

TYNDALLITE  
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from Norm Metcalf, P.O. Box 1368,  
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**REVENANT** #13 Jun-Aug 2002 –  
Sheila Strickland

pp. [1]-5 Thanks for your  
DeepSouthCon report. It had some  
attractions for science-fiction fans.

p. 10 Not all of the Doc Savage  
books were written by Lester Dent. So  
there are some variations in plotting,  
treatment, etc. From the ones I've read  
Dent wrote them with his tongue in his  
cheek.

**"YNGVI IS A LOUSE" AND OTHER  
GRAFFITOS** #78 – T. K. F.  
Weisskopf Reinhardt

p. 2 Your comments about  
humanity's lessening need to use our  
brains reminds me of a number of stories  
wherein humanity has become  
disembodied brains, lost the ability to  
walk, etc. In some of the stories  
mankind's brains had atrophied, in  
others the brains had enlarged while the  
rest of them atrophied.

pp. 4-7 Thanks for your  
combined DeepSouthCon and  
WesterCon reports.

p. 24 Toni: I think that you're  
right that solid science-fiction will  
outlast what you nicely term  
"...ephemeral experiments...".

p. 26 Harry B./P. Warner, Jr.'s  
comments about pulp heroes' ability to  
inexplicably extricate themselves  
reminds me of Jack Jardine being  
hoohahed at a meeting of the *Los  
Angeles Science Fantasy Society*. He'd  
a story published by Ace in which the  
hero is tied and bound at the bottom of a  
pit. The next paragraph has him with  
sword in hand laying waste his enemies.  
Jack explained that Donald A. Wollheim  
had edited out an intervening chapter  
explaining how the hero had gotten out  
of the pit and regained his sword.

**The New Port News** #205 Sep 2002 –  
Ned Brooks

p. 4 You're considering the right  
idea when you say that Captain Nemo  
may have used rechargeable batteries.  
He used sodium-mercury batteries. He  
extracted the sodium and mercury from  
seawater at his coal mine in the Canary  
Islands. In this particular reaction  
mercury isn't consumed but sodium is,  
Nemo carried a supply of sodium in the  
*Nautilus* and periodically returned to the  
Canary Islands to restock. I'm skeptical  
that coal would be found inside a  
volcano but I guess it is within the realm  
of possibility. The magma should have  
ignited the coal seams. ✓

p. 5 You wonder if William S.  
Porter's "Roads of Destiny" has been  
conveniently reprinted. If it is not

currently in print it should be readily available used.

Polaris Press about 1953 reprinted Gertrude Barrows' "The Heads of Cerberus" in hardcovers. I think that it has had at least two paperback editions.

p. 6 As for the origin of the term "fanzine" in *Fantasy Commentator* Sam Moskowitz traced the coinage to Louis R. Chauvenet in 1940. Before that they were termed "fanmags", etc.

### **HISTORICAL HUGO HYSTERICS**

2 Sep 2002 – Jeffrey Copeland

Jeff, I thank you very much for this tabulation of the Hugo awards.

### **Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette**

#78 Aug 2002 – Richard Dengrove

p. 4 Yes, Alfred E. van Vogt's "The World of Null-A" *Astounding Science-Fiction* Aug-Oct 1945 did have clones. The "hero" (Gilbert Gosseyn) has multiple clones of himself in the story. However, this wasn't the first "science-fiction" story to clone humans. I don't know offhand who was first. But Edgar R. Burroughs' "The Man Without A Soul", *All-Story* Nov 1913 had multiple clones with the added problem that one of them was actually human. It was reprinted in book form as *The Monster Men* and then ERB plagiarized it as "The Synthetic Men of Mars".

p.10 To quote one of your comment on *Tyndallite* V3#102:

*"I think you got two different stories mixed up. The one on Mars*

*where the spaceships appear to have been horses in a prior draft was a Spicy Adventure from the early '40s. The one about a civil war over segregation was in a SF prozine from the late '50s."*

Let us backtrack this one.

You in *Twyg...* Jan 2002, page 4:

*"I once read an [sic] story from the '30s that was ostensibly science fiction, but looked to have previously been a Western. The Indians were now Martians and the horses were now spaceships. I think there was a passage there where someone fed his spaceship hay."*

Me in *Tyndallite* Feb 2002, page 864, commenting on *Twyg...* Jan 2002, page 4:

*"You mention a 1930's science-fiction story in which a western has been transplanted to Mars so that the Indians become Martians and the horses spaceships. This reminds me of Chester S. Geier's "Outlaw In the Sky", *Amazing Stories* Feb 1953. Apparently it had been diverted from Mammoth Western. The illustration shows a Martian riding beast, looking like a horse with alien appendages (why waste the artwork?). During the story a rider arrives at a Martian ranch and is asked where he came from. He said something like 'I just rode up from New Orleans.'. Both he and his mount must have had tremendous lung capacity. The mount's ability to have tractive effort both in the atmosphere and space isn't explained.'*

You in *Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette* Apr 2002, page 4:

*"I could probably think up some curiosities of science fiction, but I have become obsessed about that tale I described to you. I wonder where and when it was published. It concerned a new Civil War over desegregation (War between States? North Aggression? Southern Rebellion?). I remember an illo of soldiers being dressed in Civil War uniforms and shooting off cannons. I gather in the story those were atomic cannons and America was completely laid to waste over the issue of desegregation. It wasn't a long story, as I remember it. I bet it was published in late 1957 or 1958. Late 1957 was when the Little Rock incident took place and that galvanized America about desegregation."*

Me in *Tyndallite* Jun 2002, page 870:

*"This story that you're trying to recall must have been a science-fictional satire. It's a western transplanted to Mars wherein horses have been transmogrified into spaceships. It also has a new Civil War occasioned by desegregation in which America has been laid waste. I wonder if I read it and mercifully forgot it or if I never read it and missed a great satire."*

p. 11 I don't know how many (if any) Frederick S. Faust manuscripts remained unpublished at his 1944 death. However, he wrote hundreds of magazine stories, some of which are still being published.

They thought that they'd run out of unpublished Pearl Z. Gray novels when *The Reef Girl* was finally published. But several more turned up.

As for Lafayette R. Hubbard novels I suspect that he wrote little, if

any, of the posthumous works published in his name.

I've read where "V. C. Andrews" is now a group pseudonym so as to maintain the "brand".

Yes, Frederick S. Faust wrote *Destry Rides Again*.

p. 12 No, I'm not playing games with words. I prefer to use English.

p. 28 To quote you:

*"You are very right that Kate Wilhelm's and Theodore L. Thomas' The Clone (1965) was the first title with the word clone in it."*

Try Thomas' "The Clones", *Fantastic Science Fiction Stories* Dec 1959. And there may have been earlier uses.

pp. 29-30 You're right that Jules Verne was slapdash with some of his science. But a lot of it was accurate.

You're also right that Verne denounced Herbert G. Wells for Cavourite and proclaimed his Moon cannon to be more scientific. Verne was basically right, except that his cannon would have killed the occupants of the lunar projectile. But he did realize that there was a problem and try to devise solutions (which wouldn't have worked). Wells simply evaded it with by mining an anti-gravity material, also nonsense.

**SPIRITUS MUNDI** #191 Aug-Sep  
2002 – Guy H. Lillian III

p. [6?] Bravo for your comment:

"We must live up to our beliefs, and the most cherished American belief is equal protection for everyone under the law. If not, then we're simply the biggest bully on the block, standing for nothing but our own power."

**osushigumi** 22 Sep 2002 – Jeffrey Copeland

p. 5 Thanks for reviewing all of the Hugo "novella" nominees plus Ursula K. LeGuin's "The Bones of the Earth".

You say that Allen Steele's "Stealing Alabama" precedes his "Days Between" and reading "SA" first enhances "DB".

You say that you are "...very impressed." by LeGuin's story.

You seem to have been rather unimpressed by Brenda Clough's "May Be Some Time"; Jack Dann's "The Diamond Pit", a tribute to F. Scott Fitzgerald (I guess that it wasn't ritzy enough for you); Andy Duncan's "The Chief Designer" and Vernor Vinge's "Fast Times at Fairmont High".

p. 10 You mention that Raymond D. Bradbury has come through with a corrected edition of *Fahrenheit 451* due to the text gradually changing with new editions.

This reminds me of proofreading a book that a friend had written. When it was published all of our corrections had been accomplished, but it was full of new errors. I asked the editor about it. He said that he'd made a mistake and had a second typesetter correct the first one's errors.

p. 11 Thanks for explaining that David Brin's *The Postman* is actually a group of shorter stories; which are uneven in quality. So the old 'expand it to its detriment' syndrome strikes again.

p. 19 As for what each *SFPAn* has either read or not read - that gives us the chance to express our likes and dislikes so that we can hopefully make more efficient use of our time.

As for your specific example of Edward E. Smith my favorite of the ones I've read is *Spacehounds of IPC*. Smith told me that it was also his favorite novel, but that his fans had complained to him that it wasn't inter-galactic super-science. (It stays in the Solar System and is more realistic than the Lens books.) I haven't read the original version of *Triplanetary*. I've been told that the original is far better than what Smith did to it to convert it into a Lens book (at the urging of some of his fans). And several people have said that the magazine versions of the Lens stories are much better than the book versions. Smith told me that John W. Campbell, Jr. wished to build the suspense all the way through but he felt that doing so wasn't fair to his readers. The original version of "The Skylark of Space" (a collaboration with Lee Hawkins Garby) is somewhat better than the hardcover version. The Pyramid paperback is a lousy synopsis of the story. Smith told me that Donald R. Bensen of Pyramid had contacted him about reprinting "TSOS". Smith said that he re-read it for the first time in years and decided that Garby's passages had to go and that he should shorten the rest. He was another author who did better with Campbell's tutelage than he did on his own.

**Frequent Flyer** 18 Sep 2002

Tom Feller

p. 5 Thanks for your well-stated opinions of the Hugo-nominated novels.

You say about China Mieville's *Perdido Street Station* that

*"There are both fantasy and technological elements that the author skillfully mixed together and developed with a rigor that I find are [sic] usually absent from fantasy stories."*

Good for Mieville.

**Trivial Pursuits** #103 [nd] – Janice Gelb

p. 2 Thanks for recommending Garth Nix' young adult fantasies *Sabriel* and its sequel *Lirael*.

And thanks for warning us against Eoin Colfer's *Artemis Fowl*.

You describe Donna Andrews' *You've Got Murder* as a mystery story in which a sentient artificial intelligence enlists help in finding its missing creator. Your summation is:

*"This book is original and engaging, although it does not feature the deepest plot in the world."*

I guess that in one sense the stories with the deepest plots in the world are those Hollow Earth stories.

Thanks for warning us that Orson S. Card's *Shadow Puppets* isn't worth a hill of beans.

p. 3 As for running nomination for the Hugo awards – science-fiction editors should be our first line of defense against crud. But apparently they're lowering their standards so as to have publications and readers are so desperate to read almost anything that they'll keep buying crud (perhaps hoping that things will get better).

p. You make a good point when you say:

*"Regarding Brin's fiction, I think one of the problems is that like most speculative fiction writers, he does a lot of preparation in his head about his universe and instead of just using that to make his fiction more grounded, he spills all of it out to his readers. And, as Toni [Weisskopf Reinhardt] has told us, editors rarely spend time tightening up the works of authors whom they know will sell anyway..."*

This is a highly-plausible conjecture. But spilling all and failure to ask the author for rewrites are both counter productive. ✓

**Cruising ConJose** [no#, nd] – Janice Gelb

p. I like your "Best Overheard Conversation":

*'George RR Martin, during a conversation about modern authors "editing" and ruining the works of earlier authors: "When Christopher Tolkien dies and his son Simon takes over, we'll probably see "Sauron Strikes Back" [.]*

**GUILTY PLEASURES #25** – Eve  
Ackerman

pp. 5-6 Thanks for your recommendation of Jason Fforde's *The Eyre Affair*, in which literature IS reality but people keep trying to revise it. I'll have to read it to see how it compares to Lafayette R. Hubbard's "Typewriter In the Sky", Robert A. Heinlein's "The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag" and John M. Myers' *Silverlock*.

p. 6 Thanks for elaborating on Garth Nix' *Sabriel* and its sequel, *Lirael*.

And thanks for reviewing Dan Simmons' super-hard-boiled private eye novels *Hardcase* and *Hardfreeze*.  
✓ Simmons told me that he is eager not to be typecast, so again he's demonstrating his versatility.

[A] *Ticklish Situation, Indeed* – mike  
weber

p. [3] When did "Edd" Cartier die? He was still alive recently, though his wife was ill the other day.

**Home with the Armadillo #55** Sep  
2002 – Liz Copeland

p. 6 Thanks for recommending the works of Tanya Huff.

LETTERS

from: F. M. Busby, 2852 – 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
West, Seattle WA 98119 5 Sep  
2002

Dear Norm,

TYNDALLITE V2Nr88: Good  
lord! You mean, mild-mannered Chuck

Hansen was A Terror When Aroused?  
A hand-cannon *and* a sword, eh? Man,  
y' never know.

I expect Rafael A. Lafferty's grotch at John W. Campbell, Jr. was that being the highest-paying science-fiction market for many years, he slanted the field towards hardware-oriented material that was at least plausibly explained in terms of Real Science. Also, JWC tended to prefer upbeat material where the Good Guys win. Today's field could use a little more of those biases. (I am fed up with the Futilitarians, and "science" that purely sucks.)

For comedy, the latter criterion can be off the table. Funny has its own rules. *Galaxy Quest*, for instance, is a total hoot.

I notice material from writers who obviously get their basic ideas of science-fiction from television. For instance, various staples of oxymoronic *Star Trek* "science".

Meanwhile, all the best,  
Buz

from: F. M. Busby 11 Oct 2002

Dear Norm,

Re diets for polar expeditions, I remember reading that Sir George Hubert Wilkins observed Eskimos eating meat, including fat, whereas the Europeans were in the habit of cutting away most of the fat, eating only the lean. And the Euros got scurvy while the Eskimos did not. So Wilkins applied the knowledge and his expedition thrived, or maybe throve. In the fifth grade I read that.

I saw the 1935 *She*, and it was in black and white. Anyway, back in the pre-WWII days most female

undergarments were pink. Nixon doubtless knew this early – if not by catching ladies in deshabelle, then from Monkey Ward or Sears Sawbuck catalogs.

It wasn't only Alfred E. van Vogt whose original magazine appearances suffered when released in book form. Many writers, and vV in particular, had a great ear for a phrase, and JWCjr, for one, never messed with a good thing. But book publishers employ copy editors, who (in Jubal Harshaw's phrase) have to piss in it until they like the taste. These mediocre wordcrunchers rely on an abomination called *The Chicago Book of Style* – which should tell you something right off the bat. They specialize in removing any hint of originality from prose and recasting it as awkwardly as is humanly possible. It's true that some of van's fixups, combining unrelated stories into books, were ill-advised. But after dealing with copy editors myself, I can't fault him for some of his most striking phrasings coming out blah in the Ace versions. And the same holds for many other writers' zine-to-book changes.

Gee, I rather liked *Transatlantic Tunnel* with Richard Dix. But come to think of it, I was fourteen years old at the time.

Yes, Poul Anderson has been one of the Greats in the field. And one of the nicest guys we'll ever meet.

All the best,  
Buz

from: A. Langley Searles, 48 Highland  
Circle, Bronxville NY 10708-  
5909 15 Oct 2002

Dear Norm,

Re: page 812 of *Tyndallite*. I've not read *The Caves of Steel*, though I probably should, as a number of people have told me/written me that it is Asimov's best novel. As for the "Foundation" stories, I was never wowed by the individual stories that make them up when they appeared in *Astounding Science-Fiction*, and I could never understand why they were so popular with fans. About three or four years ago I decided I might be prejudiced, and decided to read the whole series again. By that time Asimov had written a prequel and a couple of sequels, and I began with the former, plowed my way through the original trilogy again, and by perseverance got through the latter. I tried to read as well Benford's *Foundation's Fear*, but I just couldn't force myself through it.

My considered opinion is that Isaac Asimov is one of the most overrated science-fiction writers over. His style varies from plain vanilla to downright clumsy; it has no grace, individuality or sparkle. The fundamental idea of the Foundation books was tacked on and inflated after the parts of it were written. Apparently he had a psychological need to write, but I see no reason why anyone should bother or feel the need to read anything he wrote.

Not much new here. Now that it's past gardening weather I'm spending more time on *Fantasy Commentator*, plugging away at the next issue – which, Eric Davin reminds me, is the magazine's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary one!

All the best.  
Sincerely,  
Langley

[Langley, thanks for explaining the foundation of your disgust.

Congratulations for nearing the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of what is probably the all-time greatest science-fiction fanzine.]

from: Chester D. Cuthbert, 1104  
Mulvey Avenue, Winnipeg Man  
R3M 1J5 19 Oct 2002

Dear Norm,

Yesterday I received from you *Tyndallites* V2#92, V3#'s 102 and 103. In 102 your printing my old letters took me by surprise; even more surprised was I by your request that I recommend the best of Frederick S. Faust, since my selections would likely differ from those which would interest you most.

A more unbiased and more competent appraisal of the work of Faust can be obtained by the many references available. I will list these: I hope that *The Max Brand Companion*, at least, will be found in your public library.

#### FANZINES

*The Fabulous Faust Fanzine* (4 issues)  
by Darrell C. Richardson  
*The Faust Collector* (10 issues) William  
J. Clark  
*Singing Guns* (11 issues) David L. Fox

#### BIOGRAPHIES

*Max Brand The Man and His Work* by  
Darrell C. Richardson; (Los Angeles,  
*Fantasy Publishing Company, Inc.*,  
1952)  
*Max Brand: The Big "Westerner"* by  
Robert Easton (Norman, *University of  
Oklahoma Press*, 1970)

#### COMPENDIUM

*The Max Brand Companion* edited by  
Jon Tuska and Vicki Piekarski, Darrell  
C. Richardson, Consulting Editor

(Westport Connecticut, *Greenwood  
Press*, 1996)

William F. Nolan wrote a comprehensive article "Collecting Max Brand" in the magazine *Firsts: The Book Collector's Magazine* for May 1997 and he has compiled collections of Faust stories. He, Tuska and Richardson are the authorities.

If you can locate a copy of *Wine on the Desert and Other Stories*, many of his best are included. *The Notebooks and Poems of Max Brand* by Faust and edited by John Schoolcraft (*Dodd Mead*, 1957) was a limited edition of 750 copies, but would interest you. Nolan has published other books on Faust.

The four books relating to Whistling Dan Barry established the Max Brand reputation, but Dr. Kildare (7 volumes) was likely more popular. *Blue Book* printed some very good stories.

So you see that lots of people join me in liking Faust.

All good wishes,  
Chester

[Chester, thanks for your fine letter. I appreciate your explication of why you like Faust. Our tastes, while overlapping, are not contiguous. I have Darrell's book on Faust as well as his fanzine. And I bought a copy of *The Notebooks...* when it appeared and found it fascinating. I thought that "Wine on the Desert" was an excellent story. Roy V. Hunt and Kevin L. Cook have recommended the Dan Barry books. My problem with Faust is knowing which stories are good and which are bad. He didn't always max out his brand.]