ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

SUMMER–FALL 1977

$1.95

CLIFFORD D. SIMAK
ROBERT A. HEINLEIN
ANDRE NORTON
FREDERIK POHL
RICHARD LUPOFF

A New Berserker Story By
FRED SABERHAGEN

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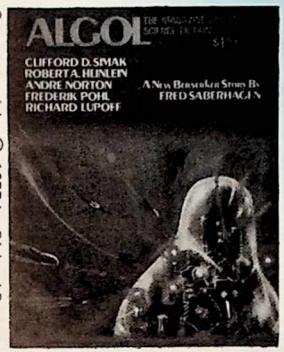
ALGOL: THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION. Vol. 14 No. 3, Issue No. 29, Summer-Fall 1977.



ALGOL is published three times yearly, in April, August and December. Printed in USA.

Retail Sales: ALGOL is distributed by the F&SF Book Co., P.O. Box 415, Staten Island, NY 10302. For further information, write the publisher.

Advertising: Classified 15c/word, 20 word minimum. Payment must accompany copy. Deadline Feb, June and Oct 1. For display advertising rates and information, write the publisher.

Subscriptions: 1 year $4.50; 2 years $7.50. Libraries: 1 year $5.40; 2 years $10.50. 50c billing charge for invoicing. Canada, other countries: see below. Mail to ALGOL Magazine, P.O. Box 4175, New York, NY 10017. First class subscription, U.S. & Canada *only*: $6.30 for 1 year.

European Subscriptions:
6 issues 21 DM. Single copy 5 DM. Cheques payable and mail to:
Waldemar Kumming
Herzogspitalstrasse 5
D-8 Munchen 2, W. GERMANY
(Postscheckkonto Munchen 1478 14-802)
European & Foreign Subscriptions direct to ALGOL: 2 years $9.36. Libraries: $11.10

Canadian Subscriptions:
6 issues $8.10. Libraries: 6 issues $11.10. Cheques payable in Canadian money *only* to:
Andrew Porter
P.O. Box 4175
New York, NY 10017 USA

US ISSN 0002-5364

ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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THE COVER: Last issue's editorial spoke glowingly of the rich and wonderful cover stock I'd planned to use that issue. Thus I was really disappointed and angry when the printer screwed up and used a regular 10 point coated stock instead of the planned on 10 point Kromecote. I think the cover would have visually punched out—have been noticeably brighter—with the Kromecote. To understand the difference in stocks, you have to understand that normal papers absorb the 4/Color process inks more than Kromecote does. With Kromecote, the ink lies on the surface of the paper rather than soaking in and the image is more vibrant and alive, the colors more brilliant. For the increasing number of ALGOLs sold in bookstores, on newsstands, and by dealers at conventions, this is an important factor: it means better recognition and more sales.

This issue will (hopefully) return to the use of Kromecote. I've decided, though, to return to using the 6 point. One of the big problems with ALGOL is weight: ALGOL is threatening, as the number of pages increases, to go into the next postal class. A single copy already costs 50c to mail, and postage remains my largest expense next to the cost of printing.

THE ISSUE: Another good one, he said in his usual humble manner. Seriously, I was lucky enough to meet Clifford Simak for the first time at the 1977 SFWA Banquet here in New York (I'd been at Noreascon, of course, but only as one of thousands of admirers), and I was able to intercept Cliff after he'd given his acceptance speech for the Grand Master Nebula. That acceptance speech appears in this issue, plus congratulatory letters from Jack Williamson and Robert A. Heinlein, the two previous winners of the award. All three offer insights into how they work which I think you'll find fascinating.

Fred Saberhagen sent in a fascinating short article about his Berserker series. The article mentioned a just-completed short story set in the Berserker universe, and with the help of Bell Telephone and his agents, that story appears in this issue.

Elsewhere, Dick Lupoff continues Lupoff's Book Week. Dick notes, exhaustedly, ". . . I *still* haven't covered anything like all the stuff I'd like to. Mighod, there's no *end* to the books coming out!" Dick's right: according to reliable sources, something approaching 14% of all fiction being published today is science fiction. We're in the midst of the largest Boom in SF publishing since the late lamented early 1950's, and the direction so far seems to be Straight Up. Newest item to come along, by the way, are SF encyclopedias. Crown is doing one, and Doubleday is working on one in conjunction with a British publisher. Again, I'll keep you posted on things as they develop.

Susan Wood tells you how to start your own fanzine. It's easy to do, great fun, and can easily cost you all the spare time and cash you have for the rest of your life; Gary Alan Ruse interviews Andre Norton; Fred Pohl talks about the Best Sellers of SF, of which there've been quite a few; Vincent DiFate offers the first part of an interview with Richard Powers; and room permitting, Patrick McGuire talks about Joe Haldeman's *Forever War* and *Mindbridge.* Plus letters, ads, and a couple of surprises.

A word about advertising: it's up again, I'm happy to say. Please remember that advertising pays a considerable part of the cost of each issue of ALGOL, and that patronage of ALGOL's advertisers is important to ALGOL's continued growth. So mention that you saw it in ALGOL the next time you go down to the space port and board that ship for Titan—or buy that Ace Book.

FUTURE ISSUES: For the first time in many years, I'm happy to report that ALGOL is stockpiling material for future issues. One of my biggest problems has been finding good articles, material I want to publish that fits in with ALGOL's identity. This has been taken care of, in recent issues, by pre-publication from forthcoming books. Recently I came in for some criticism from one long-time reader, who felt that ALGOL was reprinting material that didn't fit it. When I reprint material (although I don't "reprint"—I *preprint,* just like *F&SF* when it runs a novel which will come out later as a hardcover or paperback) I do so because this material, despite its ultimate publication in hard or soft covers, is something that ALGOL readers will enjoy. But I've begun to stockpile articles for future issues. These include long autobiographical works by A. Bertram Chandler and others (Marion Zimmer Bradley's will appear next issue); interviews with Michael Moorcock and others; and some good artwork, including a cover by California-bred C. Lee Healy, which will be next issue's cover. Deadline for letters for next issue is October first.

THE FAR FUTURE: Coming up in only a year is ALGOL's 15th Anniversary Issue. I'm not sure whether to try to make it extra-special, or just keep on doing my thing, as usual. If you readers would like to see something special in it, write and tell me and I'll see if I can oblige you.

POSTAL PROBLEMS continue to cause me concern, anguish, and dental decay (as I grind my teeth with frustration).

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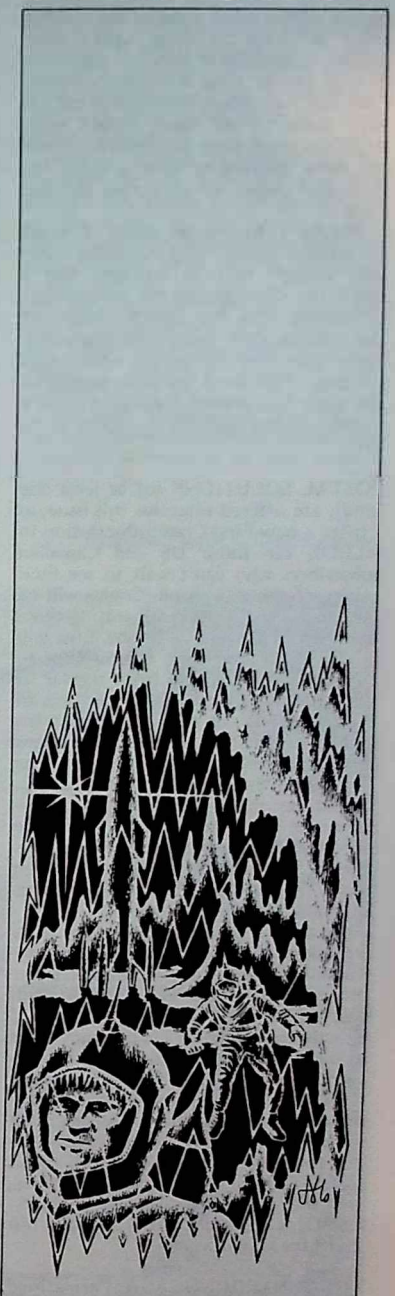


EDITORIAL

Last issue, beginning a new policy, I withheld bookstore copies of ALGOL until subscribers copies had been mailed. The post office, however, had a "new method" for labeling mailsacks. The immediate result had copies reaching people within a few miles of the mailing point as much as three weeks after mailing—compared to previous deliveries of only two or three days after mailing. Canadian subscribers still have to put up with three to six week delays until ALGOLs reach their destination: about the same amount of time it takes for European copies to go across the Big Pond.

Maybe I should be doing a series of articles about "understanding your post office" here in ALGOL. But I can't: I'm still learning the ins and outs of dealing with the USPOD, much of the information being contradictory. Some year now the person who makes the post office work for them instead of the other way around is going to make a million dollars. But it's not going to be me.

POSTAL SOLUTIONS (of at least one kind), are offered effective this issue, as I offer a new First Class Subscription to ALGOL for those US and Canadian subscribers who can't wait to see their copies of the new issue. Copies will be mailed by first class mail, getting them anywhere in a few days. I hope. Cost will be $6.30 for one year. If you want to convert a subscription from regular to Ethyl, I mean First Class, send me an additional 75c for each issue you want mailed at First Class rates. Canadians should remember that these monies, as all others that come in to ALGOL, should be made payable to Andrew Porter, in Canadian currency. A cheque on the T-D Bank payable to Andrew Porter is fine, for instance; one on the T-D Bank payable to ALGOL is worthless for my purposes.

On another note, European subscribers are asked to renew through Waldemar Kumming. Otherwise, subscriptions for countries outside the US and Canada will cost $9.36 for two years when paid directly to ALGOL in US currency. This is part of a continuing campaign to encourage those who want to purchase ALGOL outside North America to buy the magazine through booksellers. Main reason is that postage for ALGOL's 200 foreign subscribers costs as much as for ALGOL's 1600 other subscribers, and this is an unreasonable drain on ALGOL's resources. Sorry, people, but that's the way it has to be.

THE CONTINUING SAGA: I'm gratified by the response of subscribers, readers, and the professional community to my decision to remove ALGOL from the mortal vale—that is, the world of fanzines—and place it on that higher plane currently occupied by the likes of *F&SF, Analog, Galaxy,* and the like. You'll have to pardon my appearance: the doctor says I have to wear this oxygen mask until I get acclimatized. Of course, in the eyes of the SFWA, ALGOL is *still* a fanzine. To their rules, circulation of under 10,000 means you're amateur. Now, I've worked on many a publication of under 10,000 circulation, and no one ever accused Harcourt Brace Jovanovich or the New York Times Company of publishing fanzines, but they do under those rules. Both are publishers of numerous trade magazines, some with quite small circulations.

What it boils down to can be explained in a hypothetical situation. Say noted author Felix Hugowinner has to sell a short story by December 31st to maintain his SFWA membership credentials. Felix calls up Jim Baen, who says, "Gee, Felix, I'd love to buy 'Snoopy Goes To Mars,' but I haven't got any budget. I can pay you 1c a word for it on publication, but that's all." Felix thanks him and calls up Andy Porter, publisher of that big-time magazine ALGOL. Porter tells him, "Sure, Felix, I'd like to buy 'Snoopy Goes to Mars.' How does 3c a word sound?"

So what does Felix do? He sells the story to *Jim Baen*—because under the SFWA rules, ALGOL is a fanzine, and he needs credentials for his membership renewal. For those credentials, he says bye-bye to an extra 2c the word. If that's the way SFWA wants it, though. . .

ARTISTS RIGHTS, CONTINUED: The response to last issue's editorial on rights for artists has been encouraging. Rick Sternbach's *Association of SF Artists* has been bringing some people together and been raising some valid questions that have been overlooked for too long by a field that considers itself current in thought, liberated in posture, and altogether modern in treatment of enslaved peoples. I published a visual press release from Crown Publishers for the book, *Science Fiction Art,* in last issue's editorial. The press release reproduced a picture by Ed Emshwiller as reproduced in the book. The book itself was printed in Spain by Mateu Cromo Artes Graficas, Madrid, and published in the US by Bounty Books, A Division of Crown Publishers, Inc.

It's a gorgeous book, with a massive commentary by Brian Aldiss. Of course, it's in public domain. . .

How? Well, according to current U. S. copyright law, books printed outside the USA and having more than 1500 copies imported into the US are technically in public domain. That's how Ace Books was able to reprint *The Lord of the Rings:* Don Wollheim discovered that more than 1500 copies had been imported into the USA of the British edition, technically placing it in public domain. The Ballantine Books edition has a certain number of changes, making it, in the eyes of the Copyright Office, a "new" work and copyrightable in this country.

I'm informed by Vincent DiFate that the question of copyright of book covers is answered by publishers as follows: reproductions of the entire cover, type and all, are considered promotional use of covers; however, reproduction of the art itself, without the type or publisher identifying marks, is considered reproduction of fine art and another matter entirely. *Science Fiction Art* does both, reproduding both covers and, in several cases, hacked up artwork with cover logos and prices deleted. How many publishers who gave their permission to reproduce cover paintings were aware that their art would appear that way? I wonder. Perhaps Brian Aldiss will write ALGOL and tell us. . .

On another note, and returning to Ed Emshwiller, A&W Visual Library has published *Terror, A History of Horror Illustrations From The Pulp Magazines,* by Peter Haining. This book has much less claim to legitimacy than Brian Aldiss'—it's composed of a little history and a lot of pictures, most in black and white. The history of *Weird Tales,* for instance, is a bare bones affair of perhaps 400 words. This gives the author the excuse of publishing more than 70 covers and illustrations from the magazine, of which only two are in color. Some of the illustrations are artistically cropped to cut off heads or other parts of the artwork.

When the book came out, I called the publishers and asked who handled US rights. The answer was Toni Mendez, Inc., an agency here in New York. I wrote the original publishers, Souvenir Press, c/o the agency, asking whether Peter Haining received permission from all holders of copyrights for covers and artwork reproduced in the book. The agency—not the original publishers—wrote back as follows: "In reply to your letter regarding copyrights to TERROR!, this is to advise you that all available copyright holder's material used in TERROR! (including magazine publishers, artists and/or their agents) were contacted and permission for both the United Kingdom and the U. S. A. editions were granted to Souvenir Press.

"Of course all material still covered by copyrights used in the book still remain the property of the original owners. Sincere, (s) Toni Mendez/Toni Mendez, Inc."

After I received that letter, I talked with Ed Emsh about the reproductions of his artwork in the book, as well as Ed Ferman, publisher of F&SF, who couldn't recall whether or not the editor

ever wrote and asked for permission. Ed Emsh did write to ALGOL; here is his letter, which says a lot about the rights of artists that I would never think of:

"As far as I know neither the editor nor publisher of TERROR ever asked me for permission to use the July '69 cover painting on F&SF (the one featuring Fritz Leiber). This isn't the first time, nor will it probably be the last, when drawings and paintings of mine have been ripped off.

"In fact there were only two publishers of SF who I felt treated the artist with any respect. Both F&SF and ANALOG bought First Reproduction Rights Only. And both returned artwork to the artist automatically without hassle. If they wanted to keep or otherwise dispose of the artwork i. e. give it to a convention, they always had the courtesy to ask if it was O. K.

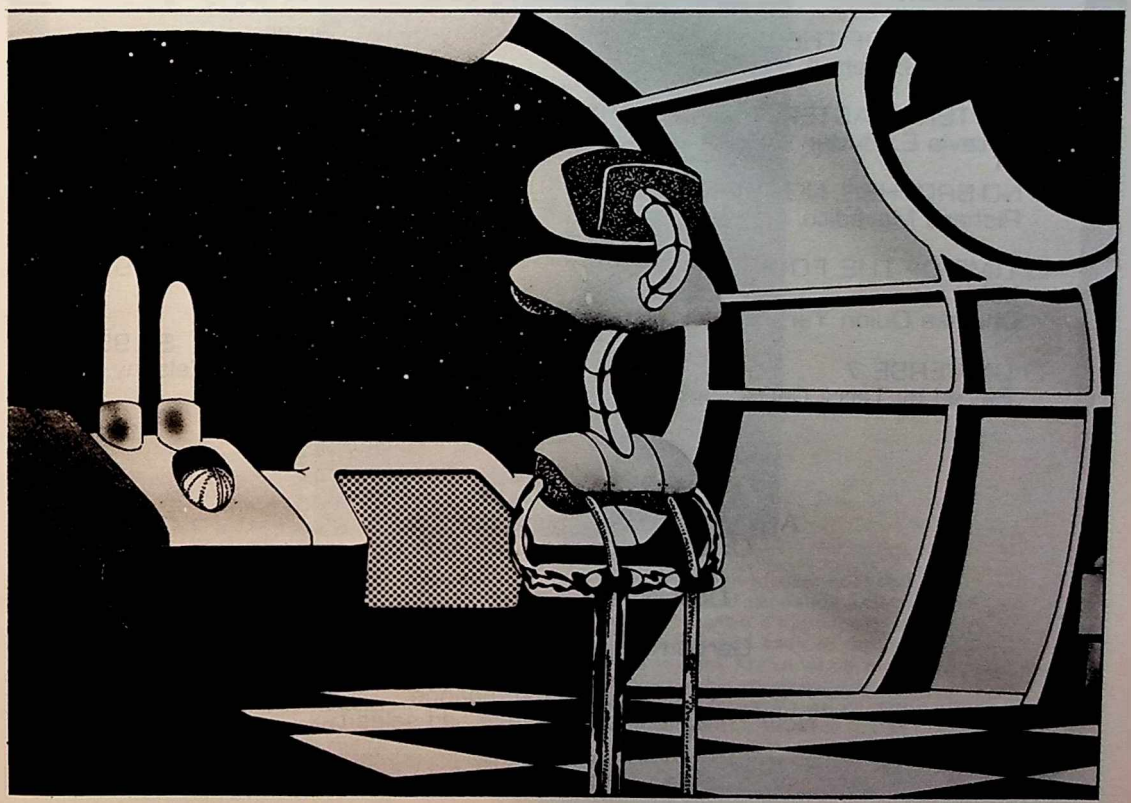
"With other SF publishers I dealt with in the '50s like GALAXY and ACE BOOKS it seemed harder for the artist to get hold of his work than for casual acquaintances of the editor or publisher. And as you mentioned in your editorial they often sold rights to foreign publishers with no percentage going to the artist. Also I remember one time when a hard cover publisher commissioned me to do a dust jacket. Then he cancelled the deal. It turned out that he could buy reproduction rights from ACE BOOKS for their cover to the book. I had painted the ACE cover. I went to ACE and complained, explaining how they had caused me to lose a job by underselling me with my own work. That time ACE paid me for the resale of my work. But I am sure they would not have if I hadn't complained. And they would not have if some other artist had been contracted by the hardcover publisher. Both artists would have been screwed for sure. The other artist by having the commission cancelled and me by not being paid for the new use of the work I had done for ACE.

"Since I have been making films and videotapes I have had my share of battles with distributors, exhibitors, and occasional pirates. Yet I like it better because I own the rights to my work much like an SF writer, not like an SF artist."

That's where things stand now. Perhaps next issue will see some more light shed on the publication of this one volume. But, as I say, this is only one volume: there are literally dozens of others out now, and more coming. One book I can report on: at last year's Fantasy Convention Michael Moorcock reported that he was in negotiation with the publishers of *The Science Fiction Book*, edited by Franz Rottensteiner. Rottensteiner, it seems, had not bothered to ask permissions of *anyone* when he reproduced the many pictures used in that book. A fact which he regrets now, I'm sure. If artists or publishers reading this have artwork reproduced in that book, I suggest you get in touch with Moorcock, who is pressing for settlement on behalf of all.

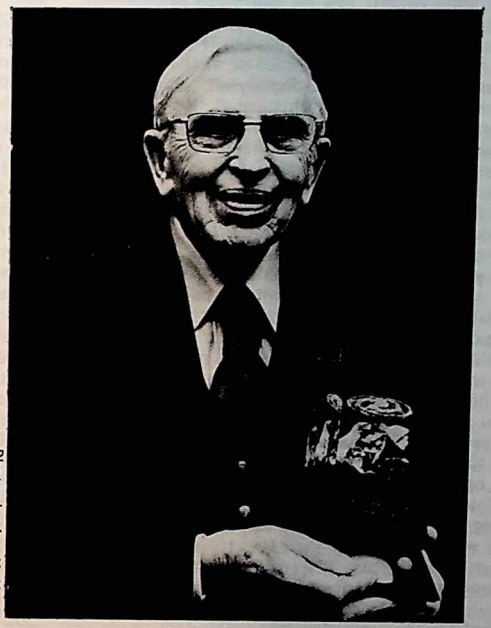
Finally, I have to report that the loophole in US copyright laws that allowed Ace Books to publish *The Lord of the Rings* will be closed by new copyright laws, which become operative on January 1, 1978. The manufacturing clause will be phased out; copyright will be extended to life of the author plus fifty years; and in addition there are some very interesting additional clauses. . . I'll get into the new copyright law next issue. I'd like to hear from those of you with questions or comments on the legal side of publishing. Remember, deadline for response to next issue is October first. ■

—Andrew Porter, Editor/Publisher



JENKINS WOULD BE PROUD

Clifford D. Simak



Photos by Jay K. Klein

It's good to be here among my own people. I thank you for having me. I feel a special bond to each one of you and it is my hope that among you there may be some who can find it in their hearts to feel the same of me.

Except in the cases of certain small literary cliques of the past, that generally were formed as mutual admiration societies, nothing like the fellowship that has come about among us has ever happened before. I immediately note that we are not a mutual admiration society. There are times when it must appear to someone who doesn't know us that we only band together so that we can more effectively squabble among ourselves.

I suppose the fellowship got its start in the days of the thirties, when science fiction writers, the most despicable of scribblers, huddled together for protection against the hooting of other, more

respectable writers—and, indeed, the world.

If that had been the only reason for the huddling, however, we should long since have broken apart to go our separate ways, having no further need for one another.

This has not happened. Over the years we have found among ourselves a continuity of purpose and a mutual respect that continues to keep us together. We stand tonight unique as a group of writers who hold a shared vision.

The Science Fiction Writers of America, in a certain sense, is responsible for this. But even without the SFWA, I think this special bond that ties us together would still exist. What the SFWA has done, and most magnificently, is to provide us a structure within which we can comfortably and effectively function as a group of writers with a common interest.

One thing that has impressed me is the fierce loyalty to science fiction and the faith in it that has characterized us. Most of us, perhaps all of us, possess the craftsmanship and ability that would enable us to write in other fields. There are times when some of us do, but few of us break away from the field entirely. We must see in it something that is satisfying and worthwhile.

A well-established writer once asked me, some years ago, why I kept on writing the kind of silly stuff I did. There is no future in it, he said; at best it was a momentary fad and in a few years will be forgotten. He asked: why don't you get out of it while you have the chance? You can write well enough to be doing something worthwhile and you should be about it rather than wasting your time on science fiction.

Often I think back on what he said. I wonder, in the face of what I am convinced was his well-intentioned advice, how I could have continued to write what he called 'that silly stuff.' I had a great deal of respect for him (and still have); his words were not to be taken lightly. The evidence, at that time, might have seemed to support his opinion. Many of the magazines had folded and others were desperately hanging on. Only a few science fiction books were being published and most of them by small specialty houses that were not in the best financial condition.

But despite all this, I still wanted to write science fiction—science fiction, nothing else. This stemmed, I am sure, not so much from any faith I might have had in my ability to write it, but rather from faith in the field.

Some years later, I must confess, I did falter momentarily in that faith, and tried a shot at the Great American Novel. As a result, I have tucked away somewhere—I honestly, at the moment, wouldn't know where to look for it—three or four hundred pages of a mainstream work that was never finished and never will be finished.

I think I would have been able to finish it if I had continued. After those several hundred pages, however, I realized it wasn't what I wanted to write. It was then I realized that I was hooked—really hooked—on science fiction.

Perhaps there may be others of you who could tell a similar tale. Perhaps you may have finished your book. But not me. I said I found I was hooked on science fiction and I guess that's the best way to say it.

Later on there was another time when I seemed to have lost my touch for science fiction. No matter what I did nothing turned out right. It was at one of those periodic times in a checkered life when I had a great need of money and with my science fiction touch gone there were no checks coming in. Out of sheer necessity, I turned to writing westerns for the cowboy pulps that littered the stands in those days.

For a solid year I ground out westerns. That literally is what I did—ground them out. Each one I wrote was almost exactly like the one I had just finished. There was a story formula from which you could not deviate if you hoped to sell. I was ashamed of what I was doing. I began to despise myself.

Finally I chucked it. Never again, I said. I went back to science fiction. Even if I and my family starved, I told myself, I would stay with science fiction.

In those early years we went through some perilous days. Many times the market was uncertain. Often the pay was not only slight, but uncertain as well. Today it is a different story. Oh, we still are not being paid enough, of course, but now hundreds of science fiction and fantasy titles are published each year and there are now several new and promising magazines on the stands.

Not only has our market improved, but our respectability as well. Our work is studied in high schools and colleges. Competent critics write learned papers about our work and these are published in scholarly journals. Our audience has increased many fold and appears to continue to increase. It is the audience increase, it seems to me, that is the most impressive and significant.

During the past few years I was placed in a position that enabled me to see one facet of audience increase. Five or six years ago I asked my newspaper to relieve me of editorial duties I had held for years so I could spend my last few years of newspapering as a writer. It has been a long time since I had done any appreciable amount of news writing and I was hungry to get at it again.

Much of my work was in scientific and medical writing. In the course of it I met a number of scientists, engineers and medical men, not only locally, but nationwide.

I found that a great number of them—at a guess I would say almost half—were readers of science fiction. Many of them identified me as a science fiction writer rather than a newspaperman. It was not uncommon, after finishing an interview with one of them for him to say, "And now, if you have the time, how about spending a few minutes talking science fiction?" Not every time, of course, not even half the time, but often enough for it to be significant.

It was not because I was Cliff Simak. If the newsman had been Gordie Dickson or Poul Anderson or Fred Pohl or any other science fiction writer (or even Isaac), they'd have said the same thing.

They were so interested in science fiction that they simply had to talk about it. Bear in mind that these men are physicists, biologists, geologists, medical researchers, or members of other disciplines. We must be doing something right when we include people such as these in our audience.

This is something that has happened only recently. Back in the late fifties I was detached from my job as news editor to write a series of stories on the International Geophysical Year. I spent about two months traveling to talk with scientists in many disciplines. During that entire time not a single person I talked with mentioned science fiction. The contrast, only a bit more than ten years later, was astounding.

I know of a hospital where some of the medical personnel—as it was told to me, many of them—carry science fiction paperbacks in their pockets, reading them as they have time. Their one gripe, I was told, are the often lurid cover paintings on some of them. In many cases they tear the covers off. "Can't you do something about this?" my informant asked me.

So, some of you publishers—here is a chance to make Brownie points with the medical profession.

The point of all this, I think, is that our readership is not only among the starry-eyed kids and college students, but includes sound professional people—and, of course, the great many people out there we never hear from. Aside from the medical and scientific community, in my work as a newspaperman, I have met a fair number of businessmen, attorneys and bankers who also read science fiction.

That we have survived at all should tell us something. Aside from science fiction and the so-called little magazines—the ones that give you a couple of free copies, but no money—the short story has about disappeared from the American scene. And maybe elsewhere—I don't know. But we not only have hung on; we are writing more than ever.

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN: "To read Science Fiction is to read Simak."

Dear Cliff,

Or should I address you as "Mr. Simak"? You are nearly three years older than I am and are eight years senior to me in the practice of our craft. . . and we both derive from a culture in which first names were used most sparingly and only between intimate friends. I cannot claim to be your intimate as I do not recall that we have ever laid eyes on each other. We talked briefly by telephone just once, about fifteen years ago.

No matter— The purpose of this letter is to let me join our brothers and sisters of our guild in recognizing your status as Grand Master of our craft. Since I am unable to be in New York I am asking our President Andrew Offutt to read this aloud and I ask you to accept it as part of the clapping, stomping, and cheering that will greet your acceptance of your Grand Master Nebula.

I am not a literary critic and have never been certain of the semantic content (if any) of the symbol "literary criticism," so I will not attempt a critical assessment of your corpus of stories. Instead let me note cases in which your work affected or impressed me personally.

Two points about your writing technique impressed me: For almost half a century you have been writing both fiction and news. It is widely believed (and may be true) that almost every news reporter has, tucked away somewhere, the unfinished manuscript of The Great American Novel. . . but it is certainly true that it usually remains unfinished. Some newspapermen do write novels—but those who do are usually editorial writers, columnists, or feature writers; they are rarely reporters or city-room men.

Champion hockey players are rarely (if ever) chamption figure skaters. Skill in one destroys skill in the other.

The team who put together a news story—the reporter who phones in the story, the man in the slot, and the men on the rim—are concerned with what, who, when, where, how, and why. . . and all of this must appear in the first few lines of the news story, with the details following in such order that the story may be chopped at any point and still be complete.

This is almost the reverse of the technique for a well-told fiction story. While both sorts of writers must hook the reader quickly, each must do it quite differently, as the fiction writer's unbreakable commandment is never, *never*, NEVER telegraph your ending.

If a fiction story can be chopped off anywhere, it has failed.

If a news story can*not* be chopped off anywhere, it has failed.

Mr. Simak, I realize that you have done almost everything in newspaper work from printer's devil to publisher . . . but I know also that you have spent much of the past half century either on the beat, in the slot, or on the rim—then have gone home and written highly effective fiction that same day. *How* did you do it?

That is a rhetorical question, as I would be incapable of understanding the answer and would continue to be amazed.

A second point about your writing technique impresses me because I can't do it—although I am aware that there are others besides yourself who can. I refer to the bottom of page 18 of the new SFWA Handbook and I quote you: "If, at the end of fifteen or twenty minutes, I'm not writing, I give it up as a bad night."

"Different strokes for different folks." I write by the brute force method. I stay at my typewriter, staring at that blank sheet, for as long as necessary, be it an hour or a week. An hour is usually the minimum, and the time grows longer the deeper I get into a story. Writing does not come easily to me, probably because I was forced into writing through necessity, not choice.

But, rather than waste time envying your facility, let me mention some things about your writing that especially pleases me, as a reader. They may not be the same things that please other readers, for you have wide variety, from comic fantasy ("Buckets of Diamonds"), tragic fantasy ("The Autumn Land"), tightly plotted science-fiction adventure mystery ("Time Quarry" aka "Time and Again" aka "First He Died"), to the magnificent and plotless "City"—plotless unless a history can be said to have a plot.

But I can sum up what I like best about your stories by saying that the closer you stick to Grant County the more I enjoy them. I think this results from similar backgrounds and similar tastes. You were born on your maternal grandfather's country place —and so was I, three years later and three hundred miles southwest. We are country boys who will never get the mud off our boots. I have never lived in a city other than through circumstances beyond my control—I haven't left our ranch for a month and don't expect to go outside our gate for at least that much longer.

When most writers write about weather and scenery, it bores me; I skip it. But not in your stories. Your sensuous appreciation of land and of changing seasons is, for me, a major part of the charm of your storytelling. And, of course and always, your animals—who are never property but junior citizens. Dogs, cats, horses—they seem to have played about the same part in your life that they have in mine, and it shows in your stories.

This letter has grown rather long to read aloud, but, like a news story, Mr. Offutt can chop it off anywhere in reading it. Let me close by saying that, since the earliest thirties, to read science fiction is to read Simak. A reader who does not like Simak stories does not like science fiction at all. So it gives me great pleasure to join in this celebration.

With admiration and respect, I remain

Sincerely yours,
Robert A. Heinlein ■

It appears that we are giving our readers something they can find nowhere else. Science fiction is a literature of ideas and, ideally, a literature of hope. We are posing questions that much of the rest of the world seldom thinks about. We give our readers something to chew on. We are opening up new avenues of thought.

That ours is a literature of ideas is important. In this time of steady technological advancement, the public is more open to new ideas than it has ever been before. And perhaps disturbed by the flood of new ideas, looking over their shoulders to see what will happen next. Asking: Are we going too far, too fast, too thoughtlessly? They want discussion and perspectives. We are the only ones who are giving this to them.

It is not only in the technological fields that people are either interested or disturbed. There are other events that are even harder to understand than technology. In our writing we do not slight these other events. We at times take a philosophical view, setting forth new lines of introspective thought. We explore the worlds of economics, political science, sociology, human relations, religion. So long as what we write superimposes new thinking upon the humdrum acceptance of things as they are, we will be read. The public today is forward looking, they are vitally concerned with what is going to happen next. What they need and want is someone to give them some concrete outline to safely guide their dreams.

That ours is a literature of hope also is important. Faced with runaway economic mechanisms, still vaguely aware of the possibility of a nuclear doomsday, with the old concepts of religious beliefs slipping away, the people stand in need of hope. If we can supply them with it, they will read us.

They want assurance that problems—at least some of the problems—can be solved. I think that at times we give them hope of solutions. Failing that, we are able to pose certain questions that eventually may lead to solutions. They want to believe that compassion and understanding still exist and at times we tell them that they do.

As Lester del Rey would tell you, we are mythmakers. The human race traditionally has placed great value on its myths. We put them to various comfortable uses. The ancient myths are largely inapplicable today, although we value them as links to the past. But in our technological sophistication they seem to be child-like, if not ridiculous. Perhaps this is the answer to what we are doing—tailoring modern myths to the needs of the times.

In the popular mind, we are often billed as prophets, forecasting things to come. Most of us are somewhat uneasy at this. We are aware we have forecast some of the developments that are now a reality. But we know, too, that we have forecast far more that have never come to be and never will come to be. Make enough predictions—and God knows, we have made a lot of them—and some of them are bound to happen. But be that as it may, our batting average as prophets is distressingly low. Failing as prophets, we may exercise another great influence. I have often wondered in idle moments, if there might not be out there somewhere a starry-eyed kid, enchanted and inspired by something we have written, who may in the years to come evolve a principle that will lead to a faster-than-light mechanism—something that he might never have dreamed of if he'd not read science fiction. Or find a cure for cancer. Or dream up an acceptable protein synthetic. Or arrive at a system that will hold off senility: something that, at my age, I would find extremely interesting.

I am among the last surviving dinosaurs of science fiction. This I consider no particular distinction. But it does give me some perspective and a long memory. I was in close to the beginning of modern science fiction and

JACK WILLIAMSON: "The man shines through!"

Dear Cliff:

I'm completely delighted that you are getting the Grand Master Nebula. I wish I could have been there to see you receive it, but with Commencement coming up in early May I'm involved in too many academic emergencies.

You have earned the Nebula well. Looking back across your career, I see more high points than I can mention. I recall THE COSMIC ENGINEERS, in which you turned John Campbell's sort of super-science space opera into something even more thrilling.

I recall the stories about the Webster family which you combined to make the "City" series—one of the most memorable and most moving of all visions of future history.

I recall the special spell of THE TIME QUARRY, a master work that helped Horace Gold lead science fiction in another exciting direction.

I recall many a fine novel since, all of them notable for character, for mood, for a glow of good feeling. Your great achievement, I think, is the humane emotion you put into your work. If literature really shows us better ways to feel about ourselves and our world, you have given us fine ways of feeling about our future and our universe.

Yet it isn't any or all of those wonderful stories that I recall most fondly when I look back. It's the occasions—too few of them—when we met quietly in a hotel room at some convention to sip good whiskey and talk about the things that matter.

Live forever, Cliff!

You have been one of the great makers of science fiction because you are what you are. The man shines through. Keep shining!

With love,

Jack Williamson ■

through the years I have watched its development. I wish that out of this long observation I could find something profound to say, but it seems I can't.

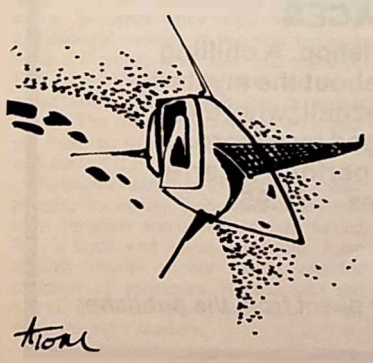
I wrote my first science fiction story in 1930. It sold to *Amazing Stories*. My second story was bought by *Wonder Stories*. With two stories in the works, I haunted the news stand for the appearance of one of them. Finally *Wonder Stories* showed up with my story in it. I rushed home with a copy in my hand and sat down to read. I couldn't read it. I was so filled with excitement and elation, that it was impossible to concentrate. It was hours before I calmed down enough so I could read the story.

And that first story—the one bought by *Amazing*? I waited and nothing happened. Several years went by and I had other stories published. One day an envelope was in the mail. Inside it was that first manuscript and a scrawled letter, written in long hand, by *Amazing*'s editor, T. O'Connor Sloane. He was sorry, he said, but the story seemed too outdated for publication. It never sold to anyone else; I didn't try to sell it. It was, after all, a fairly bad story. T. O'Connor Sloane may have been right.

Tonight, here in New York, among my friends, I look back over a span of 46 years in the science fiction field and I feel a deep pride—a calmer, deeper pride than I felt that day I saw the magazine containing my first story. Not a pride in myself. But a pride in you and the field. For myself, I think, only a pride that I am privileged to be one of you, that I am accepted by you.

By your collective effort and devotion you have taken a tiny, squalling infant born in the welter of pulp magazines and have carefully nurtured it to adulthood. You have given it respect. You have forged for it a significance that no one, those many years ago, could have suspected. You have done well by it. I know you will continue to do well by it.

And God bless you all. ■



ALGOL PROFILE

ANDRE NORTON

PROFILED BY

Gary Alan Ruse

The image seems almost wrong at first, this modest and soft-spoken woman—a retired librarian with 20 years service dealing with books of others—living in an unpretentious house in central Florida. The area is almost rural in appearance. A lake edges the rear of the property, and in the expansive yard of a neighbor a horse grazes leisurely.

Yet this comfortable setting appears far too understated. For the woman is Andre Norton, a prolific writer of tightly plotted action stories and boldly imaginative science fiction.

By the end of this year, Andre Norton will have 80 books to her credit, with millions of copies in print. She has achieved the enviable position of receiving both critical acclaim and popular acceptance. Her inventive works of fantasy adventure have been compared to those of J. R. R. Tolkien and Edgar Rice Burroughs. Yet she still thinks of herself as basically just an old fashioned story teller.

The day seems right for a visit into Norton's carefully crafted fantasy worlds —a steady rain washes out the sounds of intruding reality and the gray clouds are somber and enveloping. Visitors are promptly inspected by her five cats, Su-Li, Mei Le Te, Punch, Frodo and Moses, and Norton's love of cats is evident even in the artwork and sculpture which decorate her home. A great variety of ceramic cats mingle on a shelf with small Wizard of Oz figures, and in several spots plaques in the shape of large feline faces glower mysteriously.

On a wall in the foyer, a map delineates the lands of *Witch World*, one of her most popular books and the start of an entire series of adventures. Fantasy art fills the small gaps between well-stocked book cases, and the overall appearance is of a very homey and slightly exotic library.

Magic plays such a key role in many of Norton's tales set in this world and others that a question about it can't be avoided. "Yes, I'm very much interested in the occult," she replies, "and not in what they call 'hard science'. I'm interested in what they call 'speculative archeology', which is the von Daniken type of thing, and I'm interested in ESP and things to do with the mind, more than gadgets—I'm not a gadget writer. I'm more interested in how people react to situations than the mechanical part of it."

Norton's ability to identify with people, to create believable characters even in alien surroundings, has earned her a large and loyal following. Even though many of her books are for children or teenagers, Norton says she has far more fan letters from adults than from younger readers.

The following extends worldwide, since her books have been translated into eight languages, Arabic included. Among the many awards she has received for her writing, perhaps the most unexpected was a special award from the Dutch government in 1946, sent in appreciation for her novel, *The Sword is Drawn*, which depicted the valiant efforts of the Dutch underground during World War II. Letters supplied by people in the Dutch resistance movement and other research led to a second book, *The Sword in Sheath*, published in 1949. Five years later the trilogy was concluded with *At Swords Points*.

The same kind of careful research and attention to detail went into a book written for the Civil War Centennial, *Ride Proud, Rebel!*. "I came across an unpublished diary of a young man who had been a Morgan's raider," she explains. "He had gone south and joined the Confederate general, Forrest, and he had written a diary in very, very great detail. I drew upon than heavily for my book."

A second book traced the westward drift of Civil War veterans in the 1870's —men who had nothing left to return to except ruined land and families torn asunder. "That's what caused the great western advance right at the end of the Civil War, in the 1870's. You see, a lot of these men, the Northerners, could get state land. Just like the bounty land

after the Revolutionary War. For so many years of army service they might get land in the west. And the Confederates went because there was nothing left to go home to; they went mostly into New Mexico and Arizona, while the Northerners went into Colorado and Nebraska."

This second book, *Rebel Spurs*, was also partially inspired by the story of a real life rancher. When the army withdrew from New Mexico and Arizona at the outbreak of the war, the Apache Indians believed they had defeated them. In a few years they overran the region, and very few white men remained. But one rancher in a little town called Tubacca, which no longer exists, did not give up so easily. "He fortified his ranch," Norton explains. "He built a regular castle. And he hired the Pima Indians, who were enemies of the Apaches, to fight for him. His ranch was the only oasis of white safety in the area. He provided armed escorts for the train that came up from Mexico City, which was their only way of trade during the war. He became very famous for this, and I used him as one of the characters in the book—or rather, I used his background and what he did to develop the character."

Another novel based upon fact is due out this fall. Set in Africa, in the ancient Nile Valley country of Kush, the action of the novel is built around the African dynasty that inherited the declining Egyptian empire and rose to great power. According to legend, the city eventually fell to an Arab invasion and the nobility fled to the area of Lake Chad. With that kind of rich background as a starting point, Norton proceeds to develop a colorful and exciting adventure novel.

Norton's interest in the past goes back to childhood and her own ancestry. Born Alice Mary Norton in Cleveland, Ohio, her mother's family were bounty land people. "You know," she explains, "at the end of the Revolution they got the land as payment. Well, my mother's ancestor was in the Maryland line, and he helped found Zanesville on bounty land. He married an Indian, which was the first legal marriage between an Indian and a white in that part of the country, in order to get absolute control over the land that he wanted."

In high school she worked on the school paper as editor of the literary page, and stayed after school on her own time for a creative writing class. "We were very lucky in that we had an inspired teacher," she says. "Out of that class of about twelve people there came five professional writers—unusual for a class like that." At the end of the year they published a book of their stories and poetry through the school printing shop. But Andre Norton's writing career might have gone no further than that, if not for the events of the early 1930's;

"I had no intention of becoming a professional writer at the time," she explains. "I was going to become a history teacher, but the depression hit and I went into the library. And then I took writing courses at the college at night. My first book, *The Prince Commands*, was brought out before I was 21."

More books followed, slowly at first, since she could only write in her spare time. And there was little of that. Besides working as an assistant librarian in Ohio, she also spent a year during World War II in the research section of the Library of Congress. Then in 1950, health problems forced an early retirement from library work. Norton turned her full-time attention to her avocation, and was soon writing up to four books a year. But the scope of her subject matter expanded to cover more than just the past.

"As I started producing more, it was at the same time that science fiction became saleable," she says. "So from then on I went into science fiction. Before that I had written spy stories and adventure stories and historical novels. Things of that kind. You see, you couldn't sell a science fiction book prior to 1951. The publishers were very dubious about risking a book. And then there came this great change, and from then on it was easier to sell."

Since then, she has had no trouble selling her science fiction adventures. If anything she's having trouble keeping up with the growing demand for her books.

Occasionally, Norton even collaborated with another writer, as she did for the novel *Murder For Sale*, published in 1954. The book was written with Allen Weston, pen name for Grace Hogarth. "I did the plotting, she did the writing," Norton explains. "She was living in England at the time and she wanted this for an English company. I have collaborated now six times. This time she worked from my notes, the other times I have worked from notes that the other people had written."

It sounds difficult, working from someone else's raw material, attempting to stay within the bounds set by another writer while still developing a story that is equally hers in its creation. Yet Norton did not consider it all that difficult. "It's rather interesting. You have their basic notes, and then you can see possibilities that you can expand upon."

Besides writing, Norton also spent eight years as an assistant editor at Gnome Press. It was during this time that she wrote two novels, *Plague Ship* and *Sargasso of Space*, under the pseudonym of Andrew North. By odd coincidence, both of these novels were pirated by the Russians and the French—translated and published illegally without regard to copyright or royalties. It is typical of Norton's calm approach to things that she regards the incident with amusement today, especially the foreword which the Soviet government deemed necessary for one of the books, explaining how the story was *really* a statement against the evils of capitalism!

When asked about the use of the name *Andre*, she explains, "It was necessary when I started writing because I've always written books that were first considered boy's or men's books. And in those days, a woman did not. You'll find that all the early women writers, like C. L. Moore and Leigh Brackett either used their initials or a pseudonym. And I've used it so long now that it's become my name. It is, legally." She also points out an ironic twist to what may be considered a chauvenist policy in publishing—men who write gothic romance novels are generally required to write under a *female* pseudonym.

Norton's ideas for stories come from her own interests, as a rule. Her research into travel, history, archeology, folklore and occult matters continually serves as the springboard for new books. It is easy to be caught up in her special kind of story telling magic as she relates tantalizing bits of information and scientific oddities. . .the storage batteries that were found in a three thousand year old Sumerian tomb; the fossilized footprints of a man that date back to long before any human being was supposed to have walked this earth; odd statues found in Mexico that show prehistoric animals that the natives could not have known unless they actually saw them; and a viking tale that may be more than mere legend.

"There was an Icelandic saga that was almost dismissed as being entirely a fantasy, in which they told about sailing so far south that the stars appeared on the wrong side. And then they started north again and they met these people that had queer boats with claw-like sails and had a fight with them," she says. "Well, that was almost dismissed as fantasy. Now we understand—they rounded South Africa, those Vikings did, and the people that they met were from Borneo, that have the lateen sails. Now we know that, because we can put together what we know with what they say."

Besides her own research, Norton sometimes has the assistance of others. "I have one correspondent who sent me an extremely interesting thing," she relates. "He has a sea-going boat that he can run by himself, and he will tie up in a port and work for awhile until he gets enough money to go off. Well, he's made friends all over the world, and he had a letter from a friend in Australia who has a sheep ranch in the outback, right on the edge of the desert. And there was a very odd formation there. It was a mound, and up from the mound was this point of rock, and it was so

noticeable that they used it for a camp and a landmark. Well there was a rain, which doesn't usually occur in that area and an earth slippage showed that the pinnacle was on top of a roof of blocks. And the man who owned the property did everything to try to get an archeologist to come there and investigate it. He petitioned the universities in Australia and he wrote to archeologists—nobody would pay any attention to it. Now, Australia is supposed to have no ancient remains, the people are supposed to be drifters. Yet the aborigines themselves have some peculiar drawings on the rock, and some legends of a white race that preceeded them, that *did* build."

In Norton's estimation, the find is comparable to the submerged roads and walls found recently off Bimini. "Apparently there might have been a very high civilization before the ice-age," she says with conviction, "or before the world catastrophe that we know occurred about 10,000 B.C., a terrible world catastrophe, which appears in legends all over the world as a flood."

But even Norton's research can't account totally for the success of her books. In the final assessment, it is her vivid imagination and the people that are so skillfully woven into her fantasy tales—wizards and witches and brave warriors, colorful and exciting people who never-the-less have emotions enough like ours that we may identify with them and cheer them on in their adventures. No small magic, that.

Outside, the rain is still pelting down into the enclosed patio of Norton's home—a house designed by the architect husband of her neice. Norton moved to Florida in the fall of 1966 primarily because of her neice, but she also admits that she couldn't take the cold winters of Ohio any more.

The cats, which have been distressed by the steady rain, are now pacing about nervously. And for good reason, as it turns out, since the local veterinarian soon arrives to give them their annual shots.

Those very same cats are, one suspects, directly responsible for a number of recent Norton books. *Catseye*, for one; *The Jargoon Pard* for another, in which a young man in the ancient land of Arvon discovers he has the ability to change into feline form; and *Iron Cage* as well, which opens with the earthly mistreatment of a cat and then proceeds to depict a world in which humans are treated no better by their superior animal masters.

The vet leaves and the talk returns to less mundane matters. One of Norton's new books is *Red Hart Magic*, another of the "Magic" series of stories that have delighted readers (*Steel Magic*, *Octagon Magic*, and *Dragon Magic*, to name a few). This new tale centers around a miniature inn, while past books used such items as a doll house and an herb garden as the starting points for their fantasy adventures.

Another new one is *Wraiths of Time*, and Norton has finished a new book for Walker entitled *Star Ka'at World*. Those fans of Norton's *Witch World* series, and they are legion, should look for a collection of Witch World short stories, *Trey of Swords*, due soon from Ace. Those same fans will also be pleased to know that Gregg Press has issued the original Witch World books in a special hardbound set complete with maps.

When questioned about her prodigious output, Norton commented, "When I was working full-time, I could only bring out a book once every two years, because I had to write in little snippets of time, rather than steadily as I do now. Since then I've been doing four a year, up until this year." She is also quick to correct the impression that all four novels are full-blown projects. "They vary, though. You see, some of them are for younger children, and they're short. I usually do about two full length novels a year, and the others are shorter. I've been doing some for the Walker line, for very young readers—eight to ten years old. And then the Magic Series for the ten to twelve readers. Those are short, too."

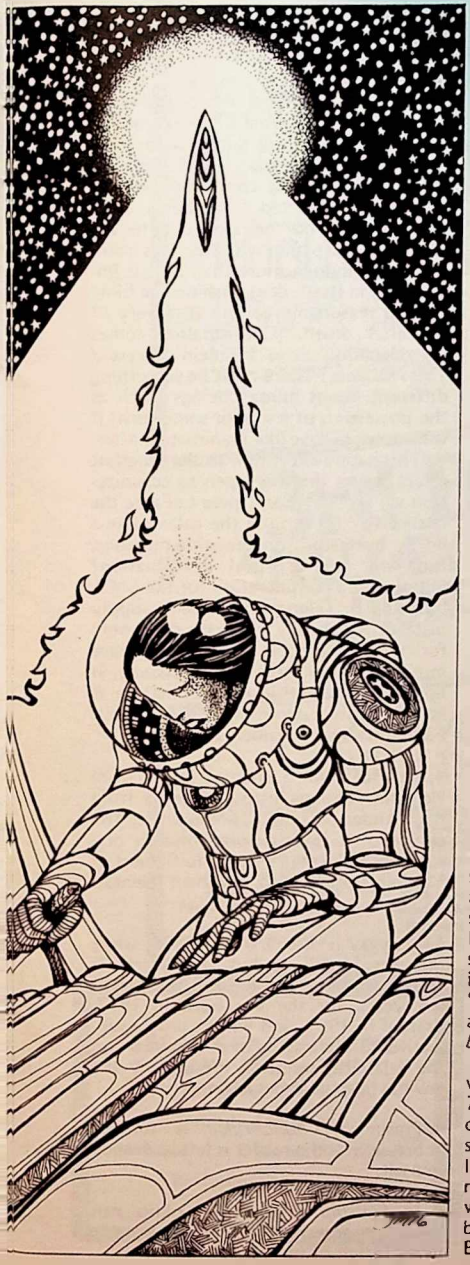
Fiction is her primary interest. In fact, her only non-fiction work has consisted of articles about the SF field. Another area of writing Norton has scrupulously avoided is the short story. "I don't write many of them, and I don't do it easily. The very short story is difficult for me because I think in longer terms, and plan in longer lengths. There are only a few writers I know that ever started with books instead of short stories, but they all have the same difficulty—short stories are very hard."

In the meantime, more projects are in the works, including, hopefully, a tale set in the Florida Keys. But for those readers interested in sampling Norton's special style of magic, they needn't be content with only new or recent titles. One of the benefits of writing tales with strong historical backgrounds is that they are truly timeless.

One such story, *Scarface*, was originally published in 1948. "It's a pirate story," Norton explains, "and it's the result of a great deal of research on the pirates that operated out of Tortuga in the very early 18th century. It's partly based on the accounts of a Dutch doctor who was captured by the pirates, and kept because he was the only man with medical knowledge. It's also based on the story of Henry Morgan, the British buccaneer who became governor of Jamaica." A delightful smile lights up her face. "That's still selling, by the way . . .very well." ■

VARIANTS: Joe Haldeman's SF Novels

Patrick McGuire



I once made a remark about Robert Heinlein in a letter to someone who had read a great deal of SF, but little by Heinlein. My correspondent thought I was talking about alternate universes. I wasn't, precisely, but the point I was trying to make was related: particularly in his juveniles of the fifties, Heinlein had gotten into the habit of "writing around" the same idea from various points of view in various books. For instance, in one novel (*Space Cadet*), a worldwide federation would be a good thing, and in another (*Between Planets*), it would be the basis for a tyranny.

Joe Haldeman, who has picked up a number of points from Heinlein, has appropriated this one among them. His recent *Mindbridge* (1976) is in large measure another version of his earlier *The Forever War* (1974), exploring different variants of the same general ideas.

Each book tells the story of a male protagonist who falls in love with the heroine while the two serve under military discipline in an international organization. (In both cases the organization is rather like the Mobile Infantry in Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*, down to the powered suits.) Conflict arises when Earth encounters an extraterrestrial species with whom communication is difficult because the extraterrestrials have a group mind. After senseless loss of life, communication is established, it turns out the fighting has been a dreadful mistake, and peace is restored. Throughout each novel, the hero and heroine have retained their love for each other, although in accordance with local mores they continue for a while to have sexual intercourse with others. Eventually hero loses heroine in a way that seems final. In the end, however, true love triumphs over everything. Even some details of everyday life are similar in the two novels—twenty-first century "neo-Elizabethan" dress in *Forever War* and neo-Elizabethan music in *Mindbridge*, for instance.

More frequently, however, the two works differ in detail. Consider format. *The Forever War* consists of a number of episodes which originally appeared as separate stories, but which are in fact linked closely together. Virtually all the material is presented in the first person, with Mandella as narrator. *Mindbridge*, by contrast, contains a dedication to Brunner and Dos Passos, *"pro forma."* Fortunately for the reader, Haldeman's use of this *forma*, of interpolations of diary entries, articles, commercials, and so forth, is more "linear" and readily comprehensible than in Brunner's *Stand on Zanzibar*.

The characters of Mandella and LeFavre are similar in that both of them are competent and resourceful professionals. In one respect, however, LeFavre is a mirror image of Mandella. Mandella in *Forever War* is a pacifist who has been transformed by the system into an efficient soldier. LeFavre in *Mindbridge* has an inherent killer rage which he has subdued through his own effort—but at the behest of the system, to keep himself from getting bounced from the AED Academy—so completely that he is the one human who can serve as a channel for peace.

Even the common plot takes quite different turns in the two books. In *Forever War*, the conflict with the extraterrestrials lasts from about 1996 to 2917,[1] while in *Mindbridge* the whole thing is over in about sixteen months (October 2052 to February 2054). In *Forever War*, the romantic crisis is resolved by the discovery that Marygay has not died, but is waiting for Mandella on a relativistic shuttle. In *Mindbridge*, Carol has actually died, but on LeFavre's own deathbed he discovers that there is an afterlife and that Carol is waiting for him.

Forever War is extremely optimistic technologically. By 1996, only twenty-four years after the first story incorporated in the novel appeared in *Analog*, the human race has near-lightspeed starships, FTL via black holes, extrasolar colonies, and assorted extremely advanced military hardware, including powered suits just about as good as the ones in Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*, which is set several centuries further in the future.

Most technology is a bit more backward (and consequently more plausible for the date) in *Mindbridge*. Though the story begins about half a century later than *Forever War*—Mandella is born in 1975, LeFavre in 2025[2]—the powered suits in *Mindbridge* are not much better than the ones at the start of *Forever War*. (For one thing, you need a crane to get the *Mindbridge* suits on and off, while a single person can handle the

Forever War ones.) Late-twentieth-century spaceships in *Forever War* travel between black holes at almost light-speed. In *Mindbridge*, as late as the 2030's the plan for colonization is via ponderous "generation ships."

The main exception to this general technological lag is the "Levant-Meyer Translation," a form of teleportation much like that in Heinlein's *Tunnel in the Sky*. It's used for much the same purpose as Heinlein's tunnel, too—for the colonization of extrasolar planets. One difference is Haldeman's "slingshot effect," by which anything teleported eventually returns to its origin (or else disappears completely). The slingshot effect, like kryptonite, provides an arbitrary limitation on an ability that might otherwise get out of hand.[3]

But for all its technological optimism, and indeed to some degree *because* of it, the most striking feature of *The Forever War* is its social pessimism. The pessimism is not total—the creation of a UN International Guard in about 1986 isn't a lot less improbable than those 1996 starships, and by 3139, events have settled down more or less to everyone's satisfaction. But pessimism is certainly the dominant mood. The Forever War is started by professional military men eager to get back in harness despite world peace, and is supported for economic and social reasons. The political-miliary establishment shows very little respect for human rights (though its record is rather better than, say, Stalin's), and on the whole it gives little indication of improvement over the centuries, at least up to the point where varied genotypes are phased out and replaced by clones of someone by the name of Khan.[4] Until the end, death and suffering are routine, and Mandella can only try to endure them with stoicism or irony.

Let's consider in particular the twenty-first century, since that is also the time of *Mindbridge*. In *Forever War*, twenty-first-century Earth is effectively socialist, dominated by a United Nations bureaucracy hell-bent on order, stability, and the war effort. Most of the soldiers in *Forever War* are draftees. The only way out of the service is to complete a tour of duty—at first two subjective years, but soon raised to ten.[5] The chances of surviving this tour are very low.

In *Mindbridge*, the government is something called the World Order Council. Multinational corporations are powerful, but government agencies have their own bureaucratic power bases, and professional associations and the World Council of Churches also have their say. There are Liberal and Conservative[6] political parties. In short, we have "pluralism," "cross-cutting cleavages," and "institutional checks"—the things which are supposed to make life livable today in the industrialized English-speaking countries.

AED, the Agency of Extraterrestrial Development, does hold human life fairly cheap. It puts actors and trainees into tests which are real life-and-death situations. When it turns out that the first person to touch a mindbridge animal is always killed by the bridge, AED busily recruits volunteer suicides. Only 50 per cent of all Tamers survive their tour of duty. But a fifty-percent survival rate is much better than the near-zero of UNEF in *Forever War*. Moreover, Tamers are volunteers and can resign at any time, though they will spend the rest of their lives paying off the expense of their training.[7] On the whole, things don't seem so bad. What does this social improvement over the two novels signify? Has Haldeman mellowed with age?

It could be. By the time *Mindbridge* came out in 1976, the draft was ended, the Viet Nam war was over, and Nixon had been driven from office. The success of *The Forever War* and the consequent size of Haldeman's advance for *Mindbridge* must have made the world seem a brighter place, too. But on the other hand Haldeman may simply have decided to try something different. You can't go on writing cynical books all the time unless your name is Kurt Vonnegut.

Has Haldeman actually improved? In my opinion *Mindbridge* is no better than *Forever War*, but neither is it appreciably worse, which is to say it's pretty damn good. Furthermore, its more temporate view of life and its successful experimentation with narrative forms new to the author are a good sign of Haldeman's flexibility.

Still, the extent of Haldeman's debt to Heinlein is a bit worrysome. It's not that Haldeman fails to take over the ideas and remake them, but even so, he's got only twenty or so Heinlein novels to crib from. He's drawn heavily from *Starship Troopers* twice in a row. Other writers have been winning awards by responding to Heinlein too, as in the case of Panshin's *Rite of Passage*. What happens when all the Heinlein is used up? Do we start over with third derivatives?

There is no question of the very high quality of Haldeman's two SF novels and of many (not all) of his short stories. Consequently I think he will be with us as a major talent for some time. Still, I'll feel more certain of that if his next novel gets along without powered suits, aliens and a group mind, or pointless wars. ■

FOOTNOTES

1. Haldeman's arithmetic, by the way, is a little off. At Mandella's discharge in AD 3138 he is told that the war has been over for 221 years, meaning it lasted for about 921 years. A few pages later, Mandella says the duration of the war was 1143 years. This is rather the length of his own military service.

2. In this regard Haldeman makes another arithmetic error (or else there is a misprint). LeFavre was conceived in Spring, 2024, and therefore born in late 2024 or early 2025. But the roster for 17 August 2051 gives his age as 25. He has to be 26. The roster of 11 October 2051 gives an age of 26. These errors in simple calculations make one wonder about the complicated relativistic calculations in the two novels, which I haven't checked.

3. The slingshot effect also provides the setup for the eventual discovery of life after death. It turns out that a baby conceived and born on another planet, though he be made completely out of molecules teleported from Earth, does not slingshot, but behaves as if he belonged to the planet where he was born. This idea, though more than a little improbable in itself, does cushion the blow for the reasonably certain discovery of life after death. (Confirmation comes via telepathy, as in Heinlein's *Beyond This Horizon*.) There must be something different about human beings (such as the possession of a soul or some such) if they don't behave like inanimate matter.

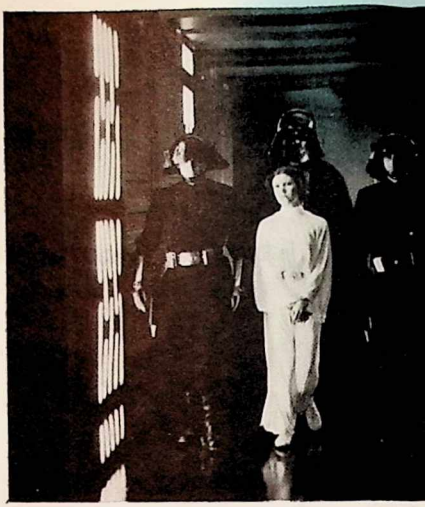
This happy exception to the slingshot effect leaves the way open to colonization via the LMT, and gives LeFavre the chance to "flit around the galaxy like a horny butterfly" on breeding missions. But why not artificial insemination? Mass is not a consideration for the LMT, but bulk is. Teleporting a sperm supply instead of a horny butterfly good only for a one-afternoon stand would leave more room for beer and beefsteak, if nothing else. Artificial insemination *is* mentioned in *Forever War*, so it cannot be that it slipped Haldeman's mind.

4. This idea, for a change, is not from Heinlein. It seems instead to derive from Poul Anderson's old UN-Man series. The choice of a Jewish clone-donor is presumably Haldeman's ironic fulfilment of Yahweh's promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:5).

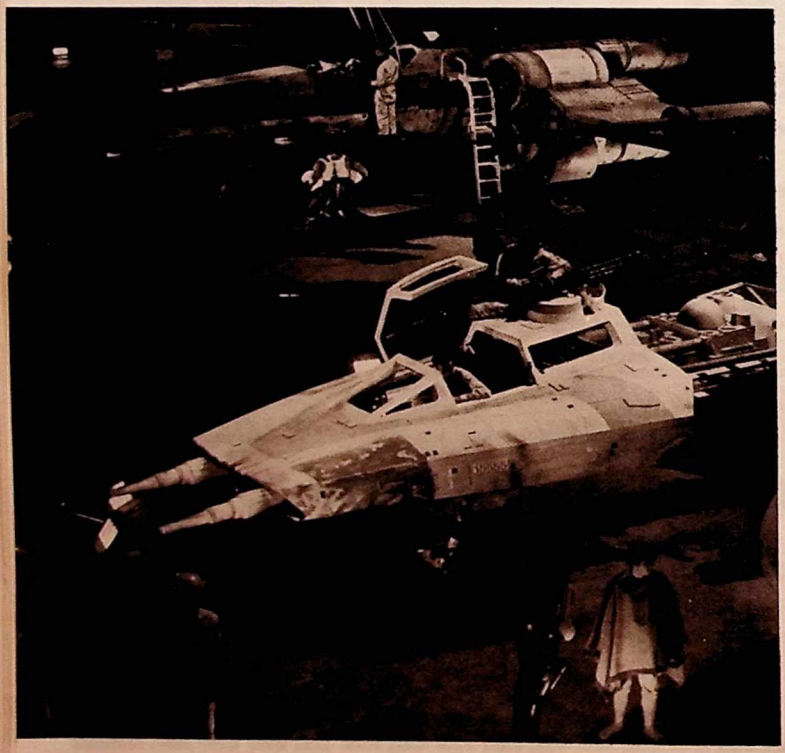
5. Marygay is discharged in 2878, while the war is still on but after Earth is clearly winning. She has not completed ten years, for she was born in 1977, drafted in 1997, and will be only a subjective 28 after aging over two years on the relativistic shuttle. Presumably the law has been changed again.

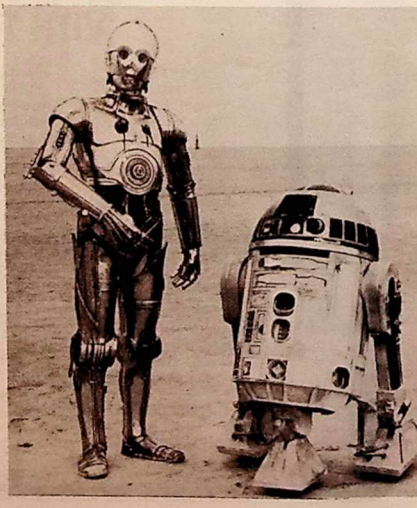
6. Presumably—*Mindbridge* is full of abbreviations the reader is left to decode himself.

7. In *Starship Troopers*, a soldier can resign at any time, the only penalty being forfeit of sufferage.



STAR WARS





Critics are sometimes called upon to prove they know what they're talking about, and that can be dangerous. While writing my last column about genzines (the care, feeding, and ideal qualities of), I began boring my local fannish friends with my views on The Need For More Good General-Interest Fanzines. To prove my points, I lent them copies of *Maya*, *Janus*, *The Witch and the Chameleon*, some old *Energumens* and a *Cry*, various *Granfalloons* and a *Warhoon* or two. At the BC club Christmas party, sitting next to Allyn Cadogan, our information officer and newsletter-editor, I rhapsodized about the fannish immortality awaiting the capable editor who could fill the fanzine void with a regular, attractive, intelligent genzine, full of personality, witty commentary and the sense of fannish community.

"Yeah. I guess a good fanzine would be a way of making contact with people. Communicating. Getting known," said Allyn, who wants to be an SF writer.

"Yeah," said Bill Gibson. Bill, who is tall and lean, rather like my pet avocado plant, is another would-be SF writer; in fact he had just sold his first story, one he'd written for my SF class. (Luckily, I had given him an A.) "It would be neat to do a good fanzine like *Maya*. We could talk about SF, and stuff."

"Practice writing? Sounds ok. But what's a genzine?" said John Park, who is also tall and thin, has an English accent, and. . .guess what. . .is a would-be SF writer. John distinguished himself by finishing his doctorate in physical chemistry, and having his first story published in *Galaxy* in the same week.

"Yeah, and it's fun, too," I said, staring reminiscently into my glass of BC Rotgut Red. "That moment when you staple the first copy, and it's yours, and beautiful. . .the first loc, praising your writing. . .the first unsolicited contributions. . ." Me, I'm Susan, Old Fan and Tired, local gafiate. I'm the short one with glasses, who has no ambition to write SF. Allyn's the slim woman with the high cheekbones and the gap between her teeth. That's the cast of Birth of a Genzine. I was catalysing something.

Allyn borrowed more fanzines. Bill, who'd been a 15-year-old actifan at Chicon III, ungafiated and started drawing cartoons. John began muttering about the price of paper. Then suddenly, one evening at Allyn's place with the kids put to bed, Barney purring in my lap and the Canadian wine affecting my more-gafia-than-thou pose once more, Allyn uttered the fateful words:

"Let's start a genzine!"

"Great! I, uh, I just happened to do this cover," said Bill, producing a superb collage.

"Hey, yeah. May I write a column?" my voice said. (It wasn't me. I had four hundred papers to mark that term, and was already running short on sleep.)

"What's a genzine?" asked John Park.

"What are you going to call the baby?" I asked. "You can either pick a really serious stfnal name like, oh, *Starship* or *Science Fiction Essays* and go the semi-prozine route, or you can pick an off-the-wall name and be crazy-fannish. Call it *Fred*. Or *Genre Plat.*"

"Yeah," said Allyn and Bill.

"What's a Genre Plat?" asked John.

"Now, for the first issue, we'll need. . ." said Allyn; and by the time we all left at 4 am, Vancouver had itself an embryo genzine.

It's really easy to start a genzine. All you need are a couple of neos with lots of time and enthusiasm; a couple of older fen with experience and enthusiasm (not to mention enough fannish contacts to make up a mailing list); and a certain amount of mood-enhancers and sheer lunacy to get you to the point at which the thing stops being a great idea for Real Soon Now, and starts being a reality. A lot of crudzines are born that way. Most die after the first issue. *Genre Plat* should be a strong survivor.

First off, the would-be editor of a successful fanzine has to have some idea of what he/she is doing, or wants to do. I get a couple of dozen "fanzines" every month that are just assemblages of material that the editor had lying around, stencilled, and mailed out. Allyn and Bill actually sat down and read a lot of fanzines, decided which ones they liked, and then figured out why: it boiled down to *Maya* and the like, for the balance of serious and fannish material, the informal tone, the artwork, and the sense of a fannish community. They also knew *why* they wanted to publish: to communicate with other fans, to—in Bill's case at least—apply his English major skills to debating ideas about SF in a non-academic way, perhaps to create and maintain a fannish community: genzines are great focal points for loose energy, and there seems to be a lot of that in Vancouver/Seattle just now.

A word here about co-editing: generally, I don't think it works. In your heart, you know you could've done it better if you hadn't compromised about that illo on page 13, right? Well, Allyn and Bill, the Official Editors (John and I became Surrogate Godparents) have worked out areas of responsibility: he the artwork, she the written material, both alternating editorials. Also, and I think this is a big factor in a successful magazine: we may be Silly, but we're mostly Grown Up. We're all in our late 20's, with Careers and Relationships and Life Experiences and all that. We're not dependent on fandom for all our egoboo, so the chances of petty feuds ("That's *my* tradezine!" "No, mine!" "Paste those e-stencils in *my* way, or I quit!!") are going to be minimal. I hope.

Genre Plat knows what it wants to be. It also has the courage to go after The Ideal Fanzine, even if it means rejecting material, bruising feelings. . .or, more important, having the patience to sit down with contributors and Get It Right. (The lack of real help to do better-than-adequate work is something of a problem, in fandom. You get a lot of feedback on content, very little on technique.)

["We want to infuriate and amuse," said Bill, asked to define his aims.]

The planning also took money into account. Allyn did a cost analysis: reproduction methods, paper costs, envelopes, postage, electrostencils. . .all part of knowing what you're doing.

Mimeography is informal, "fannish," and a community project. Also a pain, when you have to slipsheet and when you have Allyn's two- and five-year-olds to "help." Also much, much cheaper than offset. Also available, since they... we (you don't get out that easily, Susan) have access to both the BC club mimeo, and mine. (But I've done enough slipsheeting to last a lifetime...)

"What's a slipsheet?"

"We'll show you, John."

Planning. Direction. Enthusiasm. (I'm actually quite excited about this whole thing, which is ridiculous for an Old Fan and Tired. I keep volunteering to do things; I even wrote a column for the first issue and a reprint-introduction for the second, while marking exams. That's enthusiasm.) The final ingredient needed to lift the zine out of the ordinary, though, is talent.

Of course, yes, you're a great writer. Well, a good one. Well, that essay on *1984* got an A in Grade 11 English. And your friend's cartoons are sort of like Rotsler's, sure. But: are you going to be embarrassed when the first issue of *Purple Ditto Monster* turns up for the neos to snicker at in a fanhistory room ten worldcons from now?

I don't think anyone will snicker at *Genre Plat.* Dena Brown read Bill Gibson's essay on SF criticism, and immediately asked to reprint it in *Locus.* We passed around Bill's cartoons, and giggled. Allyn's piece on Harlan Ellison is a really fine piece of personal journalism, and her editorial... Well, look, send for the fanzine, and judge. I think it has a nice community feel about it, the layouts look attractive, and Allyn has, I discovered, an enviable fannish talent: she can lay down presstype straight, a useful gift unless you have a tame caligrapher in the basement.

Get the best contents you can, for whatever type of fanzine you want: if it's a reviewzine, make them good reviews (*Genre Plat*'s by doug barbour and Bill Beard discuss books and films, instead of just summarizing plots.) If it's a personalzine, make us care about your life...and write about it in literate English. Don't print crud, just because it's yours.

Reproduce each issue as well as time and money allow. I get a lot of fanzines. I simply do not bother reading the ones typed with dirty typewriter keys, with fuzzy printing, crowded and messy pages, faded-to-nothing ink. If you expect anyone to care about your words and art, make them legible.

Bill and Allyn are going to spend a fair amount of money for good mimeo bond, ink and electrostencils. We all are going to spend many, many hours running off pages and collating. We will complain, loudly. We will hold an artifact that is as good as we can make it, and beam, eventually.

OK. You have a pile of lovely, expensive (nobody does this to make money, *nobody;* there are easier ways to get rich and famous) fanzines waiting for an audience. Mail them out. (There are piles of unmailed issues in closets from Brooklyn to Seattle. There are piles of unpublished material all over fandom. Whatever happened to the Willis issue of *Warhoon?* to *Innuendo?*) Borrow mailing lists from a friend, from a club. Read lots of fanzines, noting the mistakes, so you don't make them. Copy down the addresses of the faithful contributors and letterhacks, neatly, each onto its own filecard on which you may note issues sent and response received. Send your zine to fanzine reviewers; the reviewers, inundated, will not respond, but will feel Terribly Guilty, and may mention you.

As a personal piece of advice, try *not* to hand your zine out at a large convention. I invariably leave them at parties, resent dragging them around, and dump them unread at home with the dirty laundry. I once distributed a fanzine at a Lunacon, and it got the least response of any issue we'd published.

Personally, I think the first issue of *Genre Plat* has as much going for it as any firstish could have: brains, good looks, loving parents, contacts in the great world. It needs two more things to succeed. It needs a good lettercolumn. For that, all Bill and Allyn can do is to rely on the overall appearance to convince people to read it, the material to provoke comment hooks, and their own skill to edit and balance a healthy exchange-of-ideas lettercol that's the heart of any successful genzine.

The second factor in making a good genzine into a potentially great one is, I think, regularity. I think people are more inclined to contribute when they know that the zine will really, honestly appear—preferably soon, so they get the egoboo of seeing their work in print, and the double egoboo of response. Fans write and draw for pleasure, but also for feedback and praise, not for your inactive file. Keeping a regular schedule—quarterly isn't impossible, for a small zine—shows a certain commitment on the editor's part. It also means you don't get stuck producing those two-years-in-the-making hundred-page monsters which destroy your fannish enthusiasm, destroy your finances when you mail them out three years later, and which no-one ever finishes reading anyway.

Starting a fanzine is easy. You need some friends, a bottle of wine, a bottle of corflu, and some stencils. Keeping a fanzine going is harder. Stick around and see what happens with *Genre Plat.*

Meanwhile, *Hedgehog* No. 1 from Seattle fan Jeff Frane is a prototypical Good First Genzine. There's a smattering of artwork: a Jim McLeod cover and two interior illos, plus some fillos by Seattle fringefan Gene Perkins. The main emphasis, though, is on words, by Jeff and his friends. Jeff, like Allyn Cadogan, is a grown-up neo, who's been reading SF and fantasy for years, mixing in the fan community for awhile, writing for other people's fanzines, until, one day...on the highway between Flagstaff and Seattle, coming home from Big MAC...he decided to start his own fanzine. It would be about SF and fantasy: "a serious look at the field" but not a pseudo-scholarly one. "I personally have no interest in articles such as 'Sociothermodynamics in John Norman.' I *am* interested in the views of those people who consider literature in general, and SF in particular, to be a viable, vivacious art. An entertainment form that can excite the emotions and the intellect. Fun."

At this point I decided I was going to like *Hedgehog.* I was right. The main focus of the first issue is provided by Jeff's intelligent interview with Kate Wilhelm. For once, instead of transcribing a taped excursion into trivial chitterchatter, the interviewer has asked the apt questions, and the interviewee has provided lucid and interesting answers: about Clarion, about professional relationships with husband/editor Damon Knight, about being a woman writer.

"Q. 'Are you a feminist?'

"WILHELM: 'A feminist? I think that any woman who is aware has to be a feminist...'"

Jeff has also compiled a Wilhelm bibliography which I, for one, am going to find useful as I track down the earlier, and neglected, work of the woman who, with *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* and *The Clewiston Test,* may well become the SF field's next superstar: ironic, that, since neither *Clewiston Test* nor her new novel, *Faultlines* is being marketed as SF, her non-SF has always sold better than her genre-labelled material, and she herself enjoys being "hard to categorize."

The other major articles fulfil Jeff's criteria, by examining SF with the emotions and the intellect. Loren MacGregor's "Things Change" is a personal reaction to the disappearance of The Expository Lump in modern SF; it's informal, chatty, and makes a serious literary point in an entertaining way. Denys Howard's article on "Love and MZB" is equally personal, more impassioned: as a gay man, he details his evolving reactions to Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The World Wreckers* and *The Heritage of Hastur,* with a synthesis of self/society/art that lit-crit-at-school just never even hints at. I read fanzines for material like this.

Hedgehog concludes with 11 pages of reviews (more than a third of its length.) One is four years old but still important:

Ursula Le Guin on *Watership Down*. The others are longish discussions of current books. Jeff and his reviewers (Debbie Notkin, Frank Denton, Mary Kay Jackson) stay this side of major essays, without falling into the trap of most reviewers, who give "I-enjoyed-this-because" plot-outlines which are only a biased buyer's guide, useless three months after the book is released. The commentary is intelligent; and Debbie Notkin's long examination of *The Crystal Ship* is a model of what a good long appraisal should be.

OK. I enjoyed *Hedgehog*, and wish it well. I wish it a good lettercol; the Wilhelm interview and the Howard piece should provide adequate comment hooks. I wish it a few more fannish touches, though editor Jeff's editorial ramblings set the informal tone quite nicely. In fact, one of the things I like most about the zine is its sense of a Pacific Northwest fannish community from Vancouver to Berkeley. (Even the books reviewed tend to be by West-coast authors: Ursula Le Guin, Terry Carr, Vonda McIntyre, Marta Randall...hmm.) This "community" isn't emphasized, or really even mentioned; there's no claustrophobic ingroupness; but I do get a sense of people carrying on a discussion with their friends, and inviting each reader into the conversation. I like that.

The other thing I wish Jeff is better reproduction. The informality of mimeo on twiltone paper is nice, Jeff, but you're getting a lot of setoff. And set the striking pressure on Father Frank's typer higher, if you can; or use pliofilm; or something. The stencils don't seem to be cut clearly, the printing is spotty, and the result, after 32 pages of almost unbroken type, is incipient eyestrain. Don't put up barriers between the words and us.

Addresses: *Genre Plat*, Allyn Cadogan, 1916 W. 15th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. Canada. The usual, or $1. a sample; no longterm subscriptions.

Maya, Rob Jackson, 71 King John St., Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 5XR, U.K. US/Can. $1.00, 4/$3.

Hedgehog, Jeff Frane, P.O. Box 1923, Seattle, WA 98111. The usual or $1.

Other Stuff: I'd like to recommend two very different projects. *New Venture* No. 5 is described as a "special art issue." In fact, it's a 118-page art folio, spiral-bound, offset, with a colour cover by Kelly Freas. Artists include Freas, George Barr, Eddie Jones, Ed Emshwiller, Stephen Fabian, John Schoenherr, Tim Kirk, Roy Krenkel, Rick Sternbach, Vincent Di Fate, and the best of the fanartists, including Harry Bell, Grant Canfield, Terry Austin and Randy Mohr. Selections and repro vary from fair to !!wow!! with the emphasis on the latter. As a bonus, there are autobiographies by most of the artists, and a long interview with George Barr. It's a gorgeous collector's item, for only $2., from Jon Gustafson, NW 440 Windus St., Pullman, WA 99163.

Apple is "a journal of women's sexuality and erotica" edited by Jessica Salmonson for S.I.S.T.E.R., the Seattle Institute of Sex Therapy, Education and Research, 100 NE 56th Ave, Seattle, WA (offset, $1.) Jessica's multipartite editorial, a reprinted column from Phyllis Ann Carr, personal articles, fiction and attractive artwork and graphics make this a feminist magazine remarkably akin to those fanzines I reviewed last column. A lettercol in No. 2 should increase this feeling, and *Apple*'s value as a forum for sharing experiences and energy.

I only read English and French, alas, so most foreign fanzines are inaccessible to me. You might be interested in some of these, though:

Omega, a Dutch genzine, edited and published by Zacharias L. A. Nuninga, Westersingel 1, GRONINGEN 8009, The Netherlands; f. 3.50/BF 55.

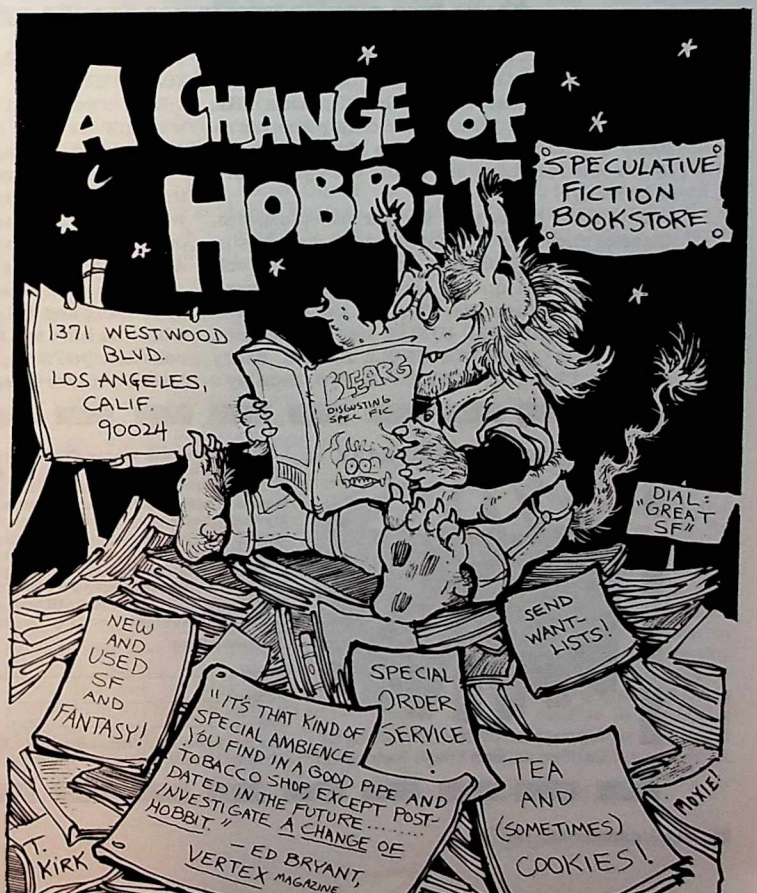
Munich Round Up, a German genzine with an English summary: conreports, stories, reviews, and stunning covers, from Waldemar Kumming, Herzogspitalstrasse 5, 8000 Munchen 2, W. Germany; DM 2, or 80c, 4/$3, from US agent Andy Porter.

Cahier is Flemish, an English/French/Belgian annual "devoted to the famous Flemish writer Jean Ray-John Flanders . . .the greatest author of fantastic literature in Belgium," and to SF and fantasy-related articles, bibliographies and such. It costs 200 BF, 220 BF overseas or 250 BF airmail from Josef Peeters, Loburgenbos 27, 3200 Kessel-bo, Belgium—who also wants to trade with foreign fanzines. Send him yours.

For English-language fans, an indespensible introduction to overseas fandom is *The Spang Blah*, from Jan Howard Finder, P.O. Box 9163, Ft. Riley, KS 66442. It's quarterly, offset, and 75c. Metamorphosing from a European newszine, *Spang Blah* No. 13 has become an international genzine featuring, among others, Marion Zimmer Bradley (US), Cherry Wilder (Australia, now in Germany), Bert Chandler and Dennis Stocks (Australia), Eric Bentcliffe and Ian Watson (Britain) and Annemarie Kindt (Netherlands) with artwork by Harry Bell and Terry Jeeves (U.K.), Bill Rotsler (US), etc. etc. . .This should become quite fascinating.

Keep those fanzines coming! ■

—Susan Wood, Dept. of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1W5



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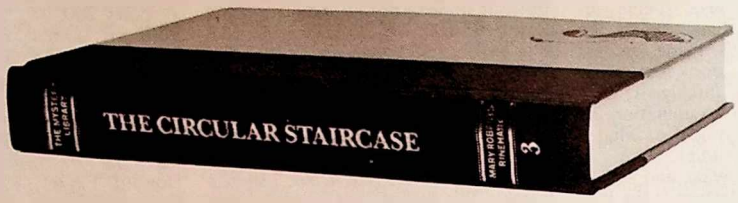

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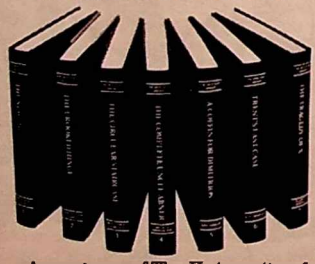

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SKETCHES: VINCENT DIFATE

Richard Powers is a tall, lean, athletic gentleman in his mid-fifties. He lives with his young wife Tina, an attractive tennis instructor of, say, twenty-five or twenty-six, on a portion of what was once a much larger estate in Ridgefield, Connecticut. To a great many SF readers, Powers is virtually unknown, yet his influence on the art of science fiction is easily equal to that of H. G. Wells' influence upon its literature. In addition to his commercial work, he is a respected American surrealist painter and has had his work exhibited in museums and galleries both here and abroad. We met, after nearly two months of planning around conflicting schedules, at my place for lunch on the cool, windy afternoon of April 23, 1977. It became apparent to me, after the first few minutes of our interview, that this personable and articulate man could not and should not be confined to a straight question and answer interrogation. Consequently, my role as interviewer was limited to that of a fascinated listener absorbed in the colorful recollections of a great visionary painter. Our conversation lasted two hours and by its end, it had seemingly raised more questions than it answered. We resolved to meet again in another month or two to finish what we had begun. This, then, edited solely for the sake of clarity, is part one of a conversation with Richard Powers.

–Vincent DiFate

ALGOL: I'd like to ask you about your background. Simple things, personal things, like where and when you were born, what your influences were as a kid, whether or not the idea occurred to you early in your life that you might get involved in painting, and when and where you decided to get into illustration?

POWERS: I was born in 1921. I got interested in painting only eight or nine years after that. I was lucky enought to have an uncle who was a quite competent landscape painter, although by profession he was a billboard painter. This guy would go up with buckets of paint and reproduce from a sketch almost anything you can imagine. I went to his place of work to see how it was done when I was about ten years old and it stayed with me very vividly. The guys that were really first rate in the business would make a sketch in proportion to what the billboard was to be. My uncle would take that thing up eight stories above the ground, and without even making a grid of the damn thing would do a ten foot high face or beer bottle. That got me—the sheer vituosity of the thing. Also, just like anybody else who even thinks of getting into art, I was pretty adept at drawing from the first time that I was given something to work with.

ALGOL: You grew up in the Midwest?

POWERS: In Chicago, right.

ALGOL: Did either of your parents have any artistic inclination?

POWERS: No, none whatsoever. Only this uncle who was an uncle by marriage, so there was nothing in the genes as far as was perceptible. But, as I said earlier, his example was enough to get me interested. He was in a position to give me free paint, because they'd get something like cadmium red in buckets, so for the first years that I painted I had free paint in quantity. I had all that I could possible use, even though once I started learning something about painting, it was obvious that some of the stuff he was giving me I shouldn't be using. He was a great user of lead white. He emphasized to me that it was toxic. He said this stuff is very poisonous, be careful, don't stick your brush in your mouth for any reason. Who would do it? But they were oil paints, and you'd be pointing your brushes. He showed me a couple of rats that had gotten into the white lead paint, and that really is the way to teach a kid a lesson. One of those rats was a big as Mickey Rooney. The damn thing had swollen to the point where, a little bit more and it would've exploded.

I remember the color that most influenced me in those days was orange. The color I found myself using a hell of a lot in those days was orange, and until this interview I'd never thought why, but I remember that first paint that I ever had was a great big studio tube of a chrome orange that I'd gotten from my uncle, just to fool around with. It might've been the first time he'd ever given me anything to work with, this really beautiful orange, but the big thing about it was that it was free and it was in quantity, so that I could use as much as I wanted to.

ALGOL: What about influences other than your uncle? Did he expose you to other artists? Take you to museums?

POWERS: No, he didn't give a damn about that sort of thing. All he was interested in was his own stuff. He was a landscape painter in the manner of the Hudson River School. And very good at his kind. But in any case, he was the only influence except for the stuff that I'd see and admire. For instance, the first painter that I can remember admiring was the guy that painted the seascapes in the *Saturday Evening Post.* His stuff was obviously very good. Full of action.

ALGOL: Were they representational?

POWERS: Oh, they were representational, but so well done. They had a vitality and an authenticity about them that really appealed to me. And years later, when I was studying marine painting I was talking to a guy who was an abstractionist, a very good painter named Ruben Tamb—he's got a substantial reputation as a painter in general, but as a marine painter, too. I mentioned the fact that I'd become interested in the sea through seeing these *Saturday Evening Post* things, and he said the very first painting he ever did was a copy of one of them.

ALGOL: That's very interesting. Anyone else that you can think of? Did you ever go to museums?

POWERS: Oh yes. The Art Institute in Chicago, as a matter of fact, is in many ways better than The Metropolitan Museum of Art here in New York. It isn't as comprehensive but it has a better French collection, pre-Impressionist and Impressionist. I was exposed to that particularly when I went to the Art Institute. It's hard to say though, what exactly I was most impressed by. One of the things I remember distinctly was doing an enormous drawing of Michelangelo's *David,* and in the process of really studying it because I was drawing it, realizing how badly done the proportions were and correcting them and being taught a lesson, because in correcting the proportions I had utterly destroyed it. The thing that gave it its power—that is the. . .

ALGOL: The distortions.

POWERS: Well, yes, what it was was a head that was maybe 25% too big for the body. But once the head was put down to scale as I did when I was doing my correcting, it became just an ordinary well proportioned athlete instead of the head of an intellectual on the body of an athlete. Frankly, to this day I don't think Michelangelo intended that. But of course when you're Michelangelo whatever you do comes out right. In this instance it came out right and nobody is going to correct it. That's the point.

ALGOL: This may seem a little removed from the subject, but it's come up in most of my experience with other artists. Did you ever have an unusual experience as a child, possibly an uncanny or psychic experience?

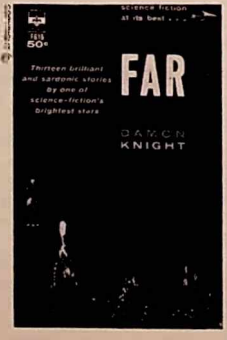
POWERS: Oh, God, I used to have them all the time because I was afflicted with nightmares from the time I was five or six until I was about 14 or 15. I suppose they had something to do with a broken family, and also, bad eyes which meant that I was a compulsive reader and so had a headache most of the time. If I didn't control the thing it would turn into either a real migraine or a pseudo-migraine headache which would then turn into a nightmare when I finally did get off to sleep. So I and my family had one hell of a time for a long period, and some of those nightmares were, if not psychic, as good as psychic. They were, you know. I can still remember the symbolism involved, now that wouldn't even take a Freud to work it out.

ALGOL: Do you feel that this may have been an influence in moving you towards surrealism?

POWERS: It had to be and yet I've always operated under the delusion that I'm pretty much in control of what I decide to do. My idea of a proper artist or a proper human being is somebody who is in control of the area in which he operates, and doesn't let extraneous influences move him around. And yet, like most artists, I'm constantly surprised at what comes out in a drawing or painting that I had no intention of putting in. I've seen stuff, perhaps that someone else has bought and has hanging in their house and I won't see it for several years —you know, go to their house and see the thing and see things in it that come as distinctly a surprise to me. And of course, these have got to be certainly subliminal and sub-conscious things. But I'm not aware of actually trading on those things the way that a charlatan like Dali trades on what psychic phenomena he's read about or whatever. Possibly I'm fooling myself about that, too. But, I don't consciously exploit that kind of thing.

I would say, however, that there are ways to explain anything, some of which are legitimate and some of which are not. We're eventually going to talk about Tanguy because he was certainly one of the painters who influenced me most. The proper kind of influence—I simply have so much repsect for what the guy did and the way that he did it—the complete honesty I felt with which he worked, that it had to be an influence on me. But there was something else involved, too and that is that as opposed to the superficial, sleek surrealism of Salvadore Dali or Max Ernst, Tanguy's things seemed to me to be a much deeper layer of sleep experience, of unconscious experience than the more available, more superficial, more accessible kind of thing that Dali does. And I've always felt very strongly, that the kind of symbolism that I can remember from these nightmares of mine is really a superficial kind of surrealism because you can explain it in fairly pedestrian language. You can take it to a psychoanalyst or read a book on psychoanalysis and figure out for yourself what it means. For instance, I can remember distinctly a vast plain covered with open holes, so densely covered with these holes that there was very little solid area and always in this recurrent dream seeing myself desperately trying to get from one end of this plain to the other without falling into one of these holes. Having read 15 minutes of Freud on the interpretation of dreams you can figure out what this is all about. But that's not the kind of thing that Tanguy was interested in. I think that his symbolism is much more the real stuff that influences us without our being aware of being influenced. It's something that even if you do analyze it, it still eludes you.

ALGOL: You're touching on a lot of things that I feel personally, and that I think are really at the heart of what makes you, especially, what you are. Getting back to your personal development, did you attend art school before or after military service?



POWERS: The war started just about the time that I would be seriously embarking on a career. I went to the Art Institute, briefly, for less than a year. Didn't care for it all that much. What I did like was being able to wander around in the Chicago Art Institute. Then I went to a commercial art academy while I worked during the next summer. That was funnier than almost anything, because the guy that ran that academy was the guy who was then doing the hyper realistic Coca Cola ad. The stuff that he did was at one and the same time so impressive in terms of sheer technical virtuosity and so atrocious in terms of taste. It was like a guy being able to eat three gallons of ice cream in five minutes. You gotta admire the guy for being able to do it, but the impulse to do it and the taste involved and all the rest involved is something else again.

After that summer and having I thought got commercial art out of my system for keeps, the next place I went was the University of Illinois Fine Arts School. That was something else again, because the instructors were the general level of art instructors which means, in Shaw's terms, they were failed artists. A couple of these guys were really decent enough to the few of us—there weren't very many—who were really interested in making time as fast as we could. The thing in those days that impelled me and a couple of others who were in art school to work as hard and as fast as we could was the fact that the war had started. It had started in Europe, that is. There was no question in the minds of anybody with any sense that we were going to get into it sooner or later. So I didn't think I'd be getting out of college and I'd better get in what I could. Sure enough a year later, in 1941, we were in the war, and that took care of the next four years.

The experience with that first commercial art school I went to gave me a lasting impression of commercial art, that to this day, has never really left me. I can and do respect skill, but behind 99% of commercial art—I'm not talking so much of book illustration which has a respectability of its own—but the stuff that I find myself doing on the rare occasion when I do an agency job—there's no respectability about it at all and there's no use kidding yourself. The most you can force yourself to do is a fairly honest job. But you know damn well that there's no lasting value of any kind.

ALGOL: Interestingly enough, you were working in film. What were your influences and your reactions to that and do you feel that you might someday want to return?

POWERS: I was working in the Signal Corps film studios out in Astoria, Queens. This was the biggest rip off that was going on at that time. I mean, God, what it cost the U. S. taxpayer and the government: a waste of time, and it probably prolonged the war by six months. If we hadn't been operating the

war would have been over sooner and a lot less expensively. And they were almost exclusively Hollywood types with the exception of some kids like myself, because I was a 21 year old kid at the time, and had been sent there because the army had trained me to be a radar specialist. That's what I'd gotten into the Signal Corps for, but I had written on my army bio that I was an artist. Maybe I'm being a little harsh with them. But I'll tell you the best stuff was not done at our place. The best stuff was done by Frank Capra in Washington and out in Hollywood, and by John Huston in North Africa, Sicily and places like that. We did one series of Black V. D. films. Now, that was really useless, there's no question about that. That almost cured all of us of sex for the rest of our lives, it was really repulsive. The thing was that there was such enormous waste involved. To this day that has made me very suspicious of govenment in general, and certainly bureaucracy, because the whole thing could've been done for 10% of what it cost.

Anyway, I did have access to a scenic loft and got friendly with a ocuple of the older scenic painters—the men who did backgrounds and some of the illusory stuff that they use in filmmaking—and learned a fair amount: how to work big, for one thing. But I also learned some of their cynicism about the thing, because again, as in many areas of the art business, you get people of considerable skill who are really aware that they're wasting that skill doing something that isn't worth doing.

They had a man there who could paint a 10 by 20 foot sky, which takes some doing singlehanded, and the thing would come out absolutely beautiful. He'd do it in four or five tones of black, no other color, or else for reasons that I never could understand, he'd do it in full color—even though they were shooting in black and white, which doesn't make any sense—but nevertheless he'd do it. The thing would come out absolutely perfect. Cloud formations right off the top of his head, that sort of thing. Now, a guy that can do that should be able to do something more with their skill than that.

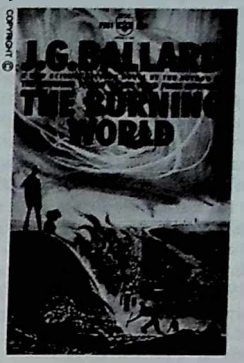
ALGOL: Did any of the people that you worked with in this period ever go on to distinguish themselves in the film industry?

POWERS: Well, I played short stop on the Post ball team with Stanley Kramer, and Carl Foreman, who was also an officer but I'm glad to say didn't make the team. He was just so inept, that even though he was a captain, they wouldn't let him play. Carl Foreman made *The Guns of Navarone.* Some of the people that have influenced me in terms of a sense of craft, haven't really been commercial artists or painters in the strict sense of the word. I was doing a book and I had to illustrate pretty accurately—do a couple of paintings and some drawings of wolves—and through the editor I was working with the Museum of Natural History in New York let me get down into the exhibits both before and after people had left, so I could make drawings. You know, these dioramas of, say, a wolf on the Alaskan tundra. Under those circumstances I got familiar with one of the guys who does the painting on those things. He was perfectly happy. For instance, they'd decide to do something on an African animal like the zebra, so they'd send him to Africa—their natural habitat. And he would make photographs, but also some sketches and scenes, and the man had to work very, very realistically. He showed me some of the sketches he had made in Africa, and within their limitations which were that they were done as realistically as he could do them, and with as much fidelity to detail and without worrying about any of the things that worry painters, you know, composition, spacial design, anything of this sort, they were exquisite. They were just beautiful little things.

This man has the ability to do something really excellently without any worrying about whether they're going to slap a frame around it and it's going to wind up in a museum someplace. That attitude has carried over into doing an honest job in circumstances that, frankly, if you analyzed them, just don't warrant doing anything.

In SF, there are plenty of authors, who God only knows how they get printed, and yet there has to be a decent cover done for each book. The same thing is true in other aspects of commercial art. I've knocked myself out doing illustrations for children's books which should never have been printed, I mean the texts are so minimal and lousy. This is the business of, in very many cases, the art simply carrying the story, and this is not only in terms of children's books where the text is minimal. The war was over; I was lucky enough to end it in New York. I stayed on, having gotten married and having had the first of my four kids here in New York, both to continue schooling and to make a career of it. I had early on given up the idea of teaching as a way of supporting my painting, and the alternative of course, is commercial art. There's no other way of doing it; one or the other. And so I went, on the G. I. bill to a place called the School for Illustrators. It was a brief lived thing anyway. A guy named Dan Content who had been a Dean Cornwall school illustrator during the 30's—quite successful, was running this school, and a bunch of us wound up working with him.

It was one of those no-win situations. The guy's style had been old fashioned by the time the war started, and by now it was just plain antique, so you couldn't really learn anyting, just sort of get an idea of how much prosperity was possible for a commercial illustrator if you struck it rich. The only thing I remember that he ever told us was at the height of his success he used to wear a dress coat and striped morning pants, and drive a Rolls in New York City. And we'd look at each other when he'd tell us the story—was this possible? Well, it turns out that it's no longer possible—*nobody* can do that.



ALGOL: In the days when you were finishing your education, this was really considered the heyday for American illustrators. I guess probably beginning much earlier but ending in the 50's, the late 40's.

POWERS: Well, yes, television ushered out the age of the illustrator. There's no question about that. But even when I got out of the army and until about 1952 or 53, even later than that, the markets were ten times what they are now. Until the magazines really started folding: *Collier's* folded, *Saturday Evening Post* folded, and then of course *Life* and *Look* folded. It's hard to remember what the markets were. As a matter of fact, that's another thing that I hate to have to admit, but one reason that I did quite well was that no really good artists, really successful commercial artists were bothering with the paperback field. I was working for $350-400-500 per painting in those days, when a guy with —if I may say so—my comparable talent who had already been established in the magazine field was getting two and three times that for a *Post* illustration or a *Life Magazine* illustration. I went through this brief thing at the School for Illustrators, and again this left me with nothing but an abiding, not so much contempt, but distaste for the whole business of commercial art which, however, I recognized was the way in which I was going to have to make my living. But I decided the hell with going to school anymore. I'll just do this stuff from now on. So I went to the New School and

studied painting. And took a year or two off and worked with a man named Jake Conoway in Vermont and Maine, studying landscape and marine painting.

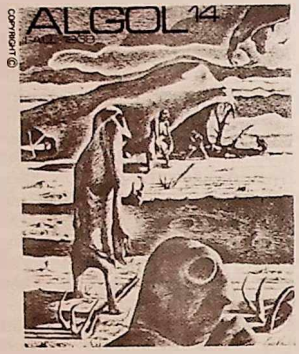
And, as a matter of fact, I broke a six month jinx of not getting one single job, despite the fact that I was hustling around all the time—this was the year that I got out of the army—when I signed up for this school. Almost the day that we had made our plans to leave for Maine, my first book came through, which was *Gulliver's Travels* for World Publishing. I did that up in Maine, the first sizable commercial job I ever did. So, I've always felt that's one way to break a jinx, just clear out and things will start breaking for you.

ALGOL: In one of our previous conversations, you mentioned Ian Ballantine as being an influence and encouragement. Yet, from my own personal knowledge, you actually started getting involved in science fiction before you even started working for Ballantine Books, and if I'm not mistaken, I've seen some black and white drawings that you did as far back as 1944.

POWERS: I mentioned *Gulliver's Travels* —that was a straight book illustration job, and it's something of a classic. Well, somebody at Doubleday saw that when it came out. Remember, I was still up in Vermont painting, and I had left my portfolio there several times, and had talked to the art directors and all that sort of thing with no luck whatsoever, maybe one or two little jobs, nothing to amount to much. When they saw the Gulliver, they got in touch with me and said they had some assignments, so I hot-footed it back to New York. Among the assignments that they gave me, and they threw a lot of stuff at me, in retrospect, to see what I could do, they threw Westerns at me, they threw a lot of mysteries at me, and they threw some of the first SF that Doubleday was starting to do. There was no such thing as a four color cover in those days. The only kind of fiction that would have four color in those days was something they knew was going to be a blockbuster—never SF, obviously. So what we were working with was one or two colors and that, of course, involved very often if not always, a black and white drawing.

As a result of having done a lot of that kind of stuff H. L. Gold at *Galaxy* got in touch with me and said he would be interested in doing some of this stuff. Frankly, from the very beginning I liked doing SF better than mysteries, straight fiction or westerns, because there was just more sense to it. You had a chance to do something that had a little more validity than a boy or girl situation, or somebody aiming a gun at somebody else, or somebody riding a horse. It was something with a little dignity to it. That's the way it appealed to me, anyway.

ALGOL: Where you've been asked point blank what your attitude toward the genre was, I remember you calling SF bushleague stuff, and being generally disdainful of the public who bought it, yet I know you long enough and well enough to know that there are at least a handful of authors you admire. I know that in spite of what you say you actually do enjoy some SF. What is your overview of the field? Who are the authors that you particularly admire? And do you think that there has ever been a great work of SF?



POWERS: The thing I should emphasize right off is that I'm not nearly as well read in SF as I should be. There are any number of people who are much more widely read and who are more familiar, and I really am ashamed to say this, with books that I have done paintings for than I am myself, partly because very often I'll get an assignment without being given the manuscript. They give me a title and the author's name and that's about it. But beyond that, it is true that I have always been a very comprehensive reader. My first impression of SF in the very earliest days when I was given Isaac Asimov's *Pebble in the Sky* to read was that while the ideas were no doubt interesting and very provocative, the level of writing, quite frankly, wasn't up to the level of writing of the best of mystery fiction. Once I had become more familiar with the overall panorama of SF writing, I did learn to respect some of the writers. Bradbury, obviously. Fred Pohl, Fritz Leiber are good writers. When you talk about first rate writers who would be considered first rate in any genre of writing, I would say that among them has to be Ballard. I did covers for several books by Ballard. And the first three quarters of *The Drowned World,* to my way of thinking, is still one of the best pieces of surrealist writing I've ever read. It's really first rate—absolutely first rate.

ALGOL: What is your impression of mainstream writers who've dabbled in the genre? You mentioned that you knew or know Howard Fast.

POWERS: I've met the man and I respect very highly his *Spartacus,* and a couple more of his historical novels. But even a man like Howard Fast, much as I respect some of the things he's done, I even more respect the fact that when he quit the Communist Party it cost him hundreds of thousands of dollars in Russian royalties. That's something that I can respect aside from the quality of his writing. I wouldn't consider him a really first rate writer the way that I'd consider Bernard Malamud. When Malamud's *The Natural* came out in hardbound, I was lucky enough to do the cover for that. And, reading that in manuscript, to put it mildly, is a hell of a different experience from reading any except one or two SF writers. And, I don't think I'm being overly cruel there.

ALGOL: I don't think you are, either. Are there, in your experience, one or two Science Fiction novels that really stand out? You mentioned Ballard's *The Drowned World.*

POWERS: Well, I would say *Childhood's End,* certainly. A lot of this is the nostalgia of an aging illustrator, no doubt, but I remember being very struck with *Childhood's End* when I read that. Sturgeon's *More Than Human.* Can it be that simply it was one of the first things that I read that really struck me and it was an interesting assignment that worked out well and did well for me and all the rest of that? I hope I'm more objective than that. No, I think those two books, and then of course Bradbury's things. There are some writers that I've definitely got a blind spot about. I find Robert Heinlein very difficult to appreciate.

ALGOL: Is it mostly for political viewpoints, or is it the style?

POWERS: No, it's just an opaque style that just doesn't have any real vitality and liveliness to me. It's kind of a dead style. When Fred Pohl was writing with Cyril Kornbluth the two of them did a couple of novels together. I remember those were very amusing things.

ALGOL: I think some of the finer works of someone like Ray Bradbury really are almost impossible to translate into effective painting, and still capture some of the flavor of the content.

POWERS: That very thing is one of the reasons that from the very earliest times I started handling SF, I decided to see if I could work out something that would create an atmosphere without getting into a specific situation in terms of the text. And, of course, a lot of the things that I did were really quite abstract or abstract surrealist. Abstract, certainly in the sense that there was nothing very realistic in terms of a situation either extraterrestrial or terrestrial about them. I felt if I did it correctly, I could communicate the same sense that the author

was communicating above and beyond the story that he was telling. In some of the things, it seems to me that that's the only way you can handle it. If you're dealing with Ballard, for instance, this guy is not too interested in straight narrative writing. What he is interested in is communicating a Kafka-like sense of alienation and frustration and a really paranoid kind of existence on a different plane than the normal plane—below, above, inside, outside, whatever. And when you get a situation like that, it seems to me that you can best handle it in the same way that Yves Tanguy handled similar states of mind in his straight painting. Of course, that gets us to the business of where you go for your sources, and my feeling is that some of the visual idioms that Tanguy dredged up out of his subconscious for the first time, because nobody had used elements like that before him, are very germane to the kind of thing that we're talking about. I used Science Fiction not only as a way to make a living, but also quite frankly to work out a lot of problems that really interested me that I didn't want to get into in terms of my own painting. And, of course, get paid for it. And maybe one out of five or six of these things would turn out to be not too damn bad. They had their own quality, despite the fact that almost all of them were so designed that there was plenty of room for type, which immediately means that 20% can be lopped off without any difficulty at all. As a matter of fact, they're better paintings for it.

ALGOL: I think there really are at least two different kinds of SF, probably many, many more. I prefer to read the type of SF that deals with the philosophical questions of what is man's ultimate identity, his place in the universe, what is human and what's not human. Things of that sort I think are the really profound purposes of SF. Then, there's also another kind of Science Fiction, concerned somewhat with human interaction, but its basic fascination is with the fabulous gadget. That is the main crux of the story, and those are at least for someone like myself, who is a more representational type of illustrator, easier to paint, but personally less satisfying. Are there any of your colleagues that you particularly admire? Now, you must have at least seen and possibly been influenced by N. C. Wyeth's paintings for *The Mysterious Island*, that Scribners published. . .

POWERS: You know, that's kind of interesting. I like N. C. Wyeth's things, I always have. But before I ever saw his illustrations for *Mysterious Island*, I had seen the very early film that was made of it. That's what conditioned my thinking, and I never was all that impressed by N. C. Wyeth's representations, having seen the film. An agent came to me and said that Ian Ballantine, the paperback publisher, is going to be producing Science Fiction and I can get you a lot of work from him if you want me to represent you. And so I told him, fine, go ahead. And that's how the Ballantine thing started.

Now, the first thing that I did for Ian Ballantine was strictly a Chesley Bonestell sort of thing. No bones about it, I had seen a lot of Bonestell and had liked his stuff for exactly the same reasons I had liked the work of this guy at the Museum of Natural History. He was bone honest, he was just really skilled, too, but bone honest—so it seemed to me and so it still does.

If the number of good artists who are painting good SF now were working in the early 50's when Ballantine approached me to do the work, he might not have approached me, he might have approached somebody else, and the competition would have been a hell of a lot stronger than it was. I had the good fortune of having Ian Ballantine who, if he wasn't what I would call an inspiration, certainly at least had the tolerance and the basic recognition of the fact that I was bigger than he was to see that if it ever came to a real dispute, he'd let me do something and see what happened.

After that initial Chesley Bonestell thing, which was quite successful, he didn't insist that I do more Bonestell. He gave me something else to do, it might even have been *Childhood's End*. He let me do what I wanted with some reservations on his part, but they were successful enough across the board so that it inspired him to let me try things that were even a little further out and a little further out than that, and finally wind up doing some things that were, to my way of thinking, quite respectable.

By respectable, I mean things that if Tanguy hadn't already preempted the area in terms of fine painting, would have made fairly decent paintings. They would have deserved a frame. However, I've never deluded myself on that score. Now, Theodore Sturgeon's *Caviar* was—I won't say a brave thing for me because it was a hell of a lot of fun—a brave thing for Ian Ballantine because nobody at that time was putting anything even like that on any kind of a book anyplace and expecting it to sell, and it did sell. The point being that he had courage enough to let me go ahead with that. I don't think that if anybody else's opinion had been involved but Ballantine's it probably would have gotten through. It probably would have been killed right then.

To get to the painters that are doing things that I think are admirable. I would say Paul Lehr, certainly. Among the painters, certainly Vincent DiFate is number 1, 2 and 3 among these guys. Mike Whelan does good things. Dean Ellis has done some good things. Across the board, I'm absolutely not fond of his things, but. And, then Schoenherr, Jack Gaughan, I've seen good things of theirs. I've seen some very amusing things by people who strictly speaking don't do any science fiction except for maybe somebody who accidently gives them an assignment. The point I'm trying to make is that there are so many good people working now in the field where there just weren't when I first came into it. And on the other side of the coin, I would say after a long period of time the better publishing houses, like Bantam, Avon, New American Library, companies like that, might not have been very inspired but at least they weren't printing garbage. Some of the stuff that they're using, it's almost like a throwback to the 40's. I mean some of the stuff is that bad, and that's my definition of bad—the Science Fiction art of the 40's.

So despite the fact that I probably don't have nearly as disenchanted a view of Science Fiction art as I might, I do respect a good deal of the work that I see and consider it much better than the art that was available when I was lucky enough to get in on the ground floor. ■

To be continued next issue.

FRED SABERHAGEN

THE BERSERKER STORY

Time: early summer, 1962. Place: the sweltering (or freezing, it must have been one or the other) Chicago apartment of neowriter Saberhagen, who is laboring over what he considers to be a jim-dandy of a story idea, viz: the construction of a functional, checker-playing computer without any hardware more advanced than a game board (simplified from regular checkers), a few small boxes, and a stock of beads of various colors.

Having got well along with plotting and writing the story, which he has chosen (without thinking about it) to make an adventure set in interstellar space, Saberhagen realizes that he has yet to name, describe, or even begin to think about the deadly menace whose destruction by his clever hero is already scheduled for the penultimate page.

"I know what," says Saberhagen to himself, off the top of his then-ungrayed and crewcut head. And without giving the matter any more conscious deliberation than that he types a new opening paragraph:

> The machine was a vast fortress, containing no life, set by its long-dead masters to destroy anything that lived. It and many others like it were the inheritance of Earth from some war fought between interstellar empires, in some time that could hardly be connected with any Earthly calendar. . .Men called it a berserker. . .

The rest, as someone has said in another context, is history. Or at least it has been going on ever since. Some fifteen years and eighteen stories (if my count is correct) later, readers in Japan, England, Brazil, France, and who knows where have had a chance to read about berserkers. Some of them (and even some editors) are still asking for more. There are now berserkers in computer games, though I believe that in that alternate universe they are still vastly outnumbered by the Klingon forces. What was to have been an ephemeral menace has turned into something approaching a lifelong career.

I still have Fred Pohl's acceptance note for that first berserker story, which he bought and renamed "Fortress Ship," a title I still have not learned to love. The note reads, in part:

> I like the berserker ship in "To Move and Win"[1] very much; I'm not quite as fond of the rest of the story. (The concept of the wild, huge ship seems to promise much more color and drama than the checker game provides.)

In subsequent notes (and in conversation, when Fred and I finally met at a convention) he urged me to write more berserkers, and solemnly assured me that a series of connected stories was the most certain road to fame.

And you know, he was right. Or, anyway, the berserker series has, and has rubbed off on me, a name-recognition potential far greater than anything else that I have ever written, though the series actually makes up less than half my published output of science fiction. That first berserker has brought in many times the $50 earned by its first showing in *Worlds of If*, and new requests for reprinting are still at hand in 1977.

In mathematics there are series that converge and others that diverge. So, I think, it is in story-telling. In a convergent series of the literary type (I had one, I believe, in my trilogy *The Broken Lands*, *The Black Mountains*, and *Changeling Earth*) the writer sooner or later feels increasingly constricted by what he has already put down about his characters and settings. As in real life, choices once made must be lived with. *Not* as in real life, the author retains the prerogative of bailing out of his cornered position in that world, to another world that he already knows; and sooner or later the prerogative is exercised.

The divergent series of stories, on the other hand, is more like the succession of football seasons, or *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman.* One chapter's victories or disasters mean nothing when the next chapter starts.

Sherlock Holmes grew old, converged, and retired, though he had the (in his case, delightful) habit of coming back for a long succession of last bows. How can the berserkers grow old? It's been established that in their secret automated bases they can repair and improve themselves, and add to their numbers by new construction. Fred Pohl, in his editorial capacity, was a little worried upon reading one of the stories ("Stone Place," *If*, March 1965) that I had decided to wipe out the berserkers and wind the series up. No, by then I was already too smart for that. The metal killers came back from near-extinction as briskly as dandelions. Nor are they presently an endangered species.

A few hours ago (as I write this) I mailed off to my agent a new berserker short story, called "The Smile."[2] I'm also working on *Berkerker Man*, a novel which I think may be the best of the family to date. With a whole galaxy to range over, containing scores (at least) of Earth-colonized planets, and an occasional alien race if I need one, I don't feel the least bit crowded. Particularly with several thousand years established as a rough time-frame.

This is not to say that suitable ideas for new stories are always at hand. I believe it works something like the nation's proven reserves of oil; at times there may seem to be no more anywhere, but let a whiff of money stir the air, the metaphorical rod smiteth the rock, and lo, the needed material gusheth forth. Or trickleth, anyway; enough to meet the absolute necessities of the time.

Lack of ideas as a difficulty is peculiar to the series story, of course. About the only difficulty I can think of that is, other than convergence, is really no more than an irritant.

It has to do with background material; the establishing of the story's setting for the reader. For example, in how many different ways (limiting oneself to the English language) is it possible to repeat, restate, or paraphrase that explanation

Continued on page 40

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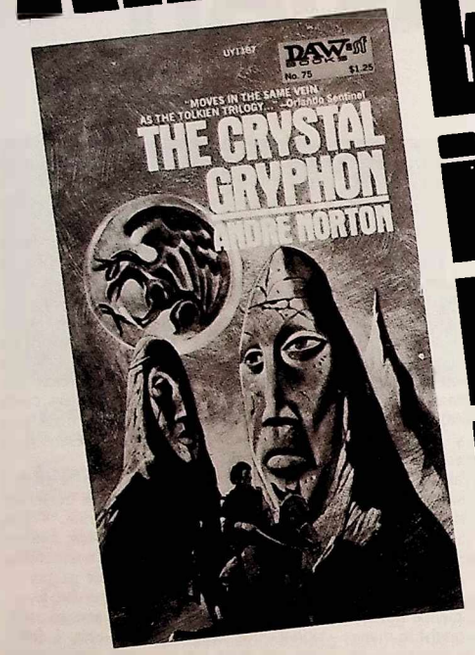

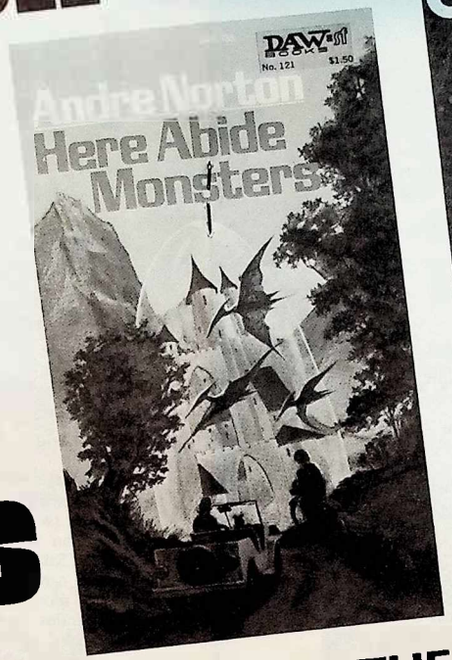

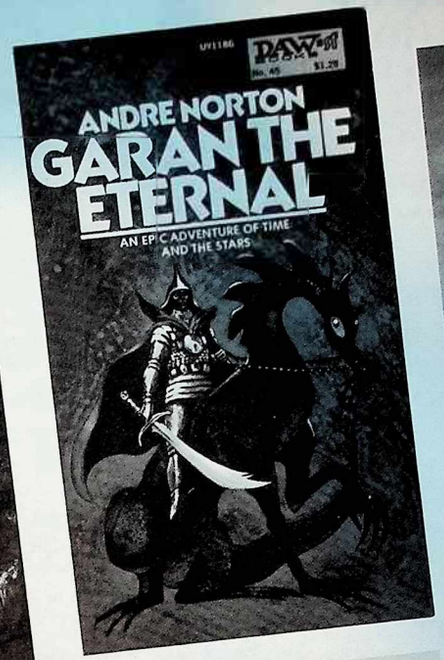

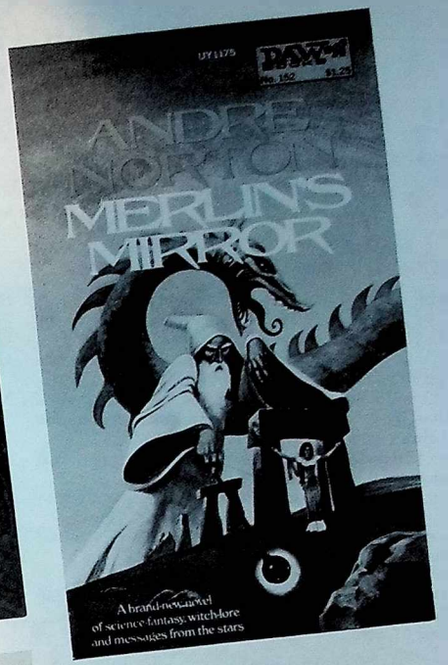

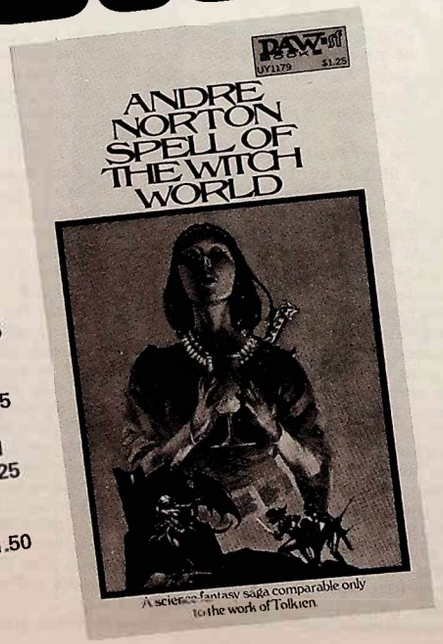

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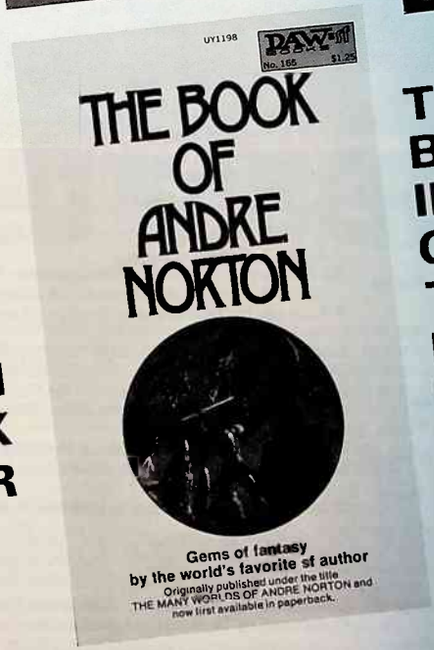

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Science-Fiction Studies

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Subscription per year (3 issues): in USA, $8.00; elsewhere via surface mail, $9.00; overseas via air mail, $12.00. Please specify issue with which subscription is to begin. Single copy, $4.00; via air mail, $5.00. *Payment must be in US funds.*

11, 12, 13 = Volume 4 = Issues for March, July, November 1977

On the Ouster of Stanislaw Lem from the SFWA

Also in #11

Also in #12

Scheduled for #13: The Sociology of Science Fiction

Caveat emptor. *Science-Fiction Studies* has been described by Charlie Brown in *Locus* as a magazine that "makes both *Riverside Quarterly* and *Extrapolation* sound like light reading" with its "super-serious academic articles on SF."

FRED SABERHAGEN

The berserker attack upon the world called St. Gervase had ended some four standard months before the large and luxurious private yacht of the Tyrant Yoritomo appeared amid the ashclouds and rainclouds that still monotonized the planet's newly lifeless sky. From the yacht a silent pair of waspish-looking launches soon began a swift descent, to land on the denuded surface where the planet's capital city had once stood.

The crews disembarking from the launches were armored against hot ash and hot mud and residual radiation. They knew what they were looking for, and in less than a standard hour they had located the vaulted tunnel leading down, from what had been a subbasement of the famed St. Gervase Museum. The tunnel was partially collapsed in places, but still passable, and they followed its steps downward, stumbling here and there on debris fallen from the surface. The battle had not been completely one-sided in its early stages: and scattered amid the wreckage of the once-great city were fragments of berserker troop-landers and of their robotic shock-troops. The unliving metal killers had had to force a landing, to neutralize the defensive field generators, before the bombardment could begin in earnest.

The tunnel terminated in a large vault a hundred meters down. The lights, on an independent power supply, were still working, and the air conditioning was still trying to keep out dust. There were five great statues in the vault, including one in the attached workshop where some conservator or restorer had evidently been treating it. Each one was a priceless masterwork. And scattered in an almost casual litter throughout the shelter were paintings, pottery, small works in bronze and gold and silver, the least a treasure to be envied.

At once the visitors radioed news of their discovery to one who waited, listening eagerly, in the yacht orbiting above. Their report concluded with the observation that someone had evidently been living down here since the attack. Beside the workshop, with its power lamp to keep things going, there was a small room that had served as a repository of the Museum's records. A cot stood in it now, there had been food supplies laid in, and there were other signs of human habitation. Well, it was not too strange that there should have been a few survivors, out of a population of many millions.

The man who had been living alone in the shelter for four months came back to find the landing party going about their work.

"Looters," he remarked, in a voice that seemed to have lost the strength for rage, or even fear. Not armored against

radiation or anything else, he leaned against the terminal doorway of the battered tunnel, a long-haired, unshaven, once-fat man whose frame was now swallowed up in clothes that looked as if they might not have been changed since the attack.

The member of the landing party standing nearest looked back at him silently, and drummed fingers on the butt of a holstered handgun, considering. The who had just arrived threw down the pieces of metallic junk he had brought with him, conveying in the gesture his contempt.

The handgun was out of the holster, but before it was leveled, intervention from the leader of the landing party came in the form of a sharp gesture. Without taking his eyes off the man in the doorway, the leader at once reopened communication with the large ship waiting above.

"Your Mightiness, we have a survivor here," he informed the round face that soon appeared upon the small portable wallscreen. "I believe it is the sculptor Antonio Nobrega."

"Let me see him at once, bring him before the screen." The voice of His Mightiness was inimitable and terrible, and no less terrible, somehow, because he always sounded short of breath. "Yes, you are right, although he is much changed. Nobrega, how fortunate for us both! This is indeed another important find."

"I knew you would be coming to St. Gervase now," Nobrega told the screen, in his empty voice. "Like a disease germ settling in a mangled body. Like some great fat cancer virus. Did you bring along your woman, to take charge of our Culture?"

One of the men beside the sculptor knocked him down. A breathless little snarl came from the screen at this, and Nobrega was quickly helped back to his feet, then put into a chair.

"He is an artist, my faithful ones," the screen-voice chided. "We must not expect him to have any sense of the fitness of things outside his art. No. We must get the maestro here some radiation treatment, and then bring him along with us to the Palace, and he will live and work there as happily, or unhappily, as elsewhere."

"Oh no," said the artist from his chair, more faintly than before. "My work is done."

"Pish-posh. You'll see."

"I knew you were coming. . ."

"Oh?" The small voice from the screen was humoring him. "And how did you know that?"

"I heard. . .when our fleet was still defending the approaches to the system, my daughter was out there with it. Through her , before she died, I heard how you brought your own fleet in-system, to watch what was going to happen, to judge our strength, our chance of resisting the berserkers. I heard how your force vanished when they came. I said then that you'd be back, to loot the things you could never get at in any other way."

Nobrega was quiet for a moment, then lunged from his chair—or made the best attempt at lunging that he could. He grabbed up a long metal sculptor's tool and drew it back to swing at *Winged Truth Rising*, a marble Poniatowski eleven centuries old. "Before I'll see you take this—"

Before he could knock a chip of marble loose, he was overpowered, and put into restraint.

When they approached him again an hour later, to take him up to the yacht for medical examination and treatment, they found him already dead. Autopsy on the spot discovered several kinds of slow and gentle poison. Nobrega might have taken some deliberately. Or he might have been finished by something the berserkers had left behind, to ensure that there would be no survivors, as they moved to carry out their programmed task of eradicating all life from the Galaxy.

On his voyage home from St. Gervase, and for several months thereafter, Yoritomo was prevented by pressing business from really inspecting his new treasures. By then the five great statues had been installed, to good esthetic advantage, in the deepest, largest, and best-protected gallery of the Palace. Lesser collections had been evicted to make room and visual space for *Winged Truth Rising;* Lazamon's *Laughing (or Raging) Bacchus; The Last Provovation*, by Sarapion; Lazienki's *Twisting Room;* and *Remembrance of Past Wrongs*, by Prajapati.

It chanced that at this time, the Lady Yoritomo was at the Palace too. Her duties as Cultural Leader of the People, and High Overseer of Education for the four tributary planets, kept her on the move, and it often happened that she and her Lord did not see each other for a month or longer at a time.

The two of them trusted each other more than they trusted anyone else. Today they sat alone in the great gallery and sipped tea, and spoke of business.

The Lady was trying to promote her latest theory, which was that love for the ruling pair might be implanted genetically in the next generation of people on the tributary worlds. Several experimental projects had already begun. So far these had achieved little but severe mental retardation in the subjects, but there were plenty of new subjects and she was not discouraged.

The Lord spoke mainly of his own plan, which was to form a more explicit working arrangement with the berserkers. In this scheme the Yoritomos would furnish the killer machines with human lives they did not need, and planets hard to defend, in exchange for choice works of art and, of course, immunity from personal attack. The plan had many attractive features, but the Lord had to admit that the difficulty of opening negotiations with berserkers, let alone establishing any degree of mutual trust, made it somewhat impractical.

When a pause came in the conversation, Yoritomo had the banal thought that he and his wife had little to talk about anymore, outside of business. With a word to her, he rose from the alcove where they had been sitting, and walked to the far end of the gallery of statues to replenish his tea pot. For esthetic reasons he refused to allow robots in here; nor did he want human servitors around while this private discussion was in progress. Also, he thought, as he retraced his steps, the Lady could not help but be flattered, and won toward his own position in a certain matter where they disagreed, when she was served personally by the hands of one so mighty. . .

He rounded the great metal flank of *The Last Provocation* and came to a dumb halt, in shocked surprise so great that for a moment his facial expression did not even alter. Half a minute ago he had left her vivacious and thoughtful and full of graceful energy. She was still in the same place, on the settee, but slumped over sideways now, one arm extended with its slender, jeweled fingers twitching upon the rich brown carpet. The Lady's hair was wildly disarranged; and small wonder, he thought madly, for her *head* had been twisted almost completely around, so her dead eyes now looked over one bare shoulder almost straight at Yoritomo. Upon her shoulder and her cheek were bruised discolorations. . .

He spun around at last, dropping the fragile masterpiece that held his tea. His concealed weapon was half-drawn before it was smashed out of his grip. He had one look at death, serenely towering above him. He had not quite time enough to shriek, before the next blow fell.

The wind had not rested in the hours since Ritwan's arrival, and with an endless howl it drove the restless land before it. He could quite easily believe that in a few years the great pit left by the destruction of the old Yoritomo Palace had been completely filled. The latest dig had ended only yesterday, and already the archaeologists' fresh pits were beginning to be reoccupied by sand.

"They were actually more pirates

than anything else," Iselin, the chief archaeologist, was saying. "At the peak of their power two hundred years ago they ruled four systems. Ruled them from here, though there's not much showing on the surface now but this old sandpile."

"Ozymandias," Ritwan murmured.

"What?"

"An ancient poem." He pushed back sandy hair from his forehead with a thin, nervous hand. "I wish I'd got here in time to see the statues before you crated them and stowed them on your ship. You can imagine I came as fast as I could from Sirgol, when I heard there was a dig in progress here."

"Well." Iselin folded her plump arms and frowned, then smiled, a white flash in a dark Indian face. "Why don't you ride with us back to Esteel system? I really can't open the crates for anything until we get there. Not under the complicated rules of procedure we're stuck with on these jointly sponsored digs."

"My ship does have a good autopilot."

"Then set it to follow ours, and hop aboard. When we unpack on Esteel you can be among the first to look your fill. Meanwhile we can talk. I wish you'd been with us all along, we've missed having a really first rate art historian."

"All right, I'll come." They offered each other enthusiastic smiles. "It's true, then, you really found most of the old St. Gervase collection intact?"

"I don't know that we can claim that. But there's certainly a lot."

"Just lying undisturbed here, for about two centuries."

"Well, as I say, this was the Yoritomo's safe port. But it looks like no more than a few thousand people ever lived on this world, at any one time. And no one at all has lived here for a long time now. Some intrigue or other evidently started among the Tyrant's lieutenants—no one's ever learned exactly how or why it started, but the thieves fell out. There was fighting, the Palace destroyed, the rulers themselves killed, and the whole thing collapsed. None of the intriguers had the ability to keep it going, I suppose, with the so-called Lord and Lady gone."

"Just when was that?"

Iselin named a date.

"The same year St. Gervase fell. That fits. The Yoritomos could have gone there after the berserkers left, and looted at their leisure. . .that would fit with their character, wouldn't it?"

"I'm afraid so. . .you see, the more I learned of them, the more I felt sure that they must have had a deeper, more secret shelter than any that was turned up in the early digs a century ago. The thing is, the people who dug here then found so much loot they were convinced they'd found it all."

Ritwan was watching the pits fill slowly in.

Iselin gave his arm a friendly shake. "And—did I tell you? We found two skeletons, I think of the Yoritomos themselves. Lavishly dressed in the midst of their greatest treasures. Lady died of a broken neck, and the man of multiple. . ."

The wind was howling still, when the two ships lifted off.

Aboard ship on the way to Esteel, things were relaxed and pleasant, if just a trifle cramped. With Ritwan along, they were six on board, and had to fit three to a cabin in narrow bunks. It was partially the wealth of the find that crowded them, of course. There were treasures almost beyond imagining stowed in plastic cratings almost everywhere one looked. The voyagers could expect a good deal of leisure time en route to marvel at it all. Propulsion and guidance and life-support were taken care of by machinery, with just an occasional careful human glance by way of circumspection. People in this particular portion of the inhabited Galaxy traveled now, as they had two hundred years before, in relative security from berserker attack. And now there were no human pirates.

Lashed in place in the central cargo bay stood the five great, muffled forms from which Ritwan particularly yearned to tear the pads and sheeting. But he made himself be patient. On the first day out he joined the others in the cargo bay, where they watched and listened to some of the old recordings found in the lower ruins of the Yoritomo Palace. There were data stored on tapes, in crystal cubes, around old permafrozen circuit rings. And much of the information was in the form of messages recorded by the Tyrant himself.

"The Gods alone know why he recorded this one," sighed Oshogbo. She was chief archivist of a large Esteel museum, one of the expedition's sponsoring institutions. "Listen to this. Look at him. He's ordering a ship to stand by and be boarded, or face destruction."

"The ham actor in him, maybe," offered Chi-nan, who on planet had been assistant digger for the expedition, but in space became its captain. "He needed to study his delivery."

"Every one of his ships could carry the recording," suggested Klyuchevski, expert excavator. "So their victims wouldn't know if the Tyrant himself were present or not—I'm not sure how much difference it would make."

"Let's try another," said Granton, chief record-keeper and general assistant.

Within the next hour they sampled recordings in which Yoritomo: (1) ordered his subordinates to stop squabbling over slaves and concubines; (2) pleaded his case, to the Interworlds Government, as that of a man unjustly maligned, the representative of a persecuted people; (3) conducted a video tour, for some supposed audience whose identity was never made clear, of the most breathtaking parts of his vast collection of art. . .

"Wait!" Ritwan broke in. "What was that bit? Would you run that last part once more?"

The Tyrant's asthmatic voice repeated: ". . .grim story of how these magnificent statues happened to be saved. Our fleet had made every effort but still arrived too late to be of any help to the heroic defenders of St. Gervase. For many days we searched in vain for survivors; we found just one. And this man's identity made the whole situation especially poignant to me, for it was the sculptor Antonio Nobrega. Sadly, our help had come too late, and he shortly succumbed to the berserker poisons. I hope that the day will come soon, when all governments will heed my repeated urgings, to prosecute a war to the finish against these scourges of. . ."

"So!" Ritwan looked pleased, a man who had just had an old puzzle solved for him. "That's where Nobrega died, then. We've thought for some time it was likely—most of his family was there—but we had no hard evidence before."

"He was the famous forger, wasn't he?" asked Granton.

"Yes. A really good artist in his own right, though. The shady side of his work has somewhat overshadowed the rest." Ritwan allowed time for the few small groans earned by the pun, and went on: "I'd hate to accept the old Tyrant's word on anything. But I suppose he'd have no reason to lie about Nobrega."

Iselin was looking at her wrist. "Lunch time for me. Maybe the rest of you want to spend all day in here."

"I can resist recordings." Ritwan got up to accompany her. "Now, if you were opening up the crates—"

"No chance, friend. But I can show you the holograms—didn't I mention that?"

"You didn't!"

Oshogbo called after them: "Here's the Lord and Lady both, on this one—"

They did not stop. Chi-nan came out with them, leaving three people still in the cargo bay.

In the small ship's lounge, the three who had left set up lunch with a floor show.

"This is really decadence. Pea soup with ham, and—what have we here? Lazienki. Marvelous!"

The subtle grays and reds of *Twisting Room* (was it the human heart?) came into existence, projected by hidden devices in the corners of the lounge, and

filling up the center. Iselin with a gesture made the full-size image rotate slowly.

"Captain?" the intercom asked hoarsely, breaking in.

"I knew it—just sit down, and—"

"I think we have some kind of cargo problem here." It sounded like Granton's voice, perturbed. "Something seems to be breaking up, or. . .Iselin, you'd better come too, and take a look at your. . ."

A pause, with background smashing noises. Then incoherent speech, in mixed voices, ending in a hoarse cry.

Chi-nan was already gone. Ritwan, sprinting, just kept in sight of Iselin's back going around corners. Then she stopped so suddenly that he almost ran into her.

The doorway to the cargo hold, left wide open when they came out of it a few minutes before, was now sealed tightly by a massive sliding door, a safety door designed to isolate compartments in case of emergencies like fire or rupture of the hull.

On the deck just outside the door, a human figure sprawled. Iselin and Chi-nan were already crouched over it; as Ritwan bent over them, a not-intrinsically-unpleasant smell of scorched meat reached his nostrils.

"Help me lift her. . .careful. . .sickbay's that way."

Ritwan helped Iselin. Chi-nan sprang to his feet, looked at an indicator beside the heavy door, and momentarily rested a hand on its flat surface.

"Something burning in there," he commented tersely, and then came along with the others on the quick hustle to sickbay. At his touch the small door opened for them, lights springing on inside.

"What's in our cargo that's not fireproofed?" Iselin demanded, as if all this were some personal insult hurled her way by Fate.

Dialogue broke off for a while. The burn-tank, hissing brim-full twenty seconds after the proper studs were punched, received Oshogbo's scorched dead weight, clothes and all, and went to work upon her with a steady sloshing. Then, while Iselin stayed in sickbay, Ritwan followed Chi-nan on another scrambling run, back to the small bridge. There the captain threw himself into an acceleration chair and laid swift hands on his controls, demanding an accounting from his ship.

In a moment he had switched his master intercom to show conditions inside the cargo bay, where two people were still unaccounted for. On the deck in there lay something clothed, a bundle-of-old-rags sort of something. In the remaining moment of clear vision before the cargo bay pickup went dead, Ritwan and Chi-nan both glimpsed a towering, moving shape.

The captain stared for a moment at the gray noise which came next, then switched to sickbay. Iselin appeared at once.

"How's she doing?" Chi-nan demanded.

"Signs are stabilizing. She's got a crack in the back of her skull as well as the burns on her torso, the printout says. As if something heavy had hit her in the head."

"Maybe the door clipped her, sliding closed, just as she got out." The men in the control room could see into the tank, and the captain raised his voice. "Oshy, can you answer me? What happened to Granton and Klu?"

The back of Oshogbo's neck was cradled on a rest of ivory plastic. Her body shook and shimmied lightly, vibrating with the dark liquid, as if she might be enjoying her swim. Here and there burnt shreds of clothing were now drifting free. She looked around and seemed to be trying to locate Chi-nan's voice. Then she spoke: "It. . .grabbed them. I . . .ran."

"What grabbed them? Are they still alive?"

"Granton's head came. . .it pulled off his head. I got out. Something hit. . ." The young woman's eyes rolled, her voice faded.

Iselin's face came into view again. "She's out of it, I think the medic just put her to sleep. Should I try to get it to wake her again?"

"Not necessary." The captain sounded shaken. "I think we must assume the others are finished. I'm not going to open that door, anyway, until I know more about our problem."

Ritwan asked: "Can we put down on some planet quickly?"

"Not one where we can get help," the captain told him over one shoulder. "There's no help closer than Esteel. Three or four days."

The three of them quickly talked over the problem, agreeing on what they knew. Two people were sure that they had seen, on intercom, something large moving about inside the cargo bay.

"And," Iselin concluded, "our surviving first-hand witness says that 'it' tore off someone's head."

"Sounds like a berserker," Ritwan said impulsively. "Or could it possibly be some animal—? Anyway, how could anything that big have been hiding in there?"

"An animal's impossible," Chi-nan told him flatly. "And you should have seen how we packed that space, how carefully we checked to see if we were wasting any room. The only place anyone or anything *could* have hidden was inside one of those statuary crates."

Iselin added: "And I certainly checked out every one of them. We formed them to fit closely around the statues, and they couldn't have contained anything else of any size. What's that noise?"

The men in the control room could hear it too, a muffled, rhythmic banging, unnatural for any space ship that Ritwan had things suddenly go right, as if of themselves, will know what I mean.

The Berserker Story
Continued from page 33.

that *The machine was a vast fortress, containing no life,* et cetera? You can't leave the background out, or new readers won't know what is going on, and some of them will care. You can't keep sticking in the same sentences and paragraphs, or old readers (not to mention editors) may have the sensation of dropping their money in a too-familiar turnstile. So the writer, the one being paid here to do some work, has to keep on making the same old beloved background look fresh each time it is revisited. Of course when series stories are gathered into a book, even varied discriptions of the same thing quickly become too numerous, and background material so carefully created for the individual stories must be taken out. No more, as I said, than an irritant.

To return to origins. The idea of automated war machines that no one can turn off was original with me, in the sense that at the moment I began to use it I was not aware that anyone else had done so. There seems to be no doubt that I was wrong. I stand ready to be corrected, not having the evidence before me, but I believe Sturgeon's "There Is No Defense" is an example of an earlier use, dating from 1948. Others have used the same basic idea since I began, and others will use it in times to come.

The point I want to make, though, is that this idea fit me, worked well for me, almost became identified with me, precisely *because* it came out of the bottom of my subconscious and through the top of my head. Writers who have

To repeat another bit of advice, this one, as I recall, from Damon Knight: Find something that you do well, and stick with it, or at least come back to it. For myself, I seem to do best with the far, far out; with ungodly and unlikely worlds and monsters; robot killers, the demons of *Changeling Earth*, sympathetic vampires. (My own feeling is that *The Dracula Tape* may be my own best book. *Publishers' Weekly* liked it. You've never seen it in a bookstore? Neither have I. Another story.) ■

1. How's *that* for a title?

2. Somewhere, someday, you may see it in print as "Fortress Face."

had ever ridden. He now, for some reason, suddenly thought of what kind of people they had been whose Palace had provided this mysterious cargo; and for the first time since the trouble had started he began to feel real fear.

He put a hand on the other man's shoulder. "Chi-nan—what exactly did we see on the intercom screen?"

The captain thought before answering. "Something big, taller than a man, anyway. And moving by itself. Right?"

"Yes, and I'd say it was dark. . .beyond that, I don't know."

"I would have called it light-colored." The muffled pounding sounds had grown a little steadier, faster, louder. "So, do you think one of our statues has come alive on us?"

Iselin's voice from sickbay offered: "I think 'alive' is definitely the wrong word."

Ritwan asked: "How many of the statues had movable joints?" *Twisting Room,* which he had seen in hologram, had not. But articulated sculpture had been common enough a few centuries earlier.

"Two did," said Iselin.

"I looked at all the statues closely," Chi-nan protested. "Iselin, you did too. We all did, naturally. And they were genuine."

"We never checked inside them, for controls, power supplies, robotic brains. Did we?"

"Of course not. There was no reason."

Ritwan persisted: "So it is a berserker. It can't be anything else. And it waited until now to attack, because it wants to be sure to get the ship."

Chi-nan pounded his chair-arm with a flat hand. "No! I can't buy that. Do you think that emergency door would stop a berserker? We'd all be dead now, and it would have the ship. And you're saying it's a berserker that looks just like a masterpiece by a great artist, enough alike to fool experts; and that it stayed buried there for two hundred years without digging itself out; and that—"

"Nobrega," Ritwan interrupted suddenly.

"What?"

"Nobrega. . .he died on St. Gervase, we don't know just how. He had every reason to hate the Yoritomos. Most probably he met one or both of them at the St. Gervase museum, after the attack, while they were doing what they called their collecting.

"You said Nobrega was a great forger. Correct. A good engineer, too. You also said that no one knows exactly how the Yoritomos came to die, only that their deaths were violent. And occurred among these very statues."

The other two, one on screen and one at hand, were very quiet, watching him.

"Suppose," Ritwan went on, "Nobrega knew somehow that the looters would be coming, and he had the time and the means to concoct something special for them. Take a statue with movable limbs, and build in a power-lamp, sensors, controls—a heat-projector, maybe, as a weapon. And then add the electronic brain from some small berserker unit."

Chi-nan audibly sucked in his breath.

"There might easily have been some of those lying around on St. Gervase, after the attack. Everyone agrees it was a fierce defense."

"I'm debating with myself," said Chi-nan, "whether we should all pile into the lifeboat, and head for your ship, Ritwan. It's small, as you say, but I suppose we'd fit in in a pinch."

"There's no real sickbay."

"Oh." They all looked at the face of the young woman in the tank, unconscious now, dark hair dancing round it upon the surface of the healing fluid.

"Anyway," the captain resumed, "I'm not sure it couldn't take over the controls here, catch us, ram us somehow. Maybe, as you think, it's not a real berserker. But it seems to be too close to the real thing to just turn over our ship to it. We're going to have to stay and fight."

"Bravo," said Iselin. "But with what? It seems to me we stowed away our small arms in the cargo bay somewhere."

"We did. Let's hope Nobrega didn't leave it brains enough to look for them, and it just keeps banging on that door. Meanwhile, let's check what digging equipment we can get at."

Iselin decided it was pointless for her to remain in sickbay, and came to help them, leaving the intercom channel open so they could look in on Oshogbo from time to time.

"That door to the cargo bay is denting and bulging, boys," she told them as she ducked into the cramped storage space beneath the lounge where they were rummaging. "Let's get something organized in the way of weapons."

Ritwan grunted, dragging out a long, thick-bodied tool, evidently containing its own power supply. "What's this, an autohammer? Looks like it would do a job."

"Sure," said Chi-nan. "If you get within arm's length. We'll save that for when we're really desperate."

A minute later, digging through boxes of electrical-looking devices strange to Ritwan, the captain murmured: "If he went to all the trouble of forging an old master he must have had good reason. Well, it'd be the one thing the Yoritomos might accept at face value. Take it right onto their ship, into their private rooms. He must have been out to get the Lord and Lady both."

"I guess that was it. I suppose just putting a simple bomb in the statue wouldn't have been sure enough, or selective enough."

"Also it might have had to pass some machines that sniff out explosives, before it got into the inner. . .Ritwan! When that thing attacked, just now, what recording were they listening to in the cargo bay?"

Ritwan stopped in the middle of opening another box. "Oshogbo called it out to us as we were leaving. You're right, one with both the Yoritomos on it. Nobrega must have set his creation to be triggered by their voices, heard together."

"How it's supposed to be turned off, is what I'd like to know."

"It did turn off, for some reason, didn't it? And lay there for two centuries. Probably Nobrega didn't foresee that the statue might survive long enough for the cycle to be able to repeat. Maybe if we just hold out a little longer, it'll turn itself off again."

Patient and regular as a clock, the muffled battering sounded on.

"Can't depend on that, I'm afraid." Chi-nan kicked away the last crate to be searched. "Well, this seems to be the extent of the hardware we have for putting together weapons. It looks like whatever we use is going to have to be electrical. I think we can rig up something to electrocute—if that's the right word—or fry, or melt, the enemy. We've got to know first, though, just which of those statues is the one we're fighting. There are only two possible mobile ones, which narrows it down. But still."

"*Laughing Bacchus,*" Iselin supplied. "And *Remembrance of Past Wrongs.*"

"The first is basically steel. We can set up an induction field strong enough to melt it down, I think. A hundred kilos or so of molten iron in the middle of the deck may be hard to deal with, but not as hard as what we've got now. But the other statue, or anyway its outer structure, is some kind of very hard and tough ceramic. That one will need something like a lightning bolt to knock it out." A horrible thought seemed to strike Chi-nan all at once. "You don't suppose there could be *two*—?"

Ritwan gestured reassurance. "I think Nobrega would have put all his time and effort into perfecting one."

"So," said Iselin, "it all comes down to knowing which one he forged, and which is really genuine. The one he worked on must be forged; even if he'd started with a real masterpiece to build his killing device, by the time he got everything implanted the surface would have to be almost totally reconstructed."

"So I'm going up to the lounge," the art historian replied, "and see those holograms. If we're lucky I'll be able to spot it."

Iselin came with him, muttering: "All you have to do, friend, is detect a for-

gery that got past Yoritomo and *his* experts. . .maybe we'd better think of something else."

In the lounge the holograms of the two statues were soon displayed full size, side by side and slowly rotating. Both were tall, roughly humanoid figures, and both in their own ways were smiling.

A minute and a half had passed when Ritwan said, decisively: "This one's the forgery. Build your lightning device."

Before the emergency door at last gave way under that mindless punch-press pounding, the electrical equipment had been assembled and moved into place. On either side of the doorway Chi-nan and Iselin crouched, manning their switches. Ritwan (counted the most expendable in combat) stood in plain view opposite the crumpling door, garbed in a heat-insulating spacesuit and clutching the heavy autohammer to his chest.

The final failure of the door was sudden. One moment it remained in place, masking what lay beyond; next moment, it had been torn away. For a long second of the new silence, the last work of Antonio Nobrega stood clearly visible, bone-white in the glare of lamps on every side, against the blackened ruin of what had been the cargo bay.

Ritwan raised the hammer, which suddenly felt no heavier than a micro-probe. For a moment he knew what people felt, who face the true berserker foe in combat.

The tall thing took a step toward him, serenely smiling. And the blue-white blast came at it from the side, faster than any mere matter could be made to dodge.

A couple of hours later, all the most urgent damage-control measures had been taken; two dead bodies had been packed for preservation, with some real reverence if without gestures; and the pieces of Nobrega's work, torn asunder by the current that the ceramic would not peacefully admit, had cooled enough to handle.

Ritwan had promised to show the others how he had known the forgery; and now he came up with the fragment he was looking for. "This," he said.

"The mouth?"

"The smile. If you've looked at as much Federation era art as I have, the incongruity is obvious. The smile's all wrong for Prajapati's period. It's evil, cunning—when the face was intact you could see it plainly. Gloating. Calm and malevolent at the same time."

Iselin asked: "But Nobrega himself didn't see that? Or Yoritomo?"

"For the period *they* lived in, the smile's just fine, artistically speaking. They couldn't step forward or backward two hundred years and get a better perspective. I suppose revenge is normal in any century, but tastes in art are changeable."

Chi-nan said: "I thought perhaps the subject or the title gave you some clue."

"*Remembrance of Past Wrongs*—no, Prajapati did actually do something very similar in subject, as I recall. As I say, I suppose revenge knows no cultural or temporal boundaries."

Normal in any century. Oshogbo, watching via intercom from the numbing burn-treatment bath, shivered and closed her eyes. *No boundaries.* ■

Frederik POHL POHLEMIC:

THE BIGNESS OF BIG

When I talked last column about how big, and therefore complex, science fiction was getting, I got gently chided by one or two people for forgetting that for a lot of writers it isn't big at all. I didn't really forget that, even if I didn't stress it; what I was saying was that the corrupting effects of bigness were affecting a lot of writers, even some not particularly successful ones. But I also got called up sharply by a couple of pen-friends who said I had to be out of my head. Where was the bigness? SF was, and remains, they said, a cottage industry. Had not Harlan Ellison, Bob Silverberg and Barry Malzberg all announce with great passion that the rewards were far too low to justify their continued presence? (—in Harlan's case, not once but roughly every time the moon is full.)

It isn't altogether fair to lump them together. They are quite different people, and they are not all saying quite the same thing. But there are some points in common. All three of them protest that the SF field is a ghetto, and that they are imprisoned in it and denied thereby the kind of audience they might otherwise get. All three have announced they want no more of us. These are people whom I like and respect. I am not wholly delighted by the fact that they choose to piss in the well I drink from on the way out, but everybody has his own way of dealing with this truculent and demanding world, and if that's what they want to do then let the departing brothers go in peace.

However. What exactly are the dimensions of this ghetto? Should SFWA start issuing tin cups to its members? Let's put some numbers into the argument. Then all of us can judge for ourselves just how bad things are.

I'll start with the publisher I know best, Bantam Books. In April 1977 Bantam released a list of its best-selling titles of all time, 1,000,000 copies and over. More than a dozen of them were science fiction, as follows:

Alas, Babylon . . . . . Pat Frank
Brave New World. . . . . .Aldous Huxley
A Canticle for Liebowitz. . . . . Walter M. Miller, Jr.
Dandelion Wine. . . . . Ray Bradbury
Fantastic Voyage. . . . . Isaac Asimov
Flowers for Algernon . . . . Daniel Keyes
Golden Apples of the Sun . . . . . Ray Bradbury
The Illustrated Man . . . . Ray Bradbury
The Martian Chronicles. . Ray Bradbury
Medicine for Melancholy. Ray Bradbury
Star Trek I. . . . . James Blish
Star Trek II . . . . . James Blish
Stories from the Twilight Zone . . . . . Rod Serling
The Terminal Man. . Michael Chrichton

This is not quite a complete list. I've left off one or two arguable titles; also, there are a number not yet on the list whose velocity of sale is such that they will surely join it rather soon. (And the numbers are not merely a million or so. Three of the titles have sold more than two million copies, and of those one is over *four* million.)

Of course, one might argue about that list: Why, look how many of them are by people like Pat Frank and Aldous Huxley, not really SF writers at all! The statement is true enough. But what kind of an argument is it to say that science fiction is too limited, when the evidence is that writers from outside SF invade our field because it offers them something they can't get in the mainstream?

The list is particularly interesting in the light of Bantam's history. Bantam is, of course, big business. It sells a lot of copies of a lot of books. But its relationship with science fiction has been, over the years, sketchy. This is curious, because it was almost the first major paperback publisher to get its feet wet with SF, back around 1950 when Ian Ballantine was running the place, with Judy Merril's anthology *Shot in the Dark*. Then it backed off. For a long time it did little or no SF (a condition I have been trying to remedy for the past couple of years, as their SF editor).

For this reason, I doubt that Bantam's list is materially more impressive than that of other American paperback houses. We know from public sources that there are titles by Frank Herbert and Robert A. Heinlein that are in the million-copy range, and there are quite a few others that I am quite sure are up there too. But as neither the authors nor the publishers have said so in public I won't either.

A million copies of a book is a hell of a lot of books. It means quite a lot of money to the author. How much, of course, depends on many factors, including how shrewd a contract he was able to negotiate; but the median earnings figure of dollar returns to the writer for the best-selling science-fiction titles is well into six figures, and there are at least fifty books that fit that category.

The Space Merchants is in there. So are the three volumes of Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* series. Joe Haldeman's new one went for a hundred-thousand-dollar *advance* on the American paperback rights alone in recent bidding; no doubt a big chunk of that goes to the hard-cover publisher, but when you add in the hard-cover royalties, and all the foreign rights not included in the bid, it can't be far off either. And these are only the numbers that come from solid sources, neither gossip nor confidential. They don't include such towering pure-fantasy success stories as Tolkien or *Watership Down*, nor have my guesses about earnings included anything for film or TV (which have in some cases meant a *hell* of a lot of subsidiary rights income). Anyone in the trade can confirm most of the above, and probably add a lot to the list. What's more, there is bidding now going on for a dozen new books, some of them not even written yet, one or two not even yet firmly thought out by their writers, which is likely to put them in the same range.

I did a little arithmetic the other day. I can't guarantee its accuracy. Some of

it is based on firm data, some is a probabilistic estimate. And a lot of it is an informed guess, and very possibly in some cases an ill-informed guess. But, for what it's worth, what the bottom line comes to, as an estimate of the total amount for publication rights to be paid to science-fiction writers in the calendar year 1977, is something like ten million dollars, give or a take a couple million. That isn't General Motors money, but it ain't chopped chicken liver either. If it were evenly divided among the members of SFWA, it would give each of them an annual writing income of over $20,000, or about what the federal statisticians have just told us is the "moderate comfort level" for a family of four.

Well, it isn't like that, of course. For one thing, it doesn't all go to SFWA members (though the biggest part of it does). For another, it surely is not evenly divided. But there are quite a few people who have switched from Pear Ripple to Chateau LaFitte over the past few years, and what pays their bar bills is science fiction.

Now, what I have been talking about exclusively so far in this column is money, and of course that is not the wholeness of the thing. No writer writes for money alone, and anyone who says he does is a liar. (Or, to be more charitable, at least needs a few hours on the couch to get in touch with his own head.) Particularly, anyone who says he writes science fiction for money alone is fooling somebody, either us or himself, because it is clear that you can get a lot more money for the same skills in some less demanding line of work. There are some very good writers who never made much of a success in science fiction. John Jakes, now one of America's most successful novelists with his Bicentennial series. John Toland, with NBAs and Pulitzers to show as the rewards of his conversion to non-fiction. Several top mystery novelists. Arguably even a playwright like Tennessee Williams, although his first story was properly in *Weird Tales* rather than a science fiction magazine.

But the money is only one reward of writing science fiction. It isn't bad, but the others are even better. Shall I name some of the others? I'll try:

The knowledge that you are doing something intrinsically worth doing.

The knowledge that you are doing something that most people can't even fully appreciate, much less do.

The audience—quirky, contumacious and various, but collectively about the most rewarding literary audience I know.

It is my personal opinion that anyone who is successful at writing science fiction and still is miserable with his lot probably just has never acquired the skill of contentment at all. Oh, sure, it would be nice to have more, or different, or finer. But taking the bitter with the better, as Jane Ace used to say, who is there to envy?

Now, having said all this, there is one thing that remains to be said. And that is that the foregoing, while true, is probably not relevant. You cannot make someone contented by constructing a syllogism of contentment.

All writers are discontented. It is what motivates them. If they weren't discontented, they couldn't function as writers. If you can satisfy yourself with the first sentence that appears out of your typewriter, there is no way for you to go on to write a better one. The inside of a writer is hot, sweaty, gloomily lit with dark-red flame, raucous with cries of pain and anger and churned with confusion. Writing is a kind of therapy. If we didn't write most of us would go fair up the wall.

Everybody's inside is a lot like that. Most people keep it tightly sealed. Writers can't. A writer has to let himself reach down into that stormy sewer to feel what is there to write well at all. He can't wall it off—or if he does, he writes badly, and knows that he is writing badly, and that is a separate and maybe a worse kind of pain.

I sat with Harlan and Joe Haldeman at a writers' workshop in Ohio last fall, and someone asked, "What does it feel like to be a writer?" And all of us, without rehearsal, said almost in unison, "It hurts."

It does hurt. But it's worth it. ■

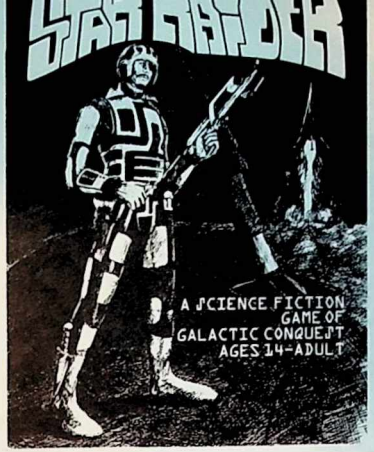
—Frederik Pohl

RAP SESSION

Writing this column is a lot like giving a lecture to an audience of strangers. except that the spotlight's pretty bright and, squint as I might, I can't see your faces. The best thing about any lecture is the rap session after it. So let's rap. If you have any questions, comments, viewpoints or arguments, on what I've said or, what the hell, anything else relevant to SF, please send them to me:

F. Pohl
ALGOL
386 West Front Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

The reason for putting "ALGOL" in the address is so that I won't mix your letters up with the general run of correspondence. But don't send anything else for ALGOL to me—*please!* It will get lost.



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LUPOFF'S BOOK WEEK

RICHARD LUPOFF

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

The American Booksellers Association convened in San Francisco over the Memorial Day weekend. Attendance was estimated by a local radio station as "10,000 people and one robot," the latter being a very impressive gimmick from the publisher of a book on how things work. It was the first time I had ever attended an ABA convention, but I found the atmosphere much like that at a very large science fiction con. The major difference as a friend remarked, being that "The huckster room is gigantic —and everything is *free!*"

The huckster room *was* gigantic. It filled the main floor of the San Francisco Civic Auditorium, with the second floor set aside for small press exhibitors, and with all of Brooks Hall, a truly *huge* exhibition hall adjacent to the auditorium, completely filled with displays.

Interest in science fiction and fantasy was high. Perhaps the greatest excitement was over Tolkien, with an "official" biography due for publication this summer and the long-awaited *Silmarillion* due in autumn. The Houghton-Mifflin booth reported specialty stores ordering copies in lots of 1000 to 1500!

Several publishers have announced "encyclopedias of science fiction" for the coming winter. I suspect that we will face a situation similar to that of two years ago, when four or five competing "illustrated histories of science fiction" were published simultaneously. Certainly the competition is desirable; one only hopes that the competing books won't hurt one another too much financially.

Back on the Tolkien front, Peter Beagle made an appearance, back from England where he had accompanied Ralph Bakshi and the Fantasy Films crew in their preliminary shooting for *Lord of the Rings.* Meanwhile, the Abrams booth was displaying posters from the forthcoming NBC television version of *The Hobbit.* This same art will be used in the new Abrams edition of the book.

At the Ballantine booth, most of the attention was devoted to *Star Wars,* with free copies of the book, t-shirts, dummies of the 1978 *Star Wars* calendar, and passes to a special screening of the film being variously shown around and given away; an actor in a Darth Vader costume acted suitably menacing in a genial way.

I personally spent most of my time chatting with editors and publishers with whom I have had dealings, or with whom I hope to have dealings. These included Buz Wyeth and Paula Diamond of Harper & Row, Clyde Taylor of Putnams, Page Cuddy of Berkley, Judi-Lynn del Rey of Ballantine, Tom Doherty of Ace, Nancy Neiman of Avon, Robert Reginald of Borgo Press, Norman and Rosa Goldfind of Baronet *(Cosmos* magazine), and Ted Pauls and Karen Townley of T-K Graphics.

While I was visiting the T-K Graphics booth I heard my name mentioned and I looked at the name-tag of the man who had spoken. (At ABA, unlike SF conventions, everybody *does* wear a badge; there are just too many people there to count on the small-town effect.) He was Nick Austin, the editorial director of Sphere Books, the British paperback house.

Austin and Sphere had been negotiating with my agent in New York over British rights to a couple of my novels, but neither my agent nor I had known that Nick was going to be at ABA. Yet, out of 10,000 people—talk about serendipity! Austin and Ted Pauls and I went off for some Mexican food and over lunch Austin mentioned that he had first become aware of my books through a review in *Algol* by Marta Randall. "There is one little thing," Austin said, "I wonder if you would mind if we changed the name of *The Crack in the Sky* back to *Fool's Hill* for the Sphere edition."

Would I mind? Is Jimmy Carter an Eskimo?

I also stopped at the booth of Zebra Books and met the legendary Walter Zacharias, onetime associate of A. A. Wynn, later a top executive at Lancer Books for many years. "You published my first novel," I told Zacharias. He

asked my name and the name of the book, and amazingly he remembered the cover art (a reddish painting by Jack Gaughan). Also at the Zebra booth was Roberta Goodman. To my astonishment she recognized my name at once. "You've got a story in that anthology *Chrysalis* that we're bringing out in August," she said.

Not very many science fiction authors showed up at the convention (or if they did, perhaps I missed them), but I did run into Bob Silverberg, Fritz Leiber, Terry Carr, Robert Anton Wilson, Ray Nelson, and fantasy collagist Wilifred Satty and underground comix publisher Ron Turner. There were many non-SF celebrities present pushing their own books, of course. These included the brilliant cartoonist B. Kliban, entertainer Mary Martin, and slush-philosopher Richard Bach.

Another little ego-boost came for me at the Rainbow Books booth, where I got my first look at the trade paperback edition of *The Comic-Book Book* that Don Thompson and I put together a few years ago. I met Tom Eliopoulos, president of Rainbow, and Cathy Van Yperon who told me that *TCBB* was getting the most attention of all Rainbow's titles.

From a less personal viewpoint, the major item of interest for science fiction enthusiasts was a panel discussion on "The Growing Boom." This was chaired by Lester del Rey, who introduced the other panelists by their qualifications: Don Wollheim (editor and publisher), Frank Herbert (best-selling author), Fred Pohl (author and editor), Jeff Hohman (buyer for a major bookstore chain), and Katherine Kurtz ("She's here as an ornament," Lester quipped coyly).

About one-third of the audience either bristled or moaned at the characterization, but Ms. Kurtz clearly basked in it, commenting several times over the next hour-and-a-half on her own youth and great beauty. Ms. Kurtz also explained the difference between science fiction and fantasy ("Science fiction is concerned with the future, fantasy is concerned with the past,") and indicated a willingness to visit bookstores and promote her novels when she could fit such activities into her very busy schedule.

I'm afraid that the panel was less impressive than I'd hoped it would be. The main thrust was a rather hard sell for SF, with an occasional digression into such tired topics as What Is the Definition of Science Fiction. Perhaps the audience was a lot less familiar with the stuff than an SF convention audience would have been, but it still seemed to me a needless rehash of old material. As for the hard sell itself, there were a lot of adjectives slung around but distressingly few numbers. A lot, a few, many more, vast, and so on. . . but about the only statistic given was that for the number of new science fiction titles issued annually, which has grown in recent years from somewhat over 300 to roughly 1000. The source cited was *Locus.*

What the panelists made no mention of was the following: Back a couple of decades ago there were very few SF books appearing, but a typical print run might be anywhere from 150,000 to 250,000 copies. The book would then stay in print until virtually all those copies were sold.

In today's market, while the number of titles published has ballooned, the average print-run has shrunk to 40,000 to 60,000 copies, with 100,000 being "big." On-sale time averages 5 to 10 *days,* and unsold copies are then "stripped." That is, they aren't returned to the publisher's warehouse—their covers are torn off and returned for credit, and the books themselves are destroyed!

This last practice led to a bizarre racket which I heard of in rumor several years ago, and which Norman Goldfind confirmed to me in an informal conversation. A printer in Canada was publishing bootleg covers for American paperbacks. These were then shipped across the border sold off roughly the way counterfeit money is sold, and then returned to publishers for credit!

At any rate, while there is a boom in the number of titles appearing, how does this translate to dollar-flow for booksellers? I overheard one bookseller grumbling after the panel. "I wanted to hear about ordering quantities, sales percentages, returns, solid information," he said. "All I heard was a lot of mutual congratulation by four of science fiction's fat cats."

The high point of the panel came when some of the speakers made a few very tentative remarks about innovative ideas they were playing with. Things like publishing posters, or bringing out simultaneous limited-edition hardcovers for libraries and collectors when books were issued as paperback originals.

Ian Ballantine was doing exactly that almost twenty-five years ago, and he strode to the microphone amidst a deafening round of applause. He spoke a few modest, graceful sentences and returned to his chair amidst a second round of deafening applause.

May I now add mine. □

BROTHERS OF EARTH, by C. J. Cherryh. 254 pp. $1.50. 1976. DAW.

Don Wollheim has been criticized for favoring pot-boilers and naive adventure stories, especially open-ended series that appeal to the lowest common denominator of readership and drag SF down by giving substance to its most severe critics' arguments. He has, to be sure, unleashed the likes of Perry Rhodan, Lin Carter, Alan Burt Akers and numerous others of their ilk on us, during his long career at Ace Books and more recently (going on six years!) with his own imprint. Why, he even got John Norman away from Ballantine Books!

But Wollheim has another side. He can be as cannily ruthless (or ruthlessly canny) as they come, yes; but he has always been receptive to new writers, including new writers of significant talent and serious intent, publishing many of the earliest works of emerging talents from Philip K. Dick, Robert Silverberg and Harlan Ellison, to Thomas M. Disch, Samuel R. Delany, Roger Zelazny, John Brunner and Ursula K. LeGuin. That is an admirable, not to say an enviable, record!

It's my opinion that C. J. Cherryh is a name that will appear in years to come along with those of the finest Wollheim discoveries.

Brothers of Earth is not Cherryh's first novel, but it's the first of hers that I have read. It will *not* be the last! It's an amazing performance. It comprises the exploration of a human but truly unearthly culture by a lone earthman; the book is executed with deep sensitivity and high intelligence. With Cherryh's hero Kurt Morgan (but I think of him as Kurt t'Morgan, a great tribute to Cherryh) we feel all of the alienation, the anxiety, the despair, the new hope of integration with another society. When t'Morgan meets another earth person after a time, we feel with him all of the shock and renewed dissociation that C. S. Lewis's Ransome felt at the end of *Out of the Silent Planet.*

Wollheim himself compares Cherryh's *Brothers of Earth* to LeGuin's *Left Hand of Darkness;* and I can see his point and to some extent agree with him, but for me the comparison that presents itself more aptly is with Austin Tappan Wright's *Islandia.* There is the same deliberate avoidance of violence and spectacular action for its own sake, the same painstakingly developed culture and history, the same emphasis on thought and feeling rather than melodramatic deeds.

The book is a jewel.

Not an unflawed jewel, one must concede. Cherryh is *almost* always the master of her style, but there is an occasional lapse. I doubt that the expression, "Where do you think you're going?" will survive into the distant future of *Brothers of Earth;* the point in chrono-linguistics is debatable but the effect in the book is to break the spell of reading and dump me back in Berkeley-1977 (what LeGuin calls the Elfland-to-Poughkeepsie effect). And there is an occasional minor solecism like "venerable

old man." (A venerable *young* man, you were expecting?) But these are trivialities.

A more serious flaw is the evolution of the book, in its latter sections, into more of a routine chase-n-fight epic. I suppose that the author's intention was to build to a climax in this fashion, but the effect (on this reader, at least) was to trivialize the last sixty pages or so, except for occasional bright moments, and to cause the book to dribble away at the end rather than *really* to end.

But still—what a performance from a young writer! What a fine mind, what craft, what power, and above all, what promise! C. J. Cherryh is already very good. Before long, she will be one of the best! Any reader who hasn't discovered her yet has a rare opportunity to be in on a major talent from its early days. Don't miss her performance!

Don Wollheim—thanks! □

IF THE STARS ARE GODS, by Gregory Benford & Gordon Eklund. 214 pp. $7.95. 1977. Berkley/Putnam. SBN 399-11942-6.

Time was when almost all science fiction was published in the specialized magazines, where it was a matter of policy to present lots of stories by lots of authors in every issue. The author who wanted to work at book length was thus faced with a tough choice. He could damn the torpedoes and probably wind up with an orphan novel on his hands. Or he could write for serialization, meaning a peculiarly constructed novel with semi-discrete segments and internal cliffhangers and resolutions. Or he could break his material into fully discrete units and write series of short stories and novelettes.

Since the market for short fiction was much larger than that for even serializable novels, there were a *lot* of series written. A few of the better remembered were Catherine Moore's Jirel of Joiry and Northwest Smith stories, Henry Kuttner's Hollywood on the Moon, L. Ron Hubbard's Old Doc Methuselah, George O. Smith's Venus Equilateral, and Otto Binder's Adam Link. Even Isaac Asimov's Foundation "trilogy" was originally a series of some nine shorter pieces.

Nowadays there's a voracious market for original science fiction novels and consequently no need for authors to chop up their material in the old pulp fashion, but habit is hard to break. Besides, cutting the material into small units makes it possible to shoot for magazine and/or anthology sales before the book appears, thus doubling the author's income and exposure.

I guess that's why Benford and Eklund wrote *If the Stars are Gods* the way they did. They succeeded in the double-sales maneuver, and even won a Nebula for the 1975 publication of one of the segments. But the tactic also, unfortunately, produced a very clumsily structured pseudo-novel instead of a novel. There's a *lot* of good stuff in *If the Stars are Gods* and I'm not going to trash the book, but the performance is far less accomplished than the potential of the book, and I'm convinced that the reason is this structural weakness.

The basic strategy of the book is to provide a biography of Brad Reynolds, astronaut, from an early Mars-lander mission to the exploration of the outer planets of the solar system. We see him through his adventure on Mars; an encounter with visiting aliens whose ship orbits the moon of earth; a manned satellite in orbit around Jupiter, etc. To cover all this Reynolds needs a *very* long active life; this the authors account for with a clever combination of a hypothetical anti-ageist law and the beneficial effects of life under prolonged low-gravity conditions. There are also a few other attempts to paper over the seams in the book, but they are really too great to be concealed.

There are any number of promising themes introduced and then *not* developed. In the earliest sequence, for instance, there is undisputed evidence of life on Mars. But—is it native? Or is it inadvertently introduced by earth-built landers? How can this be determined,

and if there is native life, what is its meaning? Benford and Eklund close off the question with a simple statement, leaving the reader annoyed rather than satisfied.

Probably the best segment in the book is the one that lends it its title. When the enigmatic aliens arrive and go into lunar orbit Brad Reynolds is the man who makes first contact. The aliens' ship is fascinating, as are the aliens themselves; the whole sequence is strongly reminiscent of Clarke's *Rendezvous with Rama*—it's utterly intriguing. And the notion that suns are actually and literally "gods"—living, sentient creatures with which it is possible to communicate—is a *very* powerful idea. It's been handled before in science fiction, but very seldom. And never better.

But after introducing the theme in a manner which can hardly be classified as less than brilliant, the authors drop it.

Boomp!

So it goes, through section after section, ending with a second and totally different first-contact sequence. Not all segments of the book are equally good, but the average quality is *very* high, and the book offers many moments of very rewarding reading. Still, every time Benford and Eklund really get something set up and running, they abandon it and start building something new from the ground up. I can only compare this with Heinlein's novel *Citizen of the Galaxy*, in which one fascinating future society after another is sketched in, set running, and then abandoned.

Thus *If the Stars are Gods* emerges as a frustrating book, certainly with many elements of excellence in it, but ultimately as less than a good novel, and ultimately as less than the sum of its parts. □

SCIENCE FICTION: HISTORY–SCIENCE–VISION, by Robert Scholes & Eric S. Rabkin. 258 pp. $12.95 cloth, $2.95 paper. 1977. Oxford University Press.

SF IN DIMENSION: A BOOK OF EXPLORATIONS, by Alexei and Cory Panshin. 342 pp. $10. 1976. Advent.

ANATOMY OF WONDER: SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Neil Barron. 471 pp. $14.95 hardbound, $8.95 paperbound. 1976. R. R. Bowker Company.

TURNING POINTS: ESSAYS ON THE ART OF SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Damon Knight. 303 pp. $12.50. 1977. Harper & Row.

SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE, edited by Peter Nichols. 224 pp. $8.95. 1977. Harper & Row.

Whooie! Remember when there was almost no literature of science fiction? Bailey's *Pilgrims* stood alone for years; then, along came Bretnor's *Modern SF* and de Camp's *Science Fiction Handbook*, and we thought that the millennium had arrived. Wow! Nowadays, it seems you can't turn around without falling over another history, critique, or collection of essays about the stuff. Well, we asked for it and we got it.

Robert Scholes and Eric Rabkin are academics—Scholes from Brown University, Rabkin from the University of Michigan—and their book is issued by a university press, both factors giving me pause, I must admit, before I undertook the reading. But in fact *History–Science–Vision* is not the heavy academic tome I feared it might be. The authors write well; they have rather good perceptions regarding science fiction. Their book is readable and worth reading.

The book is sub-divided into five sections, ranging for the most part between good and excellent in quality; there is one exception, which I'll get to shortly.

The first—and by far best—section of the book is devoted to a brief literary history of SF, further divided into what the authors call the beginnings (SF before *Frankenstein*), the first century

after *Frankenstein*, the career and influence of Wells, the twenties and thirties, anti-science fiction, the Golden Age, achievements of the sixties, and "making waves and crossing lines."

The history does not offer any startlingly unconventional views, largely harking back to Aldiss and farther to Bailey, but it is a thorough and intelligent rendering of the familiar themes. In particular, Scholes and Rabkin give a good perspective on the "literary" SF that was being written (mostly in Europe) while the pulps were booming (mainly in the US).

For the most part they stay on safe ground, present their ideas gracefully and persuasively, and provide what must be a useful history both for the student who wonders where all this stuff came from and what it means, and for the thoroughly familiar reader who is interested in comparing perspectives.

The section on science is not as thorough or compelling, but still provides a congenial guide to the historical treatment, by SF, of the scientific method itself, of physics, astronomy, computers, biology, and so on. Similarly, the section of forms and themes examines SF in its treatment of myth, fantasy, utopias, imaginary worlds and beings, sex and race.

And there is a good examination of ten representative SF novels, from *Frankenstein* and *20,000 Leagues* to *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *The Shockwave Rider*. Some of the selections are surprising and gratifyingly apt. Thus, *We* by Zamyatin rather than the more obvious *1984* or *Brave New World* by Orwell and Huxley respectively. And *A Voyage to Arcturus*, that strange mixture of SF, fantasy and allegory by David Lindsay. In their discussions of these ten novels, Scholes and Rabkin avoid the naive summarizations and shallow dogmatisms of typical academic ponies, providing instead subtle interpretations and stimulating questions for the reader.

This is, altogether, an excellent book; I did mention its one poor section, and I must take the authors to task for committing such a congeries of uninformed and inaccurate material to paper as they did in their section titled "Science Fiction in Other Media." It's a short section, and it's *so* bad, while the rest of the book is so good, that I suggest you simply staple the pages of this section together and ignore them.

SF in Dimension comes from "within" the science fiction field rather than representing an investigation by outsiders. Alexei Panshin is a pretty good science fiction writer himself, who has produced distressingly little fiction in recent years; Cory Panshin was a fan in her own right before marrying Alexei and becoming his collaborator.

Their book is essentially a compilation of some twenty essays, originally published between 1969 and 1976 in *F&SF*, *Amazing*, *Fantastic*, and in critical anthologies or fanzines. Some of the essays are really little more than glorified book reviews; others are much more ambitious. Through the volume, the Panshins seem to be approaching an overall philosophy of science fiction, not unrelated to a general philosophy of life, based on the notion of an evolution of consciousness from the optimistic but mechanistic and consequently sterile scientism of the nineteenth century, which was carried in most science fiction as late as the 1950s, through a more mystical and non-deterministic outlook as reflected in both contemporary science and much recent science fiction, all leading ultimately to a sort of eschatological union or Oneness.

As applied to such widely varying materials as this book contains, the Panshins' view offers both a reward and a penalty. The reward is a generalized worldview which gives some sense of unity and continuity to the essays, which might otherwise be little more than a hodgepodge of book reviews, think-pieces, and polemics. The price is a feeling, at times, that the subject matter is being treated to a session in the bed of Procrustes.

Certainly the most obviously interesting section of the book is that titled "Heinlein Reread." Alexei Panshin wrote *Heinlein in Dimension* over a decade ago, and that book has remained the standard

work on Heinlein ever since. (This is not to say that it is definitive and will never be superseded, but so far it has not been.)

Heinlein has continued to produce books, and Panshin has continued to study and analyze each additional work. The present installment goes as far as *I Will Fear No Evil;* mention is made of *Time Enough For Love* but it is not treated at length. "Heinlein Reread" is over 100 pages long, and is, in my opinion, an indispensible adjunct to Panshin's earlier book.

To my mind, the second most interesting item in the new Panshin book is one titled, semi-misleadingly, "The Short History of Science Fiction." I say semi-misleadingly because this is *not* still another rehash of the whole Lucian-Godwin-*Frankenstein*-Verne-Wells-etc., story. Panshin mainly talks about the problems of definition as they affected Gernsback, T. O'Conor Sloane and other important editors of the pulp era, the era in which science fiction was certainly not created but in which it received much of its modern impetus.

By its nature the Panshins' book is somewhat repetitious, somewhat uneven in quality, but overall very worthwhile. I recommend it not to the beginning inquirer, but to the knowledgeable reader.

Anatomy of Wonder takes still another approach to the subject. The R. R. Bowker Company is a publisher little known to the public but well known and hugely important within the trade. It produces a number of highly influential periodicals including the invaluable *Publishers Weekly*, and numerous reference works of value to libraries, universities, and professionals.

The present book carries the subtitle "bibliographic guides for contemporary collections," and as the subtitle suggests, *Anatomy of Wonder* is aimed pretty much at librarians, especially academic librarians, interested in setting up basic science fiction collections. However, in the process of creating this annotated bibliography for librarians, Barron and his associates have almost inadvertently created a pretty good volume of criticism and history, and an *excellent* reference source with information on more than 1,100 significant science fiction novels, anthologies, and critical works.

Again we have the customary division of the history of the field into a sort of pre-history (up to 1870), a period of "emergence" (1870-1926), the Gernsback era (1926-37), and the modern period (1938-1975). There are also valuable sections on juvenile SF, research aids, a directory of publishers, and very useful indices.

Each section contains a critical-historical essay. I must say that I found the one by Robert Philmus utterly impenetrable, but then I have always found Philmus's prose impenetrable. The other essays—by Thomas Clareson, Ivor Rogers, Joe De Bolt and John R. Pfieffer—range from competent to excellent. But most useful in this book are the long, long sections with their hundreds and hundreds of entries giving bibliographic data, descriptive information, and critical evaluations of books by practically everybody you've ever heard of in the entire history of science fiction. You won't sit down and read *Anatomy of Wonder* from end to end, but you'll find it invaluable to keep on your reference shelf and you'll find yourself dipping into it very often.

Turning Points edited by Damon Knight is a very different sort of book, and is (I think) the very first of its kind. It's another collection of essays, and when one looks at the list of contributors it is *most* promising. Brian Aldiss, Kingsley Amis, Poul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, Bester, Blish, Campbell, Clarke, Heinlein, Huxley, Richard McKenna, Joanna Russ, Theodore Sturgeon and more.

As for the book's being the first of its kind. . . the essays are, for the most part, reprinted. They appeared originally in a wide variety of places: *Holiday* (the slick travel mag), *Skyhook* (a fanzine), *Astounding*, *Galaxy*, the Science Fiction Writers of America *Bulletin*. . . as well as earlier books of essays. *Turning Points* is thus, as far as I know, the first selection of "best" or "classic" essays about science fiction. Judging by the big names involved, it ought to be a dynamite volume; especially in view of its being

the first, and the material not having been combed over previously. (In the analogous field of SF *story* anthologies, the first few skimmed the cream of the reprints and later ones were lost between the scylla of re-reprinting overly familiar material and the charybdis of settling for unfamiliar but unmeritorious ((or at any rate less meritorious)) stories.)

Unfortunately *Turning Points* does not live up to its promise.

Certainly the most noteable presence in the book is Heinlein's: he's there with three separate essays, one on the definition of science fiction dating from 1959, one on rules-for-writers that first appeared way back in 1947, and one on prediction that first appeared in *Galaxy* in 1952 and was updated for a 1966 reprint. Regrettably there is no 1976 revision and the essay has a kind of quaint-clumsy look to it, like an Eisenhower-era sedan. Not quite old enough to be a classic, not quite new enough to look modern.

Almost all of the essays have something of that odd, clumsy feel to them. Some, like Amis's, are of the pat-on-the-head-from-a-*real*-lit'ry-man variety. Others are even more patronizing: C. S. Lewis's reveals that Lewis didn't really like science fiction at all, even when he said he did. What he really wanted was fairy tales and religious allegories. One had already suspected as much. And Richard McKenna, who wrote highly effective SF for a short time, then wrote *The Sand Pebbles* and dropped SF shortly before his death, never was serious about science fiction. At least, if one is to believe his own words. He wanted to be a "real" writer but felt the need to serve an apprenticeship. He deliberately selected a field where the pay was poor, hence (as he anticipated) the competition was not too stiff; once having learned what he could by writing SF he planned all along to quit us and go on to better stuff. And he did.

And he doesn't even bother to say that he loves all of us crazy bastards.

Almost any of these essays might have made it as marginal-value filler material, if only Knight had had some really meaty, relevant, powerful pieces to put in this book. Apparently he didn't, and I have to say that I think it more likely because he made poor selections than because he had to settle for the best of a poor crop. With all of the earlier books about SF to pick through, plus all of the magazines—general, science fiction, academic, and fan-produced—he should surely have been able to come up with a better volume than this.

It's essentially 300 pages of fluff, possibly worth flipping through in a library but hardly worth its price or space on your shelf.

Science Fiction at Large, on the other hand, is a delight and a revelation to read. Its eleven chapters were originally papers given at a symposium co-ordinated by Peter Nicholls for the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London; Nicholls has also compiled and edited the text. (Philip K. Dick was unable to travel to England and deliver his own paper, and Robert Sheckley appeared in his place. Nicholls has included both the text of Sheckley's address and the paper that Dick had intended to use; this is typical of the thoroughness and quality of the book.)

Most of the people involved came from within the science fiction commun-LeGuin, Brunner, Harry Harrison, Alan Garner, Tom Disch, Sheckley and Dick are all writers; Nicholls a critic and academic. The only "outsiders" were Edward de Bono (a psychologist), John Taylor (a mathematician), and Alvin Toffler (the future shock man). Their contributions were the least interesting and relevant, de Bono's being a rather vague treatment of something he calls "lateral thinking;" Taylor's being a plea for broadmindedness toward unconventional ideas in science; and Toffler's being that familiar old pat-on-the-head.

Within the science fiction field, I found that Ursula LeGuin presented some of the most stimulating and challenging thoughts, although some of

her notions are distinctly questionable. Citing the dicta of Virginia Woolf, LeGuin maintains that the only real novel is the novel of psychological development of character. By this standard, LeGuin claims that the first science fiction novel was—get ready for this, now—not *Frankenstein*, not anything from Poe or Verne or Wells, not *Ralph 124C 41+* or *The Skylark of Space*, but—*We* by Zamyatin!

It's a daring theory, and not one that I would care to go on record as agreeing with, but certainly fascinating food for thought.

Disch, Brunner, and Nicholls all have valid and compelling things to say, mostly about science fiction as literature (although Brunner takes on the lunatic fringe pseudo-scientists rather hilariously, into the bargain). And Alan Garner gives the fascinating story of his own mental set and the interrelationship between his emotional state and his creative work. In the process, he comes head-on into opposition with the de Campian notion that neurosis equals creativity, and the greater the neurosis the greater the creativity. Garner's experience is that clearing up some emotional trash freed his creative ability and hugely increased his ability to produce!

The book ends with Phil Dick, whose essay is one of the most audacious, outrageous, soaring, singing, shining pieces of writing it has ever been my privelege to read. In an odd way, Dick seems to be coming to the same kind of orientation as the Panshins' evolutionary notion, with a worldwide mental union and the development of a literal "noosphere" as its next stage.

Nicholls points out that this book is not exactly a collection of essays about science fiction; rather, it is a collection of essays about the interface between science fiction and reality. Most of the authors in the book live up to that billing, and the end result is a book readable, thought-provoking, enlightening, and moving.

Most highly recommended! □

MILLENNIUM, by Ben Bova. 295 pp. $1.95. 1977. Ballantine; reprinted from 1976, Random House.

Millennium, which Random House issued last year to notable lack of response, is now available in a mass paperback from Ballantine/del Rey. It's a slickly written and highly readable novel, but I found it frankly more interesting as a commercial enterprise than a literary work.

Tony Boucher wrote an essay fully a quarter century ago, in which he pointed out the major difference between category and general publishing. A book clearly labelled and marketed in a genre—mystery, western, gothic, etc.—is essentially guaranteed a reasonable sale, Boucher contended. Provided that the publisher doesn't commit a really gross blunder in packaging, distribution or some other vital area, any reasonably competent category book will do all right because there is a loyal following for each established category.

The converse of this, however, is that a category book is limited in sales to that following. The great general readership will not even sample a book that is clearly earmarked for a category. (There are exceptions to this, the occasional "breakout" book like *Stranger in a Strange Land*, *Dune*, or *Lord of the Rings*—but these represent very unusual cases.)

A book published for the general readership doesn't face that limitation, and has the potential for runaway bestseller status. But the publisher also loses his *entree* to the category market, loses his guaranteed audience, and runs the risk of total disaster.

All of which brings us to Ben Bova's *Millennium*. The novel itself is slickly executed, suspenseful, believable and fast-paced. It's what booksellers and some editors call a "good read." It's also rather shallow and thoroughly derivative. It's the story of American and Russian colonists on the moon, uniting to declare their independence of their respective sponsors, prevent the outbreak of World War II, and impose a *pax lunaria* on the earth.

In other words, it's 60% *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* and 30% *Fail-Safe/Seven Days in May/Red Alert/Dr. Strangelove*. The other 10% is made up of snippets of "The Man Who Sold the Moon," *A Spectre is Haunting Texas*, another source or two that I may have missed, and conceivably even a snippet or two of genuine (but don't count on it) original material.

I didn't see the Random House edition (or don't recall it if I did, which tells you something right there), but the Ballantine version is done up to look like a "big novel" with a high-budget movie about to be released. There are three stars on the cover (Katherine Ross, George C. Scott, and Kirk Lancaster or is it Burt Douglas). One USAF colonel, one Soviet air force officer, the woman in an ambiguous outfit. You have to look long and hard to see a tiny spaceship in the distant background. And the blurb sounds like something nice and safe for the big novel-movie tie-in reader, nothing scarily science fictional. "A novel about people and politics in the year 1999." (To be accurate, the phrase "science fiction does occur once on the cover—in small type, on the back cover, at the bottom, in the context of an endorsement by Isaac Asimov.)

The major question, then, is whether the publishers' gamble paid off—for in a conventional SF package, *Millennium* would surely have had a respectable but thoroughly unspectacular sale. I do not, of course, have access to Ballantine's sales reports. But a friend of mine who works at Cody's (the largest book shop in my town and one of the country's leading non-chain booksellers) tells me that *Millennium* died the death in that store. There's your general readership. And another friend, who works at Dark Carnival (a science fiction specialty shop in this town) tells me that *Millennium* also bombed with that store's customers.

So, as Boucher said. . . stay in category and play it safe, or take on the big boys and maybe you'll win big—but that way you can lose big too. □

THE FICTION OF JAMES TIPTREE, JR., by Gardner Dozois. 36 pp. $2.50. 1977. Algol Press.

I haven't followed the career of James Tiptree as closely as many of my colleagues, and when it was revealed this past January that "he" is actually a middle-aged psychologist named Alice Sheldon, I'm afraid that I did a good deal less gosh-wowing than some of my friends did. In particular, while some were walking around saying, "Isn't it great—Tiptree is a *woman?!*", *I* kept asking, "Why did she feel the necessity to take a male-type pseudonym?"

The only reply I could get from anyone was the conjecture that Tiptree felt she'd be discriminated against in the SF marketplace if it were known that she was a woman. A similar notion was expressed by Katherine Kurtz during a panel discussion at the recent American Booksellers Association convention—that there are many excellent women science fiction and fantasy writers because women are discriminated against and thus have to strive all the harder to "make it."

This is utterly astonishing. Has no one ever heard of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Francis Stevens, Catherine L. Moore, Mary Gnaedinger, Leigh Brackett, Clare Winger Harris, Dorothy McIlwraith, Margaret Brundage, Betsy Curtis, Margaret St. Clair, Katherine MacClean, and all of the literally scores (if not hundreds!) of women who have successfully written, illustrated, edited, and criticized SF, from the days of *Frankenstein* to those of Betty Ballantine, Judy-Lynn del Rey, Vicky Schochet, Joanna Russ, Vonda McIntyre, Pamela Sargent, etc. . . .

Why all the startlement?

But all of this is a side-issue. The fact is that Tiptree is one of the more colorful, exciting, and sensitive writers to come along in the past decade, and Dozois's is the first comprehensive writing *about* Tiptree's stories that I have read. The essay originally appeared

in the Gregg Press facsimile edition of Tiptree's Ace collection, *Ten Thousand Light Years From Home.* It is written from the perspective of the Tiptree-the-mystery-man era, and hence needs concentrate on the individual stories rather than on their author. Whether this is an asset or a liability to the essayist, the reader will have to decide.

There is a graceful little note by Dozois concerning the revelation of Tiptree's true identity; there is also a useful bibliography by Jeffrey Smith.

Obviously, one isn't going to make a definitive analysis of a writer in thirty pages, and Dozois's essay is far from the last word on the subject—if only because Tiptree is still producing, and her first novel, presently in production, could receive only bare mention in Dozois's writing.

The booklet is graceful and well written, despite an occasional burst of hyperbole. (E. g., Dozois describes Tiptree's production of nine short stories in 1972 as "incredible," "an overwhelming avalanche of fiction..." Unless Dozois is referring to *quality*—and every indication is that he is not doing that, he is referring to quantity—he doesn't know what he's talking about. Nine short stories in a *year?* Nine in a *month* might be an avalanche, but nine in a year? Assuming an average length of 7000 words per story, those nine represent a production of roughly 63,000 words, or one average length novel. That's less than the average science fiction writer can *live* on and far less than almost any full-time writer writes. Of course, Tiptree isn't a full-time writer and doesn't live on her writing income, surely an enviable position to be in. But nowise does the production of nine stories in a year constitute even a non-overwhelming avalanche!)

But all of this is nitpicking. You won't agree with Dozois on every point, nor on his assessment of every story, but his essay is stimulating and well-informed, and will do until a fuller study of Tiptree is written. □

BRIEFLY NOTED

The results are not yet in on last issue's experiment with this section, so I will include another set of brief notes, and see, by *Algol* 30, whether or not there is reader interest.

Charles Fort Never Mentioned Wombats is Gene DeWeese and Robert Coulson's sequel to their earlier Doubleday novel *Now You See It/Him/Them.* If you read the first of the series I need only tell you this is more of the same; if you missed the first, you can start with *Charles Fort* and not worry about missing vital info.

In brief, these books are thinly fictionalized convention reports; the first, of a World SF Convention held in the Midwest back in the 1960s; the new book, of the Aussiecon of a couple of years ago. There are fictional characters mixed in with the real fans, and there is a thin overlay of plot in each volume—the first was essentially a murder mystery with just the barest tincture of *psi* to qualify it as SF; the second is more science fictional (quasi-human invaders from the zornch dimension or some such silliness), but in both cases the plot is really just an excuse to wallow in a couple hundred pages of fannish in-references and humor.

Tony Boucher invented this subgenre, I believe, with his novel *Rocket to the Morgue*, and it's been practiced ever since by people as diverse as Isaac Asimov, Robert Bloch and Barry Malzberg. I can't recommend the Coulson-DeWeese books as good novels, really, but they are breezy and fun and I guess that I'm still fan enough at heart to be susceptible. In any case, I love 'em, and recommend that anyone interested in the fan phenomenon give them a try. They really present a far better insight into fandom than such poorly informed academic inquiries as Dr. Wertham's book on fanzines. □

The Best of E. E. 'Doc' Smith, as far as I know, has been published *only* in Britain (by Futura). However, import books seem to be more widely available of late than they had been a few years ago, and you might wish to pick up the volume. It's a fat (nearly 300 pages) paperback with a Canadian price of $2.50; US price should be in the same range, I suppose.

Smith was best known as a novelist, of course, but he also produced a number of short stories and they are collected here—certainly a treasure-trove for the dedicated admirer of this most excellent of "primitive" SF authors, the champion of what Damon Knight calls the good bad story.

Some of the stories in the book require a little bibliographic notation—one isn't really a short story, but a more-or-less self-contained excerpt from *The Skylark of Space;* another, which also stands alone moderately well, was actually Doc's contribution to the legendary round-robin novel *Cosmos;* still another, *Subspace Survivors*, originally ran in *Astounding* as a novelette but was in reality the opening section of the novel *Subspace Explorers;* while the short *Vortex Blaster* also grew into a novel of the same name.

All of this notwithstanding, the book is a joy to the fan of Doc Smith and a valuable research tool for the scholar who would otherwise have a devil of a time locating its contents in mouldering pulp magazines. The book also contains valuable non-fiction sections by Philip Harbottle and Walter Gillings, and a Smith bibliography. Highly recommended.

Speaking of Doc Smith, Los Angeles writer Stephen Goldin has produced several pastiches of his works for Pyramid Books. One is free to judge Goldin's work for oneself, but a warning should be issued with regard to the bylines on these books. They are "by E. E. Smith with Stephen Goldin" (Smith's name several times as large as Goldin's) just about the same way that those old stories "by H. P. Lovecraft with August Derleth" were... Such stories are really imitations, sold to the reader on the strength of one person's name but actually written by another, to the disappointment (usually) of the reader and the enrichment of whichever commercial interest is behind the whole project.

Caveat emptor! □

Michael Bishop has been making a bit of a splash lately, and two recent novels are worthy of note. *Stolen Faces* (Harper & Row) is a sensitively felt and skillfully crafted projection of the classic do-good-er-among-the-poor-savages situation. The alien culture that Bishop projects is convincing and heart-rending; his hero is believable and sympathetic; the whole book is an admirable job.

It *is*, however, extremely morbid and rather gruesome, and is not recommended to the squeamish or depressive.

A Little Knowledge (Berkley/Putnam) is a rather long and very ambitious treatment of the future encounter-with-aliens situation, concentrating on the theological questions that such an encounter will doubtless raise (unless organized religion is not a serious force when the encounter occurs). Bishop's projected future is a kind of soft theocracy, an extrapolated future city reminiscent of some of Delany's dense future-metropoli, and the book has a good deal of promise in it.

Somehow, unfortunately, it seems to wander around, the extra verbiage providing not greater richness but greater confusion and distraction, to the end that the reader (or *this* reader, anyway) is left frustrated rather than satisfied. A worthwhile attempt, a noble failure—but, alas, a failure nonetheless. □

There's an old line that claims lovemaking is the only field of endeavor in which the enthusiastic amateur will outdo the professional every time. I'd like to nominate *The Chronicles of Lucius Leffing* by Joseph Payne Brennan (Grant) as another case of the superior amateur.

Not that Brennan is a *pure* amateur; six of the eight stories in the book were previously published in such periodicals as *Afred Hitchcock's* or *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine*—but I suppose that the editors of those journals were as charmed by Brennan's amateurishness as I am. Lucius Leffing is a classic type of private detective, as overdrawn and eccentric as Sherlock Holmes, living in a perfectly preserved Victorian parlor in Connecticut. His Watson is Brennan himself.

The writing is somewhat simplistic, the cases are naively conceived and simply developed, but Brennan so clearly loves his pseudo-Holmes, and that love so powerfully permeates every page of the book, that it is a sheer joy to read it. Further, the physical book making, by Donald Grant (better known for his Robert E. Howard editions) makes it a pleasure just to hold the volume, turn its pages, examine the typography, feel the paper...

The Chronicles is actually the second Lucius Leffing book. The first was *The Casebook of Lucius Leffing.* It's long out-of-print, and my searches have failed to turn up a copy; if anyone out there is willing to part with a copy, I would gladly pay a reasonable amount for it. □

M. P. Shiel (1865-1947) is best known in science fiction circles for his two eccentric novels *The Purple Cloud* and *The Lord of the Sea*, but in fact he was a prolific author in a number of fields, and one of the more distinct voices ever set onto paper. Arkham House gathered a dozen of his fantastic short stories into a volume titled *Xelucha* in 1975; I don't believe the book is in the Arkham catalog any longer, but you may still

find a copy in a book store or dealer's list somewhere; the stories are worth reading.

Now Arkham has gathered seven more stories, psychic detective (sometimes straight detective) stuff, under the title *Prince Zaleski and Cummings King Monk.* They are among the most bizarre and mindbending tales I've ever read; Shiel could write like a satanic scripturalist on an amphetamine jag, and some of the stories in this book will leave you positively reeling around the room, searching for a chair to grab onto. By no means is Shiel fare for all readers, but I suggest you try at least the first two or three paragraphs of "The Race of Orven," and if you're not hooked by then, just put down the book and go in peace. But if Shiel grabs you the way he did me with that story, you'll be a goner for sure. □

Of all the people to emerge in the science fiction field, it tends to be a decade or so between people who get discovered by the world of general letters. In recent decades it was Ray Bradbury in the 1950s, Kurt Vonnegut in the '60s, and now Ursula LeGuin in the 1970s. Suddenly everything that LeGuin ever wrote, however minor, is grist for scholars and reviewers—and, inevitably, reprinters.

Harper & Row has issued *Rocannon's World*, originally an Ace Book (1966) expanded from an even older short story from *Amazing.* It is very early and very minor LeGuin, and by no means should it be read in preference to her later and more significant works. It should certainly be read by the LeGuin completist, however, and what makes *this* edition of particular interest is the presence of a new introduction by the author. The comments of the author, a decade farther into her writing career and apparently at the peak of her powers, as she surveys this rather naive and not too good early novel, are worth the price of admission. □

MAGAZINES

I mentioned earlier in this column the surprising hardiness of the science fiction magazine as a publishing form. When all the other pulps died off two decades ago, SF and mystery alone managed to survive, with about half a dozen titles each. There are still about half a dozen mystery magazines, but science fiction has gone into an astonishing boom lately!

Two titles came and went. *Vertex* was a promising experiment, paying pretty good rates and publishing in a nice, slick format. But the magazine was plagued from the start by understaffing, eccentric editing, unattractive graphics, and finally a disastrous change of format that was supposed to make it look like *Rolling Stone* and instead made it look like *Midnite Tattler.* Too bad. Next came *Odyssey,* a schlock operation from the word GO and good riddance to *it.*

But there's a still newer crop which is most intriguing. *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* is the most conservative of the group, in both format and editorial approach. The idea is to do an *Ellery Queen-Alfred Hitchcock* type magazine of SF, with just a picture of Isaac on the cover, minimal internal graphics, and lots and lots of relatively short stories bought for pretty high rates, inside. It seems to be working very well, with three issues out so far.

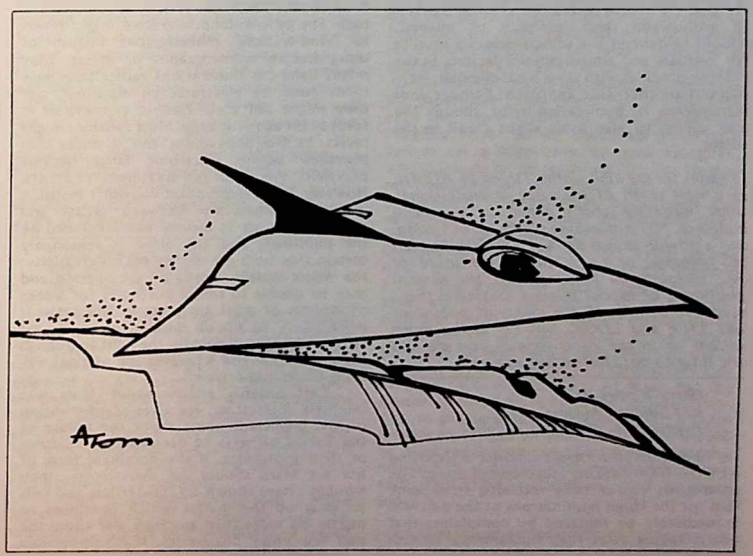
Galileo has also done three issues, in the bedsheet format that *Odyssey* and *Vertex* both used. I think that *Galileo* has put too much of its emphasis into getting reprint rights to old, minor works by Big Names, while running weaker fiction than it ought to. But each issue has been better than the previous one, and the magazine may survive.

Cosmos is probably the most daring of the new magazines, paying rates comparable to *Asimov's* or *Analog,* using the bedsheet format, running a mixture of slick and dull paper stocks and some interior color art. I've had the feeling from *Cosmos's* issues (also three to date) that art director Jack Gaughan is still experimenting, feeling his way around. Certainly the snappier logo treatment on the third issue is more attractive than that on the first two. The magazine is produced by an experienced crew—the editor is David Hartwell, best known for his work at Berkley Publishing Company, and the publisher is Norman Goldfind, formerly of Pyramid Books. They've been getting big names: a Fritz Leiber serial already, Michael Bishop, Haldeman, Spinrad... as well as some bright newcomers.

Unearth on the other hand is surely the most innovative of the new magazines. The basic policy of this magazine (edited by Jonathan Ostrowsky-Lantz and John M. Landsberg, both new names to me) is to feature stories *only* by new authors. Each issue introduces a whole new crop of by-lines—although, once having appeared in *Unearth,* I understand that a writer may return. There are other features... a column on writing by Harlan Ellison has been promised, there's a science column by Hal Clement, and the magazine reprints the first published stories by established writers.

Two issues have appeared so far, with a third due imminently. It's a fascinating experiment, and apparently is selling rather well. Certainly worth a look—and it's nice to see a market that goes out of its way to offer new writers a break.

Antaeus is neither a science fiction magazine nor new—it's a very classy, lit'ry mag. Issue 25/26 is a giant double number, 336 pages, and is devoted entirely to popular fiction, roughly equal sized sections being given over to western, detective, and science fiction. The latter section contains stories and/or commentary from such luminaries as Fred Pohl, Stanislaw Lem, Tom Godwin, Elizabeth Lynn, J. G. Ballard, C. L. Grant, William S. Wilson, Ursula LeGuin, Roger Zelazny and Lester del Rey. There's much good reading here, several stories of unusual merit and commentary of great aptness (most of all Pohl's, I think, although there are *no* slouches here!). And all else aside, a publishing oddity that will almost certainly become a premium-price collector's item in a few years. ($6.95 from the Ecco Press, 1 West 30th Street, New York 10001.) □■



RANDOM FACTORS: LETTERS

Robert A. Bloch
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Congratulations! Formerly you were one of the best fan-editors in the business—now you're one of the best pro-editors. And you have by far *the* best-looking of all prozines! So much pleased and delighted me in this latest issue, and if forced to epitomize its outstanding quality in a single word, I think the one I'd choose would be *vitality*. There's an enthusiasm, and intensity of interest, seldom evident in the self-consciously erudite fan journals and almost wholly lacking in the old-line prozines with their what-the-hell, let's-slap-out-another-issue approach. Perhaps your infrequency of publication helps, though I'm also willing to give some slight credit to the editor.

[Thanks for the kind words. I think of ALGOL as a new breed of magazine—a professional, trade magazine that's aimed at a general audience. Not a magazine with a lot of fiction, nor a how-to magazine, but a hybrid. Perhaps the harbinger of a new wave of the future for SF, certainly in keeping with the current publishing of special interest magazines that's seen the demise of the giants of publishing like LIFE and LOOK. But I'm just as much caught up in the experience as you are, and the future's not clear to me, either!]

Harry Warner, Jr.
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I admire your heroic conduct in removing ALGOL from fanzine Hugo competition. The complaints you've been receiving from some fans for the Hugo nominations of the past will immediately be replaced by complaints that you're taking away their fundamental fannish freedom to nominate and vote for whichever fanzines they prefer to choose. If two or three of the other publications in your category should go and do likewise, it is fascinating to think what such action might do to editorial intentions for many other fanzines. Would the trend toward bigger, pro-oriented fanzines vanish, if the evidence existed that the logical conclusion of this process was transfiguration out of the fanzine category? Come to think of it, the energy crisis could also have an effect. If most fans really got serious about saving in their energy consumption, they might revert to hand-cranked mimeographs instead of using electric mimeographs or offset, they might hand-cut illustrations rather than have them done by electrostencil machines, and they might sell their electric typewriters in favor of the acoustic type. Most fanzines might revert to the appearance and slimness that prevailed before electronic fanac became prevalent. I'm all for fair treatment for artists. However, there is one point you don't mention in your comparison between artists and authors. The art is usually commissioned by the publisher, and the artist is reasonably certain that he'll get money for his creativity; the writer usually works on speculation and may be unable to find a purchaser for weeks or months of work on a story. The artist is more likely to obtain double return for his efforts: the money paid for the right to publish the illustration and whatever the original will bring when sold privately.

Carl Sagan's article about Mars was intensely interesting. He gives scant mention of one important point about the failure of the Viking cameras to detect living creatures or their footprints: if the dominant form of life on Mars should be marsworms, they wouldn't have shown up. The article also fails to clear up the matter which continues to puzzle me more than anything else about the past few years' discoveries. If it's impossible for liquid water to survive on the surface of Mars, how are those apparent creek and river beds so clear and prominent in the photographs? If they were made a billion years ago or thereabouts when water last was plentiful on Mars, how can they survive so plainly after such an enormous amount of erosion and drifting from the sandstorms which have been going on for, presumably, millions of years? There's nothing of the sort to be seen in aerial photographs of the deserts of Earth, although I assume that some of this planet's deserts once possessed waterways where there is nothing but sand dunes today.

Jack Williamson's article makes me wish all over again that the Heinlein juveniles had been written in time for me to use them as my introduction to science fiction. It's awesome to think how many millions of men and women must have discovered SF through the Heinlein books' existence.

I suppose several of them will be losing their appeal because they have been outdated by the space exploration program, but most of them seem immune from this type of trouble for many more decades. I'm sure Dick Lupoff is right when he relates the Slusser book to a re-evaluation of Heinlein. But he might have gone on to make the point that re-evaluation is inevitable for every pro who has a big reputation because this is the era when every idol is being battered, painted with funny moustaches and beards, triumphantly proved to be either standing on clay or using that substance to keep his shoes full, and in the natural course of events, the most respected science fiction writers will be getting theirs, too.

[Yes, Harry, this is fandom's finest hour! As the energy crunch gets worse, fanzines will regress into prehistory. First the mimeograph stencils go, or the mimeo-ink—can you make ink out of carbon-black and tallow?—or how

about making your own ditto fluid in a still, hoarding your last few aniline dye masters... The mind boggles. At last, fallen so low that we make gelatin from old (human?) bones, and the last of fandom publishes their hectographed fanzines by the light of a guttering torch. Then, too, fans might still get together, not for collating sessions, but to run the bicycle-driven generators that power their mimeographs.

About authors/artists, I know many part-time authors, but few professional part-time artists. If you work in this field, you have to devote the best hours of daylight to your art. And, too, if you're an established writer, there's an advance and royalties for the book, plus new royalties every time it goes back to press. How many artists receive more money when the book is reprinted?]

Ann Weiser
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Again you have a spectacularly fine cover. I saw the original STATIONKEEPING on display at Disclave. Dickinson is some artist.

I commend your declaration of pro status for ALGOL, and I hope LOCUS and SFR are moral enough to follow your lead. As a worldcon member my fondest dream has been to vote for both ALGOL and SPANING in the same year, and now, you see, I can.

As someone who has Heinlein in my blood, inextricable from my earliest memories of reading, I enjoyed Jack Williamson's article very much. He writes with a cheerful affection for the juveniles, and reading the article gave me the sense that I had relived all the books with a friend. One note: Hazel Stone of *The Rolling Stones* appears as a teenager in *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress.*

Richard Lupoff makes an interesting point: was Heinlein really that good, or were we just very young? I recently reread a remembered favorite, *Beyond This Horizon*, and was sickened at a scene I had forgotten, where a man spanks a woman to teach her a lesson and she ends up liking it. Yet I'm not sure Heinlein needs an iconoclast. I think we're all aware of his shortcomings. It's no news to anyone that *I Will Fear No Evil* is a shattering bore. *That's* what makes Heinlein so fascinating to me: that despite all the crap that's there, he's been so influential and still compels our attention. Yesterday I reread *Double Star* for maybe the fifth time and couldn't put it down.

I wish you wouldn't take advertising for Gor books. Have you no principles?

[Yeah, well, we gotta pay the bills somehow. Sorry about that, but at least I refused to exchange ads with Penthouse... *Which reminds me, some year I want to publish an issue of* Spicy Spaceship Stories, *just to see how it does. Might even publish some of the current rage, the Let's-Get-Spock-Into-Bed stories. Oh, you didn't know about those?...]*

SN Mark R. Sharpe, USN
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I'm not one of the greatest fans of Heinlein but I've mellowed somewhat after his speech at MAC last year (not that it was a good speech, quite the contrary, but I feel sympathy for him). The only fiction Heinlein has written that I've really enjoyed is his juvenile series. I haven't read them for some time but after the Williamson piece I think I will go back to my collection and pick them out of the bottom of some box. Too bad his late fiction was so bad—did I say I had mellowed?

Dr. A. D. Wallace
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I deplore the confusion that arises from Jack Williamson's approach to Heinlein's juveniles (Youth Against Space). He accepts purblindly the "intentional fallacy" and esps Heinlein via his fiction, confusing quite deliberately the historic (real) Heinlein, the author, with the narrator of the books. It is obvious that the narrator is Heinlein's creation, a fictive construct that may, or may not, reflect the author's own opinions. He is not so much commenting on the books as he is commenting on the author. Slightly paraphrasing Williamson--"What I most admire about the *books* is Heinlein's dogged faith in us and our destiny." Admitting that Williamson is privy to much about Heinlein (which of course he has a right to tell us), it is a critical failure on his part not to distinguish between this and the narrator. A reader of "Youth Against Space" might justly conclude that Heinlein writes allegories rather than writing fiction. But, if one accepts this latter, that it is the "responsibility of literature to be on the side of life," then all of SF comes crashing to the ground as nothing but absurd extrapolations. Williamson knows quite well that in mainstream the author accepts our milieu and invents the responses of the characters, while in SF the author invents a milieu *and* the responses of the characters. It is doubly dangerous to confuse the author and the narrator while going through two layers of inventions.

Frank Belknap Long
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Lupoff's *Book Week* was of especial interest to me at this particular time, because I've recently exchanged several letters with him, and was most grateful for his gracious review of my AH volume, *The Dreamer.* But I saw only one page of *Book Week*, in a review clipping photo-duplicate which Jim Turner sent me, and wanted very much to go on, and read everything Dick had written about HPL in a review so largely devoted to him. That wish has now been fulfilled.

I can't recall ever having seen a more impressive lineup of writers—in any SF publication, fanzine or professional, in recent years—Williamson, and Pohl, and Sagan (I never dreamed, when I met him at an SFWA gathering some three or four years ago, that his popular science fame would become so great!), Bester and van Vogt, and Lafferty—I stand in awe! And I'm quite sincere when I say that every aspect of the format as well makes this the kind of publication one would instantly be arrested by—on its appearance on any newsstand—to the exclusion of *Playboy* or *Esquire* or any other enormous circulation magazine. I'm not even sure one would have to be an SF reader or writer to be so arrested! The great beauty of the cover illustration and the novelty of it, would, I think, make likely such a response.

The correspondence in *Random Factors: Letters* from A. D. Wallace, Stepen Antell and three or four others displays the kind of maturity—intellectually and aesthetically—that, until recently, has been more often than not absent from SF commentaries. Although I do not agree with all of the views set forth in these letters, there is a maturity and perceptiveness here of a very high order. Just reading this entire section should convince even the most case-hardened skeptics that SF has indeed come of age.

Fred Patten
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I'll be particularly interested in seeing you develop your editorial comments on rights for SF artists. As publisher of DF&SFR, this interests me considerably. Slightly over a year ago I made an attempt to find out just what the exact legal situation was regarding the reprinting of book cover illustrations in reviews of the books. I had to give it up as inconclusive after getting wildly different opinions from a half dozen or more experts. The artists tended to say, "It's fine art, and you can't reprint it without specific permission and printed copyright notices," while the publishers tended to say, "It's advertising art, and we have full authority to give you permission to display as many of our covers as often as you want to." At one point I was planning to make up a standard credit line, "C by the artist," and print it with every cover illustration (following the request of one artist), but it turned out that sometimes the art is copyrighted by the artist and sometimes it's copyrighted by the publisher, and printing an incorrect copyright credit may do more to invalidate the artist's protection than to print no statement at all. My main problem as publisher of DF&SFR is one of time and manpower: it's simply impossible to undertake the paperwork to get a specific permission for each and every illustration, with 40+ in each monthly issue. So we ended up adopting a variant on a suggestion by Jack Gaughan, who said he'd be satisfied if we treated reproductions of his covers with the same professional courtesy that newspapers and newsmagazines give works of fine art when they reproduce them. So I checked the Art sections of NEWSWEEK and TIME to see how they credited paintings by modern artists like Warhol or Bacon, and they don't print copyright statements at all—just the names of the galleries or private owners of the paintings that are reproduced. So we settled for giving the artist prominent credit wherever possible, which seems to be a satisfactory sign of good faith on our part. At least, for the manner in which we're using the reproductions. But, to get back to the original point, if there is some more legal phraseology that we should be using and that we can adopt without getting involved in a deluge of correspondence over each illustration, I definitely want to know about it.

[I did ask a number of artists to comment on my editorial, but none of them did. Owell...

I also have found, especially in reprinting covers for Vincent DiFate's column, that considerable time and energy are spent in tracking down who owns what rights, and who is empowered to give permission to reproduce covers. The actual reproduction of the covers becomes an anti-climax after the energy expended in the search for what's right. Most of the publishers don't care, and even the artists, with notable exceptions, couldn't be bothered. My editorial this issue does raise the question of art books themselves, which is another use entirely.]

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I was interested to read your comments about art copyright and it is a pity you didn't write at greater length; I'll look forward to the next issue. One thing that always annoys me as a collector/reader of SF is that I also enjoy good artwork and yet so few book covers are credited to the artist concerned on the book jacket itself, despite the tremendous impact covers can have on casual sales. I've taken completely at random a cross-section of one hundred paperback books from my collection, nearly all of them recent editions, just to see how true this is. The results are not surprising: 24 covers are credited, 76 are not.

Of course, a knowledgeable fan soon gets to know the style of the individual artists and can pick out a Foss from a Hardy or a Jones, but a lot of artists nowadays 'cash-in' by imitation and before long there are quite a few artists producing very similar work and unless they have signed the work it can be difficult to tell them apart. For example, of the 76 uncredited covers above I cannot identify 56 of them, although I would add the rider that I consider myself far from being a knowledgeable fan of art. One artist I have recently 'discovered,' Patrick Woodroffe, has had a book of his artwork published. Called Mythopoeikon, published by Dragon's World in limpback at 3.95 pounds and hardback, it is filled with Woodroffe's fantastic fantasy artwork, his paintings, his book covers and his album sleeves. He is the Salvadore Dali of the SF artworld with an incredibly fertile imagination. I noticed from my little survey that nearly all his book covers are credited. Could it be other artists aren't so insistent or bothered?

[Woodroffe's book, which puts Roger Dean to shame, will be published in the US and distributed this fall by Simon & Schuster. Woodroffe's work has appeared mostly in the UK, though he did the covers for The Grey Prince *and* Song for Lya, *both published by Avon.]*

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Alfred Bester's annotated history/demonstration of SF writing is a gem and prompts questions about the history of imaginative fiction which he might not have had in mind himself! In the early part of his story, we read:

> "... Brick Halsyon X-beamed the monster with his Cathode Disintegrator... From the ichor of 'The Thing' arose a mother-of-pearl tree. 'Oh, so, bubie,' the petals giggled..."

Compare the following excerpts from the Tale of the Two Brothers, an ancient Egyptian story dating to about 1200 B. C.:

> "... and the king sent a chief royal butler to sacrifice the bull... and when it was on the shoulders of the men, it quivered in its neck, and it shed two drops of blood beside the two doorposts of His Majesty... and they grew into two great persea trees... (and the trees) spoke with his wife: 'O you liar! I am Bata; I'm alive in spite of you... I became a bull, and you had me slaughtered."

(The translation is my own, from the text in Sir Alan Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian Stories*, Brussels, 1932; others have recently been published by Edward F. Wente in W. K. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, New Haven, 1973, and Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature II, The New Kingdom*, Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1976.)

Intentionally or not, Bester has produced the (for the moment) most recent example of one of the most time-honored motifs in literature.

[As Uncle Hugo once said, the more things change the more they remain the same.]

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I take exception to Richard Lupoff's remarks that George E. Slusser's views in the booklet *Robert A. Heinlein: Stranger in His Own Land* are in any way revisionist. One need look no farther than Alexei Panshin's *Heinlein in Dimension* to realize that critics have been clobbering Heinlein's more recent works for the better part of a decade. Heaven knows, there's enough to clobber.

By contrast, Jack Williamson's article on the Heinlein juvenile novels made some points that were genuinely new, at least to me. As one of the legion introduced to science fiction by these novels, I found Williamson's article informative and entertaining—the kind of lucid criticism which is always too rare. It is these novels that are Heinlein's true legacy, and shooting the clay pigeons that he has turned to producing strikes me as a worthless exercise—unless one cares to try and determine *why* Heinlein is no longer writing "good stuff."

My own answer to this latter question is hardly original. I think that Heinlein has said all he has to say. To extend an Asimov analogy, the brilliant creativity which made him a supernova in the 40s and 50s has finally burned out, leaving a black dwarf.

This brings me to a particularly painful episode: the reaction of a number of fans to Heinlein's appearance at MidAmericon. I was both shocked and enraged at the conduct of those who booed Mr. Heinlein's Guest of Honor speech. It seems that some fans don't like to be reminded of their own mortality, and that our genre fans are as fickle as the fans of an over-the-hill rock star. Still more appalling were Ted White's remarks on the Heinlein speech in an AMAZING editorial. If White had sat down and thought with all his might for the next ten years, he could not have come up with an editorial in poorer taste.

One can only hope that some day science fiction fans—along with the rest of the members of this No Deposit, No Return society—will grow up.

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I enjoyed and agreed with the Pohlemic, but would quibble with one point at the end. A reader unfamiliar with the history of SF might get the impression that "packagers" putting together great globs of SF without regard to quality were something new. But as I am sure Pohl knows, this sort of thing has always gone on. In an *SF Voices* interview, Robert Silverberg gives this description as his days as a fiction manufacturer of the 50s: "I was invited to contribute 50,000 words of fiction a month... Now the publisher of *Amazing* didn't care what his 50,000 words of stuff were as long as they looked like science fiction." Perhaps the only difference between then and now is that writers are now *better* paid to do bad work.

Lupoff has come as close as anyone I've seen to defining the paradoxes of Barry Malzberg. Malzberg has written brilliantly original stories and novels, yet his books have become almost as repetitious and predictable as those of Jonathan Herovit. He has quit the field, and yet he backslides from time to time. (I imagine him compulsively writing a story and mailing it off to Ted White in the dead of night, and then hating himself the morning after.) He proclaims his love for the field, and yet he has just stated that *Shadrach in the Furnace*, good as it is, is not as good as *Franny and Zooey* (!) because—well, because *Shadrach* is *science fiction*. Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling that, like many other self-contradictory writers from Nietzsche on down, Malzberg is sincere. He really means what he says at the moment he says it.

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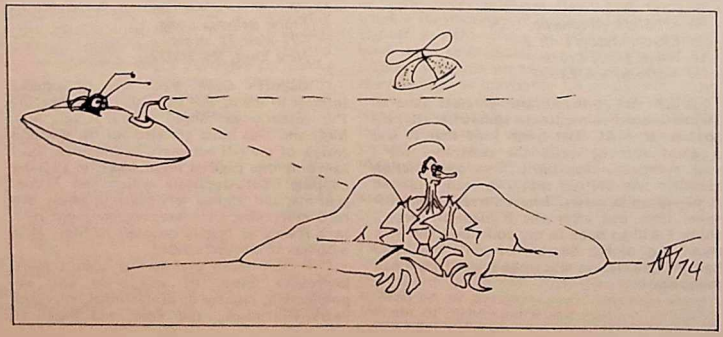
I take exception to the attitude expressed by Mr. Antell in his letter in issue No. 28. The term "pseudo-intellectual" is one which carries a heavily negative connotation as used by Antell. Specifically, it seems to suggest some type of impure motivation for Samuel R. Delany's style of writing in *Dahlgren* and *Triton*. "Pseudo-intellectual" implies that the writer knows that the content of his work is minimal or non-existent and deliberately uses a certain style to cover up that fact.

Now, I have read various essays by Delany along with some interviews with him. He has always seemed genuinely interested about the ability of the English language to convey certain types of content and the resulting relationship between style and content. He has been quite clear on this subject. His fiction must, therefore, be read with this in mind. He has never said he intends to be easy to read or, simply, entertaining (this being the *most* subjective aspect of all types of literature).

All this leads to the conclusion that



Delany is not a "pseudo-intellectual" (unless some proof of impure motive is forthcoming). Any criticism of him and other such writers who experiment along such lines must be aimed at how well the author succeeds in integrating the form with the *intended* content. Only after that (walk in his mocassins first, so to speak) should the basic differences of writer and reader/critic as to world view be hacked out so that the merit of the content can be discussed. Only in this way do we get away from such perjorative terms as "pseudo-intellectual." There may be writers in the SF field who deserve such a title. They must be pursued on moral grounds (specifically, no hiding behind generalizations), if one's worldview allows for such a things as morals, that is. Samuel Delany, on the other hand would seem to deserve critical literary attention whether it be negative or positive (most probably both).

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With regard to the short shrift SF illustrators receive, I think Vincent DiFate in the same issue as your editorial puts the finger on the problem. The purpose of cover art, at least in the opinion of the publishers who buy it, is to *sell the book*. The free reproduction of covers on advertising circulars, etc., is seen as promoting this end, and a nice regard for copyright is seen as defeating it. If I had any aptitude for art, which I don't (as I've said before, one of the triumphs of DiFate's column is making art interesting even to someone as lacking in natural aptitude as I am), and if I were therefore interested in bettering its position in the SF world, I think I'd concentrate on areas where the art can be considered as part of the product rather than as part of the packaging. Even ordinary interior illustration goes a long way toward meeting this specification. Only a few art enthusiasts will buy a book for the sake of its cover (many more may be subliminally induced to buy a book *because* of the cover, but this is different—as DiFate explains, an effective cover need not be good art). I think more will buy for the sake of interior illustrations, such as the inside-the-cover sketches of Known Space beings in some Niven books. SF art books, both original portfolios and collections of reproductions, also seem to sell fairly well, and as the cost of color reproduction comes down (relative to the cost of print, anyhow), I would presume that the market increases. The Russian *Fantastika* series of anthologies is now including color portfolios of SF art which is *not* illustration, but independent conception. U. S. magazines sometimes do something similar—*Cosmos* seems from its first issue to be on this course.

In another instance of interior dialog, Jack Williamson answers Richard Lupoff's question about the quality of the early Heinlein. (At least if Dick calls the fifties early—and the editions of Heinlein's work of the forties that we read these days were revised in the fifties, after all.) My own answer, similar to Williamson's, is that the early Heinlein may be not quite as good as it first appeared (the golden age of SF being twelve, and all that), but it's still gripping. Several times in the past year or two I've made the mistake of trying to read myself to sleep with a Heinlein book of pre-1958 vintage (one I'd read before, naturally), and ended up reading into the wee hours.

Some of the plots do creak a bit. In particular, *Have Spacesuit* is set in about the 1980's, but the teen culture therein (as well as other aspects of society) is very much that of the 1950's. Even the title doesn't mean as much to a generation which never heard of "Have Gun, Will Travel." (Last year I was talking to an undergraduate who was not aware that the prevalance of the phrase "Fearless Leader" in current jocular speech came from "Rocky and His Friends." She'd seen "Rocky" in reruns, but had never made the association. I begin to feel old.) . . . Unlike Larry Niven, I've never *seen* Beanie and Cecil (that being just before *my* time), so his description of puppeteer mouths isn't as clear as one might like. So it goes.

One thing you do notice on rereading Heinlein is that there are various throwaway lines and subtle—to a twelve year old—indicators pointing toward the later Heinlein: Suggestions of a humans-*uber-alles* philosophy (Heinlein is a human chauvinist nowadays, but why does Lupoff call him "racist"? I know of no racism in anything later than conceivably the original version of *Sixth Column)*; perhaps a somewhat unbecoming cultural imperialism; sexism; narcissism, etc. are all to be found in early work, but they are counterbalanced by other elements. (How could a thoroughgoing human chauvinist have created the dragon Sir Isaac Newton, or the Hroshi race in *Star Beast?)* In the later Heinlein, the counterbalances are removed. It is almost as if Heinlein was willing to sound middle-of-the-road as long as that was the only way to get published, but that when it became clear that anything with his name on it would sell (and probably win a Hugo), Heinlein decided to let it all hang out.

Back to Williamson: One difference between *Lord of the Flies* and *Tunnel in the Sky* resides in the educational level of the castaways. The *LoF* participants are, as I recall, public-school pupils. The *Tunnel* people are older—H. S. seniors who have had educations looking more like current college, and college people. Practically all of them are old enough to vote under 1977 law. Most (with the pointed exception of the protagonist) are sexually mature. I think they survive as a community because they have been socialized

already. (*All* of these people have either graduated H. S.—very good high schools—or are within a few weeks of doing so. You can't say that about *any* contemporary society. As far as formal preparation goes, the *Tunnel* society is off to a better start than any heretofor existing.)

I think, with the help of Williamson's comments, I've finally got Stephen Antell pegged. He's deep down a classicist, much like Gibbon, sadly born later than his time. He thinks that everything emerges full-flowering in a Golden Age (be it SF, religion, or whatever), and from there on it's all downhill, at least until Fate decides to chuck some new wonder into the sad old world. Not many of those left—these days practically everyone either has some sort of progress orientation, or thinks that the world is just going around in circles. Classicists are thus an endangered species, and steps should be taken to preserve this one. . . . I agree with Steve that the best approach to the ghetto problem is to ignore it. If your SF is good enough (like *Left Hand* or *The Dispossessed)*, you'll transcend the "ghetto" and reach a wide audience without worrying about it. If, as with Gunn's *The Listeners* or Bova's *Millennium*, you consciously *try* to write with "broad appeal," you're condemning yourself to something second-rate. You may get the transient glory and the financial rewards of a big sale (if you get lucky), but who will remember you in twenty years? That's not the way Heinlein or Clarke built up the backlists that made them rich, either, so even in terms of monetary reward the course has its dangers. . . . Remembering some odd arguments I've been in (including one with Antell, who insisted that fuzzy-headed mystics were taking over science fiction, which previously had been a bastion of clear-thinking rationalism; while I maintained that the cancer of godless atheistic Jacobin freethinking was gnawing at the vitals of the sfnal commonwealth, now that the defenders of true religion such as Boucher, Smith, Lewis, and all were no longer with us to defend it), I've decided that Steve is absolutely right that "human beings just like seeing themselves as members of a persecuted minority." This is a curious state of affairs, and I wonder why it is. So we can blame our failures on our membership in some group rather than our personal incapacity? A daunting thought.

[I know how you feel—I took The Star Beast *off the shelf to get the correct spelling for Hroshli and ended up re-reading the darned thing from start to finish. . . still holds up very nicely, too. Speaking of which, I read JW Campbell's "All" in the Pyramid released* The Space Beyond, *then re-read RAH's "Sixth Column." "All" was written just a few years before "Sixth Column;" the plot, the ideas, nearly everything's the same. Campbell's writing doesn't hold up, though; his characters are the thinnest cardboard, his dialogue stilted and unreal; Heinlein's characters are still living, breathing human beings, 36 years after the story was published. And the story still grips you, is just as real these long years after.*

I'm cutting off debate about what Steve Antell is or isn't. If the two of you want to go at each other with pen and paper, you know where the other lives. But comments on comments on comments get boring very fast.]

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The best service that *Algol's* presenting now seems to be DiFate's art column. Okay, SF art has been a hot publishers' item for a couple of years now, and I'm sure some critical views of it, rather than just the collections of reproductions that seem predominant, have been coming out, but the presence of an ongoing analytical column devoted to the art, by one of the artists, is of some significance. The Powers column pointed this out strongly to me: I've known about Powers and admired him for years, nearly everyone has, and everyone interested in books as objects talks about his work when it comes out, but the level of the talk has never, in my experience, gone beyond the recognition or impression stage. I'm certainly no critic or analyzer of art, so I don't have, and no one else I know has had, the ability to explain why we like, enjoy, or are just affected by his paintings, and how they enhance and express SF's visions (or just work as their own art). DiFate has given us at least a start on this; the interview next issue should bring Powers further out into the light.

Williamson's article, despite my feeling that it's a non sequitur, was a good readable overview of Heinlein's juveniles. And Ross Chamberlain's three drawings on pages 10 and 11 are especially wonderful—they recapture the feeling of those fifties SF juveniles nicely and because of this do more for me than any other art I can remember in *Algol.*

Ol' "Alfie" Bester's piece is misfit, if not downright gratuitous. I swear he could talk/write an article about duckshit landing in his afternoon cocktail and have the same whimsical and enlightening effect on me (which is to say none). And find someone slavering to publish it. That boy's just full of fun, in't he?

Lafferty's another boy whose fun is wasted on me—I haven't got an ear to listen right to his crazy voice, I think. But this story "Trepidatious Eyes" is one I enjoyed for a change (I noticed it even had a plot). Seems to me, besides obvious merits in its own right, it can be taken as an allegory of Lafferty writing: he's pleased his fans lately (and I don't know how many he's got anymore but hope they're still there) mainly by serving up minor variations of the same dish time after time, and I imagine, for some time now, Lafferty himself having been done in through some creative accident, his creations have taken over and are now skittering around the kitchen serving up *Lafferty.* Seems plausible enough. As a friend reminded me the other day, first a man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes the man.

When I first read Fred Pohl's column this time I thought, he's got some reasonable and apt things to say, but SF isn't like that *mostly,* only a few writers get involved in all these other ramifications, and isn't he finally being just a little offhandedly nasty?—can't a writer simply refuse to deal with some of the more distracting and dissipating effects on SF's bigness and still command respect? But I realized on rereading it that this is precisely what Pohl is getting at—you can maintain your personal and artistic integrity, still deal with the complicated necessities of being a well-known writer (Isaac Asimov still does his own submitting, contracting, and accounting, doesn't he?), and continue writing what you write, if temptation doesn't snatch you away from your purpose as a writer. Now I don't know who these "esteemed colleagues" are he mentions. Silverberg and Ellison surely haven't "quit" SF, nor perhaps Malzberg for reasons of money, however many other sour grapes may have been flung into their decisions, but the lure of the bucks must be tempting many fellows in SF these days (I sexistly imagine they're all men) away from the primary consideration, which is the work you do when you're alone. Filling someone else's plastic package is not really writing, as I see it, and I'm glad Fred Pohl has remade the distinction—it *is* a timely little "pohlemic."

Dick's review column remains one of *Algol's* strongest parts. He doesn't often review books that I would buy or read right away, but he's eminently talented at giving a look at current movements in SF (especially with his attention to small publishing houses), and filling in tangible bits of history. And the new shorter reviews, while not giving as much space for that historicity, are a reasonable augment; I don't see why they shouldn't continue.

Susan's fanzine column plays much the same role for me as Dick's: I've really been out of the fanzine scene for months and years, and have been wondering what's up; the trends seem to fit what I thought (and had heard) would be happening—more offset, "professionalism," at least physically, etc.; and it seems fandom is becoming a rather huge subculture—everyone's got their own lifestyles and perceptions to put out, respond to or with, and talk about; or just have space to talk, period. Which strikes me as being great: with all the dissolution around these days, some medium that allows communication, participation, and identity-raising (or affirming) on a personal, almost family level, is wonderful. Certainly beats television.

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"Sketches" is fast becoming a favorite featue of ALGOL for me—well written and thoughtful. Dealing as it does with subjective analysis and qualifications, there is much that Vincent says that causes me to disagree—making it a meatier column than is common. I find Vincent's comparison of Richard Powers to Bosch awfully far-fetched. If someone told Bosch to "Draw me a monster" or "Paint something that doesn't exist in *our* reality" he would have done it *realistically.* Every fragment of a Bosch painting is exciting and real; feet are feet, teeth are teeth, torture is torture, grotesque creatures and scenes *are* grotesque creatures and scenes. Powers, given the same task, would draw something entirely

unreal—shapes and lines and images, nothing tangible.

The comparison to Bosch is absurd on other levels. Powers' paintings are usually alike: they illustrate nothing and could be moved from book cover to book cover with equal effect. Yet the most surreal-appearing Bosch painting tells a *specific* story and could never have been purchased in wholesale lots to illustrate the first thing that came along.

I've noticed Powers' art since I was in elementary school, but never until now knew who he was. In spite of the above criticisms and of Vincent's comparisons—I think Powers is indeed a remarkable stylist, though not an "illustrator." I may never have the same admiration for Powers as for Sweet or Johnston, but thanks to DiFate I can now look at the intricacy of designs on Powers' surreal landscapes with a more appreciative eye.

And on the same topic, your editorial struck me as particularly important. Every reader, writer, editor and publisher should nurture the same respect for artists' copyrights as for copyrighted prose. This can't be over-emphasized until artists can be assured of recourse and back-up when they're ripped off.

Drake's profile/interview on van Vogt was well written, researched, informative, and interesting. Now, isn't this SO much better than transcripts off any ol' tape recorder? I trust this *is* indicative of how ALGOL will cover SF personalities in future issues.

Fred Pohl writes whimsically, but isn't "The Badness of Big" just a tad bit indulgent? How many writers—even among those we know best—have always maintained regular jobs because SF could never support them? Pohl makes the field sound wide open for the Big Time International Jet Set And Monte Carlo Million Dollar Bet—and that is somewhat misleading, yes? Surely Pohl's tower isn't *that* ivory. Tell him thanks for GATEWAY, by the way. I've enjoyed so little SF lately, so much of it is so stinky. GATEWAY is the first hard-SF novel to hold my attention throughout in a long time, and it's appreciated.

Susan's column was particularly informative this time around—but I still wish that dreadful title would go. Propellor Beanie indeed! I want to take exception to her repeated claims that fans are generally of a higher intelligence albeit socially inept. Socially inept maybe; but on any bell curve, every exceptionally bright fan has got to be matched by an exceptionally stupid fan, with the bulk of this close-knit populace somewhere in the middle. I'm a volunteer at a women's sexuality institute, where most of the women are radical feminists and who I personally perceive as many times more intelligent than the run of the mill "femme" fan who caters to male egoes and knows less about feminism and their own sexuality than a dead squirrel. So to me, feminists are more intelligent than anyone else (including and sometimes especially fans) PLUS they're not as a rule inept socially. What it really means is that to anyone who finds himself somewhere with people who share certain ideals and interests in common, that group seems magically smarter. But it ain't necessarily so. (One fascinating aspect of fandom is that even borderline morons can find a niche.)

Dick Lupoff tells us not to be "fooled into thinking *Merlin's Godson* is a sequel to *Merlin's Ring*." Lupoff does H. Warner Munn a severe disservice with such a "warning" because *Godson* is a *prequel*. *Ring* takes up immediately after *Godson*. Harold is presently working on the third and final book of this trilogy, *Sword of Merlin*, for Ballantine.

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Fred Pohl complains about what he calls "the badness of big." He complains about the necessity of dealing with agents, lawyers, Hollywood people, speaking engagements. He longs for the good old days when SF was a cottage industry; to participate one had to have another source of income and, in effect, subsidize the effort. Thus the old notion of science fiction writers who were "really" college profs, newspaper reporters, night-watchmen, trade journal editors, scientists, or housewives. Nobody made a *living* from that suff. (If you think I picked those alternate occupations at random, I didn't. I was recalling Eric Temple Bell, Clifford Simak, Rog Phillips, Seabury Quinn, G. Harry Stine, Betsy Curtis. Numerous other examples are available.)

Another way to do it was to be a kid living on an allowance from one's family, or struggling along oneself by sharing a slanshack with three or four similarly impoverished idealists.

These were the good old days? Kitten-poop! They were the *bad* old days! They were *terrible!*

And Pohl knows it, as he reveals by his acknowledgement that he's been rich and he's been poor, and rich is better. But by a sort of Orwellian double-think he's able to acknowledge this truth in the middle of his polemic and then go right on wailing about having to use a lawyer, an agent, an accountant, etc.

You know what Pohl is doing? He's looking back at those old jagged-edge days though eyes misty with the unshed tears of regret for his lost boyhood. He also sits in his comfortable home with his comfortable income and his comfortable position in the world, and says, Gosh, wasn't it terrific when we were poor and struggling!

No, Fred, it wasn't. You just think it was. Hey, if you'd rather be poor and struggling, I'll swap incomes with you. How about that?

Of course, Fred has about twenty-five years head start on me as a pro. Twenty-five years in which to establish his identity, make his contacts, build up his back-list of works in print or available for reissue, win his honors, up his prices. . .

In 2002 AD, maybe I'll be sitting back, longing for the good old days when I had to sweat and struggle for every nickel. I should live so long, first. Then I can worry about how I'll be feeling.

But it irks me to read this kind of stuff. Well, it doesn't *just* irk me. I find it interesting and amusing and all else aside the fact is that I admire Fred Pohl as a writer and editor and I like him as a person. And I enjoy reading his column in *Algol* and hope to see it grow.

But. . . but. . . Listen, Fred, I think you've lost touch with the realities of life of the ordinary journeyman writer. If you want to re-acquaint yourself with these realities, here's what you can do. Arrange to disappear as Fred Pohl. Re-emerge, maybe, using a post office box address, under a pseudonym. Call yourself, oh, Paul Frederickson, not to strain the imagination too severely.

Go back to those markets where you count yourself lucky to pull 3c a word for your short stories instead of 2c. Go back to having to fight in hopes of getting $2500 for a novel instead of $2000. (Oh, I know in the good old days it was a penny a word instead of half-a-cent, and $1200 for a novel; coffee didn't cost $5 a pound then either!)

Try that for a while, Fred, and see if you find it so oppressive to have to hire lawyers and agents and accountants to handle your business deals for you.

I think you'll change your story pretty fast.

Right now your story sounds an *awful* lot like "Let 'em eat cake." And you know what happened to the famous person who said *that!*

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After the second installment, I want to register my admiration for Vincent DiFate's column on SF art. My only regret is that the installments aren't longer and more involved.

Respecting gadget art, there are some other workers I would like to see considered. One of them is James Steranko, whose work is somewhat sparse. In the few available gadget renderings he had done, there is a spirit of complexity and grace that begins to capture an image of the *potential* of technology. . . in the sense of technology being beautiful and austere all at the same time. I have in mind the cover he did for Hal Clement's *Iceworld*, several years ago, featuring a robotesque central figure of an almost rapacious aspect. His work goes back into the comic-book genre, where the panels are sometimes replete with the most fantastic gadgetry backdrops and alien vessels.

Another one is Jack Gaughan, who did a lot for my appreciation of E. E. Smith by creating some very evocative cover paintings for both the Skylark and Lensmen series. So good were these covers that a later printing featured all-new Gaughan covers. And, one of the most promising newcomers is Rick Sternbach, whose material has made its way to ANALOG and to some paperback covers for Larry Niven's novels. I want also to back up and make a comment on Dr. Ackerman's letter, wherein he expresses some mild disdain for the artwork of Sid Mead. If his judgement was informed solely on the basis of the panel shown in the column, I can understand his scepticism. But if he had seen other of Mead's work *(Playboy, Automobile Quarterly)*, he might well reconsider. My best recollection of Mead was artwork he had been commissioned by the Ford Motor Company to do, illustrating the progress of transportation in the future. What came across was a powerful, fluid grace in the depiction of these vehicles. . . and a very solid sense of *texture*, an elaboration of background details that suggested the kind of cultural ambience that gave rise to and supported the gadgetry in center field. I would submit that this is a high accomplishment, and that it is indeed worthy of emulation by other "gadget" artists.

A digression on a remark made by Lupoff on the former tendency of A. Bertram Chandler to write SF as transposed nautical melodrama: as we are all aware, this is a thematic transposition that is rampant in the literature. I think it is time that it be given a good inspection. I, too, seized on any and all fogbound theories that held promise for justifying a faster-than-light drive. . . if only for fictional purposes. Until I realized that an FTL drive would destroy the aspect of interstellar travel that is totally unique: upon voyaging, one can *never* return to one's world of origin. . . because one has traveled in time, as well as space. It is this "you can never return" theme that holds such promise—and which is totally swept aside by the magical (and, let's face it, fantastical) invention of a device that *denies* reality as we currently know it. Why so many readers (and writers) want to shrink the universe to a Newtonian time-and-space scale is beyond my understanding. It's as though interstellar travel should be shrunk and distorted to such an extent that a seafaring analogy can be made to hold up. But it doesn't. And it won't.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Michael Carlson, Richard Labonte, Eric Lindsay, Arthur C. Clarke, Ron Gillies, Fred Fowler, Élaine Bloom, Bob Frazier, John Chas. McCormack, Phyllis Gotlieb, Doug Hoylman, Nelson Black, Paul C. Allen, Fred Jakobcic, Richard Garrison, Lee Vernon, Ruth Parker, W. R. Findlay, Terry Hughes, A. Bertram Chandler, Doug Fratz, doug barbour, Ursula K. Le Guin, Oyvind Myhre, Jerry Page, Jim Allan, Richard Brandt, Noah Fox Stewart, Ted Koppel, Michel Basilieres, Mark Mansell, Cyril Simsa, D. A. Bray, Jim Gunn, and lotsa others. Keep those cards, letters and articles coming, people; we need everyone of you to succeed in The Big Push for fame, fortune, and egoboo!

ALGOL's PEOPLE

SUSAN WOOD: "I seem to have spent the last ten years collating a variety of fanzines, and moving from university to university setting up science fiction classes. On the way from Back East to Out West, I collected one-and-a-half Hugoes, half a Guest-Of-Honour-ship (Aussiecon, 1975), and a doctorate in Canadian literature. (Canlit is a whole nother fandom. There are only three Canlit-and-SF specialists in the known universe and we're all going to be at U.B.C. this summer.) I now teach Canadian literature, SF, children's fantasy, and other strange and interesting things (like composition) at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. In my spare time, I run a hotel for visiting fans, am active in a tenant's co-op, help produce various fanzines, participate in the Women's Apa, am Toaster for the Flushing in 1980 bid, answer my mail infrequently, and water my collections of pet Avocado plants regularly. I am an honorary member of First Fandom, Aussiefandom, and East Bay Gafiate fandom; and share the title of Duchess of Canadian Fandom with Gina Clarke. My ambition is to teach Canadian Literature at either U.C./Berkeley or Melbourne University." ■

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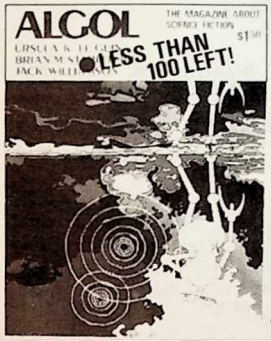

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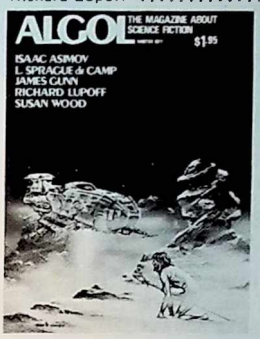

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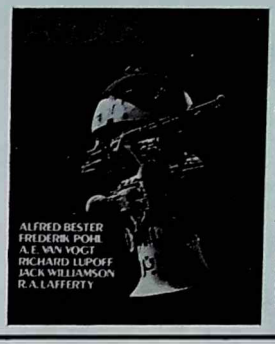

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Aug. 26-28 DEEPSOUTHCON. Parliament House, Birmingham ALA. GoH: Michael Bishop. Fan GoH: Charlie and Dena Brown. Toastperson: Hank Reinhardt. Registration: $5. Write: Meade Frierson, 3705 Woodvale Rd., Birmingham ALA 35223.

Aug. 26-28. BUBONICON 9. Ramada Inn East, Albuquerque NM. GoH: Gordon Eklund. Registration: $5. Write: Bubonicon, P.O. Box 13282, Albuquerque, NM 87112.

Sep. 2-7 SUNCON. 35th World Science Fiction Convention. Hotel Fontainebleau, Miami FL. GoH: Jack Williamson. Fan GoH: Bob Madle. Registration $15 attending, $7.50 supporting. Write: Worldcon 35, P.O. Box 3427, Cherry Hill NJ 08035.

Sep. 23-25. CONCLAVE II. Metro Ramada Inn, Romulus MI. GoH: Ben Bova. Fan GoH: Ann & Bob Passavoy. Special GoH: Robert & Ginny Heinlein. Registration: $4, $6 at the door. Write: Eastern Michigan Univ. SF Society, 117 Goodison, E.M.U., Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

Sep. 30-Oct. 2. PghLANGE IX. Sheraton Motor Inn North, Pittsburgh PA. GoH: Ginjer Buchanan, Linda Bushyager, Suzanne Tompkins. Registration: $5, $7 at the door. Write: Barbara Geraud, 1202 Benedum-Trees Bldg., Pittsburgh PA 15222.

Oct. 7-9. WINDYCON 4. Arlington Park Hilton, Arlington Hgts IL. GoH: William Rotsler. Fan GoH: Meade Frierson III. Registration: $5, $8 at the door. Write: Windycon 4, P.O. Box 2572, Chicago, IL 60690.

Oct. 28-30. ICON III. Carousel Inn. Iowa City, IOWA. GoH: Joe & Gay Haldeman. Registration: $5, $8 at the door. Write: SF League of Iowa State, P.O. Box 710, Iowa City IA 52240.

Oct. 28-30. WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 3. Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, CA. GoH: Richard Matheson. Toastmaster: Gahan Wilson. Registration: $17.50. Write: Dennis Rickard, 99 So. 12th Street No. 2, San Jose, CA 95112.

Nov. 18-20. PENULTICON. Cosmopolitan Hotel, Denver CO. GoH: Leigh Brackett. Fan GoH: Bruce Pelz. Registration: $7 to Nov. 1, then $10. Write: P.O. Box 11545, Denver CO 80211.

Jan. 6-8 1978. CHATTACON 3. Sheraton-Downtown, Chattanooga TN. MC: Arsen Darnay. Registration: $5 to 12/10/77, then $7. Write: Irvin Koch, c/o 835 Chattanooga Bank Bldg., Chattanooga TN 37402.

Feb. 10-12. ROC*KON. Holiday Inn, North Little Rock ARK. GoH: Bob (Wilson) Tucker. Fan GoH: Mike Riley. Write: Roc*Kon, P.O. Box 9911, Little Rock, ARK 72219.

Jul. 1-4. WESTERCON 31. Marriott Hotel, Los Angeles, CA. GoH: Poul Anderson. Fan GoH: Don C. Thompson. Registration: $7 to 6/1/78, then $10. Write: Westercon 31, P.O. Box 5785, Mission Hills CA 91345.

Aug. 30-Sep. 4, 1978 IGUANACON. 36th World Science Fiction Convention. Hotels Adams and Regency Hyatt and Convention Center, Phoenix AZ. GoH: Harlan Ellison. Fan GoH: Bill Bowers. Toastperson: F.M. Busby. Registration $15 attending to 12/31/77, $7 supporting. Write: Iguanacon, P.O. Box 1072, Phoenix AZ 85001.

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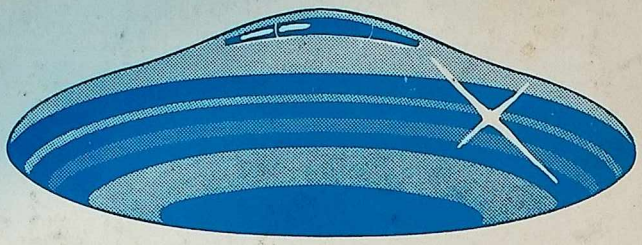

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