about the origin and near-collisions of Venus with Earth, and about the brushes our planet has had with Mars...then the sciences of Physics, Geology, Paleontology, Biology and Psychology are built on sand and must be rebuilt to incorporate Velokovsky's theory.

Not surprisingly, the Establishment is in no hurry to begin the research necessary to finally prove or disprove more areas of his theory as it applies to their empires of knowledge.

I want to quote part of an article by William Mullen concerning this restructuring. The article is titled, "The Center Holds," and the section on Psychology is especially interesting. I quote a part of that section.

"Here, without any perceptible break between disciplines, one touches a major premise of Velikovsky's psychology, barely adumbrated in the epilogue to WORLDS IN COLLISION. Referring to Freud's idea of an archaic heritage of traumatic memories transmitted from generation to generation, and also to Jung's concept of a collective unconscious, he wrote: 'In the light of these theories, we may well wonder to what extent the terrifying experiences of world catastrophes have become part of the human soul and how much, if any, of it can be traced in our

beliefs, emotions and behavior as directed from the unconscious or subconscious strata of the mind.' If biological experimentation offers concrete proof that instincts acquired under catastrophic circumstances might be transmitted genetically, then the whole psychology implicit in this sentence is objectively grounded. Whatever their accounts of the content of the unconscious, Freud and Jung agreed that one of the principal compulsions was to act out what has been repressed. If the collective unconscious of man contains memory of catastrophic experiences which his collective consciousness represses, then in a sense he may be doomed to act those experiences out. Many irrational rituals—war and religion chief among them—would thus be grimly explained. Resistance to such an aetiology will naturally be intense. The more comprehensively a theory relates past events to present behavior the more readily it is denounced as deterministic."

The motto of SFWA is "The Future Isn't What It Used To Be."

It may be that the past isn't what it used to be, either. (PENSEE, POB 414, Portland, OR. 97207. \$2. for the special issue.)

on tiny arteries. He said jokingly, "That's the Zizu—all his blood is in his pole."

Within five minutes the dart was removed. Singida dropped the short, bloody shaft into a drawstring cotton bag. His slave started to put it away.

Vik said, "I want that."

"I was asked to retain it for study. It might lead to those who attacked you."

"I'll return it to Quebo soon."

Singida hesitated. He signaled his slave to give the bag to Mwanza. Then he looked sharply at Vik, but said nothing more.

Choma had stitched the wound. His full lips quirked as he sprinkled on more Zizu. He applied a dressing of clean, white cotton and covered everything with a rubbery, porous, adhesive membrane peeled from Jop tree scabs.

One Jop tree, skillfully slashed, would produce enough membrane to cover ten large wounds per day. Vik owned most of the Jop tree orchards in the Empire.

"How long will I be on my back?"

Singida rubbed his wide nose. "You can take a few steps a day. Nothing violent or you'll rip it open. No riding, no travel for at least a ten-day."

Choma nodded in agreement.

Vik set special autonomic fast-healing processes in action. He thanked Singida. "If you will, express my appreciation to Ndola. I'll be back in the palace trees as soon as possible. Until then I will be in constant contact with my able assistants."

He said to Choma, "Will you return frequently to check the healing and renew the bandage?"

Choma nodded. He was on a large, secret retainer fee. This was the first time he had been called upon in eight years.

A DOSE OF RECENT MAIL
9-6-72

Two impressive, well-made books
from Atheneum: Andre Norton's new THE
CRYSTAL GRYPHON and Ursula K. Le Guin's

THE FARTHEST SHORE.

The October IF. Interesting. I subscribed to 12 issues of GALAXY and I suspect I've been recorded for six of each. IF is the Juvenile of the two, I gather from past performance.

Speaking of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, here it is, Vol 5, No.3, 60¢, from Leland Sapiro, Box 40, Univ. Station, Regina, CANADA. A fine cover on red coverstock, very professional, but inside the same old frumpish RQ look and very serious literary analysis of sf and fantasy. I do recommend the lead article, though: "Science Fiction as Will and Idea: The World of Alfred Bester," by Jeff Rigenbach, though it would be nice to hear from Bester himself on the validity of Rigenbach's Freudian analysis and assumptions.

Another serious literary journal of s-f is FOUNDATION #2 which George Hay sent along. Of value and of interest to me was James Blish's autobiographical "The Development of a Science Fiction Writer" (Second in a series by sf writers. John Brunner was in #1, as I recall.).

The book reviews are edited by Ken Bulmer, and the long lead-off is by Peter Nicholls who contrasts Larry Niven's RINGWORLD with Poul Anderson's TAU ZERO and decides TAU ZERO is better for a host of reasons and decries RINGWORLD's winning of the Nebula and Hugo awards. Nicholls is perhaps right in his analysis but neglects the critical factor: on the whole, RINGWORLD is a more exciting, entertaining book.

\$1.00 from Transcripta Books, 30 Craven St., London WC2, ENGLAND.

A bill from the local Gestetner dealer for service call, parts, the quire of stencils and the faxed cover stencil—\$74.68. *Groan* Fortunately I banked \$80. in REG subs today. And now the old 466 is all set to go another four years.

The September publishing list from New American Library. I've checked off the new F. Lee Bailey book, THE DEFENSE NEVER RESTS, a book about prostitution called THE LIVELY COMMERCE, NORMAN MAILER'S CONVENTION SPECIAL, and all four DAW books.

I MUST SAY that George Scithers does a lovely job of publishing the SFWA FORUM #24 and BETWEEN WORLDS, the transcriptions of the speeches and panels of the Day Program and Nebula Awards Banquet. These are chock full of nitty gritty no-holds-barred comments and arguments about agents, writing, contracts, etc. These publications are more or less limited to SFWA members and other S-F professionals.

Jim Canfield, Jr. commented in part: "You might consider using your scale-of-10 rating system on all your zine reviews, with the understanding that it reflects how well the zine does what it is trying to do, rather than how well it reflects what you'd like to see the 'perfect' zine do."

((Yeah, but that would require me to be a responsible reviewer. But seriously, Jim...on the whole I do manage to indicate relative worth, I hope. I manage to characterize the zines. I goof, I gotch, I let Alter get away with murder, but don't take me too lightly—or too seriously. But,

on the other paw, maybe a rating system would be in order. Ah, the sadistic delight in giving a "1" or "2"! Take RQ, for instance (please!), I would rate it a good, moldy 6. And FOUNDATION (suffering from a divided editorship) is a 6, too, but not in the same way: different aims, a bit, and different faults/virtues. THE SFWA FORUM is fine, it functions just about perfect: 10.))

"While in the Naval Reserve, my Reserve CO was a Senior Research Chemist with Union Oil and he advised me in late 1970 that the known reserves of petroleum would last 11 years at projected rates of consumption. He emphasized that new reserves were being found all the time, but the gap between 'now' and 'exhaustion' was constantly narrowing. From what I read about population pressures, 1985 seems about the time when the energy crisis and population explosion will combine to cause real problems."

((I would say the prime villain is the increasing level of industrialisation and the greater and greater use of resources by people who are encouraged to do so by corporations intent on profit and growth: the one car family, then two car family, the boat, the camper, the extra TV, the tourism (which supports a vast economy of motels, service stations, restaurants, etc.))

STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING
9-6-72

News item in the paper this morning. A man is at large in Portland who raped a 68 year old woman while he was wearing a gorilla suit. The 'morals detectives' are checking costume shops for leads.

"One last thing—provided I stay on my back and stay quiet, is it medically advisable to indulge the Zizu?" It was a mock question, and Vik's lips quirked.

Both doctors laughed. Singida said, "Yes, enjoy the Emperor's favor tonight. Relief, with Chen Li, is only a swallow away." He roared with belly and chin and breast-shaking laughter.

The slaves smiled. They exchanged glances. Decadence. The doctors left, followed by their slaves.

Vik was alone for a few moments. He idly played with his erection. He considered sending for one of his favorite female servants—Songea, who had a sweet, clever mouth—but decided to wait for Chen Li, the Emperor's specialist.

Mwanza entered with two girl servants who sponge-bathed Vik. They giggled at his arousal. They patted him dry with thick, soft towels and helped him into a pale green silk robe.

Vik enjoyed himself by caressing their sleek brown bodies. Warm, smooth female flesh always pleased him. One of the two, Feshi, a new girl, all golden brown and velvet-skinned, rounded and buoyant with the juices of puberty, flushed and licked her lips constantly. Her nipples were spectacular little purple fingers. She squirmed when he suckled one for a few seconds. He whispered, "When i'm well, Feshi...."

She flushed even more and giggled uncontrollably with the excitement and importance of being wanted by the great

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
9-7-72

No word from C— in a long time. I sent her two clever birthday cards last month. I've been re-living our "ships passing/colliding in the night" encounters and feeling a bit wistful...as expected. The flame is guttering out.

Oh well. Better to publish another issue than curse the darkness.

"Now rest the back of your right wrist against your forehead, Geis, and turn slightly so the camera can catch your sad expression..."

"Alter, do not make mock of my anguish."

"Face the truth. You're glad she hasn't written. But your ego wants her to pine for you still...from a safe distance."

"I may just cut out your tongue."

Mother's left wrist and right shoulder still hurt her a lot. She seems to live in pain constantly...but, dare I say it?...seems to require it for some deep emotional reason. Before her broken wrist she had constant headaches that often lasted for days. When her wrist was broken and the diagnosed bursitis set into her shoulder joint, her headaches vanished almost completely. Now they are creeping back...as her wrist/shoulder pain fades or becomes insufficient? She has a tremendous amount of repressed anger and guilt, I suspect, that goes way back.

She's compulsive and driven to stay active; cannot slow down, cannot relax. Claims she cannot sleep, but keeps going.

Perhaps significantly, she keeps on abusing her weak wrist; never gave it a chance to completely knit, I suspect, and hauls, pulls and twists with it now like a trooper. We all tell her to give it a rest for a few days, she refuses, 'Too much to do, too many projects.'

So I say little; let her be and do what she must. We tolerate each other's needs.

THE MAIL, MORE RECENT MADCAP #1 is a fairly good beginning for Peter Presford. He used everything he had—short bits of material, poems, etc., and the zine has a fragmented feel to it. Rating: 3

(10, Dalkeith Rd., Sth. Reddish. Stockport, SK5 7EY, UNITED KINGDOM) No price listed.

Eric Lindsay has also produced a new fanzine which he insists has no name. Apparently a good idea. He is at loose ends, casual, uncertain. A good item about local political/economic corruption, and a good letter column. Eric writes interestingly. Worth watching, Geis says, pompously. Rating 4. (6 Hillcrest Av., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA.)

A letter from D. Gary Grady who had the gaul to disagree with me. Well, I'll let one or two of this type into an issue...provided they don't seriously threaten my REG image, of course.

After a typo quibble, Gary says optimistically, "At any rate, resources are constantly becoming (with a couple of exceptions) cheaper to utilize and total reclamation (even with current technology) ups the price on most materials only slightly. For specific figures, I suggest you check

with Bob Vardeman.

"The resources we are running out of and cannot efficiently replace primarily are fossil fuels, of which we have only a couple of centuries left (much less for petroleum alone). However, indications are extremely strong that we will have a fusion capability by 2050 (an INTELLECTUAL DIGEST article predicts 2002), and when we get that it is only a matter of converting to electrolysed hydrogen (or some more efficient system) for portable and mobile power needs. Certainly there will be difficulties — thermal pollution, for example — but there is a world of difference between the troubled future I see and the disastrous one of your view."

((It only takes one key resource to go dry or become prohibitively expensive to bring our mass-production civilization grinding to a halt. I think oil may be that one. It can't be recycled.

((There's a lot of difference between a fusion 'capability' and the thousands of fusion plants that would be required to sustain the incredible power needs of this nation alone. I remain unconvinced re fusion power predictions, especially where an exact year is given—thirty years in the future. I'm still waiting for the much trumpeted "picture frame" wall TV that we were told about some years ago. I do hope Science Will Find a Way, but I'm skeptical.))

"Your remark about Flieg Hollander being an idiot because he equates rising prices with inflation is frankly childish. I doubt that anyone engaged in post doc work is an idiot, and besides, if you had troubled yourself to check

Masil.

Twilight was deepening. Glowleaves were uncovered. Mwanza left with the girls.

Vik lay relaxed. He tuned out the insistent Zizu lust and considered his situation.

He had been careless and he had seriously underestimated Ndola and Quebo. It had been decades since he had been in any serious personal danger. He'd settled into a rut of power and sex. He'd played the eternally fascinating high finance game again and neglected the little signs of Ndola's illness and personality change. He had ignored Quebo's steady accretion of influence and power.

The human element—greed, the fear of death, and the urge to greater power in rulers and would-be rulers—it never changed and it was always deadly.

Vik knew he had to tighten up his economic empire. It was important that the central bank survive and the plan go forward after his disappearance and presumed death.

For the ten millionth time, Vik wished he were not so damned tall! Why had They chosen a six foot five basketball player to become the one immortal man on Earth? Had They expected the average man's size to increase over the generations? Instead, after the plague that wiped out 95% of the world's cows, mankind began to shrink as basic nutrition suffered.

Now he was a giant. His size made hiding after "dying" and then reappearing with another identity almost impossible. No wonder there was a Kun-Zar myth. No wonder he was always

with more than one dictionary, you would find that rising prices do amount to inflation (see Harcourt, Brace and World, for example). It does happen that your definition is more widely used one, but that certainly does not make flieg an idiot. Maybe Alter wrote that part while you were asleep. In fact, maybe he has taken over! ((DAMN RIGHT!)) I am not qualified to argue with you about economics, (and I wish you would admit that you aren't either) but I will point out a couple of things: Germany is presently undergoing a mild inflation, but has not spent a deficit in 25 years. A gold economy, even postulating an absolutely constant supply of the metal, is prone to deflation since the GNP of a given country tends to rise with time. I agree that excessive deficit spending is a source of inflation, but it is not the main one in the U.S., Nixonomics aside. One other thing. Some economists (Galbraith, for one) question the undesirability of inflation. TANSTASE (There Ain't No Such Thing As Simple Economics)!"

((Granted, there has been a change in the official usage of the word inflation since the early 60's. Just a few days ago Nixon said, "Excessive government spending is the root cause of inflation." He has a pliable mind. That isn't what he used to say.

((So up-to-date dictionaries will reflect the usage change. But if inflation now "means" rising prices and wages, what is the word to use for the "old" meaning of inflation? As it is it serves two definitions, with some officials using both in the same sentence! What is it that Galbraith questions—the evil of deficits or the evil of rising prices?

((But speak not to me of Galbraith. I think him a shameless apologist for Keynesian Economics which in turn I think a fraud.

((As for the inflation of non-deficit Germany, their inflation is fueled by the influx of billions of American dollars, which they don't want but cannot avoid for political reasons...and maybe for economic reasons, too.

((Your comment on gold is senseless. If the world were still on the Gold Standard the price of gold might be \$300. per ounce. With mandatory convertibility (gold for dollars on demand) politicians would be forced to be fiscally responsible; deficits would very soon result in loss of gold, recessions, devaluation of the currency—all out in public and no way to obscure cause and effect. Also, with huge national debts discouraged, the banks wouldn't be making such fantastic profits and would not be able to "own" this country.

((We don't owe the national debt to ourselves; we owe it to the megabanks who hold a mortgage on the whole country. Our Federal Reserve System, which controls the credit flow of this country, and the money supply, is owned by private banks...and is inevitably their servant. O high finance is a lovely legal ripoff, the finest in the world.

((As for Inflation, let me quote The Golden Home and High School Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, copyrighted 1961:

INFLATION, in economics, a condition in which the supply of money increases more rapidly than the supply of goods needed to supply consumer demands. This increase in the supply of money may be either in an absolute amount or in the speed with which the money changes hands.

Inflation results in an increase in the cost of living. During an inflationary period the general level of prices goes up; but some individual prices remain the same, others rise but little, and still others rise more than the average. It is these price disparities that cause the problems in an inflation. People on fixed incomes, such as pensions, find that they can buy less and less. The purchasing power of each dollar decreases.

Not all sharp rises in prices are a result of inflation. A sharp rise in price may be caused by a newly created demand before industry has had time to supply the new goods. An increase in a nation's currency does not necessarily cause inflation if the increase corresponds to an increase in production.

Inflation may occur if a government burdened by debts decides to print money to cover its expenses. Germany experienced such an inflation after World War I. Four German marks before the war had been worth a dollar. By 1922 it took 4,200,000,000 German marks to equal a single U.S. dollar.

Government spending may cause inflation in a less obvious way. When a government borrows from individuals by selling government bonds, it transfers purchasing power from individual consumers to itself. If the government spends, in the economy, the same amount as individuals would have spent, no inflation trend occurs. However, if the government must rely on banks to subscribe to its bonds, then it adds its own purchasing power to the market without reducing the purchasing power of individual consumers. This increased demand tends to force prices upward.

((I would like to note that our government's bank-subscribed debt has increased in the past ten years or so well over 100,000,000,000 dollars. And that in 1962 we were paying 8 billion dollars per year in interest on the debt. In 1973 that carrying charge will be doubled to 16 billions...with no end in sight.

((I could go on and on, but it seems useless.))

fighting the suspicions and wishes of mortal men and women.

He estimated that Singida would report Masil truly black, merely an exceptional old man. Ndola would have to give up that hope.

But Quebo... That man was young enough not to care much about death. He wanted to be Emperor and he wanted to bring down Masil and confiscate the Masil fortune and economic leverage.

Quebo was undoubtedly using Ndola's pain and dread of death to maneuver the Emperor and in constructing a case against Masil—if not as Kun-Zar, then as a traitor, a conspirator with the Egyptians...the Indians...even the Allied Amazon States.

Vik knew the process of public and private manipulation to destroy a man.

So Quebo and Ndola thought they had him vined down for a while, till they investigated him more, till they made certain arrangements....

THE MAIL Dale Broadhurst sent a copy of his GRAPHIC
9-8-72 FANTASY comic book (semi-pro) #2. Also included
are two full-color posters, one of Tarzan by Hogarth
(a 1941 illo), and the other an enlarged EC INCREDIBLE SCIENCE
FICTION comic book cover by Wood, circa 1955. Still another
inclusion is a folder/flyer for his GRAPHIC FANTASY ANNUAL #1
(\$1.50). Dale is asking \$1.25 for 16 pages, many in full color
plus the posters, but seems unsure of himself in asking that
much.

As he says in his editorial, this mag is a fanzine (with a
small print run) and color work COSTS.

I think he makes a mistake in fragmenting the artwork as he
does—one page of this story, five of another, all continued.
The Mike Royer folio is nice for the nudes, as is the Russ
Manning page.

Dale seems trapped by a desire to imitate the pro comic
format. Ned Young is a good young artist, by the way.
Rate this zine 5.

Dale's address: 850 27th, Ogden, UTAH 84403.

Various and sundry: The COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW cordial-
ly invites me to subscribe. Wonder what they'd do if I offer-
ed to trade?

Bill from Garland I. Yarrow, TIMES dealer for Santa Monica
(my part, anyway) for July 1 to Sept. 1. This after I had not-
ified him five days before I moved to cancel the subscription.
I just wrote a tough—shit,—fellah letter to him. Signed it,
"Yours for better bookkeeping, Richard E. Geis." Whoever is in
1420-D 20th St. has been enjoying a free paper for three months.

Two books from Doubleday: THE EARLY ASIMOV or ELEVEN YEARS
OF TRYING, 27 stories from his youth in sf (540 pages) \$10.;
and THE PRITCHER MASS by Gordon R. Dickson, \$4.95. Doubleday
got a new stencil cut for my new address but somebody sent me
two sets of these books. Honest me, I sent one set back, with
a note.

KILL THIS BOOK, GEIS! Yessir, but not before lunch. I
hate to shoot down guilty authors on
an empty stomach.

Now then. I haven't kept up with Leo P. Kelley's writing
career. The dust jacket says he has sold six sf books, some
short stories and a textbook for high school and college stud-
ents on themes in science fiction.

His latest is a Walker book, TIME: 110100. It is written
in a kind of poetic Modern Mythic style, not what I hope is
his "normal" style that I remember as being damned good in his
first book.

The plot is Mankind in a testtube being judged by aliens.
Specifically, by accident a man is awakened from a kind of
stasis in a glass coffin in a storm ruptured building. He has
no memory. He sees eight other coffins in the room, each with
a man or woman inside. He inadvertently begins the awakening
of one of the women, then, childlike, wanders out into the
outside world.

He meets a robot in human shape called Superstud. He meets
other simulacrum of different character, and discovers they
are mirrors of the true characters of the humans-in-stasis he
had left.

And he learns of an approaching time: 110100 which is cruc-

ial for an unknown reason.

Inevitably, Smith (as he has named himself) must encount-
er every one of the simulacrum, must have long conversations
and some adventures that incorporate danger.

This becomes a drag, because the story isn't plausible
enough to believe in, and Kelley doesn't write well enough
to make the sequences intrinsically valuable.

Finally, there is a gathering of all the simulacrum in
the coffin room. Smith, with the woman whom he had accident-
ally awakened and met out in the forest during his obligatory
odyssey, is required to fight these robots, one by one. The
original characters sleep, still, in stasis coffins.

He wins. It is Significant. Everything is supposed to
be Significant and Symbolic, I suspect. That's usually the
reason for this plot use.

Who created the simulacrum? What is so important about
110100?

The nine humans are the only survivors of a totally de-
vastating world war. Aliens had gathered them, put them in
cold storage and created a forest-city goldfish bowl and the
simulacrum to study, to determine if ManKind deserves to
continue or not.

The last page tells of Smith and his woman awaiting the
verdict as the aliens enter the room. End. END!

You, dear reader, are supposed to be the judge, if you
give a damn about it in the first place. I didn't.

Why not? Smith has no personality. He's a pawn who goes
around saying, "Duh?" most of the time so Kelley can have fun
being philosophical and wise by showing off exaggerated car-
icatures of human types.

The author comes first in this book. It is a vehicle.
He drops his pearls before us and lo they are coprolites.
(Walker, \$5.95, 202 pp.)

No doubt Ndola's favorite would try to pry in certain
areas, and maybe even carry on Singida's experiments in her
own way.

Vik chuckled. It would be an interesting game; he could
use her in more ways than one.

And tomorrow the counter-attack. Stories would spread
of Quebo's stealing vast sums of Army gold, cheating the
soldiers of their pay as they fought the white barbarians.
The bank would delay certain loans and payments. There would
be leafwork problems, hints of corruption in high trees, and
the word would go out that Ndola was dying, incapable of rule.
Shipments of vital war materials would be delayed. Ships
would miss tides, would not arrive on schedule, certain
key guilds would walk off government projects.

More important, the east coast tribes would begin to talk
again of secession and independence. And there would be
plenty of money behind them, many skilled agents, and many
army and navy units would declare their sympathy with the
movement.

That would show Ndola and Quebo how dangerous it was to
strike against Masil. The Emperor had to be reminded of the
fragility of his rule and the thinness of his power. He was
essentially a figurehead. He held the palace trees because
Masil and his banks permitted it.

THE MAIL A letter from C.E. Parker of Canada who points
9-9-72 out the practical benefits of some kinds of com-
 pulsory social action: "Just a brief note about
your News Notes of 6-18-72 - don't bother to look it up -
it's about compulsory health service. We have it here in
Manitoba - for \$4.15 per month, per person (\$8.30 for a fam-
ily); we are entitled to medical services and hospital care
for no extra charge, except for a semi-private or private
ward, if desired.

"We also have compulsory auto insurance. You pay for the
insurance when you pay for your license plates. Compulsory
rates include \$50,000 PL & PD and \$200. deductible for collision.
For an extra charge, one can get \$200,000 PL & PD and a
\$50. deductible. No more sweat about an accident with an un-
insured driver - as happened to me once. It also uses the
"no-fault" principle. Having under-25 drivers using my car,
my cost for insurance dropped considerably.

"Demerit points for accidents and traffic violations raise
the cost of the driver's license - not the auto insurance,
which is the way it should be."

I'll go along with the compulsory insurance for drivers;
that's a fair and reasonable demand to make--as long as driv-
ing or owning a car doesn't become compulsory.

Compulsory health insurance is something else. Why need
it be compulsory? Why have to use force? Wouldn't 99% of
wage and salaried workers sign up if it's a good deal for
them?

A very interesting fanzine, TITLE #6, with a different,
effective organization. Briefly, editor Donn Brazier is a
specialist in the short, meaty quote gathered, from many letters,
on one subject per page. It's a ten page fanzine.

Each issue he also runs a page or two of opinion-article
which should provoke a wide range of quotable reactions..for
the next issue.

Apparently no subs: a letter of comment or a trade is the
way to get it. 25¢ and a promise to comment will likely get
you a copy, though, as a newcomer to the group.

Donn Brazier, 1455 Fawnvalley Dr., St. Louis, MO 63131.
Judged on intent and execution, I'd have to rate TITLE a good
8.

An improved zine is NEW LIBERTARIAN NOTES #14. Perhaps
my "sloppy, sloppy, sloppy" judgement did some good. This
issue is neat and presentable, with press-type headings and
a simple, conservative layout. The most valuable article is
Joseph Castrovinci's "Revisionist History" in which he char-
acterizes the Establishment historians as subscribing to and
teaching a 'consensus' view of American history: "Our nation,
in this view, is one free of class consciousness or any other
form of deep-rooted, fundamental conflict. It's dominant
philosophy, liberalism, is concerned with maximizing the free-
dom of the individual, and restraining the power of the busi-
ness community in the interest of preserving the rights of
other sections of society. ... The state is a friend of the
people, a steady ally of the oppressed."

Recently, the Revisionist view has emerged. It contends
that "the history of this nation is one filled with conflict

which centers around the emergence, over the past century, of
a native ruling class, and the...opposition its development
has engendered both from other segments of society and the
exploited overseas."

There are lists of books and authors which expand and
delineate this view, and the libertarian view of extremely
limited government.

25¢ from Sam Konkin III, 235 East 49th St., New York, NY
10017.

I'd rate this issue about 6. Still room for improvement.

DYING INSIDE It has almost reached the point now,
9-9-72 where Bob Silverberg is the one who decides
 which book wins the Best Novel Hugo Award each
year--by deciding which of his books he wishes to be in the
final ballot.

For 1972 will it be THE BOOK OF SKULLS or DYING INSIDE?
Both are novels of character change, with SKULLS the more
metaphysical, DYING more truly science fictional and, I
think, more satisfying in that David Selig, in finally los-
ing his psi power, instead of entering a time of tragedy and
terrible loss actually discovers a kind of happiness as he
rejoins the human race and is accepted. He couldn't cope
with his power, was in constant schizophrenic conflict over
it, and in the end was better off without it.

I was impatient with David over his hangups and failures
and wanted his power to revive, to continue... But Silver-
berg is writing reality now, and writing it so well that the
sf elements are real, too. David is REAL. And because he

In fact, Vik had had Emperor Pemba assassinated in order
to put Ndola into the palace trees.

But agony and rapidly approaching extinction made a man
desperate; what had Ndola to lose?

Vik realized Ndola should have been retired years ago.
He smiled disgustedly to himself. Sloppy. Stupid. He de-
cided to sleep for an hour, or until Mwanza announced the ar-
rival of Chen Li.

It was full dark when his private one awakened Vik and
announced her presence. A few moments later Vik received
her.

Chen Li glided regally into the room. Tiny ringbells
decorated her bare toes and tinkled with each step on the
golden, living carpet. She wore a violet spidervine gown
that clung to her slender, graceful body, rippled free as
she moved, then clung briefly again.

The gown glowed softly with life. The purple suckers on
her nipples were almost as large as her diminutive breasts.
Her straight black hair flowed and twisted luxuriously into
a smooth knot at the back of her finely modeled head. Jewel-
ed pins sparkled in her hair. Her features were strongly
asian. Her mouth was a delicate rosebud.

She bowed. "I am proud to be in the presence of the
great Masil."

"I'm happy the news of my injury did not keep you away."

"The Emperor instructed me to give you pleasure if you
wish, or to converse, or to leave...if you wish."

Vik gestured her to his bed. He smiled. "I'm Zized to

is so solid and human, warts and all, and is so multi-leveled, and because his "wild talent" is so finely detailed and erratic, the novel is like a breath of pure sweet air after a night of smoke-filled room.

Silverberg wisely used the first-person technique; it permits a total freedom for characterization and personality but also imposes the requirement for great skill and discipline. It is a one man show and woe to the author whose man becomes cliched and shallow. The only result is boredom and failure in this kind of story. DYING INSIDE grabs and holds.

Writing at this level of excellence and maturity in science fiction is rare. We should treasure Bob; pet him, buy him drinks, give him his yearly Hugo and Nebula....

I can think of only four or five others who are close to him: Bob Shaw, John Brunner, John Boyd, Phil Dick....add Kate Wilhelm and Gene Wolfe...and nearly forgot Fred Pohl!

What of Ellison and Miven, you ask?

Harlan writes in technicolor, with great emotional intensity, and this force of style is too often obtrusive.

Larry is at the top of the second rank, in my mind. He is more of an adventure writer, excellent, with a lesser depth of characterization in his stories and novels.

Chip Delany is concerned with quests, myths, and his people serve him well but rarely stand alone, humiliated, after having farked in a crowded room.

Roger Zelazny always captures me and entertains me, and he's the polished pulp writer; action and imagination entrancingly wedded. He is sloppy but compulsively readable.

Who have I missed in this uncalled-for, gratuitous lineup? I started out lauding DYING INSIDE and here I am doing the God bit. O well, it's fun.

Heinlein: an archer with one target who has run out of arrows; his bow is old and his last shot fell short.

James Blish! In the first rank, in the first seven or eight best. A keen mind intellectually inclined, who dramatizes metaphysical questions and whose characters are real enough to do their job. Best book: DOCTOR MIRABILIS.

I could go on...and maybe I will another time.

"And where do you put yourself, Geis?"

"Oh...third rank, as yet untested, perhaps a bad joke."

THE YELLOW FRACTION
9-11-72

Rex Gordon is an accomplished sf writer; he has mastered the trick (or has the maturity) of not only creating

a whole, integrated other world culture and society, complete with functioning economy, but of making the people real within it, not just transplanted Americans.

The central fact of life for the colonists of Arcon is that their ancestors were too eager to grab the planet after a long, long, discouraging space voyage; they found out too late that the basic chemistry of the planet limited their lifespan to an average of forty years.

The plot of the story is the contest between the three life-views of the colonists: Adapt to the planet, adapt the planet to man, or get the hell off and look for a more Earth-like planet.

The problem is that the original colonists' ship has long since been dismantled and used up. The know-how is present, -47-

but the age factor is a problem—it takes too long to educate a man for the highly specialized work of spaceship construction and operation: barely educated—dead at forty. The society can't afford to build a spaceship unless....

The yellow fraction are those who are working for planetary escape. They are considered the equivalent of commies in our society—hunted, persecuted by the deceased Information Office.

Yet—the I.O. is controlled by the yellow fraction! The surface appearance is a fraud. And there is an Army general who wants to stage a coup....

It's a good sf novel; well written, intriguing, plausible. Especially interesting is the undercover maneuvering of the I.O. vs. the Army; the plots, conspiracies, the chess-match that decides the fate of the mass of citizens who haven't a clue as to the real nature of their supposed democratic government.

(Dobson Books, London, 1972, £1.50)

THE MAIL Three books from Berkley: CHROMOPOLIS: THE
9-11-72 SCIENCE FICTION OF J.G. BALLARD (\$2212, \$1.25);
 FREEZING DOWN by Anders Bodelsen (\$2186, 75¢);
 and THE CASTLE KEEPS by Andrew J. Offutt (\$2187, 75¢).

I read FREEZING DOWN when it appeared in hardcovers a year or so ago. Good book; most of you will remember my review of it in SFR #43. It demonstrates TANSTAAFL.

I will read Offutt's latest to see how he is developing.

A letter from Don Jenkins, editor of UNFOLD (box 6, Folsom, Cal.) which I had thought a prison publication, but which apparently is not. He asks me to explain my critical comments and says his policy is to provide a forum for ideas and artists who might not otherwise be published.

my eyeballs, Li. But we'll eat and talk a bit before we pit you against the drug."

Chen Li's dark, slanted eyes sparkled. She climbed, childlike, unceremoniously, onto the big purple bed. She was very small beside him.

Mwanza arranged large fluffy pillows behind her and served tall, thin, blue glass drinks of an amber liquor. He served cheese and carved fruit, bread arrows and cinnamon fingers.

Vik joked with her. He noticed she ate carefully and favored the left side of her jaw. "Bad tooth?"

Her eyes flickered. "Yes. But it will not interfere..."

"I'm sure it won't."

After a few minutes, Mwanza entered with a serving cart and two bed trays.

As he and Li ate, Vik asked, "Are you very recently from the Yaan Temple of Glorious Sun?"

Her eyes widened. "Yes, only a year. It is not often that anyone this far from my homeland knows of the Temple name."

"I've known other priestesses of Yaan...in my travels."

Chen Li said proudly, "I am of the First Order." But her eyes brimmed with tears. "I am so far away..."

I laud his policy but feel he's a soft editorial touch.

THE NEW STUFF ON TV:
9-12-72

The new cast members on LAUGH IN are competent; one little blonde is a Goldie Hawn type, another is a big-eyed "Why ME?" type. The new balding, fortyish guy is from Portland. The jokes and situations are a bit bolder and sexier now. The I note the decorative dancing girls still wear bras. BOOO!

THE NEW BILL COSBY SHOW, with guest stars Sidney Poitier and Harry Belafonte, except for Belafonte's singing numbers, succeeded in misusing and under-utilizing their talents. Old jokes and Jack Benny Stinginess don't go with Cosby. It was a spotty show. Lola Falana wriggles nicely. Integrated cast.

THE MAIL

9-12-72 Letter from James E. Cawston's father. Jim, former SFR subber and avid (if invisible) fan and sf reader, died last March 29. He was completely paralyzed from 3 crushed vertebrae suffered from a dive into a local (Kingston, NY) creek 8 years ago. He lived 8 years longer than the neuro-surgeon guessed. His extensive collection was sold to Gerry de la Ree.

Card from Jerry Lapidus who wasn't offended by Alter's character assassination last issue. In fact, Jerry says of REG: "I found it one of the most interesting, enjoyable and exciting fanzines I've seen in a long time. Superb, simply superb." There's a nice pimple.

Strange... a copy of David Gerrold's new book, WHEN HARLIE WAS ONE, a Nelson Doubleday book (book club edition) from Ballantine. Harlie...Harlie...hmm. Is David Tuckerizing Harlan here? I've GOT to read this.

The October PLAYBOY. Say, whatever happened to the Heinlein interview that was supposed to be in one of this year's issues?

The Sept. 21 issue of THE NEW YORK REVIEW of Books. Goodies by I.F. Stone: "If Nixon Wins..." and Alfred McCoy: "The CIA-Harper & Row Letters."

An L.A. firm selling "special" products sent me their brochures. Wilder and wilder. Offers the usual porno films and porno picture-text books. And...every possible variation on dildoes: long, short, thick, thin, with bumps, knobs, ticklers, "whiskers" and "wigglers", with ejaculation capacities, with vibrators, in the shape of a bride and groom, and etc.

Also for sale "The Dickie Lighter", a lipstick that emerges from the tube as a penis, a plastic tongue with tiny vibrator, a "Tiki God" that "Lets you worship at your own special shrine of carnality!! Squeeze the bulb, the tongue flashes in and out... a prick-shaped pipe—you draw from the hole in the glans, a vibrating hand, a "lover face" with a magnificent vibrating protruding tongue, and "lover lips"—a girl's face with open mouth. And more. Expensive.

After that, here is a vastly improved PREHENSILE #5 from Mike Glycer of 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, CA 91342; 35¢, 3/11. or you can pretend to be me, I get it free.

Mike is really finding the handle now. The zine is clearly

in the top fifteen and climbing. I would, if pressed, *oof* even commend Mike for his long, interesting editorial rambblings and suggest he keep on doing it.

Good layout—he's got the feel of it now. But that is not a good cover; Jack Harness can do much better.

Now my stomach tells me it is time to sandwich it up for a while. I'll chew and read the rest of PRE. Don't go away.

Uurp! Better cut down on salami and peaner butter sandwiches with a layer of marshmallow topping. A full glass of creme de menthe seems a bit too much, too....

Now as to PRE #5! The letter column is interesting and coherent—a sign of good editing. Bruce Pelz's Fan History Quiz is a fine device for entertaining and educating newer fans. Do it again, Bruce. The Donald Keller/David Gerrold review/counter-review reads good and has provoked me into reading (or intending to read) some of David's discussed short stories...if I can find the book.

So rate this issue 6+ and look forward to Mike's developing fanediting talent and skill.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
9-12-72

I keep thinking of C— and how I "failed" with M— and G— and a few others. It takes a while for self-delusion and society-imposed Image to be melted down and sold for scrap. I think occasionally of life with each of them or with a hypothetical "perfect" girl, and I conclude I wouldn't be a good catch. Maybe in five years...ten years... probably never. I'm encased in selfish bachelor cement.

This is the last page of regular REG material. The following pages will be the finish of "Tomb..." and if there is enough room on the last stencil there will be a few comments on my writing, on "Tomb..." and a mention of what will be in the next issue.

The next issue, by the way, won't be mailed until after the Christmas mail glut. I see no point in braving that turmoil at book rate; delivery would be delayed into January anyway, in all likelihood.

So have a happy holiday season and don't slip on the ice.

-----TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE-----

"I know, homesickness." He knew a special kind of total despair, sometimes. Home for him was over a thousand years ago...and no way to return.

Chen Li pressed close to him, to his warmth and strength. "I do not like being a slave. I am not happy. Could the great Masil buy me?...and send me home?"

Vik wished she wouldn't beg. But he was used to it; the weak always used their weakness as a weapon against the strong. The problem was there were so many weak and so few strong.

He said, "Not until the Emperor tires of you. But you know he might die soon."

"He has given me to Quebo upon his death! That man is crude and foul. He tried to enter me! He is not interested in my ways beyond the quick swallow."

"Quebo would never sell you to me. He hates my guts."

Li was desperate. "You are powerful. I have heard that you are more powerful than anyone, even the Emperor. You could acquire me if you wished. I can give you the purest ecstasy. I can...."

She slipped her hand gently, sinuously, into his robe. Her touch was exquisitely light and knowing. She whispered, "The Zizu will be my ally, not my foe. The great Masil will want me with him forever."

Vik signalled Mwanza. He said, "Take these trays away and you can go to your apartment. Come at dawn."

Vik was sure Chen Li had no weapon on her body; the loosely woven spiderweb material allowed no hiding place. There might be a long, deadly pin in her knotted mass of hair, but Vik intended to check that out very soon.

He didn't believe she had been sent to kill him or further disable him. She was another test, another investigator.

His only weak point was his dyed hair; the gray and the nappiness were artificial. Not even Mwanza knew that.

Mwanza retired.

Chen Li left the bed and, facing him, proudly removed her gown. When she eased off the vine's nipple-suckers the gown faded to a dull lilac. Her body hair had been plucked.

She returned to the bed and curiously, artfully, opened his robe. "Ahhh..."

Vik risked allowing his sexual appetite full satisfaction. He enjoyed her varied techniques, her elaborate sensual preliminaries.

In time he was trembling. Chen Li lay upon him, her slender ivory thighs spread wide on his massive black chest, her warm little hands cupped his sack, her rosebud mouth engulfed him as her head and shoulders rocked to and fro, taking and taking and taking....

When the warm wetness of her enclosing lips reached his mat of thick, curly black and grayed hairs, when the incredibly disciplined muscles of her throat began the final, exotic, rippling caress of his glans....he groaned and shuddered and shouted and spasmed.

The hours passed. Chen Li practiced her fantastic skills. She brought him to mind-bending rapture eight times.

It was early morning, before dawn. He was nearly exhausted. Yet the Zizu and his will kept his organ in huge erection. He had given her the pleasure of his tongue four times, delighted her, and had brought her to wracking climaxes.

Now she again wept and begged him to save her, to buy her, to free her somehow.

Vik wished he could. He was sleepy, sated, feeling fond of her and sympathetic. His caution was down, his mind dull. He made a crucial mistake.

He had to disappear soon. He couldn't take along a pleasure girl, even one as incredibly skilled as Chen Li. Masil had to die and he had to surface, changed, in India. His current period of his immortal life was finished.

Vik said, "I'm sorry, Li. I can't help you." He yawned.

She slumped. Her head fell back to his loins. "Then I am sorry, too. I would have lied for you." She quickly filled her sweet mouth with his manhood. Her tongue slithered....and she suddenly bit down hard, using her left molars.

The pain brought him to instant alertness. His big hand

crashed against the side of her head. She was knocked aside, senseless.

He was bleeding. He had felt a soft "give" of one of her teeth and the stab of a hidden sliver of bone.

Vik saw bits of hard wax on his flesh.

She had injected him with a cunningly contrived hyperdermic syringe.

Something was in his bloodstream now. A strange paralysis was spreading in his body.

Vik slowed his heartbeat, but it was too late. He cursed and called, "MWANZA!"

But his private one was probably still asleep. No one heard.

Vik couldn't move. In a moment he was barely able to breathe. He knew the drug now: a secretion from a rare vine beetle.

They had put enough in her hollow wax tooth to kill an ordinary man, knowing it would not quite be fatal for him.

Chen Li stirred, whimpered, and slowly crawled off the bed. She spat several times. She uncovered a bright, white radiance glowleaf lamp, pulled the red drapes aside that covered an oval window, and waved the light before the transparent membrane.

Then she sat cross-legged on the carpet and did not look at Vik.

He heard the beginning cries of an all-out assault.

A moment later he heard Mwanza rush in and saw his servant's appear in his field of vision. He heard Mwanza's anguished questions but could not answer.

The battle outside at the tree's borders and on the grounds was a staccato series of shouts, cries of agony and rage, the throaty roar of disturbed lions.

Mwanza understood, after a moment, what Chen Li had done, and the significance of the attack. This was the end.

He turned on Chen Li and savagely deflowered her with a long, curved knife. Her shriek seemed to tear out her throat.

Then he disemboweled her.

Sobbing, grunting, Mwanza turned Vik on his side so his master could see he had been revenged. The lovely little Chen Li, already dying, was strangling helplessly on slippery, purplish-white coils of her own intestines which Mwanza had pulled from her abdomen and stuffed down her throat. Her belly was a gaping, red-mouthed horror pulsing with spilled guts. She pawed feebly at her mouth.

A few other servants and tree guards staged a despairing, last ditch fight outside Vik's high cluster.

Vik lay paralyzed, his mind a grim pool of self-recrimination, unable to tell Mwanza of the secret passage.

Vik closed his eyes but heard Mwanza's choking, frothy cry as an army spear ripped up through the private one's lungs.

Vik kept his eyes closed, barely breathing, as triumphant soldiers poured into his bedroom and joked and bragged and pricked his naked body with their spears and swords and bone knives.

He began the process of Slowing. He shut down his body even more than the drug had. He retreated into a kind of

half sleep. He was vaguely aware of being moved. He permitted himself marginal hearing and an awareness of body position.

He was taken from his tree. A covered cart. Another room. Lying on his back. A long silence.

He surfaced his awareness: acute hearing first. Footsteps on stone, soldier voices. Grumbling lions. A rat scuttling close by.

Then smell: mustiness...straw? A urine-shit smell. The faint, soured aroma of his own body lotion.

Sight: he opened his eyes a crack. Dim...a stone ceiling. Rough cut stone walls. A small square gap that leaked daylight.

He was in a cell in the palace army prison. He wasn't surprised.

Sensation: the Zizu had worn off. The paralysis was almost gone. Pain from his thigh wound, from his bitten organ and from the half dozen or so spear and knife pricks. He damped the pain.

He was naked, lying on a too-short, narrow, vine-latticed wood frame bed. His bladder was full.

He turned his head slowly to the right and saw the heavy killed-wood counterweighted door. Counterweighted on the outside. The door slid up and down in deep stone grooves. It was locked by wooden bolts that secured the weights and also by bars that sank into slots in the stone.

There was a peephole in the door. He saw a sudden change of light behind the hole as an observer took his face away. Vik knew his own head movement had been noted. The word was on the way to Quebo and Ndola—the prisoner is awake.

The peephole darkened. Another watcher, or the same one returned.

Vik lay quiet, thinking. Then he closed his eyes, damped the insistent bladder sensation, and let himself sleep.

He was awakened by voices close to the door to his cell. He recognized Quebo's rough tones. He did not move. Eyes shut.

The bolts and bars were drawn. The door scraped upward. He opened his eyes and watched Quebo enter with four elite army guards, their precious swords drawn.

Singida followed Quebo, and he carried one of his medical bags. No white slaves permitted in the prison.

Quebo met Vik's gaze. He sneered. "The great Masil."

Vik began to damp all sensory nerves below the neck. He said laboriously, "You're clever. But you put too much dungo juice into her tooth. I can only move my head. I can't feel a thing."

"So much the better, if true. Quebo ordered Singida, "Make sure."

Singida hesitated a second, then came forward. Sweat sheened his fat, round face. He blinked too often. He said, "There should be sensation..." He took a bone needle from a small flat case in his bag and abruptly jabbed Vik's thigh wound through the bandage.

Vik shook his head. His body didn't even quiver. He felt the penetration but no pain. Peripherally, he watched Quebo and studied the tense guards.

Singida jabbed at Vik's sack. No response. Suddenly he stabbed the side of Vik's neck. Vik gasped and violently jerked his head. The rest of his body lay as if dead.

The guards relaxed, as did Quebo. Singida said, "Yes, she -50-

must have gotten in a good solid bite!" He giggled.

Quebo snapped, "Take your samples."

Singida took out his priceless scalpel and began to cut off a handful of Vik's grayed, kinky hair.

Vik's fingertop, middle finger, left hand, suddenly throbbed twice, without pain.

He closed his eyes in despair. Quebo's agents had discovered the secret passages. The lasers had fired. The double throb was the signal he had programmed be sent. The minipile that ran the computer and other equipment was now into a swift self-destruct countdown program. He hadn't wanted it to fall into primitive hands. It, and the other things in that room, was prime evidence of his link to the ancients and their science. It was enough to prove him Kun-Zar the Immortal.

He had thought it better to have the precious computer and allied equipment and lasers destroyed in a mysterious explosion that would kill all witnesses.

Better that Masil be thought an Egyptian agent or dabbler in the old ways of war. Only a very wealthy man could afford the rare chemicals and raw materials to make explosives.

It was out of his hands now. He had no way to stop the automatic countdown. It didn't matter.

But he had never thought things would ever get this far out of control. His mouth was dry.

Singida completed cutting free the handful of Vik's dyed, treated hair. He put it into a leather pouch.

Quebo said, "Ndola is still hoping. He hasn't much time, so he believes in a myth.

"Where is he?"

"At the docks, welcoming the expedition. As you arranged."

Vik slowly let his bladder go. Urine splashed down between the vine latticework of the crude bed to the straw-littered stone floor.

Singida recoiled. Quebo laughed. The guards relaxed even more. Two of them slid their blades into their scabbards.

Vik knew he could kill them all now, in about four or five seconds. But he wasn't sure it was the best move. The problem was the prison guard outside the door who was peering in. That man would instantly lower the door and slam home the bolts. Besides, Vik didn't know the layout of the prison; he was probably in the most secure section, and there would be other locked doors.

To explode now into terribly swift killing action would betray to Ndola his true physical capabilities. If he couldn't be sure of getting out of the building he knew he should save that surprise.

Better to carry on as Masil for as long as possible. Until Singida tested that handful of hair. An Hour?

Vik's mouth began to taste brassy. He said, "My associates will take steps to get me out."

"Your companies and your bank are occupied, under our orders now. They will continue to operate in the Emperor's interest or their officers will be executed."

Quebo kicked some dirty straw toward the rivulet of urine creeping across the floor. "Calundo is under arrest, along

with your other assistants in the Ministry. My staff has taken over."

Vik asked, "Why did you attack?"

"Doctor Singida found your body amazingly youthful for your age, and so Ndola...."

Singida said quickly, "Skin...body fat. The fingernails. Upper lip. The body hair pattern—"

Quebo cut him off. "And Chen Li. She knew men, old and young, in special ways. Blindfolded, she could tell an old man's stem and sack from a young man's. We tested her. She was to drug you and signal if she was convinced you were not really an old man."

"The Zizu makes any man young."

"Zizu aside, she wasn't fooled."

"She was promised her freedom if she found what Ndola wanted her to find."

Quebo smiled. "True. I'm still not convinced. But the Emperor is."

"I want to see Ndola!"

"You probably will. If you can live forever he naturally wants your secret—and so do I—before killing you."

In the back of his mind, Vik was counting seconds. He said disgustedly, "I am not Kun-Zar!"

Quebo shrugged. "We'll find out. I have men searching your tree, inch by inch. And after Singida—"

The stone floor heaved sharply and settled back, groaning. Dust drifted down from the walls and ceiling.

Singida cringed. There was shouting outside. Lions coughed.

Quebo cursed. "We never have earthquakes!"

A strange, unfamiliar, stomach-rolling terror ruptured Vik's composure for an instant. He felt vulnerable now. He hadn't been in this bad a situation for six hundred years. And this time it could be the end.

He desperately wanted to keep on living! The unknown future lured him.

He made a lightning calculation...a difficult decision.

Then the rumbling thunder of a distant explosion filled the cell.

As the thunder of the explosion faded, Vik said, "Quebo. I have something very important to tell you and Ndola...in total privacy."

Quebo became keenly alert. "I'll inform the Emperor." He jerked his head at the wall. "Was that yours?"

"Bring Ndola." Vik closed his eyes. He ignored all further questions. He shut down his hearing. He examined his analysis and saw the weaknesses of his plan. But there was no other way to go.

Vik slept.

He awakened when two of the six bolts were drawn in the door. Quebo called, "Masil, the Emperor is here to talk with you."

The cell was dark. Bits of light illuminated the peephole and the edges of the door.

Quebo's inflection of 'Masil' told Vik that Singida had found the dye and kinking chemicals in the fistful of hair.

They were now sure they had Kun-Zar.

Quebo continued, "We are sending in a guard to tie your feet and hands."

Vik had expected that. He called, "Alright." He sat up. The peephole light was obscured as someone checked his position. More bolts were drawn. The door slid up a few inches. A face peered under it. The face said, "Go ahead."

The door raised enough for a frightened, naked, cautious guard, unarmed, to crawl under with a bright, potted, glow-leaf plant and a coil of ironvine rope.

The door lowered the instant the guard was inside, and the bolts were thumped home.

Vik said nothing to the man, who stank with fear, as his ankles and wrists were tightly bound. They were watched constantly.

Quebo called, "Tie him to the bed, too."

When he had complied, the guard retreated to the door and the door was raised all the way.

Quebo and Ndola entered. Quebo carried a cushioned, killed-wood stool. The door was lowered and locked. The two leaders waited and listened as one by one the guards walked away from the cell door.

Ndola settled tiredly onto the stool, which Quebo placed for him. He was bent and skeletal in his blue and gold patterned silk toga. His dark brown skin showed its liver spots as spatters of black. Stark veins seemed to crawl in his skull-like temples.

The Emperor was up on Zizu and hemp, but still fighting pain. Yet he knew what he was doing. His gaze was both glazed and feverish with excitement.

Quebo wore his usual ornate green military tunic and woven gold belt. A different, more dazzling set of rings decorated his short, strong fingers. He also wore a short, thin, jeweled sword in a golden scabbard.

When the seventh set of footsteps had faded, Ndola lifted a sticklike arm. "You are Kun-Zar!" His dark, hollow, desperate eyes gleamed.

Vik answered quietly, "Yes."

Ndola cackled, "Yes, yes, yes!" His eyes became glittering black diamonds. "You are immortal!"

"Yes."

"How?" Ndola's claw-hands clutched themselves. "HOW?" The effort and desperation in the question shook his frail body.

Vik said, "I want free. If I am free I will leave the Empire. I will leave the continent. I will never return. And I'll give you the secret. That's the deal. There's room in the world for two...or three...immortal men."

Quebo asked, "What was in the ground where your tree was? Forty-six of my men were killed. Steam is still coming up from the hole. All we've found are some blobs of fused metal. Valuable, but I can't help wondering what it used to be."

Ndola gazed greedily at Vik's magnificent, naked, black body. He marveled, "You are immortal!" He impatiently gestured Quebo to be silent. "If I become immortal, too, will this pain go? Will I be healthy?"

"Yes, the cancer would die, almost overnight. But you would not be a young immortal man. You'd stay your present age—forever."

Ndola nodded. He swallowed. "Yes. I understand. I

agree to your terms. The world is huge. We can be friends again."

Vik said to them both, "A long time ago I learned to be the absolute master of my body. I can withdraw into my mind and will myself to die, if I have to. I can avoid any pain for any length of time. I can stop all sound, all sight, all smell, all touch...all contact with the outside world. I am beyond torturing. I can't be forced to give you what you want." He said it quietly and truthfully. Even bound hand and foot, lashed to a crude bed in a dungeon, naked, he possessed a charisma, a great aura of knowledge and power and certainty.

Quebo clucked his tongue. "I can believe that. How did you make yourself into a black man? Kun-Zar is supposed to be white, with the features of a white man."

"Hundreds of years ago, in Egypt, there were drugs that could alter skin pigmentation permanently. There were a few surgeons then who could use their scalpels to change a face this way. It took five operations."

Ndola cried, "Never mind that! All that history can come later! How did you become immortal? How can I be immortal?" He was trembling.

"I take a drug once a year." Vik noted the subtle skepticism that shaded Quebo's expression. But Ndola wanted to believe.

They haggled: "I want out of this prison." "You don't leave until I know that formula!" "I'll make it for you." "Tell me how to make it." "You'll kill me if I tell you that." "I don't dare let you out of this hole."

Quebo broke in. "You killed my agents at Kiambi's tree, didn't you? And old Kiambi, too, to rot what he knew of you? He was the only doctor you ever went to."

Ndola whispered fiercely, "You're too dangerous. Too strong, too ruthless. I can't trust you."

Vik smiled grimly. "And I can't trust you."

They stared at one another. Ndola was trembling. "I PROMISE YOU! I'LL LET YOU GO!" He tottered and almost fell from the stool. "Mas— We've been friends for twenty years!"

Vik watched him. Ndola was sweating. His pain must be worse. Quebo was watching Ndola, too.

The Emperor cried in agony and anguish, "How can we arrange it?"

Vik was silent. Quebo was silent.

Ndola keened and clutched at his belly. He gasped, "Tell me! Tell me, or my last breath will be used to order your death!"

Vik sighed. He hesitated, glanced at Quebo, and said to Ndola, "There was an immortal man before me. Eleven hundred and fifty-six years ago he was fatally hurt in a freak accident. Before he died he told me the formula. I didn't believe him, but I tried it. Why not? Once a year. After ten years I hadn't aged a trace. After twenty years I was positive. I don't understand how it works, but it keeps on working."

Vik hesitated again. He looked hard at Ndola. "Do you swear to release me? Do you swear on the name of your father's shield and your mother's womb?"

Ndola licked his dry old lips. "Yes!" He bent over, grunting with pain. When he straightened a moment later he

said to Quebo, "Get me a pipe!"

Quebo's eyes flickered. He didn't want to leave. "I'll call your slave."

"No, you go get it!"

"As Defense Minister—"

"LEAVE US!" Ndola screamed the order. He was panting, a dew of perspiration on his face.

Still Quebo hesitated. Then his face hardened and he pounded on the heavy door. "GUARD! GUARD!"

Ndola sat, quivering, as one of the guards returned, peeped in, raised the door, let Quebo out, lowered it and rebolted it.

Ndola called, "Leave one at a time!" He listened intently to the sets of footsteps. He sat rocking on the stool, both arms crushing his toga to his abdomen.

Then he whispered urgently, "Now—the formula!" He awkwardly, painfully, hitched the stool close to Vik.

"Don't write it down. Keep it only in your mind." Vik whispered, too.

Ndola's pain-filled, cunning eyes narrowed as he listened. He made Vik repeat it. "But anybody—"

Vik shook his head. "The ingredients have to be common and always available. It's the combination and the proportions, and the twelve hour boiling. And, remember, only one small spoonful of the distillate. Too much will kill you. And take it only once a year."

"Yes. I hope... If you're lying—"

They heard footsteps rapidly approaching in the stone passageway.

A moment later Ndola seized the pipeful of Zizu and hemp from Quebo and greedily sucked the potent smoke. The guard paced away.

Quebo asked, "Did he tell you?"

Ndola sucked in deep lungfuls. He shook his head. He began to relax.

Quebo glared at Vik. "I don't believe you are immune to torture."

Vik smiled up at him.

Ndola straightened. He stood. His face softened. "I have duties. So do you, Quebo. I'll talk with Masil again tomorrow."

"He's Kun-Zar! He admitted it! We have proof!"

"Perhaps." Ndola turned to the door.

Quebo knew then. Ndola was trying to freeze him out.

Vik asked for food, clothes, a better bed. Ndola granted the request as he and Quebo left.

The previous precautions were continued, however, when Vik was untied by a naked, still frightened guard.

Ten days passed.

Vik was worried. He sat on his mattress, in an ill-fitting, too-small cotton robe, and speculated endlessly. The guard who twice a day slid a bowl of food under the barely raised door would not speak a word.

On the eleventh day there was a stir in the passageway. The regular guard walked away. A single set of footsteps approached—light, springy, quick.

The steps stopped outside his cell. The peephole "blinked." Ndola's voice came, strong and vibrant with health.

"Still there. Ahh. Yes. Do you know, I feel wonderful? I feel marvelous. I have no pain!"

"I'm happy for you. I was a bit anxious."

"I personally brewed a few spoonfuls of the...elixir. And I selected a man in my previous condition—dying of a cancer in the gut. And I personally fed him a measure of the magic fluid."

Vik exploded convincingly. "WHY? Now he's—"

"Dead! I had to be sure you weren't intending to poison me in exchange for Quebo's promise of freedom. As Emperor I think of every possibility."

Ndola's voice came through the cell door only slightly muffled. It betrayed fierce joy and exuberance.

He continued, "When I saw him transformed in a single day! I knew you had not lied to me...so I had him killed instantly. There can only be...."

Ndola paused. He laughed with self-satisfaction. "Quebo tried to move against me. But he underestimated me, just as you did. An agent can be a triple agent as well as a double. The instant he saw me the day after I took the elixir he knew I was immortal. He tried to strike that night, but I struck first!"

"Is he in this prison, too?"

"No, my former Defense Minister is at the moment hanging by his neck from my center tree, in his full military uniform with all of his honors and rings. A cautionary view for other army officers."

Vik's heart was hammering in spite of his attempt to control it. His stomach held a terrible leaden weight in its pit. He knew what was coming. His gamble had not paid off. He had known Ndola's character, but had hoped....

Ndola continued, "A few others have died, too. Your upper level bank managers, your company officials.... My people are quite amazed at the extent of your holdings and power... and wealth. Since Masil has been proven a traitor to me and the Empire, all his estates and properties have reverted to me."

Vik said, "I expected that to happen. All I want is safe passage to the sea."

Beyond the door, Ndola murmured, "Ah, Kun-Zar, mighty Kun-Zar. There can be only one immortal man."

"You swore an oath!"

Ndola laughed, triumphant, delighted with himself. "You know—of course you know—common, mortal humans are like bugs to me now. I'll watch them wither and die...and I'll live on and on and on. That's how you felt, wasn't it? I was a bug to you. Everyone was a bug and you took the long view. You planned centuries ahead...."

Ndola crowed, "AHH, GREAT YAOUNDE, I AM A GOD LIKE YOU!" He beat his fists on Vik's cell door and laughed with maniacal glee.

Vik sank into despair. His big fists tightened.

Ndola waited for Vik to say something, then informed him, "I have a surprise for you. You're going to die in a very special way. You'll never guess." He chuckled and walked lightly away.

Vik spent his remaining hours in the dungeon making a last fruitless survey of the door, the stone walls, the stone floor. The tiny, high window was only big enough to get an

arm into.

He was not fed that afternoon.

He spent the long, black night staring at his long past in his mind. He had been complacent, stupid and careless this time, beyond any recovery. A blind, smug idiot! He lashed himself with reproaches.

The aliens would let him die. He had long ago decided his immortality was an experiment. Now the experiment, after little more than a thousand years, was ending!

He slugged the rough granite wall with his fist and let himself feel the full explosion of pain.

Then he sat, gasping, half sobbing, cradling his broken left hand until the dawn.

With the first gray light Vik heard the guards doing something to his door...a muffled scraping....

He left the bed and saw what was happening. The guards were caulking the cracks...sealing his cell.

He tried talking with them, but they ignored his questions. Someone watched through the peephole.

When they finished, one called, "All right, tell them to go ahead."

Vik heard sounds outside the tiny window. It was blocked. His cell was plunged into darkness.

Then he heard hissing.... And caught the first whiff of an acrid gas. He went mad with rage. "YOU COWARDLY SONS OF DISEASED DOGS! LION FUCKERS! YOU CAN TELL NDOLA...HE..."

He choked as unseen clouds of the gas were pumped into his small cell. He was dizzy! He staggered and went to his knees. His mind slewed and skidded. He was abruptly on his back on the cold stone floor. He managed to think, What a shitty way to die. Then consciousness warped away and he sank into a black whirlpool.

But did not die.

Vik's awareness of self returned. His mind swam up from nothingness to blazing pain—his left hand. He automatically damped the agony to zero. His attention was captured by a creaking sound... He was lying on his back on softness....

Bright light penetrated his closed eyelids.

Vik opened his eyes slightly. A great slab of sparkling, transparent crystal hung over him, swaying, held in the air by plaited ironvine ropes in a heavy-duty pulley system.

To his right—an on-edge slab of the same clear crystal, only a foot from his shoulder...and another slab to his left. Cushioned white velvet under him.

He was lying naked in what had been intended to be Ndola's tomb.

As his eyes adjusted to the sunlight in the temple and the rainbow glitter from the crystal, Vik saw clearly twenty of the Emperor's Guards spaced on the marble dais around the huge, transparent coffin, facing inward. Their plumed lances were leveled.

The top slab of crystal hung only about eighteen inches above the top of the coffin.

A voice said, "He's awake, Great One."

Ndola's laughter came to Vik. "Fine! Be ready at my signal to lower the top."

Vik considered a quick scramble from the coffin...but his first move would bring those deadly, bone lances—Impossible. And with his damaged hand....

Ndola appeared between two of his Guardsmen as he climbed the steps to the coffin. He was gloating. With him, hanging back, was Empress Punia, her lovely brown face a mask of controlled horror.

Ndola wore a spectacularly alive golden leaf robe with his massive, intricately worked jeweled Necklace of Empire. He handled the gold and diamond encrusted Empire Staff easily. His Empire Crown glittered with hundreds of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, set in gold, silver and platinum.

Ndola stopped five feet from the coffin, just inside the cordon of alert Imperial Guards. He chuckled softly. "I've had a gold plaque cast in your honor. It reads, 'Mighty Kun-Zar, the Once Immortal Man, Defeated and Entombed by the Great Immortal Ndola.' It will be set in stone—here—at your side."

Vik turned his head to look fully at Ndola. He grinned. "You're not immortal."

He saw struck in Ndola's eyes the spark of a terrible doubt. "I AM IMMORTAL! My cancer is dead. I feel—"

"You feel the effects of the drug I gave you. It doesn't give immortality. It doesn't cure cancer. It draws the total resources of the body into one grand, final twenty day illusion of health and well-being. You'll be dead, a burned-out husk, one day after the effect wears off. You're a nova now."

"I don't believe you! You're trying one last trick—"

Vik sat up in the crystal tomb. He spotted the amethyst-necklaced commander of the Guards. The commander had taken a lot of money from Masil in exchange for information and secret loyalty.

Vik put every element of deep, vibrant, baritone power and authority he possessed into his words. He spoke directly to the Guards and their commander.

"I am Kun-Zar the Immortal. I will reward you all with high command, wealth, and my favor for as long as you live. Disobey me now and my curse will curdle your wives' wombs and you will father monsters! Your stems will wither and you will live in shame and sickness the rest of your lives!"

His rich, strong voice overrode Ndola's attempt to interrupt. Without pause, without hesitation, Vik commanded, pointing at Ndola, SEIZE HIM!" And confidently, calmly, unhurriedly, began to climb from the coffin.

There was an instant of hesitation in the men. A flickering of eyes to see if anyone would obey. The commander was poised—eyes narrowed, body tense, about to act—

Ndola screamed, "DODGMA!"

And a full company of the elite Palace Trees Defenders rustled into the temple from their secret positions just outside. Every archway was suddenly filled with green and gold clad warriors.

The tension broke and the Imperial Guards prodded Vik back down, inside the rectangular crystal tomb.

Ndola laughed. "I'm a worthy successor to you, Kun-Zar. Superior in mind. I will never be caught like you."

Vik closed his eyes. There was almost nothing left. A terrible dread was claiming him. He opened his eyes. He begged. "I ask of you, Great Ndola, one last request. He turned up his palms in supplication.

"What do you want?"

Vik spoke an old ritual. "Give me a full belly for my journey into death. Give me meat and let me eat my fill."

Ndola studied him. A long moment passed. A slow, malicious, cold smile spread the Emperor's lips. "I can't deny you."

He pointed to Empress Punia. "Here is your lover. Eat her! Take your fill of her, because if you don't she'll die later today anyway, for betraying me in your bed." He gestured to the two nearest Guards. "Give her to him."

Punia gasped and shrank away. Her face was pale, her eyes enormous. She screamed as the Guards took her and dragged her to the huge coffin. She disintegrated into hysterical, squalling terror.

Ndola ordered, "Take her bracelets and crown!"

They obeyed, then lifted her and thrust her into the massive tomb.

The emotionally shattered girl fell onto Vik and blindly clutched at him, sobbing, pressing to him instinctively for warmth and protection. Her pink leafgown had been torn. It flickered softly, one of its suckers hanging loose from her large, exertion-swollen left nipple.

The hanging slab of crystal, its square edges sharp and perfect, swayed ponderously above them in a slow, eccentric arc, disturbed by the Guards and by Punia's flailing body.

Ndola smirked. "I knew. I knew everything." He lifted the Empire Staff and struck the marble dais. "You have your meat, Kun-Zar. Does it matter that it is alive?"

Vik braced himself. He closed off part of his personality, part of his character. He had to survive! There was only an infinitesimal chance now. He had to go ahead. His mouth was bone dry.

Mortals were not bugs to him. He had come to think of them as his property, his pets, his children, his responsibility as a species. He had been guiding and rebuilding civilization as best he could since the horror of the Bio-War. In another five hundred years or so the few viable monsters inhabiting what had been the United States and Canada would have bred true and would be spreading south... eventually they would cross the oceans.

He had to be alive when that challenge came to mankind.

Vik had not been the perfect steward of his gift. He had indulged himself in every way possible. He had been a ferocious king in the north. And he had been soft and loving for a hundred years in the Pacific. He had been everything and done everything.

And now—

He held Punia and slipped his good right hand under her slim neck. He kissed her trembling lips. "I'm sorry." He poured strength into his big hand and made a powerful vise of his thumb and fingers. Her carotid arteries were squeezed shut.

Punia's brain, suddenly deprived of a flow of fresh, oxygen and nutrient rich blood, began to die. Her consciousness winked out. Her body began to convulse.

Vik kept up the pressure until her heart stopped for lack of a proper signal from the dying autonomic system in the lower brain. Other controls stuttered and died. The body voided its wastes with great jerking spasms.

Vik flipped the body to his left side onto its back and

tore the leafgown away. He used great strength to rip open its stomach and tear away the muscles. Blood splattered him and welled up in the gaping, ragged hole. He plunged his hand into the cavity and found the warm, barely still heart. He ripped it free and forced himself to eat it in huge rending bites. He barely chewed.

Vik was into a kind of trance, a fierce auto-hypnotic action sequence that forbid most "human" thought. He heard but did not hear the gasps from the hardened Guards. Even Ndola's shocked, reflexive laughter did not penetrate.

Vik found the liver, clawed it free and wolfed it down. Then both kidneys—biting, swallowing as fast as he could, drawing ragged breaths, snorting against the bloody gobbets he crammed against his working mouth.

He ate only the heart, liver and kidneys. Then he heaved the ruined body out of the crystal coffin.

He lay back on the blood-soaked white velvet. He saw Ndola, face contorted, gesture for the lowering of the massive overhead transparent slab.

The Guardsmen closed in to prevent a last instant attempt at escape. The ironvine cables moved, the pulleys creaked....

Vik closed his eyes and began to slow his metabolism. He had fuel now, rich in the highest quality proteins, fats, vitamins. The interior of the tomb was large enough to provide air for decades if he could slow himself enough.

He hoped the lid slab would not be an absolute airtight fit. He hoped the emperor that followed the doomed Ndola would open the coffin. Or that some vandals would try to breach the seal...or that the white barbarians would hear of Kun-Zar's entombment and come for him.

Vik did not see or hear the workman come forward at the last minute and apply a coating of clear liquid cement to the top edges of the tomb's walls.

One end of the top slab grated into position. The final ropes were pulled free and the mighty crystal slab thudded down. The sound echoed in the temple.

Vik concentrated on the ancient techniques of body control. His heartbeat quieted and slowed. Forty beats per minute... twenty...ten...five.... His oxygen requirement sank to the absolute minimum.

He settled into a deep, murky dream.

Earth's one immortal man waited.

-- End --

THE AUTHOR SPEAKS I'm not happy at all with the first page. Too porno-ish. Even so it is probably a good narrative hook and signal.

After the first page, though, I'm generally happy with the story. There are some experimental elements in the narrative which I'll discuss after I see what reaction or feedback it gets.

Writing science fiction is about three times as hard as writing pornography; creating and detailing and interweaving a future society and history and customs is work, and it makes me think that sf authors have nothing to be ashamed of in comparison to "mainstream" authors. SF calls for skills and talents not required by the "mainstream."

Doing two or three drafts of this story was essential. I

had the ending—the tomb scene—before a beginning or middle, and was feeling my way along with constantly shifting outlines as plausibility and character requirements made adjustments and minor rewrites necessary. I was forever finding myself in places I didn't want to be, and finding I couldn't logically get to where I wanted to go from where I was. Too often 'You can't get there from here.' in fiction is disgustingly true.

A good writer does get there and makes it seem inevitable. A bad one clumsily or carelessly hacks through fragile credibility to make it.

Reconciling structure with character and future is a touchy, tricky, sweaty business. No wonder so many take easy ways out or avoid it altogether.

So my next chore is to rewrite the first page, then send off a copy of REG#3 to the typist for the submission copy and carbons.

NEXT ISSUE is going to contain the first third or so of a first person sf adventure novel, DROID. (DROID being the contraction of android used by a civilization on a parallel universe Earth.)

The plot is vague—a few of the high intelligence droids of this alternate Earth suddenly go crazy and claim they are men from another world. (Somehow a few minds are sucked into droids across space-time fabrics from our world.)

Such "crazy" droids are killed. But the hero escapes death and adjusts and...

I'll have to think about it. There'll be sex, violence, and a few surprises.

Long range plans call for a series of Vik Kunzar future history novels. No hurry.

I had a lot of fun creating the initial elements of our future as I wrote TOMB. Off the cuff—the BioWar, the ice age suddenly sweeping over the world in a few hundreds of years (I'll think of a good explanation for its speed when I have to in a novel portraying Vik's northern adventures.), the Egyptian resurgence, the mutants breeding in North America which Vik will have to cope with sometime. Aah, and the enigma of the aliens who first made him immortal. What are their true motives?

"In TRIAL AND ERROR, I pointed out that a good story was just as hard to sell as a bad one. A too good story naturally cannot appear in a publication with a large group of readers. Actually, a short story, or novel, to be highly successful, must be thoroughly bad; but it must be designedly bad. Apparently I did not sufficiently clarify this point in TRIAL AND ERROR, since many young writers questioned me about it; in fact, I began to be a bit in doubt about it myself, but I questioned a cross-cut of editors of all types of popular magazines, and they understood what I meant by a designedly bad story perfectly, and it is that sort they want."

—PLOTTING by Jack Woodford, pg 71.

Alas all illusions.

—Richard E. Geis, REG #3, pg 55

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RICHARD E. GEIS is edited and published by Richard E. Geis
One American dollar per copy P.O. Box 11408
Portland, OR

All letters of comment are
liable to be published in
whole or in part. Please mark DNQ (Do Not Quote) on those
parts you wish kept private.
97211

No advertising will be accepted.

RICHARD E. GEIS is published irregularly (whenever at least
44 pages have been completed) for the Fantasy Amateur Press
Association, for trade with other magazines, and for sub-
scribers.

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Cover by Tim Kirk.
