

YANDRO 2

december 73

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"TRY IT,"
HE SAID,
"YOU'LL LIKE IT!"



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It never rains but it pours department: As of today, Dec. 18, we have no water in the house, one of the cars is inoperative due to a dead battery, and it is snowing merrily away outside. (Though I suppose if it just snows enough, it will solve our water problem. And I suppose it could be worse; it could be snowing inside.)
RSC

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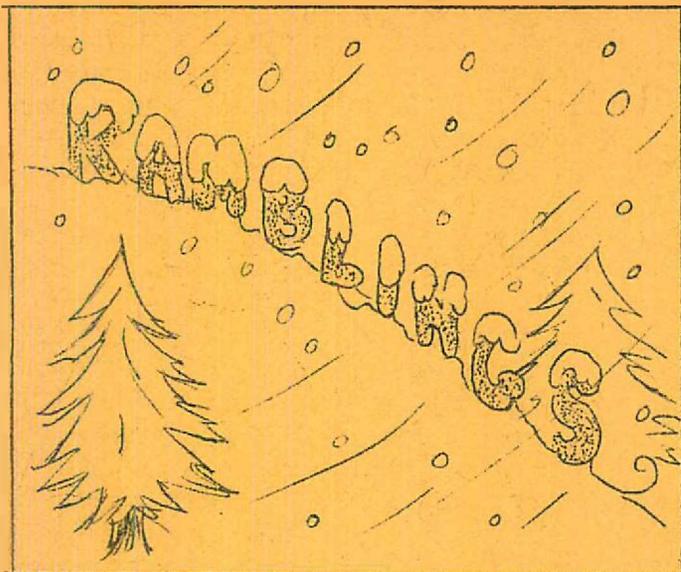
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Next issue will be our 21st. Anniversary Issue, and probably oversized. (If I get all the fanzine reviews included, it will be oversized.) Not too many fanzines reach voting age, even though YANDRO seems to be, to quote Tucker, "not dead, only tottering". It's been fun so far, and as long as it remains that way we'll manage to keep going, even if disorganized. (Come to think of it, I wonder if there is such a thing as a fan who is organized?) Thanks to everyone who has helped make our mail interesting this year.
RSC



Even though it looks excessively Christmas-y outdoors at present -- a condition I believe prevails throughout most of the Midwest, East, and South -- this hasn't been a great holiday season for us, so far. Further depressing details in "Rumblings". I don't think the situation qualifies as a crisis or ordeal or any of the standard, nail-biting fictional classifications. Seeing it through, I believe the British call it...

Years ago, when there was a Milwaukee fandom -- now down to those stalwarts, the DeWeeses -- there used to be an annual "Blizzard Party", thru circa January 1. I recall at least one of those, about 12.. 13 years ago, when Milwaukee was gifted

with 14 inches of snow overnight and for a change the wry appellation applied. At the moment our area has about one inch shy of that, and we got one of the lighter snowfalls in the Midwest. I shall forego the honor of hosting a party for the Indycans. I hope they have better sense than to be inveigled out onto the highways in this sort of stuff.

One of the benefits of rural living in this predicament -- one of many -- is neighborliness. Right when the blizzard, if it qualified as that, was beginning, we were having massive plumbing problems. And this isn't the weather for trotting outside (not to mention the fact that us females ain't too well equipped for that adaptation). Simultaneously, the well pump ge-futzed. The pump was repaired overnight through our landlord's good graces (and his talents in knowing where the skills and talents are buried among tradesmen), and the plumbing was functional within 12 hours. Mind you, while all this was going on, the snowfall was breaking records standing since WWI in this state. And while all the plumbing repairs were going on our landlord and various and sundry other rural neighbors were -- in their copious free time -- out running around with their tractors and scrapers, beating paths for the non-tractor owners to use. They did far better work, faster, than any of the county equipment for which our taxes are spent. Being urban employed and living in a rural climate makes for mild guilts. I'd like to return some of these many favors, but all the expertise is on their side. I can just be awedly grateful and pitying of occasional overhearings of city mice complaints about how slow and unfriendly everything is in the metropolis.

Things are prettier out here, too. Even with tractor paths and dog prints and such strewn across the yard and road, the snow is pristine white and looks like something a greeting card manufacturer would pay lots to photograph. Could even make old-fashioned "ice cream" with this snow and a little syrup -- besides, strontium is good for you, the AEC says.

As Bruce will detail, one of our snowbound projects was a trek a mile and half to a mom-and-pop grocery...conserving energy and using our own and all that. The only thing on the road besides us was all-weather vehicular stuff, like heavy pickups and miniature lawn tractors pushing scrapers. And a bunch of dumb birds singing their silly little hearts out just as if they knew what they were doing. Maybe they do know my mother is the tender hearted soul who sprinkles all that gourmet bird food around on the snow for them. They even get to eat some of it, what the younger dog doesn't eat. (At one point there was a "honey tub" -- younger fans, go look up a dictionary of old-timers' slang -- sitting out on a snowbank near our driveway, result of the plumbing problems. I really expected the pup to clean that out, too.)

Even moreso, in retrospect, considering all the dismal events that were to come to a head shortly after, Chambanacon takes on very pleasant glowing memories. A fitting capper to the '73 con-going season. Weird hotel and all. And even if the Smugglers' Lounge doesn't know how to cook spaghetti. (You'd think an establishment that served everything but lasagna with a side of spaghetti would consult a cookbook or somesuch and learn you don't turn the stuff into mush.) The Greek restaurant in the university village was pretty good eatin's, too. First Greek food I've ever tasted, and it tasted like more. Suppose I'll have to wait till next year, though. I was also intrigued by the hotel's idea of coping with the energy crisis. For some reason almost all the rooms I was in had overheating problems. The sort of thing that had us turning off our heat completely, running the blower constantly, and forcing open the window as far as we could despite the suicide-proof narrow aperture. Any mutterings to the hotel, though, that perhaps they could turn the heat down only produced a suggestion that one turn on the air conditioner. Smacks a bit of Nixon's blazing fireplace and air conditioner, doesn't it? Sigh. But the company made up for those little lapses, as it always does at a really good fan bash. And Chambanacon more and more shapes up as the regional con with just about th'most. Fool's a little dinky compared to the Quality Courts at Norwood, but...

If rationing comes, and I'm pretty much persuaded it's when, not if, I can assume fans will be doubling up and car pooling a lot more to get to cons. That can make for amusing and entertaining trips to and from .. and somebody to yell at you so you don't fall asleep after 10 hours at the wheel. Or even better trade off so you don't have to spend 10 hours at the wheel. Of course, there is the train, but I seriously doubt that's going to be a fannish mode of travel for a while, not in the Midwest. Bad enough picking up each day's paper and reading of a freight derailment -- somewhere within a 100 mile radius -- and thinking nothing of it without getting into passenger car derailments. Midwesterners have a pretty jaundiced opinion of the condition of Amtrak's roadbeds. But maybe we can restart the canal barges. Anybody in Indyfandom for a trip to next year's Midwestcon via the Whitewater Canal...? JWC

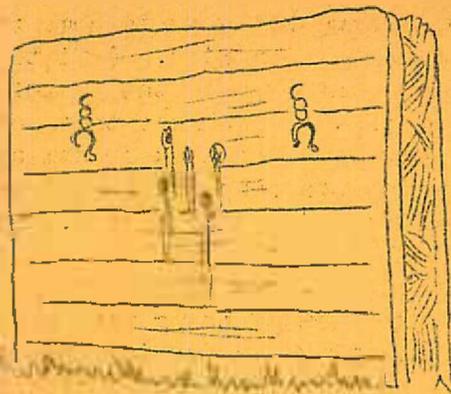
a column

bee

I am typing this in the midst of the worst snowstorm that Blackford Co. has had for years. In addition to canceling school (and having a schoolbus temporarily stuck in our driveway), the storm has bogged down snowplows and forced us to rig up a sled in order to get groceries from the local store. The last was a triumph of fannish ingenuity; We were running low on drinks (and other things), so we had to go to the store. However, road conditions were terrible (my father got stuck three times while going to work), so we couldn't use a car. At the same time, we were getting too much stuff to carry it by hand. So Mom came up with the idea of reviving my old sled, tying an old crate onto it (guess what Boy Scout got that job?) and using that to get groceries.

The last day of school ended up in one of the weirdest incidents that has ever happened to me. They were dismissing us early, so that my last class was Latin. Mr. Leach, the Latin teacher, who doesn't appreciate me, decided to have some fun and sent me to Mr. Beaver, another short-sighted educator. Mr. Beaver, after reacting a bit, sent me to Mr. Ross, the Dean of Boys, and my former Driving Instructor. He said that he wouldn't touch it, whatever it was, and sent me back to Mr. Leach. Mr. Leach then sent me to Mr. Said, who took one look at my pass and said, quite calmly, "Get the hell out of here. This isn't your class." By the time I got back to where I'd started, the principal had dismissed school. The hallway monitors, who are assigned to check passes, got to the point of saying, "What! You again?" Can anybody explain this strange behavior on the part of teachers?

I'll leave you with this thought: somebody has to be a miser, so that we can compare our generosity to some standard. Merry Christmas and a belated Winter Solstical



BETTER TAKE UP A PAPER TARGET,

BRUCE, I'M ALL OUT OF NEOFANS...

Even if YANDRO seems destined to be chronically late, you have to admit that we can come up with some really fantastic excuses. This time it's because I had to petition the court for a guardianship of my father. (That's what we were doing in court that day, Bill.) So instead of working on YANDRO, rabbit hunting, etc., I have been trafficking with lawyers and bankers, trying to get the affair straightened out. (I haven't been chaining neofans to the target backstop, either, despite the cartoon over there; I haven't had time. Such diversions will have to wait until spring.) In addition, Dad is staying with us, and if you think I show a great deal of independence (and less desirable

traits), you should try living with the individual I inherited them all from.

Anyway, I've found one bad thing about living out here away from the fannish multitudes. I'm acquainted with lawyers in places like Madison, Ind., Peoria, Ill., Albuquerque, and some place in Massachusetts (though I haven't heard from Bem Gordon for some years now), but they all seemed a bit too far away for what needed to be done. (Though I did have semi-serious thoughts of telephoning Joe Hensley and screaming Help! If Harlan can do it, I can do it.....) The problem isn't going to clear up overnight, so you may not see much of us this winter.

Which brings us to a happier occasion; our last convention of the year. Chambanacon was fun, despite the fact that nobody had any money to buy books with (and, since I didn't sell any books, I didn't have any money to buy artwork with.) Weird little hotel; one of those cylinders, like a tin can with windows. Elevators (and building supports?) in the center, surrounded by a circular corridor surrounded by rooms. Quite small; 19 rooms per floor and 21 floors including the ones devoted to meeting rooms, bars, etc. The con hospitality suite was on two levels, connected by a circular stair that, if it had had another 5' of incline, would have been a circular ladder. One of the minor enjoyments when other things turned dull was watching drunks negotiate the stairway. There was a semblance of program, but basically the convention was a huge party. Very enjoyable; no distracting elements at all. The only near-violence I saw came when Bob Tucker was singing as he waited for the elevators Sunday morning. A few fans with maybe an hour's sleep among them very nearly ended a distinguished writing career right there. I understand that nobody suffocated during the folksing, though I'm not sure why. I stuck my head into the room once and it was like a blast furnace; noise and heat both. (Actually I braved it a second time, or tried to, but Penny Hansen threw me out, saying they were taping. I realize that my singing would have ruined the tape, but really.....) How Juanita could stay in the place for hours, let alone plonk a guitar and sing, is beyond me. Maybe women really are superior....

All in all, Chambanacon is becoming one of my favorite cons, and the Hansens did midwest random a service by taking it over from the palsied hands of Don Blyly. (But I didn't see Maureen Gillespie? What happened?)

Somewhat before Chambanacon, Dave and Beth Gorman brought Bruce Gillespie (no relation to Maureen) up for a visit. Bruce was, at that time, still in pretty good shape and enjoying his tour of the US. I hear from Jackie Franke and the Passovoy's, he has been exposed to the facts of US life, or why even the relatively poor US citizens own cars. He couldn't make it back to Chambanacon from wherever he was at the time (Wichita?) because of no plane connections, and still later, when he began to feel as though the peace and quite of Australia might be nice, his luggage made better time than he did. In fact, it got to Sydney while Bruce was still stranded in Chicago. Unlike the Greyhound lines, which years ago managed to lose Walt Willis's luggage completely, the airlines did finally arrange a confrontation between Man and Suitcase. The harrowing events will I'm sure be explained more fully in SFC, but when Bruce was here he said that considering the state of his finances it might be some time be-

fore the next SFC appeared. (Not to mention that a several-month tour of another country is not conducive to leaping into fanzine publishing the minute you get back.)

However, whether or not his US tour finishes off Bruce's fan career altogether, we enjoyed the visit.

Minor apologies for the state of the letter column this round; letters were picked hastily. If yours didn't make it, wait until our Gaint (or maybe Giant) 21st Anniversary Issue next month. (Or whenever....) Not every fanzine makes it to voting age.

I've finally started reading the 1973 stf mags, beginning with ANALOG. It doesn't seem that Bova's editorship has improved the overall quality of the mag, but he has provided more variety, which is a bonus. The last few Campbell years, the mag had dug itself a pretty deep rut.

Being harassed is not conducive to either brilliant humor or doing anything worth writing about, so I shall turn the rest of the page over to THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX. I hope you all will have - or have had, by the time this arrives - a very merry Crispness.

Did all of you see the newspaper account of Haig saying that perhaps "sinister forces" were responsible for the erasure of the tapes? I don't know if he's been watching too many soap operas or if that's his way of laying the blame on Nixon.

Blast; I didn't keep track of who sent me the best clipping of the month; Dodd, probably. Or maybe Dave Piper? Anyway: "Hongkong's wave of bomb scares seemed to be dying today with only one genuine report of a simulated bomb...." Come over that one again....?

Andy Zerbe sends a couple of batches, including a "review" of Dr. Wertham's fanzine book in which the reviewer manages to misspell Robert Bloch, Isaac Asimov (of course), Arthur C. Clarke, and "2001" (which aint easy). He did get Wertham's name right, though very little else. Andy also sends an item about a course at Wright State University in Dayton, called "Problems In Human Sexuality", in which the lecturers are prostitutes, pimps, homosexuals, doctors and biologists and the classroom material includes "dirty" books and movies. (Have you signed up yet, Liz? How about you, Rusty; you could always brush up on your education.) And Andy sent a fairly long column in which the writer points out why criminals are an asset to society. (They provide employment for policemen, lawyers, judges, manufacturers of police equipment, plus plots for tv shows and activities for congressmen to View With Alarm.)

Batch of stuff from the Thompsons all seems too long to quote.

Gene Wolfe sends 3 copies of the BARRINGTON FREE PRESS, which seems to be a one-page, legal-length, mimeographed sheet. No explanation. If you wanted to show me that some people are producing a "community fanzine", it's interesting, but it wouldn't work here. The items in the FREE PRESS are the same sort of thing that get the front page on our regular newspaper in Hartford City. (If it was an example of city morality, the only strange part would be that two suicides in 3 weeks in a city no larger than Barrington seems excessive.)

This would seem to be a good time to mention that we support Pete Weston for TAFF and John Fangsund for DUFF.

Mary Schaub sends a clipping on the sawdust industry, including such interesting facts as that a Yokohama doctor cures his asthma patients by burying them up to the neck in fermenting sawdust laced with enzymes. That's a new one on me. SHARECROPPER plugs a new newsletter on land reform; PEOPLE & LAND, 345 Franklin St., San Francisco CA 94102, 50¢ per copy for anyone interested. While we're plugging things, Donald M. Grant, West Kingston, RI 02892, has published a collection of the science-fantasy written between 1874 and 1885 by Edward Page Mitchell, as collected by Sam Moskowitz. Sounds moderately interesting. Grant is also agenting for George Locke's Ferret Fantasy, which has published At The Mountains of Murkiness, an anthology of parodies of science fiction and mystery stories. And, to move to the national spotlight; Speed-C-Print is advertising its new Security Shredder, but they miss a bet by not stating whether or not it works on tapes. They could have got some endorsements, too...
Hopefully, we will be less harried next issue.

RSC

CONAN THE EMASCULATED

a complaint by

DAVID V. JENRETTE

The question before us today is whether or not a series story (with the same hero or the same setting) ought to be endlessly extended. The answer is "probably not"; in the specific case of Conan the answer is an emphatic "No more, never, and definitely not". Every Conan story written by his literary "descendants" (de Camp, Nyberg,

and Carter) is far inferior to the best that Howard wrote and hardly on a par with Howard's worst efforts.

Here are some of the points I'll try to make to you:

1. Carter and de Camp have absolutely de-balled Conan; the Lusty Cimmerian is only a shadow.
2. Carter and de Camp have not followed through on the stories according to Howard's notes.
3. Carter and de Camp are not Robert E. Howard.

Where do we start? First, a general disclaimer. I have no animosities toward Carter and de Camp and no interpretation of this article suggesting I do is fair. I've met L. Sprague personally a number of times years ago and like him; I've never met Lin Carter, but have purchased many of the books he has edited and written.

The August 1972 Fantastic features "The Witch of the Mists", a new Conan novel by de Camp and Carter. The plot line is that Conan's son, Conn, wanders off following a white deer which turns out to be an evil old lady sorceress who carries him off. Conan follows and is also captured and about to be done in by a sorcerer until -- Conan's army comes to the rescue. The end.



Sound good? Perhaps even the best of the Conans would sound as bad if treated as sketchily. Let me replay it at half speed. First, the authors refer to Conn as Prince Conn, "heir to the throne". Sacrilege if ever there were such a thing! Search among Howard's published notes and you find that Conan had many bastards and many concubines but never established an official heir. C & deC dare much by legitimizing Conn, think ye not!

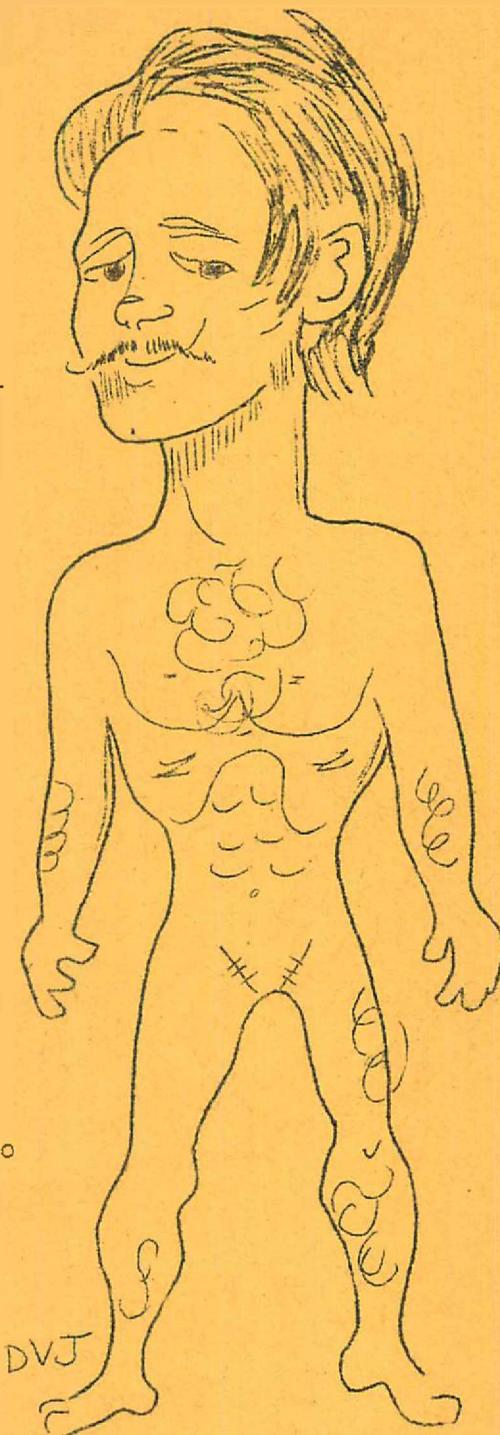
On page 37 we learn why Conan and Conn are out hunting: "Conan had suggested a few weeks of camping and hunting together, hoping to find a new closeness with his son." One can almost see them loading the VW camper; Zenobia waving from the cottage door: "Have a good time, boys!"

While saddling up to search for Conn a snow-white owl floats ominously across the gibbous moon. } Conan practically has a coronary at the sight: "...a sudden shiver. A black foreboding swept his barbaric soul." That's not the Conan Howard wrote about.

Also, in the writing, there is an absolute formula approach that shows. Almost all of these stories seem to be assembled from pieces used in previous stories -- only now the pieces aren't as bright and shiny as they used to be: they're worn around the edges, faded, and they don't fit together as cleanly.

Conan follows the abductors of his son, is ambushed by beast men, and loses consciousness: "The world exploded and Conan forgot about fighting." This is a push-button device, this putting the hero to sleep and then reviving him. It seems to be a continual event in Carter and de Camp Conan stories. Although it usually takes a good thud to do it, Conan is regularly conked on the head about 1/3 of the way thru the stories most dreadfully often.²

And then the ending: Conan rescued by his army just like the U.S. Cavalry. Howard usually let Conan get out of his own problems instead of rescuing him by automatic machinery. Nyberg really did the worse job of this when Conan was saved (in CONAN THE AVENGER) by his god, Crom! It was really embarrassing to Conan, I'm sure. Crom, according to Howard, is a god who gives each man a certain genetic inheritance, drops him into the world, and ignores him from then on. Having Crom save Conan is a little like having



1. Why do moons have to be gibbous? I bet Lin Carter put that in there.
2. Just for fun, see how often Conan gets conked in an REH story compared to C & de C. It's as bad as a Victorian lady fainting at something immoral. In writing these stories late at night one can imagine the authors getting tired, looking at the clock, and typing "...and then he knew no more..." before going to bed; then, next day, "Toward morning Conan groggily came to his numbed senses" or something like that.

your mother come out on the football field when you get hurt. Poor Conan.

Then at the end we see that Conan has become a bit of a wino begging for a drink. Conan is such an object of ridicule that "Prospero" had begun to laugh until the tears were pouring down his cheeks, cutting runnels through the caked dust." End of story and the end of every Hannah-Barbera cartoon and the end of every family situation comedy half-hour: everybody standing around laughing at something. Poor Conan. More formula stuff.

Now why did I/do I like Conan in the first place? Was I younger and more impressionable then? The halls of swords and sorcery untrod-den? Was Howard necessarily a "master storyteller"? I think not. I liked Conan because Robert E. Howard had a kind of kinky madness about him that colored the stories: weird, psycho (sodomacho?) twists that held you while you read.

L. Sprague, on the other hand, has got to be one of the sanest, most precise persons I know. If Lin Carter has any kind of madness about him it probably runs to old tea cups, gibbous moon, ~~ancient~~ foods, and oxidized manuscripts. Howard himself expressed his opinions of such writers:

"Oh, little singers, what know you of those
Ungodly, slimy shapes that glide and crawl
Out of unreckoned gulfs when midnight falls..."

Then why do the "little singers" persist? I hope it's only because they like Conan and want to see him live on (if only as a castrated, alcoholic zombi); I hope they're not doing it for the money.



Socrates ran a diploma mill.

.....Bruce Coulson

NOTICE: I think I owe someone \$4.00, but I don't know who. Awhile back I received in the mail a copy of THE BEST OF NATIONAL LAMPOON #3. Okay, I hadn't ordered it, but since I get books in the mail now and then, free, I didn't think too much about it. However, when, about two weeks later, I received (2) \$2.00 refund checks with notes saying they were sorry but volumes 1 and 2 were out of stock, I decided that someone had ordered a set for me. Whoever it is, thank you and drop me a card so I can return your money.

RSC

THE AMEBA

An ameba, grown too portly,
 Elongates itself and shortly
 Parts itself into amebae twain.
 Now, this form of reproduction
 Has its point, if your construction
 Lets you split yourself without a pain.
 It avoids the complications
 That beset our copulations,
 Which we try to regulate in vain.

Thus a piece of protoplasm
 Undergoes bipartite spasm,
 As it did in Eozoic clime;
 Each ameba, now existing,
 Is a unit, yet persisting,
 Which has flourished since the dawn of time.
 In this neat and sober fashion,
 Unbetrayed by human passion,
 Multiplies this deathless bit of slime.

Still, there must be something missing
 To a life that knows no kissing,
 Nor the other games the sexes play.
 Surely Solomon and Sheba
 Had more fun than that ameba
 E'er will know forever and a day.
 So I'd rather love my lassie
 Than to be a little, glassy,
 Protoplasmic speck and live for ay.

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

THAT OLD TIME RELIGION

ROSS
peterson

You'll find it hard to believe what a degree in radio&television can let you in for. I've just been finding out. Everybody thinks you can do anything connected with mass media. I finished my master's last fall and spent a few months traveling and vegetating, then began part-time work as an "outside technical assistant" to the cable tv company here in Bloomington, which is owned by a Daddy Warbucks type giant, Telesis Corp. of Evansville. They just naturally assumed I could fix things, whereas of course my training is in using tv equipment to produce programs (most producers are only half-assed electronics men, and most technicians haven't the foggiest notion of how one uses all that gear to make an esthetically pleasing viewing experience possible). Now I find they want me to become a newsman

(news and public affairs being another of my non-specialties) because they've discovered they have a potential audience of 20,000 on the cable here already and there's money to be made selling advertising time for local programs. Thus we are committed to a half-hour news show, just concerning Bloomington news, sports, and weather (a former Playboy playmate is allegedly lined up for this last job; the only question is, how "former" is she?) to be aired starting April 30th. The person they hire is expected to do all the news -

gathering (i.e. 8-9 AM at city police station for daily police beat briefing, 9-10 State Police ditto, etc.) plus shoot all the videotape and slides for the show, plus edit the tape, write and type up the scripts, and then direct the show (7-7:30PM five nights a week). Guess who gets this nifty assignment? Who else but yours truly. The money will be pretty good (and needed) and the experience of working

for a growing cable tv company will be good for my resumé, but man am I going to be pooped! This coming week is relatively easy; just run some videotapes on the air, requiring my pre-



Fred 1/73

sence as schedule director all after-noon and evenings until 10 all next week. But this is all just the prelude.

I've been acting television consultant to the Whole Theater of Bloomington for over a year (they're a performing arts group, around 50 people of diverse talents in the arts under a non-profit corporate umbrella of doing Good Things for the community). Last February Whole Theater began to get involved with a local millionaire who has aspirations of film directing; at that time he had a scheme to take a large film crew to Hanoi to film the release of the P.O.W.s. Chicago-7 man Rennie Davis is one of Larry Canada's friends and agreed to go on this trip if Larry (the millionaire) footed the bill.

You have to understand what a weird cat this guy Canada is, first. He's about 30, very wealthy, very speedy (i.e. talks-a-mile-a-minute, tremendous imagination, a natural commanding officer type who expects everyone else to go 1000 mph, 20 hours a day just like him) and a former Bloomington hippie. That's right, friends, he's Seen The Light. The light of Guru Maharaj Ji, I hasten to add; perhaps you've seen mention of the 15-year-old Perfect Master kid from India and his five million followers; Anyway, Larry has been to India and received The Knowledge as they call it (a set of meditational techniques leading to spiritual enlightenment, to be more specific) and has offered all his considerable worldly goods up to the Divine Light Mission, only to have the Guru give them back with the advice that Larry use his resources to make more money (green energy, they call it) for the movement. So now Larry, free of the normal strictures of the movement against drugs, sex, non-devotional music, non-organic food, and other excesses, spends his time (and money) on various high-flown projects all around the globe. The Hanoi trip involved three close friends of mine in flying to New York, spending \$500 on trinkets to give the North Vietnamese children, then meeting Larry and the Divine Light film crew entourage and Rennie Davis in Paris, where they spent a week and around \$20,000 changing hotels every day, dinners at the Lido, high-priced prostitutes, off-the-wall bets, you name it.

Then they found out they could only get visas for 5 people and my friends were flown back here. Days later Larry called us from New Delhi to say he was with the Guru and would be back to Bloomington in 48 hours, please set up a press conference and mass rally. This also never materialized. The Divine Light people have an upsetting habit of promising the real, live presence of their Guru and then, when he doesn't show up, innocently substituting a portrait of him on the dais, then explaining to the anxious crowd that he is there "in spirit".

What happened to me was that in early March, Whole Theater got involved with this local Divine Light group, which had been given \$90,000 by Larry's wife to put on a gigantic free concert/meditation show at I.U. for thousands of interested students. Whole Theater's expertise in media presentations got us involved in exchange for some equipment and other stuff from Larry. The local people from Divine Light got very "blissed out" at the ideas for a huge show and got us funds and cars to drive out to their national headquarters in Denver. This is where the scene started to



get unbelievable.

We had two cars, one a brand new Continental, white, with the \$8,500 price tag still on it; one of the Divine Light guys drove it with the heavy rock'n'roll stations blaring over the four-speaker radio all the way out, with John and Charlie of the Whole Theater in the back rapping out on audiocassettes the plot and script for a big feature dramatic film on a Vietnam veteran. (Another of Larry Canada's brainstorms: "You guys take these roughnotes I just did on this film idea and develop it into a full script; I'll get you all the equipment and crew you need and we'll shoot it on location next summer.") I got to go in the other car with another Divine Light guy. We were in a new VW bus that had just been returned from Nicaragua, where a Divine Light film crew had been shooting the rebuilding of the destroyed city. Dan, the guy I was with, couldn't hack any deviations from the Guru's path, so instead of listening to the radio while driving across Missouri and Kansas, we listened to endless raps on enlightenment by the Guru's mahatmas, which Dan had thoughtfully brought along on cassettes, with cassette machine. Dope-smoking by hitchhikers we picked up was also a no-no (more understandably, I think).

When we got to Denver, we walked into the national headquarters building at about 10:30 PM and found several dozen clean-shaven, very well-dressed, shorthaired young people racing around talking on long distance phones, using WATS lines and a telex system. All basically keeping their fingers on the international operation of surprising size -- including hundreds of Ashrams in various cities, a newspaper (the Divine Times), a monthly slick magazine (And It Is Divine), and a film crew (Shri Hans Productions), as well as an import-export company, a recycling center chain, and around 50,000 followers in the U.S. alone. Their big plan right now is a massive festival next November at the Houston Astrodome, which they intend to fill with followers jetting in from Europe and India as well as from this country. They are also intent on taking over Denver the way the Mormons run Salt Lake City; they have a private school there as well as about 20 Ashrams, each one being, usually, an old house with about 20 or 30 followers living communally in each.

We met the national public relations director, Arthur Brigham, who gave us a very skillful, impressive three-hour sales talk on joining the movement (a really shrewd Mad Avenue type guy he is -- very tall, short blond hair, and steel-rimmed glasses, penetrating glance, and the usual lingo of "oh, wow!", "blissed out!", etc.) Anyway, they felt our Bloomington show was not part of the national p.r. picture, and were disturbed that we three Whole Theater people had not joined the movement but were in this for a more mundane return. So the next day we met up with Larry's liaison with the Guru and drove on to meet Larry in Las Vegas.

The liaison turned out to be John Summerville, a fascinating guy. He's half Korean, half-Black, 20 years old, from L.A. A short, wiry guy with a tremendous throaty laugh, an Afro, a history of heavy drug indulgence, and somehow a good friend of the revered Maharaj Ji. He has sworn off drugs and sex and non-organic foods, but that doesn't stop him from listening to plenty of soul music, dancing the night away in discotheques, wearing hundreds of dollars worth of flashy clothes thoughtfully provided by Larry Canada. By late afternoon the scene had come to this:

I was riding in the Lincoln with John, the others behind us in the VW, as we drove through some of the most fantastic scenery in the world -- the Rockies just west of Denver on the road to Vegas. At 12,000 feet the snow is so deep you can't tell where the ground is, and I was just agog at it all. Meanwhile, next to me sits this crazy dude from L.A. in a \$1500 Siberian Wolfhound coat, eating sunflower seeds and listening to the rock radio and giving me the usual endless satsang or inspirational rap about Divine Light. I was so busy looking at the outside and snapping pix I hardly heard a word. I'd never been further west than Terre Haute, until this whole craziness began.

We drove all night and managed to pull into Vegas, after an unbelievable Southern Utah sunrise, about 9 AM. We spent the next three days in Vegas, changing hotels every day or so (one of Larry's habits; he also believes in carrying lots of luggage to impress the hotel staff with the size of his entourage), and cruising around the casinos. Larry was trying to impress everybody with how important and rich he is,

so he called us his "film crew" and insisted we wear all these outrageous clothes of his and waltz around the casinos with him holding cameras and tape recorders and generally looking very professional. He had somehow wrangled the tv rights to the next World Championship of Poker, the match to be held in May at Binion's Horseshoe Casino. We met the current champ, Amarillo Slim, who I understand has been on Johnny Carson a couple of times. He proved to be a fascinating character, very tall, with Stetson and elaborately-tooled cowboy boots and a thick drawl, chock-full of crazy stories about things he'd done on bets. We also met some really gorgeous (but plastic) young ladies of the boutique/show girl set, i.e. models at "Suzy Creamcheese's", and the like. Larry continued to hatch schemes on us of varied improbability -- such as selling different casinos new designs for their menus and table napkins. Also a whole new building for the Golden Nugget casino -- designed by Larry's favorite dope dealer. We also panhandled some furs and jewelry brought back into the States from India in February, and basically got very little sleep and a lot of very expensive meals and room service.

Larry sent the three of us back to Indiana in the VW bus, dispersing other members of the group to California, Costa Rica, etc., while he went down to Mexico City to try and get some old friend out of jail. Our ride back was uneventful, until we were stopped in Gallup, New Mexico, for using an invalid Gulf credit card. Larry had overcharged on it, then handed it to us to use for gas and motels on the way back. The police kept the card but let us off, unaccountably not checking the car for various illegal substances, or noticing that the plates had expired the week before, a crime that normally leads to impoundment of said vehicle. Now too bereft of funds to afford more than gas, we picked up some hitchhikers and drove 36 hours straight back to Bloomington. It was a very long 36 hours, and some great scenes on the way (fantastic stars overhead in Texas, immense ground fog and sunrise in Oklahoma, big sunset in St. Louis, trying futilely to find some Coors beer to bring back, only to discover it isn't sold any further east than Kansas City).

I've been trying to recuperate ever since.



COLONEL SANTA

from LEGENDS OF OLD EARTH

EDITED BY PUBLIUS R. PARRISH

(TERMINUS: THE PERMANENT PRESS, 27,904)

your excerpter..... dainis bisenieks

For some time after human life ceased to be ruled by the seasons, the Festival of Sunreturn was a time for feasting, jollification, and the exchange of gifts.¹ Presiding over this festival was a spirit or minor deity who was known by various names -- according to the most reliable records, Colonel Santa, Sant Nick, and Santa Claus. He is most commonly represented as a stout old man with thick white hair and beard, dressed in a suit of red. Of the 123 cards found in Golden, Colorado, the fifteen bearing his portrait agree in all essential points.² Like other such figures (e.g., Jānis of the Latvian Midsummer feast) he has seasonally the power of ubiquity. On Kristmas Eve, he leaves his manufacturing conglomerate at the North Pole³ in a flying sleigh drawn by eight or nine reindeer to distribute his manufactures among the households of Earth. While his vehicle hovers above, he enters the silent and locked houses to leave his gifts -- apparently by appotation. We can dismiss the notion that he came down the chimney, though many of the surviving records facetiously refer to this mode of ingress. Most chimneys led only to mechanical furnaces, and the obsolete fireplace, as a surviving drawing by one Chas Addams shows, could be dangerous.

Colonel Santa (or Sanders, as the name is sometimes spelled, representing, no doubt, a dialectal version) was also the patron spirit of the Kristmas feast, and by extension of feasts in general. As the turkey was the traditional fare at the American feast of Thanksgiving, so the chicken seems to have been traditional at Kristmas. But commercial interests saw to it that consumption of this fowl suffered no decline at other times of the year. A representation of Santa, apparently issued by some commercial enterprise, shows him exclaiming, "It's finger-lickin' good!" But the commercialization of all human activities in the Early Machinery Age is notorious.

"Colonel" is known to have been a military rank, but not of the highest; scholars disagree over the significance of the term. It is difficult to reconcile with Santa's position as Chairman of the Board and Lord High Everything Else (a mystic and exalted rank) of his North Pole operation, but this title -- and no other -- is well attested.

NOTES

1. Paradoxically, the people of Old Australia celebrated it in summer.
2. The Golden Hoard, with the numerous notations found on the envelopes, has also shed considerable light on people's attitudes toward their obligations at this feast.
3. It is not clear whether this was the Geographic or the Magnetic Pole. The former is in the Arctic Ocean, which was frozen at that time; the latter wanders among the Canadian Arctic Islands.

Scholars have identified certain other legendary figures as avatars of Santa. The best attested of them is Nick Claus or Jack Nick Claus, familiarly known as Old Nick. There are obscure and paradoxical references to him as a Bogey Man⁴. Not much is known about the nature of bogeymen, but that little seems hard to reconcile with the character of Santa. In the few surviving pictures, "Nick" carries some kind of instrument with a long handle. One form of it ends in an oval head set at right angles to the shaft, another in a number of pointed and barbed projections. In either form, it seems to be an instrument of violence.⁵ This is difficult to comprehend in context with the benevolent aspects of Santa. Professor Brandon Arn asserts that Nick is Santa's "dark" avatar, whose task is to punish or terrify those children who have not merited Santa's gifts. There is evidence for some German Saint Nick's Day customs which would support his theory.

It is also contradictory that this avatar should be called "Old" Nick when he looks more slim and youthful than Santa. Instead of the full beard of the customary image of Santa, he has a black and elegantly pointed 'goatee' (a term of unknown origin). Unfortunately, all but one of the surviving pictures of Nick are uncolored, but that one shows Nick's costume to be red, the color traditionally associated with Santa.⁶ A surviving Christmas song, "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus", suggests that this avatar manifested itself to adults, at least to women. There is evidence of female Santas in the Femlib Era, neatly completing the pattern.

Professor Von Mistgabel asserts that "Kris Kringle", a name occasionally given to Santa, points to an association with the sect of Kristians and their celebration of the Advent of the Saviour. But the preoccupation with material things at the Feast of Sunreturn cannot be squared with doctrines of Kristianity. It was a wholly secular celebration.

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4. The existence of a movie actor named Bogey further confuses the issue.
 5. It may originally have been an agricultural implement; compare the picture "American Gothic".
 6. And with his deer, one of which is called "Rudolph the Red". The connection with rain is shown by the saying, "Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear." His knowledge made him a useful guide.

LETTER EXCERPT, from Don & Maggie Thompson: To supplement comments by Florence Stevenson, we personally recommend The Book of Weird, \$3.95 from Dolphin (paperback, C525) which is the retitling of Barbara Ninde Byfield's The Glass Harmonica. It's sort of an encyclopedia of medieval fantasy, filled with useful definitions and considerable snatches of humor: "A Dastard tends to be a third or fourth son, if not a distant connection. His vilest act is performed when his back is to the wall, exposure is threatened, and creditors hound him - a combination of events which will inevitably occur."

"Nice differentiations - e.g., between banners, pennants, and standards. And some tables of weights and measures - e.g., a noggin or gill is 1/4 pint. A firkin is 1/2 kilderkin, whereas a runlet is a scant kilderkin (a kilderkin is 2 firkins or 1/4 tun). There are batches and batches of illustrations (by Ms. Byfield), most of which cry out for a good set of Crayolas. If I had time, I'd spend a long winter's night coloring in the pictures; wonder how the paper would take felt-tip marker?"

"HERMITS thrive and hum, do themselves very well, and generally make the best of things. They aren't above having watertight roofs for their huts, or drains in their caves, and are diligent in ensuring a steady supply of honey for their table.

"ANCHORITES show a preference for thorns, drought, and meditation. Certain that the next world will be without the above afflictions, they relish their present discomforts, which may include beds of thistles."

My only disagreement at the moment is that a fairy godmother did NOT point out the yellow brick road - neither in movie nor book. Tsk.

FORT YUKON YULE



When I left my job on a Connecticut newspaper, I left at once. The day I was last at work was the day before I rode out of town, by car to New York and by plane...to Fairbanks, Alaska, where I spent a couple of hours in the airport looking curiously at the snow outside. It was unseasonably warm in mid-December, around 0', and I was safely bundled up.

In fact, I was very bundled up. They must have thought I made some sight in Manhattan. From the skin out: Raschel knit thermal underwear, 100 percent wool pants, heavy Woolrich salt and pepper all-wool shirt, green army jacket, WWI Navy Peacoat, light socks, wool socks, sno-go boots. And I had a scarf and maybe -- yes, a wool knit cap. I was not just fat, I bulged -- and largely because I had too much gear to put in a suitcase and still meet the stringent weight limitations.

It may have looked funny in New York, but it was not out of place in Fairbanks, although still a little much. When I boarded the Wien Consolidated plane a couple hours later and flew to Ft. Yukon I knew I was not at all too-prepared. There was a stewardess who served us Coke and who seemed nice enough; there were piles of gear and boxes and mail which was being flown in; and there were about eight of us on the plane besides that -- all but the stewardess and I were Indian; at least one old man (from Chalykyesik, I later learned) didn't seem to speak any English at all. The plane was full, and could not have accommodated any more than an additional two or three passengers even if our coats and bags did not overflow onto the seats around us. A little, low-slung, pod-bellied silver plane you could step right into from the ground. Two engines -- a Cessna.

Although it was only three or four in the afternoon, it was already dark when we took off, and there were no lights below us, so I could not make out any of the landscape below, could not distinguish ground from fog, or make any visual headway through the intermittent snowfall.

An hour later we were in Ft. Yukon. Out of the plane and into the small block building which kept me safe from the -10' warmth the town was enjoying. The Indians who stood around looked at me curiously, but said nothing as I made a phone



call to the "taxi" the young Texan at the counter referred me to. It turned out to be a man with a pickup truck who came around and got me, driving me down and around to the Sourdough Inn while the other passengers whisked off home on heavy-laden sno-gos, down the little paths that served for roads. (Later, riding off to the community center, I would be reminded of a Ray Bradbury story about Irish on bicycles, although the sno-gos were always at least as well-lit as their drivers.)

The Inn was a two-story building with a false front which made it look like some remnant of the gold lust era. Since it had been moved to Ft. Yukon years before I suppose that's what it actually was. Next to it on one side was a large house trailer, and on the other a little place where movies were sometimes shown. Across the street, although I couldn't tell it thru the snow cover and the darkness, was the Yukon River. Sgt. Preston and King had hung out in Yukon Territory, Canada, not at all close to where I was, but flying over Dawson had set my pulse to beating excitedly, and this was close enough to my childhood fantasies to satisfy.

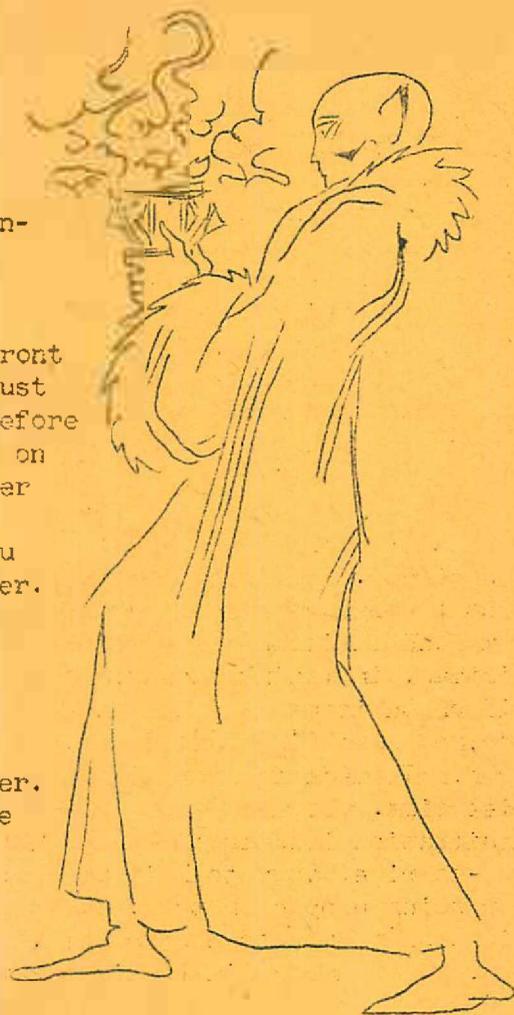
In fact, the real thing could have been no better. Although the only fort in evidence was an army base a mile or two outside town, the frontier flavor prevailed in civilization's last outpost in the bush, three miles north of the Arctic Circle. For one thing, it was small. One evening the local VISTA representative and I walked at a leisurely pace all around the town, enjoying the clarity of the sky (which had been overcast almost continually since I got in) and seeing the "sights".

Actually, there weren't any sights to speak of. The school, the school teachers' nousing, the Episcopal Church with its beautiful beaded altar cloth, the community center, the Fair Deal and Northern Commercial Co. stores...that was about all. But at midnight, with very little breeze, and I just getting accustomed to twenty below, it was a pleasant thing to do. Of course nothing moved. The silence was as profound and deep as you are ever likely to find. Above, the stars shone unkinkingly from a very black and pellucid sky and an occasional meteor fell.

During the half-year night, there is no television, and little to do besides work (if you have a job), watch movies (if there are movies), and socialize. The town is about half white and half Indian, with some amount of tension (not a lot) between the two groups. Altho **it is** not dry and bootlegging and homebrew are impossible to prevent, there is no bar in the town. Alcohol is the major help for socializing, and the town's main problem. There is an active AA chapter.

Since day and night are terms which mean very little, people spend their time going from house to house visiting. That may mean they will come in by the stove and stand without saying a word -- not just to come out of the cold (although that happens too), but to visit -- without a word being spoken. It is a kind of silent communion I never quite got used to any more than I got used to the idea of people dropping in on total strangers, but such is the way of the bush. I understand in Eskimo villages they do not even knock. At temperatures down to 70 below it is a necessary custom to insure the survival of the species.

It was only toward New Year's that I was able to find out what life was like in one of the small, one-room log cabins in which the whole family lived and slept. Only after I moved out of the Sourdough Inn to share bachelor quarters with Vince (of VISTA) for a few days that I discovered the joys of having a community center with laundry



facilities, showers, and (joy!) indoor flush toilets. That was a luxury I was to really learn to appreciate before I left the Arctic five months later.

Meanwhile, I stayed at the Inn, rarely venturing out, and not really expecting to stay long. The flight north which I wanted to make was supposed to take place the next day. When weather prevented that, the day after was scheduled...and so on, including two trips up when we were unable to land and had to turn back. Upstairs was the room I lived in, downstairs a large living-room lounge and the dining area. The juke box didn't work, but there was a record player and a collection of country and Western songs played by John and June Hardy's two (three?) kids, both in their early teens. It was very relaxed, most of the time, because of the holidays.

John was one of those people who can do anything mechanical or practical, from build an addition (which was in progress when winter hit) to repairing a generator. June, who was part Aleut, kept house and cooked -- delicious freshly-frozen river salmon among other things, lots of buttery little cookies for another, and an enormous Christmas dinner. By that time I was beginning to wonder if I would ever get out of there, but the Hardys were all kind enough to pretend I was a guest of the family, feeding me and inviting me to join in with them on some of the games the kids received for Christmas, including endless rounds of Hearts. In return I made it a point to keep to myself on Christmas Eve and much of Christmas Day. Once they were able to arrange for a copy of Walt Disney's PETER PAN, which was being shown in the community hall about then. It made for a pleasant evening and an interesting disruption of an otherwise quiet time.

In a situation like that, almost everything becomes an adventure. There was my first sno-go ride, down to Fair Trade for groceries, and there were visits to some of the interesting people in town. In a place that small, everyone knew everyone else, and so it wasn't hard to meet people. Also, Alaskans seemed friendlier than people elsewhere. In a hard climate like that, with many people coming in and out of the area from both larger cities and smaller, more remote villages, it probably is inevitable they would develop an attitude which, for the interior of the state, can only be called cosmopolitan.

Bill Bemmels, the cross-country ski coach at school in town, also taught a couple of other subjects, possibly geography and social studies. He was the other guest (besides myself) for turkey, trimmings, and drinks on Christmas Day, since he was another of the town's lone bachelors. Later he invited me over to look at some slides he was organizing, and I was glad enough to do so.

He was newcomer to the area, having taught school for a couple of years in the Pribiloff Islands off the coast. He was on St. Lawrence, which is famous for its seal industry, and there were many scenes of the little animals being killed and skinned. He was quick to point out that the work was done as efficiently as possible and bore no relation to the "butchery" in Eastern Canada, which has generated so much outrage. As much as I hated to admit it, the scenes he had on film did tend to support his words.

Bill had a small collection of furs, which were the first I had ever seen up close. White fox was the most striking but there were other almost as attractive and considerably more useful for parka ruffs and the like. Most were put away out of sight, and only displayed reluctantly, apparently because he had had some further thoughts on furs since those were acquired. I was also overjoyed to see that he owned an ocsick -- a famous Alaskan product which is somewhat difficult to describe in polite company. It is a bone, a couple of feet long and slightly S-shaped (closer to the integral sign, actually). It comes from the personal anatomy of the walrus. A somewhat smaller set only several inches long were gotten up as swizzle sticks and had originally come from seals.

When I walked into her kitchen that first day, June asked if I was a writer with Reader's Digest. I said no, I was a newspaper editor, and she avowed that was about the same thing. Later I found out a convicted criminal on the lam from rape charges and other good things (he'd thought it would be easier to hide in the wilderness, where every new face is a topic of conversation and endless comment, than in the big city where everyone is anonymous even to his next door neighbors) had been active in the area. He had run off without paying his bill, and when I wrote a check for \$10 or so, which bounced (and was quickly exchanged for cash, I must add), June must have been sure all of us were alike. We were even both named Tom...

This, then, was my introduction to life in the wilderness, two weeks in a city-village on the edge of the end, a jumping-off point for civilization which has lost its original reason for existence and not quite found another to replace it. These days when the weather was hovering around zero were a slow and memorable introduction to the coldness and isolation and privations to come when I finally did get a plane to Arctic Village, a hundred and fifteen miles further north. It was not how I had expected to spend Christmas, 1971, but it is an experience I would again sacrifice much to share.





THE WORLD OF FANZINES, by Fredric Wertham, M.D. [Southern Illinois University Press, \$10.00] This odd-sized (7 1/4 x 9 1/2) and rather skinny (144 pages) book is undoubtedly the most accurate view of fandom ever to come from an "outsider". Which doesn't mean that I necessarily agree with it -- it means that I don't disagree with it more than I would disagree with a book on fandom expressing the viewpoint of Mike Glicksohn or Ed Wood, and rather less than I would with the views of Arnie Katz or Norman Spinrad. A lot of fans won't like it because it lumps stf fandom and comics fandom together -- but for Wertham's purposes, the various fanzine fandoms have far more similarities than they have differences. (Just as a book pointing out the differences between Indian and white viewpoints doesn't necessarily -- especially in 144 pages -- need to go into the detailed differences between Apache, Navajo, and Seneca.) From the strict stf fan's point of view, the approach yields an occasional abomination, such as the list of "fanzine words", in which 18 of the 42 words listed are restricted to some "other fandom" (and in most cases, a good thing, too. "Slixies" is just too cutesy for wordsies.) Wertham also perpetuates "sci-fi", but this is probably a good thing; it will serve to separate the genuine fans from the people who are trying to talk the language after reading Wertham and/or Ackerman. And in several places, he emphasizes that fandom is so varied that generalizations do not apply. (He then goes ahead and makes generalizations anyway, but that's a peculiarity of the academic approach, according to Juanita, and probably can't be avoided in anything published by a university press.)

I don't think that fans are as opposed to drugs, pornography and violence as Dr. Wertham assumes, but then I haven't really had a good look at suburban or city morality lately; maybe it really is as bad as newspaper accounts indicate, which would tend to make fans look good by comparison. Rather interestingly, he takes two pages to refute the theory that fans are maladjusted creatures fleeing from normal society. It isn't really a very good refutation, but it may come in handy -- particularly for young fans with parental problems -- to be able to say that an eminent psychiatrist has stated that fanzine editing is "healthy and constructive". Primarily, he stresses that fanzines are valuable for their freedom from the conformity of the professional "communications media" -- including radical conformism in the so-called "underground press", and I'll go along fully with him there.

The only drawback is price. At half the price it would be recommended to individuals; as it is, go bug your local librarian to get a copy. You do want to read it, one way or another. It's too short to be a definitive study of fandom, but it's an excellent introduction. (Besides, he quotes Yandro a lot.)

HERE ABIDE MONSTERS, by Andre Norton [Atheneum, \$5.95] Any book that manages to link the Bermuda Triangle, flying saucers, esp, and heraldic beasts such as the opinicus and the enfield is going to have an interesting background. The plot is fairly standard; sudden arrival in alien location, with survival and a quest for a way back home carrying things from there. About average -- and a juvenile, if anyone cares. Not one of Norton's best, but the background details make it worth reading.

TRANSFER TO YESTERDAY, by Isidore Haiblum [Ballantine, \$1.25] This is the familiar "time war" plot, told in an original manner and with reasonably interesting characters once you get into the book. (I almost gave it up early on, but stuck with it and after the first few chapters it became interesting.) In general I dislike the writer who switches viewpoints between two sets of characters in alternate chapters, but Haiblum does it well, and jumping back and forth between our 1930 and a distant future of a world in which the Hitler-Stalin pact held up to produce world domination does provide suspense, if only in wondering how the author is going to tie everything up. (A bit sloppily, is how, but with a degree of entertainment.)

THE HERO OF DOWNWAYS, by Michael G. Coney [DAW, 95 cents] A future-reversion-to-barbarism plot with a new twist at the end. Basically, the book is about the forces that make heroes -- and how the heroic man of action in time of danger is all too often the obnoxious bastard in pleasanter times. (Remember "Pappy" Boyington and the "Black Sheep" Squadron? Or for that matter, Generals Patton and Montgomery?) Plus, of course, the difference between legend and fact, and the idea that I've always found rather strange; that most people prefer to believe the legend. (And for femfans in the audience, the real hero of Downways is obviously the protagonist, Shirl.) Not Coney's best, but quite well done.

TO RIDE PEGASUS, by Anne McCaffrey [Ballantine, \$1.25] Four connected novelets rather than a novel; previous publication credits are given for three of them. Fairly pleasant lightweight stories on the possibilities of esp. Enjoyable while reading but not at all memorable.

THE PEOPLE OF THE WIND, by Poul Anderson [Signet, 95 cents] A little of everything; the philosophy of independence, an interspecies love affair, the maturing of a teenager, interstellar politics, and quite a bit of action. (Not to mention one of the more hideous covers of the month)) A nice competent piece of writing, if not very thrilling.

HUNTERS OF THE RED MOON, by Marion Zimmer Bradley [DAW, 95 cents] Sort of nostalgic for me; this would have gone great in Startling Stories. I enjoyed it a lot, though Marion does overdo it a bit with the hero-torn-between-two-women gimmick. The plot is a variation of "The Most Dangerous Game", quite well handled.

HIGH DERYNI, by Katherine Kurtz [Ballantine, \$1.25] I'm not positive if this is the final book in the Deryni series or not; most of the threads are tied up, but there seem to be a few possibilities for continuation (the affairs of a nation do not come to a dead stop just because the invader has been defeated). I hope it is, because despite the fact that this book is written just as well as the earlier ones in the series, I tended to yawn a lot while reading it. Of course, I don't enjoy series; if you do, you probably won't have that reaction. In his introduction, Carter seems to feel that more novels are coming, which is probably nice for the author but is going to become progressively duller for me. Still, it's been nice this far, and the author's medieval world is almost as interesting as the real one was.

MESSENGER OF ZHUVASTOU, by Andy Offutt [Berkley, 75 cents] I had a devil of a time finding this one; if it hadn't been by Andy I probably would have given up. The old one of the agent on a primitive world who can't reveal modern secrets to the natives. De Camp did it better, but Offutt does very well, including the humor. Something to enjoy when you don't want to think and prefer a book to take your mind off your troubles. (It's also been out for awhile, so you may not be able to find a copy.)

THE WORLD OF TROUBLE, by Robert E. Toomey, Jr. [Ballantine, \$1.25] Pretty much the same idea as the Offutt book above; even the same general approach. But not as well done. It's not bad, and if you have time you may well enjoy both, but if it comes to a choice, read Andy's.

MONUMENT OF TERROR, by Victor Jones [Pocket Books, 95 cents] A spy novel, with the super weapon that gives it a few overtones of science fiction. How it rates as a spy novel I couldn't say, not having read that many; as science fiction it's pretty poor. Intrigues, captures, escapes, the trusted friend who betrays the protagonist; all the clichés.

POSEIDONIS, by Clark Ashton Smith [Ballantine, \$1.25] Despite the title, only about a third of the book is taken up by Smith's stories set in Atlantis; the rest are the usual collection of exotica. Personally I find most of Smith's fiction somewhat overripe, but one has to admit that it's colorful. (In one paragraph we have "black enui", and ivory chair inset with "red tourmalines and azure crystals", white eyebrows, amber parchment, cold green eyes, a beard "half white, half of a black with glaucous gleams", a mosaic floor partly covered with black and silver apeskins, a violet robe with woven silver characters, "phials filled with black or amber liquids", "a coral viper with pale green belly and ashen mottlings", and books bound in serpent-skin with verdigris-eaten clasps. Like an explosion in a paint factory...) There's considerable variety here; Smith could use fairly normal English when he wanted to -- he just didn't want to very often.

JONDELLE, by E. C. Tubb [DAW, 95 cents] Another in the Dumarest series; Tubb seems to have found one that will keep him going for years. It's well enough written, and God knows the idea of the Mysterious Meanderer who drops in to straighten out the lives of ordinary mortals and then goes his way is popular enough in fiction, but I still don't think much of it.

CONEHEAD, by Gardner F. Fox [Ace, 95 cents] Actually, this is a pretty good novel for Fox, meaning it's almost as good as Tubb turns out when he's just going through the motions. It's readable adventure, if you don't ask a lot from it.

EXCALIBUR, by Sanders Anne Laubenthal [Ballantine, \$1.25] I've read comments by several fans to the effect that this was an excellent book. To me, it read too much like a gothic with delusions of grandeur, but perhaps I was expecting too much; it seemed from the blurbs that it would be interesting. The Arthurian legendry is well researched, but the characters came across as universally unbelievable and more than a little sugary. Morgan le Fay is the only really interesting one of the lot.

STARMASTER'S GAMBIT, by Gerard Klein [DAW, 95 cents] I tend to blame the translator for the flaws in this one. Klein's earlier DAW book was quite good, and the main flaw here is the stiffness of both dialogue and description; it reads a bit like a Gernsbackian-era story. The story itself is very well done, but somebody with a tin ear for language came close to ruining it. (It is possible to avoid sounding like a robot without going into the flowery abysses of C. A. Smith, but somebody didn't make it in this one.) The novel is worthy of the cosmic concepts of Doc Smith; it's unfortunate that the writing is also worthy of him.

FUTURE QUEST, edited by Roger Elwood [Avon, 95 cents] An anthology of original stories; 6 stories in 180 pages, making them a fairly respectable average length. "Dull Drums" by Anne McCaffrey is a sequel to an earlier story which I can't locate (the one about the family crisis in which the girl rather than the boy turns out to have the mental requirements for university training). At any rate, the earlier story was good. This one, dealing with college life and relating to one's peers and maturing and all that jazz, is so slight as to be almost non-existent. It is also as dull as the drums of the title. "Second Nature" by Chad Oliver does not really deal with instinct versus conditioning, but it's so entertainingly written that one doesn't really care that it doesn't have as deep a meaning as it appears to. It's not one of Oliver's best, but it's the best item in here. "Tapping Out" by Barry Malzberg is another of Malzberg's insane protagonists; I suppose it's intended as a comment on our warped society, but it doesn't make it. And it has the flattest punch line I've read in

years; like something out of a poor fanzine. "How To Be Ethnic In One Easy Lesson" by Poul Anderson is a slight, mildly amusing story of youth confounding regimentation and bigotry, tying in with one of his series (one of the principal characters is Adzel, studying on Earth in his younger days). "Weep No More, Old Lady" by C. L. Grant is a short melodrama of the life of a government-sponsored genius, and probably the second-best story in the book. "City's End" by Mack Reynolds is another story set in the ruins of Manhattan, peopled by a few outcasts of the new society, who are hunted by the wealthy sportsmen of that society, and of a youth surviving and maturing. (Reynolds shows a rather surprising ignorance of firearms for a man who has written a series of novels about a society based on limited war. His hero is a teenager, and figures that when he gains "a few more pounds and inches" he can handle something bigger than a .22 rifle. I was hunting with a 12 gauge shotgun -- which kicks more than an army rifle -- when I was 12, and I was never even a particularly healthy child.) "Moonchild" by Tom Purdom is, basically, about the conflict between rights and duties -- set on the Moon, where too violent a defense of one's rights can literally destroy the community. I doubt if Purdom's point gets across to the people who need it, tho. "Pet" by Raymond F. Jones is about understanding between people and between civilizations. All of the stories are acceptable, except maybe Malzberg's; none is worth reading twice -- or once, if you don't have a lot of time. There is no introduction to indicate it, but Elwood obviously assigned his authors to do stories about teenagers in a future society, with 17 as the optimum age. Maybe that's what's the matter with the book...

NEW DIMENSIONS 1, edited by Robert Silverberg [Avon, 95 cents] Another original collection; 14 stories in 225 pages, for a shorter average length than the preceding volume. "A Special Kind of Morning" by Gardner Dozois is simple an old man maundering about Life and Meaning, and has about as much significance as you'd find if you went down on skid row or whatever it's called these days and asked an old drunk or junkie to tell you about Life and Meaning. (This rum-soaked old sot has an impossibly large vocabulary, but he doesn't use it for anything more constructive than a real sot would.) "The Trouble With the Past" by Alex and Phyllis Eisenstein is an amusing little item of time paradoxes. "The Power of Time" by Josephine Saxton is about a far future when people play around with sculpturing landscapes and moving skyscrapers in the name of Art (or even Collecting), but it doesn't seem to have any deep meaning and it's a particularly dull story. "The Giberel" by Doris Pitkin Buck is about conformity -- but more important, it's an entertaining story. "Vaster Than Empires And More Slow" by Ursula le Guin covers human relations and empathy and how too much of the latter can worsen the former (a cynical outlook it I ever heard one, and one that I vastly approve of). Also a very good story. "The Great A" by Robert C. Malstrom is as the blurb states a sardonic look at the creative process; it's also a satirical look at what constitutes "Art" those days. "At The Mouse Circus" by Harlan Ellison is all imagery and emotion; it struck me as pretty silly, but presumably the more emotional readers and those with a smattering of college psychiatry will enjoy it. (I have this snide feeling that anyone with more than a smattering of psychology will also consider it silly...) "A Plague of Cars" by Leonard Tushnet is an amusing modern version of the Pied Piper legend. "Sky" by R. A. Lafferty has a vague relationship to consciousness-expanding drugs, but it isn't really about them, any more than Lafferty stories are ever about anything. But like all good Lafferty stories, it's intriguing. "Love Song of Herself" by Ed Bryant is presumably an allegory (because it's not much of a story on the surface) but I couldn't say of what. Or care. "The Wicked Flee" by Harry Harrison is a moderately entertaining story until one gets to the end, where the reaction is "is that all?" "The Sliced-Crosswise Only-On-Tuesday World" by Philip José Farmer is the ultimate rigid conformity and a fine original background; the plot is pretty trite, but it's an interesting story anyway. "Conquest" by Barry Malzberg I didn't bother to read. "Emancipation: A Romance of Times to Come" by Thomas M. Disch is about a not-much-in-the-future suburban morality, and every bit as dull as it sounds. I don't read science fiction to find out about suburban morality. Overall, the le Guin, Buck, and Lafferty stories are better than anything in Elwood's anthology, and the Eisensteins, Farmer, and Tushnet just as good. This is a better buy than FUTURE QUEST, but it still has the tinge of mediocrity.

THE SHEEP LOOK UP, by John Brunner [Ballantine, \$1.65] I reviewed the hardcover while awhile back. The drawback to this one is that it's a bit too close to STAND ON ZANZIBAR; the author is covering the same ground in much the same fashion. The advantage is that he's still doing it awfully well. This is one of the best -- and if you eliminate Brunner's overfondness for melodrama, the most accurate -- previews of the not too far future.

THE CRYSTAL GRYPHON, by Andre Norton [DAW, 95 cents] I also reviewed this hardcover recently. It is set on the same planet as WITCH WORLD but in an area that is being devastated by the backwash of events from the earlier book. I dislike the style of using alternate viewpoints to tell a story, so the fact that I enjoyed this should mean that Norton is doing it very well. Some swords and lots of sorcery; an intelligent heroine and a disfigured hero and you can guess the plot from there. But the background and characterization make it work.

PLAGUE SHIP, by Andre Norton [Ace, 95 cents] The third Ace printing of one of the Dane Thorson series. Not Norton's best by a long shot, but acceptable juvenile adventure.

HUON OF THE HORN, by Andre Norton [Ace, 95 cents] I suppose this could be considered swords and sorcery; it's an adaptation of the legend. Neither the archaic language nor the archaic plot commends it much to me, but it's well enough done for those who like that sort of thing. Also a third Ace printing, so probably most of my readers have already read it.

FINAL BLACKOUT, by L. Ron Hubbard [Leisure Books, 75 cents] This is one of what might be called the "underground classics" of science fiction. The story isn't really written all that well, but the premise, of a few men restoring "order" to a Britain shattered by World War II, only to be undermined by U.S. imperialism, was fascinating enough, particularly when it was first published in 1940, to make a name for it. Unfortunately, this edition is probably just as rare as the original publication; if you want it, you'll have to look hard.

WAR OF THE WING-MEN, by Poul Anderson [Ace, 95 cents] Reprint of one of the early van Rijn stories (maybe the earliest; you'd have to ask Sandra about that, not me). In a nice little action-adventure novel Anderson points out that (a) brains usually count for more than brawn, even in primitive societies, and (b) it is well to check whether or not the swaggering blusterer has brains, before you try putting him down.

JOYLEG, by Ward Moore and Avram Davidson [Berkley, 75 cents] Reprint; this has had several publishers. (Fantastic and Pyramid, 1962; Walker hardcover edition, 1971.) Nice humorous little fantasy about the Congressman who is looking for something vote-getting to do for the veterans and discovers that one of his veterans has been drawing a pension ever since the Revolution. Isachar Joyleg is one of the more fascinating characters in fiction, and the authors had fun contrasting current American attitudes with that of one of the real founders of the country. Highly recommended; this one even reads well the third time around.

ENVOY TO NEW WORLDS, by Keith Laumer [Ace, 95 cents] Second time around for one of the earlier Retief books. First published in 1963, so you newer fans probably haven't read it before. I'm not overly enthused about Retief, but if the stories aren't great science fiction or brilliant satire they're at least competently written and moderately humorous, which is more than you can say for a lot of the field. A hideous cover, which contrasts with the excellent one for WAR OF THE WING-MEN.

WORLDS OF THE IMPERIUM, by Keith Laumer [Ace, 95 cents] Cloak and dagger work in an alternate universe. Plenty of action; characters are not exactly my type (too close to the cardboard cutouts of current spy novels), but acceptable enough if you don't

expect brilliant writing. Third printing.

THE WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER, by A. E. van Vogt [Ace, 95 cents] Fourth Ace printing of what may be van Vogt's best novel. Not that any of his novels are terribly good; his only notable performances came in shorter lengths. The hero, of course, is a totally incredible and not too bright superman, in the best van Vogt tradition, but the background and conflict are a trace more believable than usual and there is, certainly, plenty of action.

SWORDS AND DEVILTRY, by Fritz Leiber [Ace, 95 cents] Second printing. This is blurb-ed on the cover as "The first in the series of Fafhrd and Gray Mouser sagas", so presumably the others are also going to be reprinted in a matched set. This contains the separate origin stories -- "The Snow Women" for Fafhrd and "The Unholy Grail" for Mouser -- plus their first (chronologically) joint adventure, "Til Met in Lankhmar". It's thus probably the best book in the series, and one of the best sword and sorcery books ever published. (Not all that high a praise, actually.) Recommended; if you don't like this, you'd better stay away from s&s altogether.

ALPHA 4, edited by Robert Silverberg [Ballantine, \$1.25] One of the best reprint anthologies I've seen lately. Includes "Casablanca" by Thomas M. Disch (getting back at the overbearing Americans; accurate, I suppose, and thoroughly unpleasant but sf only by courtesy), "Dio" by Damon Knight (the ennui of immortality; good), "Eastward, Ho!" by William Tenn (an ironic look at a disUnited States going back to the Indians; humor with a twist), "Judas Danced" by Brian Aldiss (madness and religion; one of Aldiss's early stories, when he was a writer and not an Artiste), "Angel's Egg" by Edgar Pangborn (brilliant story of an alien visitation and a rather kindly gentleman who received it), "In His Image" by Terry Carr (the last of humanity and the first of the emotional robots -- rather moving the first time I read it and more than a little silly upon rereading), "All Pieces of a Silver Shore" by R. A. Lafferty (one of Lafferty's mad fictions, extrapolating upon historical events; one of the more easily understandable of his stories -- at least for a poor backslid Methodist, Sandra -- and also I think one of his best), "We All Die Naked" by James Blish (a satire upon some of Pohl's novels; the world taken over by sewage workers, and the final disaster), "Carcinoma Angels" by Norman Spinrad (a remarkably funny story the first time you read it; a rather overblown one on rereading), "Mother" by Philip José Farmer (one of his early stories which manages the difficult task of making sex -- deviant sex at that -- an integral part of science fiction), and "5,271,009" by Alfrad Bester (alienation - yes, that's a pun - and maturity. Good). Overall, an excellent collection.

PERRY RHODAN #31, 32, 33, 34 [Ace, 75 cents each] The series is now coming out twice a month, and for only a dollar more than the cost of newsstand copies you're allowed to subscribe to six issues (\$2 more if you subscribe to 12 issues). Goshwow; only a dollar for the privilege of receiving your copy a month late... In addition to the Rhodan installment, each issue now provides another serial (currently running is another amateur offering, "Cosmos"), a couple of vignettes, letters, movie reviews, and an editorial. Ted White talked about the paperback magazine; Ackerman is the first editor to produce one.

LADIES OF THE NIGHT, by Susan Hall [Trident, \$7.95] A book on prostitutes; why they work, what they think about themselves, their work, and society. The reader starts at the bottom (if I may be permitted a small pun) and works up; from the streetwalker through the girls working for a madam to the independent operator. (And including the industrial prostitutes; the girls who are hired to put the other party in a business deal in a good mood.) One gets the impression that the streetwalkers are mostly mental cases; their arrangements with pimps are certainly not what I'd consider sane. As one goes up the scale of status (and generally, of intelligence) there is an occasional weird rationalization or sexual hangup, but I at least didn't feel that they

should be put away for their own good. The testimony of the streetwalkers gave me a crawly feeling. There isn't really a lot in here that hasn't been covered before in books on the subject and which will be covered again -- and again, as long as there are voyeurs among the readers -- but it's presented well. The photographs by Bob Adelman are simply portraits of the subjects; mostly full clothed, and only one or two any "dirtier" than you can see in Playboy (and the Playboy girls are generally better looking), so anyone buying the book for kicks is going to be disappointed unless he's a lot sicker than I think any of our readers are.

SEX IN THE EXECUTIVE SUITE, by H. Paul Jeffers and Dick Levitan [Berkley, \$1.50] This is strictly on the industrial prostitutes (and I include those who put out to further their own careers as well as those who are hired for cash). It purports to be -- and probably is -- factual, but it's also presented sensationally. (As might be expected of a Playboy Book Club selection.) It's a reasonably good presentation, but frankly, 256 pages is a lot more than I care about sex in the executive suite, sensationally presented or not.

LE PETOMANE, by Jean Nohain and F. Caradec [Sphere Books, 25p] But Dainis Bisenieks sent me mine. This is the account of a French entertainer who made a successful stage career by being able to fart on cue and with a variety of sounds. Seriously... he was the rage of Paris. (I've always wondered a bit about the supposed artistic taste of the French...) It's a little book -- only about 65 pages -- but interesting as the chronicle of a unique entertainment.

THE PULSE OF THE PLANET, edited by James Cornell and John Surowiecki [Harmony Books, \$2.95] Reports of the Smithsonian Institution Center for Short-Lived Phenomena for the years 1968 - 1971. I got mine as a Christmas present, and as it isn't the sort of book one reads through at a sitting it's taken me awhile to finish. Mostly it relates earthquakes, volcanic activity, oil spills, and meteor fireballs, but there are other short-lived phenomena included. One of the more unusual is a report sent in by the U.S. Navy destroyer escort John D. Pearce, of an island, "reported moving through the strait / The Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti? at about 2.5 knots". The island was "15 yards in diameter and covered with some 10 to 15 palm trees, each about 30 or 40 feet tall". It was reported as a navigational hazard -- one wonders if a skipper would have the nerve to report that he'd been run down by an island -- but broke up and sank before it could be investigated. I also learned from this that I don't want to live in Peru. (1968-69: An insect which carries Chagas' disease -- which is generally fatal and for which there is no cure -- is proliferating and expanding its range. It is "resistant to common pesticides" and all attempts at eradication were unsuccessful. 1968-69: A species of porpoise indigenous to the Amazon River is "in danger of extinction because of industrial exploitation". March 1969: An irruption of leaf-cutting ants "caused widespread devastation of cultivated crops in southern Peru". May: Industrial pollution wiping out marine life in Junin Lagoon. June 1: Eruption of Ubinas Volcano. June: Industrial pollution in the Chili River, and the village of Tierapo -- lovely name -- is slowly sinking out of sight due to substrata faulting. July 24: Twenty villages cut off by floods following earth tremors. October 1: Earthquake. Peru is a pretty small country to have all that happen to it in one year.) All in all, an interesting book.

THE NEW WOMAN'S SURVIVAL CATALOG [Berkley, \$5.00] Obviously modeled on the Whole Earth Catalog, this is one for the dedicated woman's libber, or a woman who needs specific services, or anyone who is curious about the "movement". Some of the contents, such as Women's Lib rock records, are obviously faddish. (Most of the libber fanzines cited fall in that category, too.) But there are listings for information on jobs, legal advice, day care, self defense, abortion, etc. The presentation is excessively mod and faddish, but the information itself seems worthwhile enough. It would be a lot handier in a more compact package, and an index would be of more use than several pages of the dedicated editors at work and comments on their own indus-

'triousness, but then maybe they're trying to prove that women can handle awkward packages such as 11 x 14 softcover books and are really capable of doing work. I already knew both, so I'm not impressed. Look into it, if you're female; it might be just what you've been wanting to own.

CHAMPAGNE LIVING ON A BEER BUDGET, by Marilyn and Mike Ferguson [Berkley, \$1.95] There doesn't seem to be a lot in here that Yandro readers shouldn't already know, but you might glance through it. They make a plea to avoid interior decorators (you know anybody who uses an interior decorator?) which is sound if a bit redundant in fandom. They are occasionally out of their self-imposed limits -- nobody who feels the need to rent a potted palm tree for a cocktail party has a beer budget. (I ignored the lack of taste; poor people have a right to bad taste as well as the rich, and most of them have it.) Occasionally they leave out something; in mentioning rented typewriters they neglect to say that sometimes rent can be applied to the purchase price if you decide you want to own the machine after all. We bought my Royal that way; since stencil-cutting ability varies without regard to make or model, we decided to rent different machines until we found one that performed well and then buy it. The first 3 months' rent could be applied to the purchase price, so we could get a good trial. As it happened, the first machine we tried worked great; if it hadn't, we'd have kept renting different ones until we located a good one. But very rarely would I flatly disagree with their advice, although much of it doesn't apply to rural areas. (Service stations "invariably" sell parts at full list price, they say. But at least in this area they will sell reconditioned parts, at a whopping reduction from the cost of new merchandise, and when I broke the drive shaft of an old car I was told by my friendly Chevy garage to go out to a junkyard and buy a transmission for \$25, after which the garage would install it for me for another \$15. Maybe city garages don't do things like that.) And they include at least one idea -- funeral societies -- that I'm going to look into. (I was going to once before, and never did, and it's about time...some neofan may strike back one of these days.)

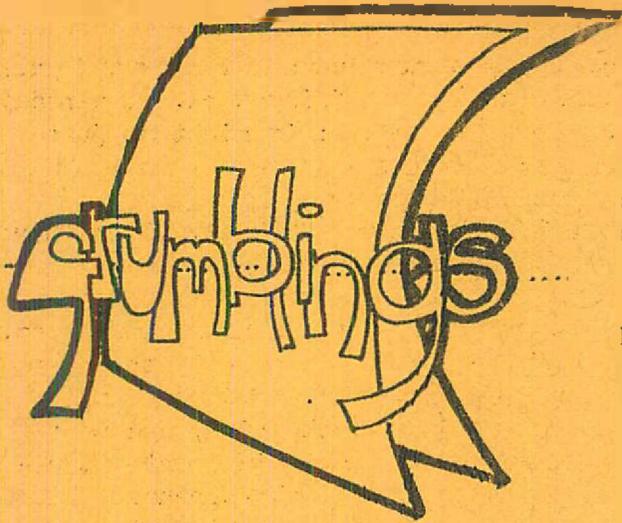
HYPOGLYCEMIA CONTROL COOKERY, by Dorothy Revell [Berkley, \$1.25] I can't review this because I know nothing at all about the subject, but it's available if you're interested.

EDGAR CAYCE'S STORY OF THE ORIGIN AND MYSTERY OF MAN [Berkley, \$1.25] Also available if you're interested. I suspect I'd find it hilarious if I was in the proper mood, but I haven't been since it arrived, so I haven't read it.

BRAND OF EMPIRE, by Luke Short [Dell, 75 cents] I read Westerns or occasionally gothics when I don't want to bother thinking. This was one of Short's early novels, when he was trying for an original, sharp style and succeeding in being awkward all too often.

LOBO GRAY, by L. L. Foreman [Signet, 75 cents] Foreman has written several excellent Western novels. This isn't one of them.

TRAIL OF THE DAMNED, by Gil Martin [Berkley, 75 cents] The anti-hero has reached the traditional Western. Like much New Wave science fiction, this is so terrible that it's funny. ("Will there ever be anyone left for me like there was with you and Ben? Something for the one that's left to remember with gladness, and know, once, they had something rare?") When the protagonist isn't making idiotic speeches (I suspect Gil Martin of being a college sophomore), he's robbing people for fun (striking out against the Establishment, Phil Dick calls it), or shooting them because they object to being robbed, or feeling sorry for himself, or making out with women who are as asinine as he is. But mostly he's making what the author fondly and mistakenly believes are relevant statements about humanity.



Fredric Wettham, M D , 44 Gramercy Pk.,
New York NY 10010

I have recently received several inquiries from science fiction fanzine readers about my book THE WORLD OF FANZINES. Since some of these queries may be addressed to you some time, I thought you might be interested in this information.

I have been asked why I don't send complimentary copies of TWoF to the writers whom I quote and the artists whose drawings I reproduce; why I don't share with them some of my advance and royalties. The answer is that this is not possible for the simple reason that I will not have any copies to send (I expect to get one for myself), that I got no advance and will not get any royalties.

I am deeply grateful to the Southern Illinois University Press for publishing such a highly specialized book, with many footnotes and references, which is difficult and expensive to publish. The 20th Century Fund sponsored my project for a few months which ended with my report to them almost four years ago. Since then I have continued my study on my own -- unsponsored. The 20th Century Fund had great difficulty in locating a publisher for such a book. No commercial firms were interested because they felt nobody would be interested in something they'd never heard of like fanzines. The illustrations in TWoF are not there as embellishments, but to document historically my research conclusions.

I shall of course be much obliged to you if you would print this or part of it in Yandro.

Honest Joe Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison IN 47250

If Propp refuses to let me smear him maybe he could use your bio-degradable pages to clean himself up. He's been sort of put out at me ever since I refused to cut him in on the contingency fund -- split the fee, I think he said. I did, however, offer to help him get admitted to a bar -- and he immediately picked one inhabited by go-go dancers. If he doesn't watch himself, he may wind up a dirty young man (say I, nostalgically).

A lot of us dirty old fans insist you print Tucker's con report. What with Playboy off the stands and pornography back underneath the counter we need something.

Kay Anderson's lemons reminded me of being on Palawan near the end of WWII. I could step outside the tent and pick wild limes, squeeze them over ice and sugar and add water for a drink I still remember. Far better than commercially-grown limes.

A year ago last summer I read the manuscript for Hugh Zachary's GWEN, IN GREEN while I was at this place in North Carolina. It's a novel which defies categorization. It's kind of a weird science fiction horror gothic mystery with some sex in it. The thing is that I haven't been able to forget it. A note from Hugh a month or so ago tells me that Fawcett bought it. So GM will be publishing it soon, probably under his Zack Hughes pen name. Read it. It works.

I should finish a submission draft of SONG OF CORPUS JURIS soon. I don't like it very well at this stage of the game, but then I never like any of them when they reach this point. Maybe it'll be okay.

My God all those fanzines in "Strange Fruit". My God.

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque NM 87107

Yandro 223. (223? That's a bunch.) All sorts of goodies but just a couple I want to comment on. Those who complain about Yandro coming apart at the staples are not cognizant of the fact that this is an old Yannish tradition. As I recall the first copy I ever received consisted solely of the back page and that was more than a decade

ago. (Which leads to the thought that I read somewhere that we age in tens of years and not by years alone.)

I was going to write concerning guns last issue but never got around to it. Woodhams and others complaining that handguns kill people. So? All guns are designed to kill people. The perusal of any history of firearms will show that to be their primary purpose. The first guns, back about 1250, sure weren't made for hunting or target shooting or to be shown off as fine examples of craftsmanship -- they were made to kill men. Other uses have been found since then but still they are primarily designed to kill people.

So what?

Anybody who thinks you can eliminate violence by eliminating guns is an idiot. I live in one of the most violent towns in the country. There isn't a day goes by without at least a half-dozen people being violently set upon and knives and clubs and fists and feet are used as often as guns.

So I hear all these peaceful types saying "guns kill people". And I say, yes, isn't that nice? It gives me an edge.

Buck, you mention that a submachinegun is an awkward thing with which to commit suicide. Ah, but there was a well-publicized case of that recently. During the overthrow of the Chilean government, you recall, Allende is said to have killed himself with a submachinegun.

Reminds me of the case if Larry Casuse out here. Casuse was a Navajo activist who got all charged up about an assortment of things and decided to take action. He kidnapped the mayor of Gallup. When the forces of law and order cornered him, he committed suicide. Shot himself. Twice. With a .357 magnum. Once in the heart and once in the head. Sure.

Fergus says that in his view ERA would force government and employers to treat everyone as individuals. Wrong. It means just what it says, everyone will be treated equally as if there were no differences. One need only look back a few years to the various laws and decisions concerning race to see how ERA will be enforced. In the eyes of the law everyone is exactly the same regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin. At the moment non-combat units of the military are thoroughly integrated with women standing in ranks next to the men. There are women in the military police units who are standing duty and carrying guns. If ERA is approved you can bet that combat units will also have women and they will be expected to fight if necessary.

All of which leads to interesting speculation about integrated barracks, shower facilities, toilets, and the like. Go put your lipstick someplace else, babe. I gotta shave.

The reason behind the clamor to tear out Kay's lemon grove is not because it is used as "a place of sexual activity" but because some land-developer wants to put houses on it. You betchum.

[I seem to have read somewhere that the Israeli army is integrated, and it's had a better record than ours, recently. RSC]

George Scithers, Box 8243, Philadelphia, PA 19101

However, there's a higher probability



that if you set out to beat someone to death with a chair leg, you'll change your mind, or get tired, or get sick at the sight of the blood, or have someone make you stop, than if you set out to shoot someone to death with a pistol.

I'd love to read the Augustus Mandrell books, but I've never been able to find them.

[It depends on the determination of both the chair-leg-wielder and the pistol-shooter; killing someone with a pistol isn't as easy as it looks on tv, you know. (Yes, I know you know, but some of the readers might not.) RSC]

Richard Brandt, 4013 Sierra Drive, Mobile AL 36609

Okay, about gun control. Anyone who thinks that gun control laws stand a chance of being enforced hasn't gone into a rural or small-town environment and counted the number of pre-teeners who own sporting rifles and hand guns. In my younger days in Florida, my best friend used to go down to the lake and pick off crows and turtles with his BB rifle. (Yes, sir, Some Of My Best Friends own guns.) Then there's the time I may have almost killed the neighbor's kid. The boys across the street, who ranged in age from about twelve to four years, invited me into their trechouse to fire some of their toys -- mainly a BB rifle and pistol; their parents made them keep their shotgun in the house. (They have cartridges, tho.) Anyhow, one of the kids was clowning around on the ground, and all of us started firing somewhere in his direction. Clowning around again, he suddenly hunched over and staggered across the back yard of the house. At the time I remember having a hollow feeling in the pit of my stomach; on reflection, though, I sometimes regret that I hadn't aimed more accurately. The point, though, is that as long as guns exist they will get into the wrong hands. And saying that the wrong hands will still exist -- will, I'd rather defend myself against a pair of sewing shears than a .45 magnum.

Funny that Leigh Brackett stories bear a resemblance to detective stories; after all, she's written some classics in the celluloid version of the field, such as THE BIG SLEEP. Furthermore, she's written the script for the new Philip Marlowe -- starring Elliott Gould and directed by Robert Altman. Jack Davis and (I'm pretty sure) one of the writers from MAD magazine did a MAD-style satire for the NY Times ad -- without revealing the ending! A Masterpiece! Four stars, and all that.

How could anyone suspect Meade Frierson? And what's this about Indians being the most ridiculous state in the union? Are you trying to deprive us of our reputation?

[Brackett has written some mystery novels, for that matter, but I've never read any of them, not being much of a mystery fan. (I've never even read any of Tucker's mysteries, and I really should some day.) RSC]

Robert Bloch, 2111 Sunset Crest Drive, Los Angeles CA 90046

I'm especially grateful for Yandro 223 because it contains the only reactions to the con which I've seen to date -- and, perhaps, the only ones I'll ever see. It's always interesting to me to compare impressions with others; particularly so in the case of a large convention, where everyone seems to have a totally unique subjective response. In this instance, I'm glad you had a good time; I did too. But it does seem as though we're getting too big for our britches; I spent two days trying to huddle with Doc Barrette, never did run into Juanita; if I hadn't visited with him in his rooms, I'd never have known that ailing, 72-year-old Carl Jacobi was present -- the first time he'd ever been further away from Minnesota and Wisconsin!

Mike Deckinger, 649 16th Avenue, San Francisco CO 94118

From Y223, page 35, top of the page: "...I enjoy it, but then I'm prejudiced; I like Jackie. You may think it's terrible, but try it and see."

It's not terrible to like her, but it's certainly out of character. Don't let it happen again.

[Oh, Jackie and I are quite fond of one another. (But it's perfectly

moral and legal; we have Wally and Juanita to keep an eye on us...)
I think that I do quite well at keeping my appreciation of individuals
to a minimum, though. RSC]

John Brunner, 53 Nassington Road, London NW13 2TY Great Britain

Hastily, because we're about to move to the West Country (not because we want to leave Hampstead, where I've lived for 17 years and Marjorie about 25, but because by selling this place at a profit we can escape the thumbscrews of the mortgage companies; current interest rate, 11-1/4 percent!): some miscellaneous comments on Yandro 222.

First, thanks for continuing to publish it. Never mind if it often infuriates me; I'm always glad to receive it.

Second, thanks for the comments on THE SHEEP LOOK UP. For me, being told that I write well is the payoff from an ambition conceived when I was about 9 1/2 years old. I'm even glad that Mr. Lester Boutillier liked it so well; noticing your appended reference to the sticker on his envelope about your immorality on TV, I'm tempted to say what I think about people who regard a bare breast as "immoral" (I do have the right guy, I think? I do recall letters from him in other publications, notably Ted White's mags, in which he expressed that type of opinion? If not, strike this and I apologise) but seem not to band together to prevent us having to see on the box human beings spewing up their life-blood or burning to death in the ruins of what were their homes. This latest foolishness in the Middle East provoked me into joining, after years of vacillation, the Peace Pledge Union. Since I did vacillate so long, I'll forbear.

But I must at least say (a) that the richest and most powerful nation in history casts a long shadow, so in a sense all of us in the western world are quasi-citizens of the USA and the comments in books like SHEEP or -- more strikingly -- Alan Seymour's THE COMING SELF-DESTRUCTION OF THE USA are as much dictated by affection as by envy; and (b) your scenario of the woman saving her life by using a gun on the man who's beating her up is unworthy of you, because in a society where people don't feel they're obliged to keep a gun because they're threatened by their fellow humans that kind of situation is comparatively infrequent. It's in just the community where women are "skilled" in the use of firearms that cases of men beating women to death are most likely to arise.

You'd probably be interested in the enclosures. Recently, researching a new novel, I've been reading through the facsimile reprints of the famous British exchange/sale/advertising magazine, the Bazaar, Exchange, and Mart, founded in 1866 and still going (though it's dropped the "Bazaar" bit). Here are a couple of pages dating back to before we had our current restrictions on the sale of guns. It cannot possibly be true in any sense that the British are less prone to lose their tempers and get into a murderous rage, any more than it can be true of the Swiss. What can -- and I suspect this is the crux of it -- very likely be true, is that the temper of a society is reflected in petto by the individual citizen; it's all very well to talk about making a hobby out of hurling lead pellets into a target...but in a society which is tolerably civilised, only a handful of people do so, and willingly respect the regulations which (as here) require them to take proper care. Anybody in Britain can, if he/she likes, buy and own a pistol and ammunition; however, he/she must sign up as a member of a recognised gun-club, obtain a police certificate to that effect, and use the weapon solely for hobby purposes. If we're to believe those proponents of gun-ownership we keep hearing from over your side -- who keep saying that's just why they like and want to own guns -- why do they keep objecting to what I regard as very sensible regulations similar to those which as a social person I acknowledge as necessary in respect of cars now that there is far more traffic than there was in the 1920's?

Yet our murder rate is still down about the figure of 115 per year, and as to the Swiss (as you probably know, in Switzerland every adult male prior to retirement age is obliged to own and keep in good order a firearm) I once telephoned the Swiss Embassy to try and find out how many people have been shot to death last year...and the guy rang back, having consulted the annual statistical register, and apologised for being unable to answer; he could tell me how many people had been killed on the roads,

or in industrial accidents, but if there had been anybody shot to death it must be in the last column, "Other Violent Deaths", of which there were so few it wasn't worth subdividing the categories.

Sure, guns exist -- but Wodhams is right; pistols are for killing people, and unless you get your society organised in a sane manner that's what they'll be used for.

[But according to this particular medical magazine, it's the British society which is plagued by men beating up their wives and any other stray females they run across. In fact, it's precisely in those societies where women cannot defend themselves with firearms where they're in the most danger; places like Britain and New York City. (And while I admit the article was described in an American newspaper it wasn't anti-British; to the author it was simply an interesting medical phenomenon. I made the correlation with gun controls because I'm on the lookout for proofs for my side; it's no fun being on the defensive all the time.) RSC] [I think the phrase "get your society organised" may sum up the basic difference in approaches on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Americans, despite their propensity for joining, tend to hackle-raise at phrases like the above. Particularly non-metropolitan Americans, and there are still a lot of those, believe it or not. "Get organized" smacks, to them, of computerization and machine politicians and massive, impersonal big business types steamrolling over Joe and Jane Doe "for their own good", whether the Does desire it or not. The results tend toward heel-digging and jaw-setting and other stubbornness even among people who couldn't care less, ordinarily, about what the rest of the world thinks of their habits or mores. JWC]



Maggie Thompson, 8766 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

Here is a letter from you in March. Yes, our corresponding is really prompt. Finally did reach the point of telling one spectacularly obnoxious correspondent that we weren't going to write any more letters to him because we weren't possessed of enough time to write to people we liked and weren't about to spend more time writing to people we disliked (especially when he apparently didn't understand English)...His response was that anyone to whom he wrote automatically owed him an answer. And if the guy to whom he wrote lacked time

for a detailed reply, the guy still owed him a postcard of apology for not being able to reply in detail at once.

No, we didn't write him any more..

Anyway, what makes you think farmers are unique in having to supplement income with a second job? Or several other jobs? Though at this point, it seems as though my writing is mostly for vanity, in the long run I'm doing it to damn well supplement OUR income. And Don ditto with his freelancing. And most couples I know (well, a hell of a lot of them) have both husband and wife working; it's not unusual or only to be found in the case of farmers. And most of these people do not live in such a case of landholding where they can plant a summer garden from which to freeze food for the winter and raise a small home flock of chickens or whatever for meat, etc.

Don grew up in farm country on a farm (and his father supplemented their income by working as a full-time mailman, yes). He knows people who raise chickens AND eat them and have milk cows without being in the dairy business and all that sort of thing. (We visited this summer with his brother, for example, who was chortling how they'd just finished slaughtering and how their freezer was full to the brim and they could eat beef while the rest of the country was without it.)

And my sister Katy is engaged to a guy whose parents are going back into raising poultry as a business after a hiatus -- and they eat chicken, yes. (To give you a bit of recognition, yes, the guy hates chicken. But the rest of his family eats it.)

What I'm trying to say is that I fully realize the farmer is getting a raw deal very often. But I am also saying (and sticking by saying) that a lot of the rest of us are getting a raw deal, too. And that the small farmer could (if he'd stop saying how damned independent he is and try some intelligent action) get a lot less of a raw deal a lot easier than the rest of us.

For one example: The barter system has a hell of a lot to offer to a bunch of small local farmers if they can get off their tails. If the guy who raises chickens really can't stand to eat them, the guy who raises beef might like variety and such in his diet. And equipment pools could be set up, too (though not for ALL equipment, of course -- or you'd end up with some poor slob trying to plow fields for planting in midsummer for his first crop).. And experience pools.

And, of course, if they'd try acting together to express their problems, needs, and aims so that the rest of the population could try to help out -- But they won't. They'll sit and whine about how everyone else is a fat cat and that'll be that. Great. Because they're so grandly independent.

Oh well. I'm STILL for the small farmer. But gee whiz. And I don't give two hoots what Sylvia Porter says, canned vegetables are cheaper here than fresh -- and that's at the height of the harvest. I know because I try to buy fresh whenever possible, since I loathe the canned. Now, of course, I'm speaking of grocery stores. I can buy cheaper fresh food at roadside stands, often -- and do, when I get the chance. And I can raise it cheaper in my garden -- and do. But please don't try to tell urban consumer that he's paying 15 to 40 percent markup to buy canned corn over fresh, because he's going to lead you to his supermarket and ask you which is the better buy for him. It's gonna be canned.

Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts., Great Britain

58 cents a gallon in Canada? I had friends who came back from France for a motoring holiday and said it was 60 new pence a gallon there. 60 x 2 1/2 c. Now you know why so many people have to drive small cars that do a lot of miles per gallon. If the Arab oil kings try to get at Israel by threatening to cut off supplies to any country that supports Israel, the problems could get a lot worse.

You actually drove up into Canada then? I suppose that isn't too much of a feat for you, having driven all the way to California. I guess the thought of any drive now will seem comparatively easy wherever they hold the next convention.

I expect you read that Tolkien died at 81 here, another of the many sad deaths that this year has brought one way and another.

MOONBASE is the title of a new Sunday night TV series here. So far it doesn't seem much though, rather like the domestic sequences of "2001", indoors and walking on the Moon. STAR TREK is in its third re-run, and I'm seeing it in colour (rented for the first time). Another series, ONCE UPON A TIME, is interesting in that it continues, or precedes, a famous work of fiction. ISHMAEL, for example, gave a play which ended with what were the first words of MOBY DICK, while FRANKENSTEIN continued on from the end of the book where Dr. Frankenstein is pursuing his monster on ice floes and is picked up by a sailing ship whose scientist charterer plans to lock it within the ice so with its flat hull it will be pulled across the magnetic north to the pole. So he thinks, and in an argument shoots Dr. Frankenstein. The monster comes back on the ship and claims him as its master. Very good ship sets, of the



old sailing ship surrounded by mist and permanent fog and the white glare of the ice and the eternal creaking of the timbers.

[Well, of course now the Arabs have cut oil supplies, the U.S. will probably be going to rationing, and the last I heard Britain was being exempted from the oil cutoff because it was considered "friendly" to the Arabs. Yes, indeedy...of course, by the time you get this Britain will probably be back on the unfriendly list again; the Arabs are nothing if not consistent. RSC]

Betty McLaren, 234 S. Figuerca St, Los Angeles CA 90012

Thank you, TY, ty. I feel like I've come home. Plugged in now organized chaos.

Bob -- I learned my craft in many schools, but an unforgettable one was working with screen comedy writers. I'm FLOORED with the loose, free, give-away humor in fanzines. Do you realize that whole screenplays -- selling for 25 to 50 thou -- are built around ONE of the hundreds of ideas you folks toss off wild? Of course you do.

MARVELOUS line in the fan -- the world is run by straight people. Can't tell you how nice to know there are others like me in the solar system. Don't believe what you hear about California -- LA -- or Hollywood. It's straight, straight, straight. An infection passed by handling steady and healthy paychecks.

The closest I've been to a real SF writer was a blind date fixed up for me -- 8? -- years ago by a friend who has since moved on to the Big Flying Saucer In The Sky. And so I met Harlan Ellison. He scared hell out of me by French kissing me on our 1st date. We never had a 2nd. Actually, it went deeper than that: Harlan was into pornographic sbarlets, I was into Studying To Become a Serious Writer, so we passed, Queen Mary and a tugboat, in the night.

[Yes, that's why fans have a low regard for much screen comedy. Many male fans fancy themselves as Groucho Marx (except for Hank Luttrell, who occasionally fancies himself as W.C. Fields). We admire the top stuff; the second-rate we do ourselves.// Actually, I'm pretty much a straight person myself. I just haven't allowed myself to be corrupted by the fact. RSC]

Robert Joseph, 1559 Eddington Road, Cleveland OH 44118

I was working at my job sorting mail at the post office when guess whose face looks up at me from a Nicaragua air mail stamp? Perry Mason's!

Examining the stamp closer, I read "1923-1973 INTERPOL ANIVERSARIO." Underneath, it said "LOS DOCE DETECTIVES MAS FAMOSOS DE LA FICCION." Next line read "ERLE S. CARDNER." Under the picture it read "PERRY MASON." It's a combined commemorative, honoring both the anniversary of Interpol and the great detectives of fiction and their authors.

Anyway, after work I rushed to the nearest stamp dealer and bought the complete set for \$1.90. It consists of twelve (doce means twelve) stamps all in the same blue and brown color. The twelve detectives who are honored, together with their creators, are Lord Peter Wimsey, Philip Marlowe, Sam Spade, Perry Mason, Nero Wolfe, C. Auguste Dupin, Ellery Queen, Father Brown, Charlie Chan, Inspector Maigret, Hercule Poirot, and Sherlock Holmes.

As a lifelong mystery-story fan and stamp collector I'm quite tickled. Something like this has never been done before as far as I know. Maybe in the future science fiction and fantasy will be commemorated in the same fashion.

I thought the above information would be of interest to you and some of the readers of Yandro since you do occasionally review mysteries and mention an interest in stamps.

[Matter of fact, it sounds interesting to me. But why air mail, I wonder? RSC]