

# SYNAPSE

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## DENDRITES

It's hard to divine the Will of FooFoo from events. For more than a week before the last deadline, He arranged it so i had few appointments and few unscheduled interruptions, as if He wanted me to have Synapse in the 200th mailing. I finished and mailed that issue the Thursday before deadline (as i shall this, if He is willing). But it arrived late, i assume.

The next day i noticed in an IASFM on our coffee table the answer to my question who is Count Zero: the last installment thereof. I read the synopsis, but saw little reason to go into the text.

Here, by the way, is perhaps another descendant of "I have seen the future--and it works!": In ads for Hellraiser, "I have seen the future of horror and his name is Clive Barker." --Stephen King

FooFoo has not arranged things so favorably this month; hence a sawed-off issue. If this doesn't get in under the wire, maybe Epimetheus will be supplemented by another Synapse.

You will be glad to hear that making italics (and quasiquotemarks) doesn't require as many keystrokes as i thought last time. There were shortcuts toward the back of the LocaScript manual.

Having this Amstrad has made me pay more attention to computers. I know a fellow with a Macintosh and a wp system. He allows access to a nephew who is almost an imbecile but likes to play with the keyboard. One time he would punch the tab key, pleased to see the cursor move across the screen; it must have given him a sense of power. He'd hit a character at random, tab again, and so on across the screen and all the way down the page. My friend had some scrap paper that was printed on one side, and gave the kid a couple dozen sheets to run the copy on again & again, for putting it through the printer was part of the game. Do you know what he called that bunch of paper?

# EPIMETHEUS

Mailing 200, part

## FANTASY AMATEUR

Pohl's article says the right things. Sometimes it shows animus against Wollheim. " I don't remember that one had to keep the hekto jelly moistened as he pulled copies. Maybe the publisher of Groggy Tales can tell us. And Fred speaks of hektographer's hands as coming from the process of duplication. I thought it came mostly from handling the master. " Wollheim wasn't a teenage kid at the time indicated. In 1934 he was 20.

A new member's name on the roster is usually all-capitalized. " Isn't Holmberg's first half-name spelled Jon? " "Total income" isn't the correct label for the sum of previous balance plus income.

One certain misprint in the constitution is the penultimate word of "Function": "published my members."

## TWENTIETH CENTURY UNLIMITED (Porter)

"so notable". "some of the very best fanzines of all times". This is an example of double intensifiers.

"much more genuine friends". "appearing with *startling* rapidity". (No, I wouldn't write 'with rapidity'.)

The idea of books with just one stfnal idea apiece sounds like the formula HGWells favored.

"really began to reveal his *true* editorial abilities." "*acutely* sensitive to nuances of style". "*quite simply*". "at least as good as, *if not better than*," : "at least" does the job.

You refer to the Ace Specials series as "epochal" "and still epochal". Will the currency of discourse be cheapened until it reaches hyperinflation?

## RIMINESCENT (Thompson)

Your second page spells it both ways. " You should have at least added 'inshallah' after typing that this issue was printed almost immediately after it was typed.

"the first real con I ever attended". "I seem to have *much* less emotional involvement".

I'm interested, if you have something original to say about the excesses of Xmas. " I never believed there were little people inside the radio; but I remember accepting my big brother's explanation of animated cartoons: They were people dressed up, and their vertical movements were with the aid of those wires you see running down the screen (scratch streaks). " "the issue *somehow* lacks emotional immediacy".

"*totally* unable to relate". " Does UNM have a telescope in Arizona?

"they *do* shift subtly". "I *do* apply a *distinctly* different set of standards". "*much* more stringent, in general." Here is an intensifier followed by a deintensifier, "in general". " When material in parentheses is essential to the structure or substance of the sentence, you ought to abolish the parentheses. es g: "I used to review (and ...) criticize ..." "recommend some of his stuff (not ...) but some ..." A sentence should make sense with the

parenthetical passage removed. " You say "plausibility (internal consistency of setting and foundation in 'reality')". Does plausibility mean absence of implausibility, or a positive quality: that you can believe people would act and talk this way? " "dismal failure". Cliché. "not at all sure it could succeed as mainstream". "thoroughly unsympathetic". "it *does* make us pause to wonder". " Why have a hypersonic underground train instead of jetliners? " "so why even mention them?" "doesn't even seem to be aware". " ~ "SF criticism is *all that* much different". (There are no words of degree here to which "that much" might refer.) ~"much thought *at all*". "better stay out of that argument *entirely*."

~"don't attend very many cons *at all* anymore". "at all" is an absolute, so it requires an absolute negative before it.

"I *actually* almost started ...".

"since I do get paid ... perhaps I *do* actually qualify."

"often *much* more interesting than the fiction". "I *certainly* don't envy anyone the project".

"it *really does* get into an extremely nebulous area."

"If ... *just* doesn't appeal to you". "I can't *really* recommend it". 'don't' would do the job better. There's too much pretense of compulsion. ('I will have no alternative but to foreclose.') " "it is *certainly* one of the most original". "In due course it *all* becomes quite real and natural". " I was sorry to hear about Replay. Long years ago i started a story along a similar line, except that at the end of a year the protagonist had the option of going ahead or going back and improving the replay. When i heard of the title My Favorite Year i thought that might be the same idea, but apparently it wasn't.

"I *fully* accept your explanation".

"living *well* below the poverty level." ('The market was off better than fifty points today.')

'shalt' is the form that goeth with "thou". " "WATCHMAN has not ... to cross my path". That happened because you inserted "and is not too likely under normal circumstances", which goes to show you should say one thing at a time. " "inadvertently stumble". "My mind *just* can't *seem* to grapple with them." "I *somehow* never learned it." Everything happens somehow. " Speed Mystery is a strange magazine title.

"Your factual account of the ambulance trip was *far, far* better ... than the fiction." " "chlosterol". That's Chloe with a tubal ligation.

"The only way anyone has ... is their own senses and sensibilities."

At page 17 you start giving the member's name after his publication's title. Would that all mcs did this, for often i can't remember who done it, excepting the FA and old standbys.

I don't know about chemists being borderline poverty cases now, but in 1934 Wollheim told me most of them had to work for large companies and didn't make much money.

"*somewhat* more modest scale." "My own ignorance is unbounded." So is everyone's.

"All the Time in the World" was made into a TV movie.

## CREATURE OF HABIT (Brandt)

I must not partake of the fannish racial memory very well, for i don't remember Amigocon. What terror tales did you hear from Las Cruces fandom (and who is that?) about Donaldson? At New Mexicons he's the soul of amiability.

Perhaps what we're groping for is a special egoboo category for discussion of science-fiction. We'd need to decide whether the account of a convention on the fantastic in literature qualifies. But maybe not; the poll-responder would probably have a general idea, 'This member discusses sf', and subjectively assign a rank to his quality in this respect.

A Russian satellite with a nuclear power plant fell on North America.

I favor testing teachers for knowledge of the subjects they teach. My profession hasn't come to testing yet, but we have requirements of continuing legal education.

I don't know how many, but the first fanzines with the SFC acronym included Critic and Collector.

What are fannish metafiction and French semiotics?

## READTHISIFYOUWISH (Engholm)

I wouldn't call Bellis's sabotage "blunders". The Fool's Prayer implied that Ghod could forgive blunders. " Does "such groups comes and goes in FTLish fashion" refer to Francis T Laney or father-than-light? " "A classical case of hubris." Not as i understand hubris. " What is a Potemkin front? "

I'm not giving you the treatment this time, but an almost consistent pattern of interchanging the singular and plural in English leads me to call attention to that. "Bellis have discarded 'votes' which hasn't met with approval (and how many cases that lies behind this, ...)". "There's no physical attacks" is the kind of mistake some natives make, not realizing that the place-holder "There" can be either singular or plural, according to the nominative in the predicate.

## ADVOCATUS DIABOLI (Rodgers)

Sermons must lose much in translation to sign language.

On the second page you correctly said "So far as Bridges goes", but on the first page you wrote "So far as reading Science fiction being a religious experience, it seems ..." Structures that require you or the reader to remember the opening form after intervening material are best avoided.

"Peace Through Strength" does not so much resemble "Strength through joy" as to indicate ignorance of history. Congressmen, even mine (Lujan), are not such nincompoops as the voters force them to seem.

I don't know anyone who writes "concertoes", but i would prefer 'concertos'to "concerti".

There are better reasons for Skeptical Inquirer to ignore creationism than "the ad hominem grounds that Creationists are Fundamentalists and he's against them."

## BOB (Rodgers)

Much of this I can't follow, but it is challenging to try. "fapesmo" I recognize and wonder what you're saying about. In some instances you seem to make typographical or ignorant errors. Is the l in "Iäl Shub-Niggurath!" correct? Why the a in "Buggaring"? Is your German Jabberwocky from a published translation?

## BENS BEAT (Indick)

The hyphenation "yo-use" on the cover is awful.

Maybe one name is enough for Bob Sirignano, but "Art is always on time" needs clarification; several FAPAns bear the Arthurian name. " L R Chauvenet may be called Russ, but never Lou.

I wonder about your "'ASiNAMALI' (sic)". Mixing the dotted i with capitals has become common.

What is a book musical, and why do you so classify Oklahoma? I know it was based on Green Grow the Lilacs. " I suppose Paul Muni's appearance in Inherit the Wind was on stage. The story irritated me by forcing an extraneous element into the sufficiently dramatic truth of the monkey trial.

## WILD COLONIAL BOY (Foyster)

Has it really been twenty years since this title last appeared?

I guess the cerebrative psittacoid was like that parrot we recently heard on Discovery(?) to discourse plainly whose answers meaning and relevancy bore. " "amusing enough at the time." Enough for what?

I suppose a silent telephone number is the Aussie equivalent of unlisted. " "really need not see him any more. I suppose the benefits to me were indeed rather like those which derive from the confessional." Indeed? who said so, that you should say "indeed"? " "people really wanted me to move." Did someone suggest they falsely wanted you to move?

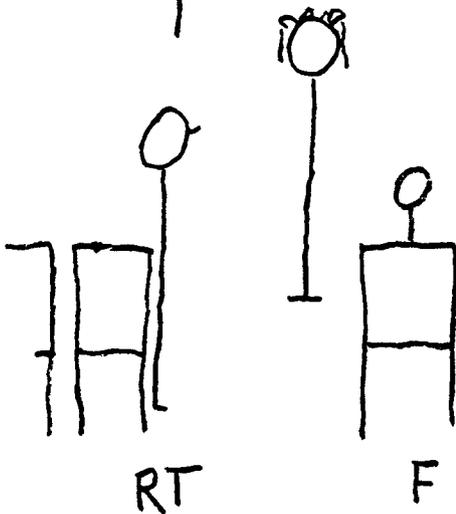
I wonder what "Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia" means. It could refer to old people, or high school, or taxation.

Anyone would be a fool who started a definition with "Science fiction is the search for ..." But it appears that when you say define you don't mean define, from your subsequent "Aldiss gives us his definition of good science fiction" followed by a quotation that uses the word only in this passage: "And there, I believe, the two poles of modern fantasy stand defined." " "I don't happen to understand Wells very well at all." "it is not really clear ..." "the nature of Trillion Year Spree becomes transparently clear." " "just isn't there". " Aldiss's calling the Hiroshima bomb "the first move in the Cold War" is nonsense. " "given the expanded attention given in Part I ..." In "The matter of omission of some authors is one which can be set aside as depending upon the background of the authors." I suppose the second use of the word refers to Aldiss and Wingrove. " The quotation from Coste you think fits science fiction "with great precision", wise though it may be, seems forced into this article. " The citation to the quotation that closes your article is almost as long as the quotation.

"It has long been my belief ... This delusion was *quickly* shattered when ... "I have briefly reviewed in ..." "... has also been thoughtfully reviewed" (presumably by someone else). "in *what are very definitely* alternate universes." "seems to me to render my task easier. This may not be a very admirable motive, ..." "Some of Lupoff's experience ... emerges very strongly." "their own deliberative actions". "the point the book is making - essentially an extension of Philip Jose Farmer's Baycon speech of 1968." So now everybody knows what you mean. "Is "the present continuous" the narrative present tense? "much more like good old Startling or Planet fare". "far more complex than the other novels." "I see your wordprocessor won't hyphenate a word at the end of a line even if it's a hyphenated word. My Panasonic wouldn't, but this Amstrad with LocaScript will; see "science-fiction" on page 8 below. "It is just

so total registration  
was approximately  
288.

288? That's  
too gross.



possible that Lupoff was a little out of control". "somewhat modified" (all modification is somewhatly). "with great skill". "the plot itself can scarcely be ascribed an existence". To posit something ascribes it existence. Why not say 'there's scarcely a plot'? "a much older tradition". "appropriately enough". "a universe very much like our own, so much like our own that ..." "One may read them for amusement - and indeed they are amusing -".

Years ago I started a letter of comment on your FAPAZine that discussed the definition of science-fiction, and never finished writing it.

"I do think that ..."

Wasted words aren't a pedantic matter. I know of no pedantry on the subject. It's a practical matter of effective writing. There are times when "very" adds force, but where I italicize it, I believe it weakens the statement. Apparently this straining to impose one's judgment of intensity on the reader occurs mostly in exposition. I doubt that your fiction is loaded with modifiers. "I wrote: "To say that the hospital "informed" you it couldn't do that seems to imply the information was correct. Why not 'said'?" You say "I surmise that this is because you believe that hospitals talk". A wild surmise, colonial boy.

What has happened to British reserve? "proved *much more* useful to me ... raised my stocks with her *immensely*."

"Quite an unpleasant business."

You and Bangsund are each down on Stone. What novel does he contemplate the shards of?

" by far the most enjoyable contribution so far as I am concerned."

## ALPHABET SOUP (Stevens)

If a timetraveler wanted to put an illegal bet on War Admiral, should he go to a newsstand or cigar store?

Ghosh too eliminates free will, since he knows what you're going to decide. " But he didn't fool around with Mary. It was the Holy Ghost that knocked her up. Read your Bible.

It would be nice to see a new Mencken attack current follies. You do a pretty good job of it. "The studies that show that intelligence runs in families have been revoked for political incorrectness. ..."

## READER AND ACCUMULATOR (Moudry)

In listing the serial Conquest of the Planets, you should have indicated that one installment was titled Contest of the Planets, and also there was that curious subtitle (Mother World). I like the wording "as by" for pseudonyms. " In reference to two stories, "all" gives me the same uneasy feeling as "thirty all" in tennis does; perhaps we humans have a built-in grammar that includes dual number. " Apparently you capitalize the first important word in a title. Why "The Black Star passes"? On page 7 you misspelled Irrelevant Irrelevant. I know, it seems as if it should derive from reveal.

The note on the cigaret ad inserted in a Dick book hardly deserves the space it takes. The paragraph on page 12 has material you must have intended to tell your wordprocessor to expunge; it doesn't make sense.

## HYSTERESIS (Feder)

Editing an oral transcript slightly to make it smoother is commendable. Oral discourse is rough.

Percentage who believe in extraterrestrials in what sense? That they exist, or that they've visited Earth?

I think the spelling was International Cosmo-Science Club. " Dr Wollheim's reaction to suggestions of interplanetary flight was common even after WW2. In the movie When Worlds Collide, members of a scientific body are depicted as denouncing the idea as nonsense with no more basis than native skepticism about anything beyond common experience. After subsequent events undermined that instinctive skepticism, people began to believe in everything. Recently when a TV interviewer was asking about some crazy notion like Atlantis and the interviewee, perhaps Philip Klass, gave the intelligent answer, the interviewer said "But wouldn't things like space travel and computers have seemed just as impossible to us in, say, 1945?" He was appealing to subjective skepticism rather than any reasoned distinction between possible and impossible. Much media sf ignores the distinction, Dr Who among the worst. " Did DAW really say "the dear, deep Depression"? " Have all the HPL stories in mundane apas been reprinted? " I seem to remember that at least one issue of a fanzine carried a colophon saying it was printed some place in Pennsylvania that i never heard of. " It was i who ran the poll, in Wiggins's fanzine. I doubt the expression "number one fan" occurred before that, and don't think there was any basis except common opinion for saying that Ackerman was "invariably fan #1". I don't remember who was #1 the first time i polled,

but Wollheim soon became it, partly because he appeared regularly in Wiggins's magazine while 4sj was not very active on the national stage for a while there. Don's statement "I was voted #1 fan for about four or five years until the war came along" seems incorrect. The IPO began in 1937 and ran for only a couple of years, as he said. I don't think any other poll quickly took its place, though there were questionnaires from several fan, notably Widner. " Probably what Don meant to say was 'What Speer said was like having your cousins say something nasty about you. It was personal.' " "It was years before anyone ever met Harry Warner." Years from when? Milty and I visited him about 1939.

#### TRENDING (Trend)

Was there any connection between the movie and John Rambo (au Sergeant York) other than his name and having been in Vietnam? " Was bedeutet "belatent"? What means "cloture of possibilities"? " Anything that happens in fandom changes fandom forever. But when someone says this of the Breen affair, he must have something more in mind. What? " When Norm Metcalf says pseudo-fandom, he means all aspects that don't relate directly to science-fiction. " "They say everybody has their time to go." Fatalism makes no sense operationally. " I wonder whether the "suicide" knob was that attachment on the steering wheel that we called a necking knob.

#### FACELESS BUREAUCRAT (Eisen)

Did you see Marlo Thomas's remake of It's a Wonderful Life? It was much like Jimmy Stewart's version except that a woman was the hero and it was in color. The original has been broadcast several times since then, b&w and colorized, but not Marlo's version. My impression is that the movie Twilight Zone likewise introduced nothing new (though the short-lived subsequent TV series had some new ideas) except better production values and a little more contemporary asexism. The same must be said of Star Trek the Next Generation. Chief interest in viewing it seems to be noting that this idea came from That Which Survives or Shore Leave, that from Amok Time or Arena or Shadow of the Gun. There are new ideas out there, but Star Trek's framework and preconceptions seem unable to accommodate them.

Small depositors aren't worth enough to a bank to call for concern such as lightening the service charges on them (a la Ma Bell before the breakup).

Which way was the battle over technophilia decided?

#### FIRST DRAFT (Perry)

"charter" ordinarily means something coming from a higher authority such as the national organization or a corporation commission. FAPA has no such charter. " Since you all-cap book names in the mailing comments, all-capping the names of FAPazines isn't a satisfactory substitute for separating your comments into paragraphs or sections. " How much would it cost to copy a book from on line compared to buying the object? " You can say 'more different than that', but not 'different than that'.

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The moron tabbin' Apple quire.