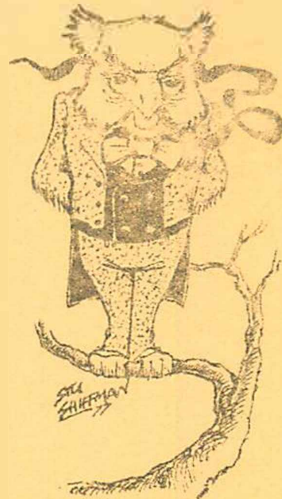


ASH-WING





ASH-WING 22

JULY 1977

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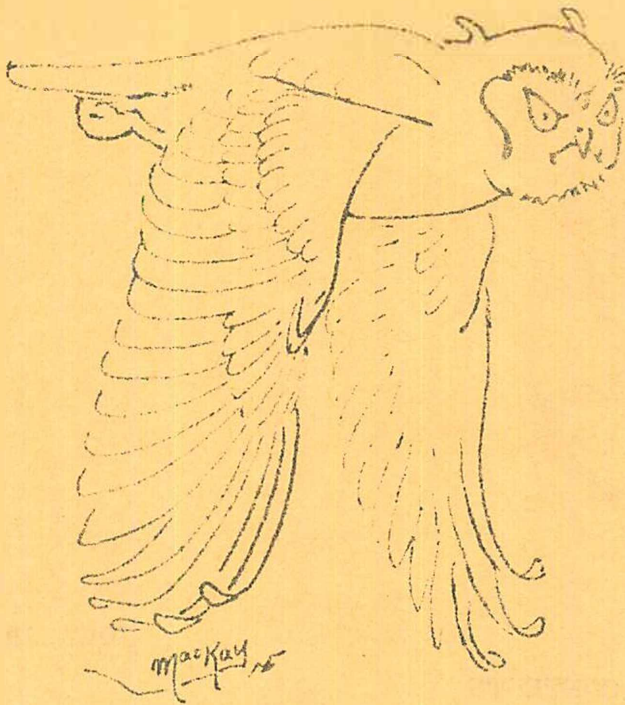
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ASH-WING 22 is a Bran & Skolawn Press Publication. Bran & Skolawn were the hounds of Finn Mac Cool who lived once upon a time in Ireland. Which is right across the Irish Sea from England. Which is where we are going as soon as I get this dumb fanzine done. Comes from Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. You can get it pretty easily, except you should be warned that I am going to trim the list after this mailing. So inscribe epistles which exude egoboo.



THE FREE COMMOTS

+Frank Denton+

I'll try my best to make this look as though it were a well planned issue, but it may be more than a bit difficult. Time is slipping away and there are certain deadlines to be met. In just about ten days from the time I write this and sometime before you read it, Anna Jo and I will be flying to England for a five-week stay. Say, haven't you heard that before. Yep, right here. Yes, I know that this will make the fourth trip to the British Isles, but there are still some spots which we have not seen, some places to explore at greater length and some people to visit. Let me thank all of the people who have written and invited us to drop in, or to stay the night. It's a wonderful feeling and while we won't be able to stop with all of you, we appreciate the invitations very much. I'm convinced that we could spend the entire five weeks doing nothing but visiting fans.

This trip is probably more poorly planned than any of the previous ones. At the moment we know that we are going to be stopping in London for five or six days. We will take in some plays, visit with a cousin from Michigan who is taking a flat for the summer, buy books and may even make it to the British Museum this time. More likely we will wander around the Limehouse Reach to see if there is anything left of the flavor which Sax Rohmer used in so many of his books about Fu Manchu. I'm rather looking forward to that.

Once we have a rental car I think that we are heading southwest once again to see more of Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. We hope to stop in to see Archie and Beryl Mercer who were so kind to us back in 1973. There is a promise to visit Plymouth once again, to see the Lizard Peninsula and some of the towns of Cornwall which we didn't visit before. From there we will head for beloved Exmoor. The way it has captured me would suggest that Anna Jo will have to tear me away from the place or we would spend the rest of the holiday there. Then the southern part of Wales beckons. We've seen some of the northern part, but never the south coast, especially the Pembroke Peninsula and the area around Fishguard, which everyone tells me is so lovely.

On the way north to the Lake District (another favorite spot) we will stop in

to see Peter Presford and 'Brood,' as he so signs his letters. I'm looking forward to that very much.

Some hiking and climbing in the Lake District and a visit with Anna Jo's cousin, Margaret, come next. Then we will press eastward to Northumberland where the National Park is said to be outstanding. Finally we will come down to Oxford for book buying, on to Henley to visit once again with Keith Roberts, over to Ruislip to visit with Dave and Cathy Piper and once again it will be time to come home. When I write all of that down in that way, it seems like a horrendous amount of area to cover in five weeks, but I know that it can be done, and rather leisurely at that, so I'm not too worried. As a matter of fact, nothing is cast in concrete.

I feel more in need of a vacation than I have in a long time. Do you suppose that it's because I am getting older. The last couple of years at the college have been draining. Finances have not been of the best and it seems as though I spend most of my time trying to figure ways to make ends meet and still provide good library service. I am fortunate in having a staff in which I have complete confidence. When I walk out the door a week from Wednesday, I can pull down the shades on that part of my life and completely forget about it. I need desperately to get away and not think about the library for a while.

As for whether we make all of the points delineated above, it doesn't make a bit of difference whether we do or don't. We intend to laze through the countryside, stopping wherever our fancy is struck and we refuse to have a schedule push us. So we are looking forward to the trip a lot. Putting the rough outline down on paper here has made me realize that I have a better idea of what it is I want to see and do than I had thought. You see, there is a usefulness to fanzines after all. Sometimes I wonder.

IN MEMORIAM EDMOND HAMILTON

Edmond Hamilton's death a few months ago made a funny feeling in the pit of my stomach. I can't say that I have read anywhere near all that he wrote, but I am particularly fond of the three books which make up the 'Starwolf' series: The Weapon From Beyond, The Closed Worlds, and World of the Starwolves. I know that Ed gave a lot of people a great deal of pleasure over a fifty-year period.

Bob Brown is responsible for passing on to me the piece by E. Hoffman Price about Ed Hamilton. When he did so he said that Ed Price did not want it to be the exclusive property of any one fanzine editor. I know that it has been published by Reed Andrus in HARBINGER and probably in THE DIVERSIFIER by Chet Clingan. I almost hesitated to do it again. I have no idea how much overlap there may be among our several magazines, but I'd like to think that its appearance here will allow it to be read by perhaps a couple of hundred who do not receive either of those other fine magazines. It seems that it is the least I can do in memory of Ed Hamilton. And for some hours of good reading, The Best of Edmond Hamilton, edited by his wife, Leigh Brackett, is highly recommended. Many fine stories, so diversified, covering the entire period of his writing career, and none that can be called derivative or cliched. Perhaps the best thing you could do in memory of Ed Hamilton would be to procure a copy of this book and curl up with it for a good read.

My own memory of Ed Hamilton is one of the finest. It happened at Westercon in 1970, held in Santa Barbara at the Francisco Torres. I was a rank neo; it was Anna Jo's and my first convention. I had been lucky enough to connect with a fair number of the members of Slanapa. I had also been more than fortunate in meeting Roy Squires, who was oh so kind to a couple of people who didn't really know what it was all about. It had been a very fine introduction to the world of conventions. At the dead dog

party on the last evening, we found ourselves in the lounge in the company of Roy Squires, Jack Williamson, Leigh Brackett and Edmond Hamilton. I recall that we had a rousing conversation although for the life of me, I couldn't tell you what it was about. I was very much in awe of the pros (still am, don't let the facade fool you) and it gave me a very warm feeling to think that these people had time to converse with a couple who didn't have much of a background in science fiction at the time. I've since learned that it doesn't make an awful lot of difference. Well, Ed is gone. He gave us over 50 years of entertainment through his writing. I appreciate that. May he rest in peace.

WESTERCON XXX

I don't have an awful lot of space left to tell you about this year's Westercon. And from here on, it's directly on stencil. Time is afleeting. Of course, this Westercon will have to stick in my mind for a long time, as I had been invited to be Fan Guest of Honor. Jeff Frane wrote a marvelous piece about me for the program, and when he asked me how I liked it, all I could do is reach out and enfold him in a great big bearhug. It makes a person feel humble.

Of course, I had to do the speechmaking at the brunch, which was held on Sunday. Damon Knight was the Pro GoH and Kate Wilhelm was the Special Guest of Honor. I tried to keep my speech short when I was writing it, because I was certain they had much more important things to say. Prepared, my speech ran to 12 minutes. Damon had already given a Keynote Address on Friday evening, so at the brunch he spoke for about 30 seconds. Kate got up and had a page of funny one-liners about how you can identify science fiction. Then I was on my feet with what turned out to be the major banquet speech. I didn't have the heart to read it, after Damon and Kate so the prepared text acted as notes, but I'm told that it came off well. Sighs of relief.

I also gave my slide show of sites concerned with Arthurian Britain. Actually was asked to repeat it, as some people were costuming during the first showing and asked if I could do it again. Had about 300 the first time, and probably a hundred the second showing. I'm afraid that because of my concern for the speech and the slide show, the only other programming I attended was two fanizne workshops which were well attended, had good open discussion and went for about an hour and a half each. I know that I missed some excellent programming but I tried to spend my time with talking to people whom I hadn't seen in ages, or with new people from the Northwest who had never had the opportunity to attend a convention before.

Dan Steffan was out from the east coast, Lesleigh Luttrell and Jeanne Gomoll from Wisconsin. Denny Lien gave a smashing 'Mi-neapolis in '73' party. Gil Gaier never sat still long enough for me to talk seriously with him. Grant Canfield I hadn't seen in about three years. Gary Green and his wife were people I would like to have talked longer with. John Gustafson and Steve Fahnstalk from Pullman were excellent folk to get to know. Jim Zegel was attending his first convention and was fun to watch as he was bombarded by the sensations. Ole Kvern was another nice person to get to know, also from Pullman.

Of course, there were more old friends than I have room for. The Vancouver, B.C. people did a good job; the convention ran high with good feelings. A few Californians bitched a bit, but I think they were in a minority. It's obvious that I don't have room to tell you more. Nextish I'll try to do it justice, and I may have a neo's look from Jim Zegel. Why, you haven't even heard about The Flying Karamozovs, or the art show, or the Huxster Room, or A Room of Our Own. Lots left to tell and it is something that I can do on the plane since I can't sleep sitting up. People are always clamoring for more pages from me, anyway. So next time, you get it. Meanwhile stay well, have a good summer, and I'll tell you more about cons and trip next time around.

IN MEMORIAM - EDMOND HAMILTON

e. hoffmann price

Note to the Editor: although this is written at the suggestion of Jack Williamson, for THE DIVERSIFIER, I can not give any publisher an exclusive. Since I can compose only one expression in memory of my good friend, I offer it to any publisher who desires it.

Meeting Edmond Hamilton at Farnsworth Wright's apartment in Chicago and then going with him and Wright to Otis Adelbert Kline's dinner party, early 1931, was the beginning of a friendship which endured, growing ever closer until his death, February 1, 1977. I learned only last year that I was the first writer he ever met, and that it was I who had written the first fan letter he ever got.

No one knows how many followed mine, in the ensuing half century!

The whimsies of those forces which combine to shape life styles and travel patterns made the most of their good start, so that over the years Edmond and I saw a good deal of each other, with by far the greater portion of our association coming in the final twenty years of his life. By that time, we had seen the end of the pulp magazines which had engrossed us during our earlier years; and we had devised modes for dealing with that which we'd never imagined--a pulpless world. Although my ways and his were different, they offered us ever more frequent opportunities to meet, to share new interests, and, to savour the time-distilled essence of an eventful past.

As usual, a woman contributed much: Leigh Brackett. They married in 1946. Leigh, a novice fictioneer when they met, was not one to remain long at that level. In 1958, by which time she was doing screen plays, they'd spend a few months each year in Santa Monica, close to the studios. Come 1968, they set up a second home in the California High Desert, to avoid the rugged Ohio winters. With less than 400 miles from our front door to theirs, we were neighbors. And for this, I was grateful.

We had matured in such measure that our meetings had a richness which our adventurous beginner years had never had. Digesting what we had experienced was better than seeking the thrill of new enterprises. Our seasoned fellowship was so very fine that its termination leaves me numbed, and groping. I won't feel any pain until we roll down the drive and pull up at our second home, the Hamilton Guest Cottage, and Leigh comes out, alone, to offer food and drink.

Jack Williamson wrote, "Your letter about Ed's death is a hard jolt. . . . he was a part of my own life and now I can't help feeling that an important part of myself is missing. . ." I know what he means.

Jack met Edmond only a little while after I did, to boat their way down the Mississippi to New Orleans. They would winter in Key West, writing until weather

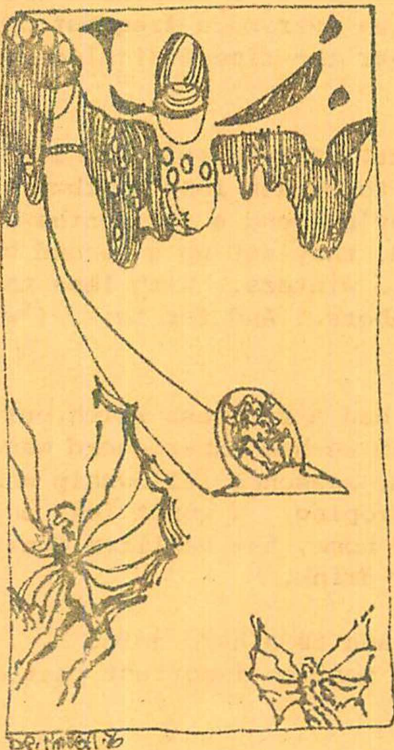
and funds baited them into higher latitudes, and westward, which included sojourns at the cattle-fattening hacienda of Jack's parents, in Eastern New Mexico. Having had all that comradeship during their earlier years, Jack knows well how I must feel about the termination of our neighborliness of Edmond's final years.

Jack also wrote, ". . . There should be some sort of memorial article written about him. . . and of course, you are the one to do it--I myself have been too much out of touch with Ed and Leigh for too many years. . ."

Jack's being so long out of touch was because he met the folding of the pulps by building a new life, that of Professor of English Lit. in the university at Portales, New Mexico. From observation, I know the academic life to be a species of serfdom. And I know how, in my own way, I lost touch with valued friends for too many years. Jack and I share the basics of this to such an extent that his words leave me wondering which of us is writing this thing.

I must restrict my words to a blending of the many hours Edmond and I sat in the pseudo-shade of a joshua tree, or, indoors, driven in by the High Desert's wind and sand. We had outlived his parents, his brothers-in-law, and the youngest of his sisters--and, since 1933, I'd been an honorary member of the clan. Also, the roster of deceased writers and editors had lengthened. We'd lost so many friends that we began to cherish our long ago enemies! Whenever we sat, we invited old memories, and they para-ed, invisible, yet living presences of dimension and reality which went far beyond mere remembering.

Virtually every writer is also a reader beyond the depth and breadth of the average literate person. In this, Edmond was unusual even among his peers. His long acquaintance with literature, from classical to contemporary, his half century or more of digesting history, biography, travel writings, as well as a mass of general information which could be classified only by an adept in the Dewey Decimal System, made me respect his evaluations of authors and their productions. Following neither vogue nor authority nor precedent, he spoke from assimilated experience, and be damned to dogma or teaching!



For example, he gave Bernal Diaz' memoirs of his participation in the conquest of Mexico a high rating among works he considered outstandingly well done. Although Diaz was far from a master of his own language, Edmond applauded because his writing was direct, and graphic; the old man characterized his fellow conquistadores his comrades and their commanders and many of the enemy in terse and vivid terms. Bernal Diaz got immediately to the heart of an event or situation. Edmond judged fiction accordingly, and wrote his best yarns in like manner. One which I have remembered for many a year was a presentation of what happened to the natives when American astronauts staked a claim on a newly discovered planet. It was Pale-Face versus Redman, all over again, stark, brutal, convincing, and true to our entire

tradition: no nonsense, and exterminate the bastards, they're a stumbling block in the pathway of civilization.

No sermon. No message. But, real.

What's It Like, Out There?--space age, de-glamourized, presented for what it is, pioneering, cruel and deadly business.

In fantasy, of which Hamilton wrote more than the science fiction fancier may suspect, there were stories such as He Who Has Wings:--no bushel baskets of adjectives, no dictionary dredging: none of the seeking to create moods or to poetize--he offered people who did things, things which required neither interpretation nor explanation, no more than did Bernal Diaz, or Charles Montagu Doughty (Travels in Arabia Deserta), or Emir Ousama, who wrote of his service with Saladin, ever tell you how you should feel.

Over the years, the 1926 Space Opera Hamilton became a writer better than the self conscious "literary" or "artistic" one. He demonstrated the validity of his claim that if you wrote enough and kept at it, you could not help but every once in a while do something better than your norm, and perhaps better than the other fellow's good or best. That's a fair, though over-simplified, expression of the Later Hamilton's view of it during the final years of his life.

After his almost terminal illness of 1972, in the few years which followed his slow recovery, he may well have sensed that he was running out of time and accordingly spoke his mind without unkindness and with the full awareness that one whose mission is so nearly accomplished can no longer be moved by anything as trivial as professional jealousy. I heard many an appraisal of writer and of editor: and all that Edmond had to say was worth hearing, the essence of experience wide and long.

When I came to the house in Kinsman, Ohio for the first time, Ed and Leigh introduced me to their collection of Chinese and Indian music, with excursions into Turkestan, Iran, and Indonesia. Not long after my departure, they taped my favorites to supply me with background music at the Lamasery. To make this a cultural exchange, I briefed them on the Leica and 35 millimeter camera work. At our next meeting, two years later, I could appreciate the subtleties of Oriental music: and there was nothing left for me to tell him or her about photographic methods. Systematically, Ed has mastered the basics and had then settled down to learning by experience. He's the only non-professional I've ever met whose opinions I found valuable.

Edmond's color photo of the Hall of Columns, at Karnak, is a magnificent piece of camera work, whether in 11x14 blowup or screen projected. Only an experienced cameraman can appreciate the excellence of that striking picture. But it was all quite simple: he'd selected the optimum viewpoint, fitted the appropriate lens to his Leica M-3, and made the exposure when the sun's angle gave the best modelling. And the Arab guide, leaning against a column, dramatized the tremendous bulk of each individual of that forest of columns.

As a traveller, Edmond was outstanding. Leigh was his match. From Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran and India, he knew the history of all that he saw: and going prepared, he saw much. In readying himself for a third round, he read the two-volume autobiography of Abdurrahman Khan, Amir of Afghanistan. He promised to get me a good shot of the Gate of Trumpets and Drums in Kabul. The failing of his health settled that third safari.

Of Oriental lands, I think he loved Iran the most dearly.

England, however, was his second home. Often, we'd sit by the hour, hearing him tell of the country, the people, and the cuisine, which he called just right. For years he had had many friends in Great Britain's writer fraternity and among the book dealers of London.

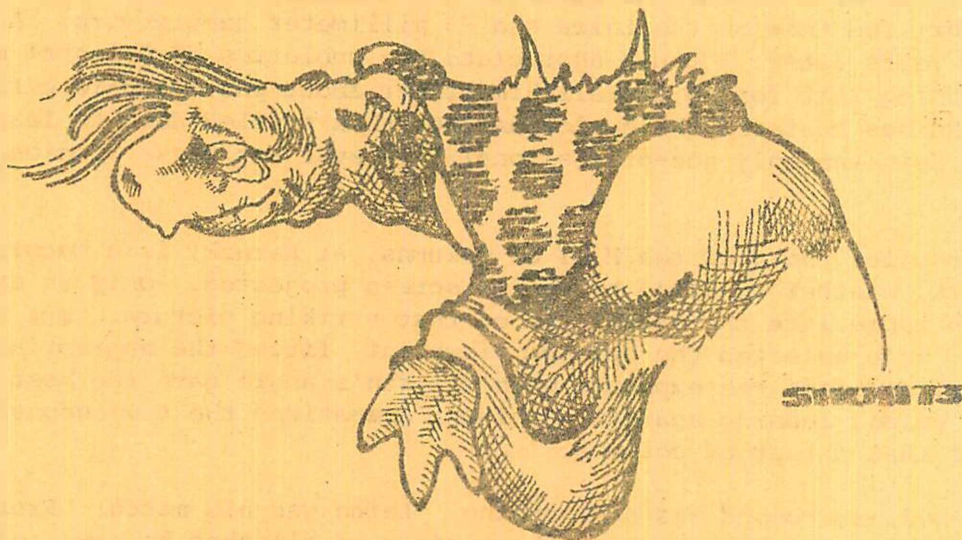
Autumn of 1976, after attending the fantasy con in New York, weekend of Halloween, he and Leigh took another trip to Great Britain. From his telling of it, I knew that if he'd regarded it as a farewell, he could not have had a finer!

December 9th, when Leigh was conducting a seminar at San Francisco State College, we had a four-hour session with him and her at Fisherman's Wharf. Though frail, and none too steady on his feet, Edmond was in good spirits. Slowly, he and I followed the women to Grotto No. 9.

The news of Edmond's death was no surprise: it was a devastating jolt. Edmond Hamilton, my loyal and generous friend these past forty-six years, was one of the few links, other than memory, which bound me to my early fictioneering days. I knew well indeed what Jack Williamson meant when he said that he could not help feeling that an important part of himself had departed with Edmond's death: and I fancy that Jack would understand if I said that it would be very good if I could swap a few of the Later Hamilton Days for a handful of his Early Hamilton Days.

Meanwhile, in this good friend's death, we survivors experience the meaning of that Chinese proverb, "An inch of sundial shadow is worth a foot of jade."

* * *



THE SECOND DIMENSION

eric bentcliffe

It isn't often I'm moved, these days, to write about science fiction. I am an old-and-tired-fan, and I have my reputation to consider. However, Eric Mayer's article, "Caricature in SF," in the twentieth issue of Ash-Wing has actually had me thinking about sf again, instead of just reading it; enjoying it. I think what I'm about to type is complimentary to the ideas Eric has about sf--and certainly, to the endnote by Leigh Edmonds following Eric's article.

First of all I think I'd better loosely define what type of science fiction I'm talking about--it may be a looong while since I last wrote about science-fiction, but I do recall that it's always safest to loosely define it; that way you have an 'out' if you back yourself into too tight a corner. Now what I'm going to write about (and what I think Eric and Leigh were also concerned with) is basically the sf which concerns ideas, credible but probably slightly fantastic ideas, and which succeeds in conveying to the reader that these are an entertaining possibility in the future. I'm not, quite definitely not, relating anything herein to that which can be called New Wave...Nouvelle Vague, is the French for it and conveys the meaning far better; i.e., New but very vague!

There are, in effect, two main camps (I use the word advisedly) of science fiction fans--there are all sorts of gradations in between, but let's not get too involved, eh? One is composed of the Literati and their, ahem, camp followers. They prefer stories in which form and style are more important than content and idea; they usually also, for some reason, prefer to write, and read of, stories set in the quite near future most of which deal with the results of one form of pollution or another. Possibly one of the reasons for this is that whilst they have beautiful handwriting, their imaginations aren't too hot. They often call their genre Speculative Fiction, or eve, Fantabulation. This type of story is not particularly relevant to what I'm groping towards (nice phrase that, Eric. Hi, Kathy!), but it does lead me to observe that by its very style and short-term look-ahead it is unlikely to be read in only a few years time--unlike, science fiction.

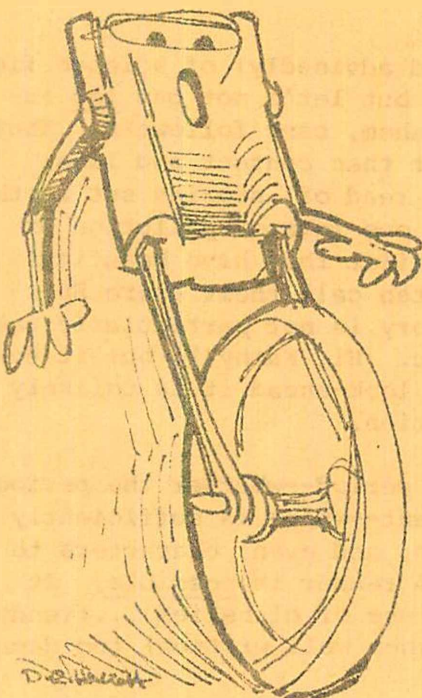
For goo sf must be "Timeless". It must be set in a period--whether the period is the past, the future, or a sideways jaunt, is irrelevant--which is sufficiently divorced from present day reality for its ideas, concepts, and even, characters to evolve in any direction which the author can convince the reader is possible. It must involve its reader in that well known phrase, 'suspense of disbelief'...trendy stories of the near future can never do this; they are (when well written) too damned easily believed.

We want entertainment (well, I do!); if you want to hear dire news about the future you only have to read a paper or switch on the Box. We want entertainment (all together, now) that takes us away from our mundane world and transports us literally, into an interesting future/past/alternate world where things are alien, but believable when we let our imagination stretch.

We prefer those stories to be peopled with believable characters, but since this is an 'alien' world we're in we can't expect to always understand them; or even to presuppose that the author can, either. Providing they act in such a way which is logical to enhance the ideas, the creation the world in which they inhabit, the cohesiveness of the story; that is, I think, sufficient. Here, again, I think is the way in which writers of that which I'll refer to as speculative fiction (it's their label, not mine!) err. Their futures are often inhabited by characters too similar to those found in any London Underground, or late night chemist...they talk contemporary jive, they have contemporary mores as regards sex, politics, and religion. Now, I'm not saying that their way of life is wrong (let everyone go to Riverworld in their own canoe), but I am saying that it is wrong to assume that the future will be theirs... that in the relatively-near or real far-out future people will act and talk (and be real people, and defecate and fuck all over the pages) as do some of those who, currently, consider themselves prophets of the genre known as science fiction.

As regards characterization.....

Your typical science fiction characters must also be timeless, like those in many of the stories Eric Mayer mentions. Asimov's Robots are an excellent example. They are believable in their actions within the framework of the author's creation. So are the characters in Larry Niven's The Mote in God's Eye; they are stereotypes.... no, that's wrong; not stereotypes, monotypes, but they behave in a believable manner in relation to the circumstances they are placed in in a way that is to be expected by any average student of human nature. They don't date the story by their language, they don't date the story by their actions or their mores. A science fiction character must be an average of human behaviorisms, not a particular time-bound type-- unless, of course, he is a time-traveller used for purpose of enhancing, driving home, a particular point or ethic necessary to the story.



Depth of characterization is another thing.... or another word....in the context of sf it should mean making the character more believable in relation to the world in which he finds himself. And, thus making the story itself more believable. Anyone who tries to delineate the man-of-the-future in a finely drawn, independent of the story idea way, is going to get himself (and his inveterate fan reader) very confused.

It isn't, I think, purely coincidental that the science fiction movies which have won fairly unanimous approval as the best Hollywood has produced, 2001, Destination Moon, Forbidden Planet, have also been notable for the fact that the characters therein have been only marginally realized. The only 'star' I can recall playing in any one of them was Walter Pidgeon whose dimensional reality in Forbidden Planet was less than that of HAL in 2001! The only successful sf films have featured unknowns in roles which minimized personality. They, too, were monotypes.

Obviously, this line of thought must get around to what-kind-of-people-are-we-who-like-this-type-of-story, this science fiction. I'll leave major conclusions in this area open to conjecture, but I would say that it appears that we prefer to use our imaginations--we like a story/film to which we can add a dimension or two when reading/seeing. We do not want every possible facet of a character or world realized for us; we want to add to the author's creation as we go along.....we want to be part of the story.

At least, that's the way I see it, and I don't think it's a bad way to be.

-- Eric Bentcliffe --

* * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * *

SONNET TO A SLEEPING LIZARD

A half-asleep old lion shakes
his fly-filled mane and forces growls;
a tiny marmot hears and quakes;
a monkey skreeks; the lion scowls.

Beneath a growing fern there is
a common lizard, hibernating;
aware (painfully so) of his
reptilian problems of relating.

Jungle lizards aren't supposed to
sleep the steamy summer by.
All the rules are opposed to
letting sleeping lizards lie.

But lecturers are jungle bores
and lose their words to lizard snores.

-- Michael R. Carlson --

A RETIRED FANTASY FAN'S DAY

chester d. cuthbert

::: Some of A-W's readers had their interest piqued by mention of Rick Stoker's book buying quests which appeared in his recent article for Ash-Wing. Chester Cuthbert seems to have gone a step further and provided us with an insight into his own book buying wanders in the city of Winnipeg. He modestly said that it was probably too long and would not merit the space. Listen, old friend, it more than merits the space. So, without further ado.....:

April 13th, 1977. Left home at (:15 to mail a parcel of books and magazines to a Toronto dealer. The Bay (formerly Hudson's Bay Company) opens at 9:30; parcel cost \$2.50 including \$100 insurance coverage. Found \$10.89 worth of books in the Book Department, so arranged for delivery; too large a parcel to carry while book-hunting elsewhere.

Cole's next. Searched the main floor and basement, only new books stocked. Purchased Concrete Island by J.G. Ballard for 79¢, and The Great Soul Trial by John G. Fuller for \$1.99. At these prices for hardcover books, they average less than the cost for new paperbacks. I may never read the Ballard: his one book I have read did not impress me; but it enlarges my collection. The Fuller is important in my collection of psychical research material, and will be read as soon as I can find time for it.

Eaton's. Their display of bargain and remaindered books is the same from which I purchased all I wanted several weeks ago; I found nothing on their bargain table.

Classics. Two tables of quality paperbacks offered at half price. I saw four titles of interest, but none essential enough to warrant purchase because of money and storage space problems.

Classics second shop; its bargain outlet. Bought Many Voices by Eileen J. Garrett; I have a copy, but this was reduced from \$1.49 to 79¢, and Stuart Gilson or another of the members of the Winnipeg Science Fiction Society will want it. The author was a medium; head of an American publishing firm; and important in promoting the study of psychic phenomena; this is her autobiography. Also purchased The Tunnel Under the Channel by Thomas Whiteside, for 50¢ reduced from 99¢. So many fantasy and science fiction stories have been based on the idea of a tunnel under the ocean between England and France that this is an interesting assoc-

ational book for such a collection.

The Goodwill's book gallery contains possibly 8000 books and magazines. The shops of several book dealers are within walking distance, and although it has been the policy of the Goodwill Industries from time to time to refuse to sell books to dealers, the fact that out-of-town dealers and book scouts who cannot be identified frequent these shops has weakened that prohibition, and I have often seen local bookstore proprietors making purchases. The books are unorganized; most are on wall shelves or on tables, but some are in cartons on the floor; and since dealers have near access to the shop, the time necessary to look through the accumulation of material is not often warranted, and I visit the shop only once in six weeks or two months. From a commercial point of view, the two hours I spent would not be economically justified, but I enjoy browsing and I seldom leave the Goodwill without buying something.

Today's finds were" Animal Astronauts by Bergwin & Coleman, the story of the animals who pioneered space flight; The Picts and the Martyrs by Arthur Ransome, a children's book I already have, but this copy might be in better condition than mine; The Unbearable Bassington by H.H. Munro (Saki), a non-fantasy book which I have already read, but this is a Toronto first edition (1912) in good condition except for foxing of end-papers; Wild Youth and Another by Gilbert Parker in good condition for my Canadian fiction collection; a book club edition of Humorous Tales by Rudyard Kipling for my Kipling collection; Stand By for Mars! by Carey Rockwell, a "Tom Corbett Space Cadet" juvenile for my science fiction collection; a dust jacketed copy of the Triangle Books reprint of Calling Dr. Kildare by Max Brand for my Frederick Faust collection; Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang: The Magical Car by Ian Fleming, a British Pan quality paperback illustrated by John Burningham; Love of Seven Dolls by Paul Gallico in the British Penguin edition which I may not have, although I have read the book and have the American paperback edition; Ice and Iron by Wilson Tucker (Ballantine paperback); and Ozma of Oz by L. Frank Baum, the Scholastic Book Services paperback which will possibly substitute for the hardcover in my collection if the hardcover is wanted by someone like Ben Indick who is an avid "Oz" books collector. The six hardcovers were 50¢ each; the four paperbacks came to \$1.35. I can remember when the Goodwill's minimum price for a hardcover was 15¢; now it is 50¢. I placed my parcels from Classics and Cole's in the big grocery bag containing the Goodwill books, so I would have only one parcel to carry. Comic World, operated by Doug Sulipa, was not yet open, so I went from there to Red River Book Shop.

There I found James Hall and Randy Reichardt, newly returned from attending the science fiction convention in Minneapolis last weekend. They were enthusiastic about their good time there; insisted that Winnipeg fandom had been publicized largely by James's T-shirt bearing the words "Decadent Winnipeg Fandom" and by some posters taken there by Garth Danielson; said that Bob Stimpson had purchased about \$200 worth of pulps before quitting simply because he had lost his appetite for buying, and not because there was no more material to buy; and promised to be at my place next Saturday afternoon, where and when the local fans generally meet. Randy, whose fanzine, WINDING NUMBERS, has publicized "Emerging Winnipeg Fandom," had his car parked at a meter near expiration, so he and James left; and shortly afterwards Chris Rutkowski, head of UFOFORUM: Ufology Research of Manitoba, who is now being subsidized by the Winnipeg Planetarium with office space, a secretary's services, and their library, entered. Chris found one paperback for himself on UFOs, and a romantic Barbara Cartland Harlequin paperback for his wife-to-be (next month); and as he lives only about a dozen blocks from my home, we decided to take the same bus.

I made no purchases at Red River Book Shop. They have on display about 1500 sf paperbacks, 150 sf hardcovers, 350 paperback occult or psychic books and 50

hardcovers; and I know I want many of these, but am awaiting their decision to purchase a quantity of books from me, which would give me space to devote to an expansion of my own collection.

Before boarding a bus, Chris and I stopped in at Paperback Galaxy, which stocks the largest selection of sf material available new in Winnipeg. I expressed regret to the proprietors at my not doing business with them, but reiterated what I had told them a year or so ago that I purchase all my new books from F & SF Book Co., Inc., Staten Island, New York, with whom I have dealt for the past quarter century. One of the men said he would like to see my collection and would be free next Monday, so he is to telephone if he is coming.

On the bus, I showed Chris some of my Goodwill purchases, and he said he would try to attend the meeting on Saturday.

At home was a parcel from a Regina book dealer containing a copy of the first edition of Ben Barzman's Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. This dealer has supplied me with several books I require for compiling my Checklist of Fantasy and Science Fiction Books by Canadian Authors; but I already have this book in several editions.

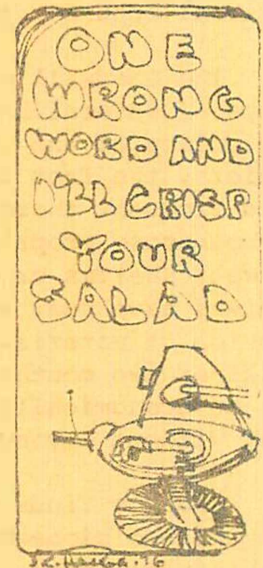
After supper I watched the first two-hour installment of "Howard, the Amazing Mr. Hughes" which I found interesting. I read the day's Winnipeg Tribune, then went to bed and read a few chapters of Lost Valley by Katharine Fullerton Gerould, a non-fantasy novel which has, on page 190, the following interesting passage:

"The Giardini tenement-- a little old wooden house squeezed between two modern rookeries of brick--was a breeding place of hatreds. If--as I have heard that some people believe--walls could keep the vibrations of the human passions they have contained, and give them out again after many days, letting the stored horror flow about the helpless minds of later tenants: if such a thing could be, woe to the people who might succeed the Giardinis in that rotting house..."

And so to sleep.

Today is April 14th. Most of this morning has been spent typing this account of yesterday's wanderings, and I have come full circle to my purchases at The Bay. But the books have not yet been delivered, so my conclusion must be delayed.

Reviewing the foregoing, I remembered an incident I failed to recount. While Chris and I were browsing in Red River Book Shop, a Post Office letter-carrier who had bought a couple of A. Merritt items from me some time ago asked me if I thought he had paid too much for a copy of Skull-Face and Others by Robert E. Howard. He had been purchasing it from Red River in installments, and he had just made his last payment of a total \$130.00 and had taken delivery. I had seen the book, which was a slightly worn and soiled copy with dust jacket, and whose only major flaw was some water-staining involving about an inch and a half of fifty pages in the center of the book. I told him I had sold a copy in near-mint condition, with two minor tears at the bottom corners of the dust jacket, to a local collector a short time ago for \$225.00, and that I thought the difference in price represented a reasonable allowance for the water damage, though some collectors would not consider the dam-



aged copy at any price. There is presently a rage for Howard material, and prices have soared; but, like the stock market, no one can foresee what prices may be a few years from now.

April 18th, 1977. At 11:15 a.m. The Bay's books were delivered by mail (Parcel Post, Postage \$1.60). Is it possible that this is cheaper and less trouble for Department Stores than the use of their own delivery trucks? I am amazed. But do they pay so little for books that it is possible for them to make a profit on my purchases? Here's the list:

Hardcovers:

Dixon, Jeane: Reincarnation and Prayers to Live By (\$2.50)	2 copies @ 29¢	.58
Hale, John: The Paradise Man (\$5.00)		.77
Woodhouse, Martin: Mama Doll (\$6.95)		.99
Zeigfreid, Karl: Radar Alert (\$3.50)		.99
Williams, T. Owen: A Month for Mankind (\$3.95)		.99
Blofeld, John: The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet (\$6.95)		1.49

Paperbacks: (The first twelve titles at 2 for 99¢)

Carter, Lin: Sky Pirates of Callisto (Orbit \$1.75)		
Parry, Michel: Chariot of Fire (Orbit \$1.50)		
Buckland, Raymond: Guide to the Supernatural (Tandem \$1.25)		
Forrest, David: The Undertaker's Dozen (Tandem \$1.35)		
O'Toole, George: An Agent on the Other Side (Futura \$2.50)		
Elder, Michael: Flight to Terror (Pinnacle \$.95)		
Elder, Michael: Paradise Is Not Enough (Pinnacle \$.95)		
VanGhent, Dorothy: The English Novel (Perennial \$1.45)		
Mead, Margaret: Growing Up in New Guinea (Dell \$1.25)		5.94
Garner, Alan: The Weirdstone of Brisingamen (Encounter \$1.25)		.13

All these books were purchased merely to extend my collection, or for trading. It is obvious that by watching the bargain tables at department stores it is often possible to purchase books for less than one would pay second-hand dealers and bookshops.

Obviously, also, one has to ignore the value of the time expended to consider that the savings on the cost of books is worthwhile. Certainly the re-sale of these books would not bring more than the cash expended. My collection was extended (though not likely improved greatly) by my day's wanderings. So it goes.

RIDDLE

Bright jaundiced yo-yo,
what tricks can you do?

Around the world,
over the top,

& a wicked all-day sleeper too.

Michael R. Carlson

FROM BACH - TO ROCK

OR, GOING FOR BAROQUE!

by Bob Spale

Ably assisted by Carol Spale

(The most voluptuous Editor a budding boy writer ever had)

Serious music is another term for what most people call Classical Music. Technically, of course, Classical refers to that period between Baroque and Romantic, and is best exemplified by Mozart and Haydn. Vivaldi was one of the great Baroque composers and Bach the culmination. Beethoven led the transition from Classical to Romantic, with Tchaikovsky one of the outstanding examples of Romantic composers.

The music written by all these men is usually referred to as 'Classical Music' and in an effort to be more accurate, some people refer to it as 'serious music'. I'm going to be nit-picking and point out, first, that 'serious' implies something which is solemn, grave, and not very much fun, and second, that it is the only music which can or should be taken seriously.

That the first is false is self-evident to anyone who listens to such music. That the second is false -- well, I can only say that my wife and I like all music (with the exception of Country and Western) and take it with the same degree of seriousness. We pay as much attention to, and get turned on as much, by Neil Diamond and Ramsey Lewis as we do by Beethoven and Bach.

Why should Schoenberg be regarded as a 'serious' composer and Glenn Miller not? Miller's compositions have been heard by many more people than Schoenberg's. But does popularity determine the worth of a composer? During his lifetime, Mozart was outshone by several composers whose only claim to fame today is that they were contemporaries of Mozart's. A hundred years from now, we may better know where Arnold Schoenberg or Glenn Miller wrote better music -- or they both may be forgotten. Who knows? Who cares?

When Carol and I got married, we not only merged our families and libraries, we merged our record collections. While we both enjoy the entire spectrum of music, we have fortunately concentrated on different areas when it comes to buying records, so that out of 1000 or so record albums, we have only one duplicate (Neil Diamond's Tap Root Manuscript). This complete difference in record collections is a matter

of emphasis, rather than exclusion. For instance, Carol's favorite male vocalist is Frank Sinatra; mine is Cesare Siepi; but we both enjoy both of them. It also helps to broaden our musical horizons -- I've acquainted Carol with Smetana, and she introduced me to Blood, Sweat and Tears (more fondly known in this household as Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato).

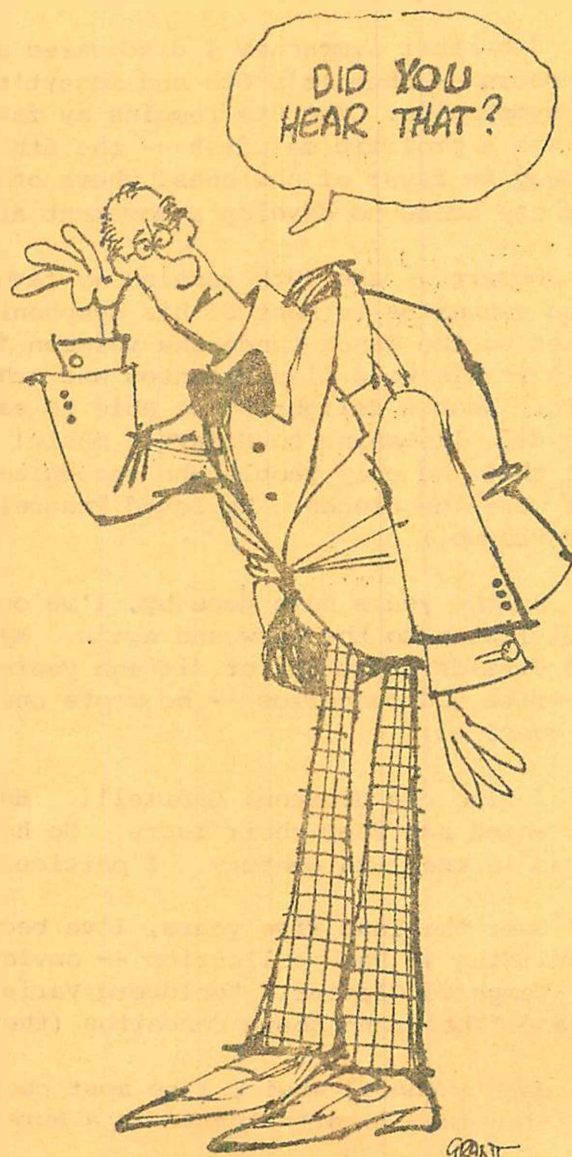
While our collection goes from Rock to Bach, the left-hand side of the record storage cabinet tends to concentrate on Jazz. The Preservation Hall Jazz Band of New Orleans is one of our favorites. The personnel in this group changes periodically; the group we saw went from a young 65-year old pianist to an 85-year old trombone player. Then we have the Miller-Dorsey-Goodman era, including the Goodman Carnegie Hall Concert album, which I bought more than 20 years ago. Stan Kenton, of course -- no jazz collection would be complete without this giant. I have a privately made record of a Kenton concert made about 1950. It's very noisy and indistinct, but it has Maynard Ferguson doing "All the Things You Are," and his fantastic trumpet solo that seldom comes down into the staff and comes through like a violin. We both like Brubeck, Shearing, Ramsey Lewis, and Herbie Mann (though Baroque flute is good, we believe that the flute is primarily a jazz instrument). Who remembers Norman Granz and his Jazz at the Philharmonic group, with their outstanding sax player, Flip Phillips?

Segovia is the Grand Old Man of guitarists, and there is no questioning his greatness; however, Charley Byrd and Laurindo Almeida are not only great guitarists, they are much more versatile. There doesn't seem to be any style that they cannot play. I've never heard either one do bluegrass, but I suspect that if they put their minds to it and teamed up, they would blow Flatt and Scruggs right out of the auditorium.

Since the Rock scene is covered by other contributions to Ash-Wing, I'll skip over that and on to other 'serious' music.

One of the first composers I became acquainted with was Katchaturian, via his "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra." This was the William Kapell version on 78 rpm. I fell in love with it. It has been pointed out to me that there is a Gershwin quality to this piece, which is not surprising, as they were contemporaries. Nonetheless, I like Katchaturian, don't like Gershwin. Anyway, there are phrases in the Concerto which became known as 'Bop Licks' nearly twenty years later, when they were done by Dizzy Gillespie (I love his "Salt Peanuts") and others of that school. In other words, perhaps this number is not so much influenced by jazz as vice versa.

With Kapell's death (in a plane



crash) in the early 50s, the few recordings he made seemed to disappear. Oscar Levant recorded the Concerto, but to me it sounded mechanical -- technically brilliant, but utterly lacking in any feeling. A woman pianist, whose name I don't recall, also had a recording out in the late 50s, but it was completely unimpressive. (Is my male chauvinism showing?) Finally, about three or four years ago, Lorin Hollander did the Concerto with Andre Previn conducting, and it came very close to the Kapell version -- enough so, that I bought it. Then, at long last, about a year and a half ago, the Kapell version was rereleased in long play, and I snatched it up. It remains one of my treasures.

About the same time that I discovered Katchaturian, I discovered Beethoven. It is hard to believe that one could live to the age of eighteen without hearing Beethoven, but there it is. His "7th Symphony" was the first symphony I ever heard in my life and I fell in love with it immediately. After 27 years, it still turns me on. By coincidence, the 7th was the featured number at the concert to which I took Carol on our first date. Never did I enjoy it more. My set of the Nine Beethoven Symphonies is Victors, with Toscanini conducting. I still prefer that to any of the others. Beethoven should not be ponderous, but you can't rush his symphonies, as some present day conductors tend to do. The best performance of the "Eroica" I've ever heard was at a memorial concert for Wilhelm Furtwangler in Heidelberg. The 5th, which is probably the most familiar, is not one of my favorites -- I like the 3rd, 6th, 7th and 9th.

Two other symphonies I discovered about this time led me to two other favorite composers -- Schubert's 6th and Mozart's 40th. I have the full set of the nine Schubert symphonies. The 6th remains my favorite, followed by the 9th and the 8th. Schubert was a prolific melodist -- the 6th teems with themes, and they are casually tossed away in favor of new ones, where other composers would be happy with one or two of these ideas to develop a movement around.

Mozart -- the 40th remains my favorite, followed by the 41st. I prefer his piano concertos to most of his symphonies, especially the "Coronation" concerto. I picked up the Wanda Landowska version for 25¢ at a rummage sale. My favorite Mozart music is his wind divertimentos and other chamber works. Mozart is best at intimate music. What a delight to be able to eat a meal, as the wealthy people of Mozart's time did, listening to Mozart's music! Incidentally, I have always been proud of the fact that the only people who recognized Mozart as a musical genius during his lifetime were the Czechs. He loved Prague, hated Salzburg. (My grandparents came from near Prague.)

As the years have gone by, I've outgrown Tchaikovsky and Offenbach, though I still listen to them now and again. My favorite music today is Baroque. I discovered Vivaldi about ten or fifteen years ago. Everyone has heard that Vivaldi did not write 400 concertos -- he wrote one concerto 400 times. If that's true, I like his concerto.

I also dig Giovanni Gabrielli. He was a priest stationed at St. Marks in Venice, which has four choir lofts. So he wrote music for two, three, and four choirs-- stereo in the 16th century. I particularly like his music for brass.

Over the last five years, I've become immersed in the master -- Bach. I'm slowly building my Bach collection -- obvious things like the "Mass in B minor," "The Well-Tempered Clavier," "Goldberg Variations," "Chromatic Fantasy," "Italian Concerto" and "The Brandenburg Concertos (the epitome of music).

Bach's choral music, like most choral music, is more of a delight to sing than to listen to. I participated in a Bureau of Music presentation of the "Mass in B



minor a couple of years ago at Loyola University. What a thrill!

Bach on the Moog Synthesizer has taken a lot of people by storm, including me. Much of Bach's music was written without a particular instrument in mind, and I feel sure that, if Bach were alive today, he would embrace the synthesizer with a whoop of joy. I have several synthesizer albums, including one by Richard Grayson playing his own compositions. My favorite on that record is "Ostinato;" some of the chording is pure Bach. In this number, Grayson uses the device of resolving the tension of discord into harmony to perfection. On the flip side is a thing which is hard to describe as music. It's an impression of a rainstorm in a forest, and the majority of people I know regard it as noise. I sort of like it, and I have one friend, who, having once been caught in a rainstorm in a forest, is very enthusiastic about it.

I'm a harpsichord freak. This goes hand-in-hand with being a Bach freak, I suppose. Along with that, thanks to KFAC, our local classical station, I became hooked on Scott Joplin, about two years before "The Sting" came out. So it's not too surprising that one of my favorite albums is a collection of Joplin rags played by W. Neal Roberts on the harpsichord. It has the flavor of the old tinkling bar-room piano, and Roberts' Mozartian precision is perfect for Joplin. I prefer a rag to be done precisely, rather than a loose interpretation. That's just me, of course -- I know there are people who feel that the performer can vary inflection, etc., as he or she pleases, but that's not my bag with Joplin. I have a tape of piano rolls made by Joplin himself, and the most surprising thing is that he was a very poor pianist. His playing is labored, something like a beginning student.

Stravinsky composed music in so many different styles that it is difficult not to find something you like. My favorites are "The Rites of Spring," "Petrouchka," and "The Firebird." I also enjoy "History of a Soldier."

Shostakovich wrote perhaps the best ballet music ever written. I never tire of listening to it. I'm sure a great deal of his popularity is due to the fact that he was a Communist. The Communist Party is very conservative when it comes to art and music, and Shostakovich was kept in line to compose in a traditional manner, rather than avant garde. Since most of us tend to be traditionalists, his music is much more popular than that of Alban Berg or Webern.

Among contemporary composers, I like Alan Hovhaness, Seattle's composer-in-residence. When I lived in Seattle, I loved to sit by the fountain in the Seattle Center and watch the lights and water while listening to his "Fantasy on a Japanese Woodprint." A couple of years ago he came out with "And God Created Great Whales," which incorporates recordings of the sounds of whales. The sounds are fascinating, and once in a while they sing in harmony. The number is musically interesting, not just a novelty. A composer I've recently encountered is 37-year old Paul Chihara. At the Roger Wagner Bicentennial Concert, we heard Chihara's folk Mass. He took a Gregorian Chant Mass and American folk tunes and put them together, both words and music, and wrote the whole thing in the style of Palestrina. It's simply beautiful.

Carol and I enjoy every kind of music there is with the exception of Country and Western. Even there, I like Bluegrass, and if I'm drunk enough, enjoy singing along with some cowboy singer. Most of the Country and Western music has no musical merit whatsoever, and that which does, is usually rendered in such an unmusical manner that it is almost impossible to enjoy, at least if you are sober. It seems to me

that, in order to be a country and western singer, one should not possess any musical ability at all, and definitely not have a singing voice.

Satirizing country and western is not easy, because, like commercials, it's so bad to begin with; but Homer and Jethro always did a good job of it and I enjoy them very much. But, then, I find musical satire of any kind enjoyable. I have an album by the Gukenheimer Sauerkraut Band of San Francisco that is a masterpiece of band and German music satire -- and I love both marches and German music. The series by Gerald Hoffnung of England was marvelous. The orchestra at his concerts were members of the London Philharmonic and he had top notch performers doing his satires (Dennis Brain doing "Concerto for Hose Pipe and Orchestra"). Of course, I can't overlook the greatest of them all, Professor Peter Schickele, discovered or P.D.Q. Bach. My favorite album of his is "The Stoned Guest", which satirizes opera, and has time at the end to do a couple of really wild madrigals, "The Queen to Me a Royal Pain Doth Give," and "My Bonny Lass, She Smelleth." Another of his albums features two sports announcers doing a running commentary on Beethoven's Fifth as if it were a sporting event pitting composer against orchestra.

Tom Lehrer is in a category by himself, for he not only satirizes music, he takes on everybody -- the Boy Scouts:

"If you're looking for adventure of a new and different kind,
And you chance upon a Girl Scout who is similarly inclined,
Don't be nervous, don't be frightened, don't be scared --
Be prepared!"

Motherhood:

"There once was a boy named Oedipus Rex.
You may have heard about his odd complex.
His name appears in Freud's index,
'Cause he -- loved his mother."

Werner Von Braun:

"The widows and orphans of Old London Town
All owe their pensions to Werner Von Braun."

The Roman Catholic Church (commentary on Vatican II):

"Two, four, six, eight,
Time to transubstantiate."

Lehrer's best is the periodic table of elements set to Gilbert and Sullivan's "I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General." If you are familiar with Tom, I don't have to say any more. If you are not -- you must, you simply must get one of his albums.

I have several of the Stan Freberg satires on Elvis Presley and other rock stars, and his famous and last satire, the one on Lawrence Welk. His "Green Christmas" is one of his best, but not very well known because the FCC banned it within two weeks of its release. No, it's not dirty -- just did in so many commercials that the companies and agencies involved howled until it was taken off the air. I have always regarded satire of anything as healthy. If you can't laugh at yourself, you're in trouble.

My likes in opera are rather limited. Most people I know enjoy operettas -- particularly Gilbert and Sullivan. But many never get past, more's the pity. If I

have the opportunity to introduce someone to opera, I usually try to get them to a performance of "Die Fledermaus." It is a light opera, and it's hilarious, and the music is never tedious. Performances these days are usually in English and that helps. Last year, I took some friends to the New York City Opera performance at the Music Center. The third act provides Frosch, the jailer, (the only non-singing part) with the opportunity to wing it, usually in pantomime. In this particular version, the jailer had a marvelous bit in which he accidentally discovers that the jail cell door can be played as a harp. He sits down, and accompanying himself on the cell door, joins the tenor locked in the next cell in singing the love duet from the first act of "la Traviata."

"Traviata" is undoubtedly my favorite opera. I have two albums of the complete opera, one starring Monserrat Caballe, and of course, the Beverly Sills version. The Sills album gets the edge because Nicolai Gedda is regarded as the definitive Alfredo. There is more sheer melody in the first act of "Traviata" than in most complete operas. I really like Verdi (sometimes known as Joe Green). His "Rigoletto" and "Aida" are other favorites of mine.

My favorite Mozart opera is "Don Giovanni." Perhaps I'm prejudiced because Mozart wrote it for the people of Prague. A couple of years ago I saw it down at the Music Center with Bill, our ten-year-old son. He had begged to go, as he thought it would be like Gilbert and Sullivan. He was disappointed when he discovered that it was being sung in Italian, so he kept bugging me to tell him what was going on. How do you explain the story of Don Juan to a ten-year-old?



I like Rossini overtures, but about the only opera of his that I enjoy is "The Barber of Seville." Rossini is a man after my own heart. He did most of his composing in bed. He was so lazy that if a sheet of music fell to the floor, he would write it over again, rather than get out of bed to pick it up.

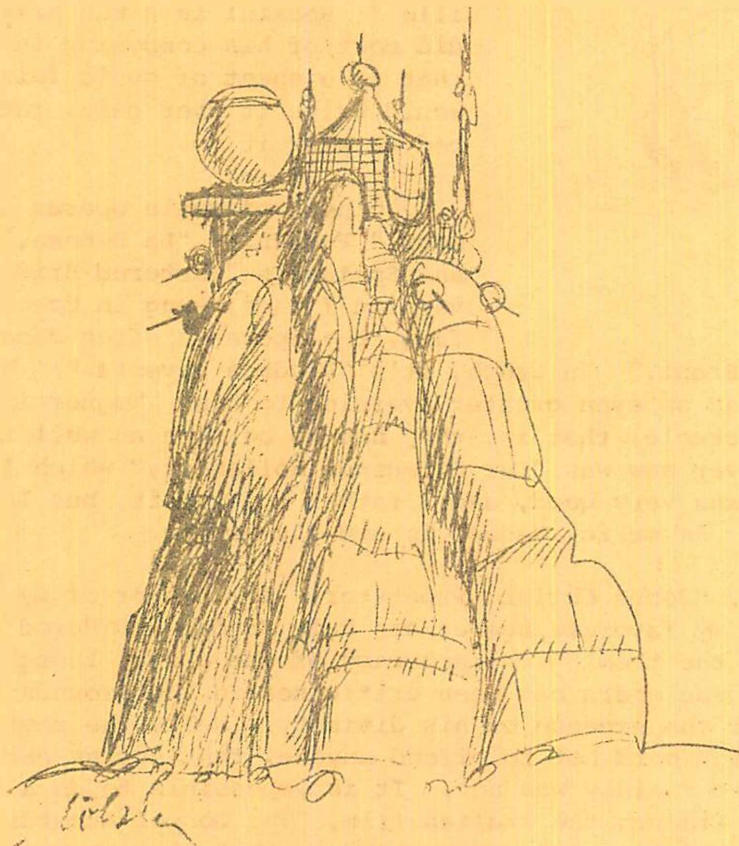
Other enjoyable operas are "Lucia di Lammermoor," Puccini's "La Bohème," "Madame Butterfly," and Smetana's "Bartered Bride," especially the version I have, sung in Czech. (For you trivia fans, the opera is often done in German, and the name is "Verkaufte Braut." In Czech, it's "Prodána Nevesta.") Wagner usually turns me off, and Carol has an even greater aversion to him. Wagner insisted that his operas were total spectacle; that is, they had to be seen as well as heard. The only Wagnerian opera I ever saw was "Der Fliegende Holländer," which I saw at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus. It was very good, and I rather enjoyed it, but largely because it was a total experience. As music, Wagner is usually boring.

The rock opera, "Jesus Christ, Superstar," is another of my favorites. From a musical standpoint, my favorite scenes are Palm Sunday and Herod's Song. I don't concern myself with the theological accuracy of the opera, though that is surprisingly sharp at times. The opera has been criticized on the grounds that it stresses Christ's humanity at the expense of his divinity. Well, the movie, "The Greatest Story Ever Told" tried hard not to offend anyone, that Christ came out as a very 'blah' character, which he certainly was not. It is impossible to do a life of Christ that does justice to Him (though the Italian film, "The Gospel According to St. Matthew" came close. So the way I regard "Superstar" is that it is a version of Christ's life, not the version, and that I find acceptable.

Another version of the life of Christ set to music is "Godspell." I find it very satisfying. It has replaced "The Fantasticks" and "My Fair Lady" as my favorite musical. I've seen the movie on TV a couple of times and attended the play twice. The first time, I came out feeling outrageously good. The second time I saw it with Carol and some friends in San Diego. One of the wives commented that she was sitting on the edge of her seat, thinking, "I wonder how it comes out?" She then realized that, of course, she knew how it came out, but couldn't shake the feeling. Carol said she felt as if she were being allowed to peer deeply into someone's mind. As for me, the subtle transition from entertainment to message, beginning with the Last Supper, set me to crying, and I couldn't stop until the play was long over. Perhaps it was my mood, but it has tremendous emotional impact. Do, by all means, see it, if you haven't already done so.

Of course, the music has as much to do with the emotional impact as much as anything else. Music alone can reduce one to tears. A couple of years ago, Carol saw the International Tattoo in Toronto. This is a competition between bagpipers and bagpipe bands. At the end, they wound up with a football field full of bagpipes and pipe bands, all playing together. Carol stood there with the tears streaming down her cheeks, and when she looked around, the majority of the crowd was crying, too. Certainly, there are pieces of music, or particular renditions of them, that literally give one goose pimples. The "Sanctus" from Gounod's "St. Cecelia Mass" does this to me every time.

There is no doubt in my mind that a good musical experience is the closest thing to sex. A good session of music leaves you with the same pleasant, wrung-out feeling. The wife of a husband-wife opera singer team once commented that it takes a singer to understand a singer. "Before a performance, he won't," she said; "and after a performance, he can't." I rest my case.



the read book

DOUG BARBOUR
BRUCE TOWNLEY
MICHAEL CARLSON
FRANK DENTON

Cold Chills by Robert Bloch. Doubleday, \$6.95

Nebula Award Stories Eleven edited by Ursula K. LeGuin. Harper and Row, \$10.85

Universe 7 edited by Terry Carr. Doubleday, \$6.95

New Dimensions 7 edited by Robert Silverberg. Harper and Row, \$8.95

Getting Into Death and Other Stories by Thomas M. Disch. Random House, \$7.95

Sf is still one of the few areas of modern fiction where the short story truly has a chance to do well. Short fiction is still a mainstay of science fiction, even though sf novels tend to garner the most notice. A number of collections and anthologies reveal how well short fiction is doing in sf today.

Still best known as the author of Psycho, Robert Bloch is an old hand at the O. Henry type of sf story, and his latest collection, Cold Chills, contains fourteen examples of his craft. It's an entertaining collection because Bloch knows how to entertain, and if there are no moments of absolute terror, there are enough last minute reversals to keep you on your toes. Indeed, Bloch is the master of the shaggy monster story--whether the monster be an alien creature from halfway across the galaxy or something within our own minds--and he knows how to come up with a good punch line every time. Cold Chills isn't art, it doesn't pretend to be, but it is good light entertainment, something for those long summer evenings at the cottage when you want to enjoy other peoples' troubles for a change.

Nebula Award Stories Eleven is, as usual, full of goodies. I feel Ursula K. LeGuin, this year's editor, made an error in including a portion of the easily found novel winner and thus denying us at least one of the superb novella runner-ups, but otherwise her choices are pretty good. Certainly Fritz Leiber's 'Catch That Zeppelin!', Tom Reamy's 'San Diego Lightfoot Sue,' and Roger Zelazny's 'Home Is the Hangman,' are all worthy winners, even if I prefer James Tiptree's incredible 'A Momentary Taste of Being' to Zelazny's piece. The other inclusions are fine, and an enticing bonus there are two enjoyable essays on the state of the art in 1975 by Vonda McIntyre and Peter Nicholls. Ms. LeGuin's Introduction, like all of her writing, is intelligent, witty, and humane.

Both Terry Carr and Robert Silverberg are among the best editors in sf, their high reputations kept high by their annual anthologies of new stories, Universe and New Dimensions. Both have reached the magic number seven, and both are superior

collections which, this year, contain a higher number of comedies than usual.

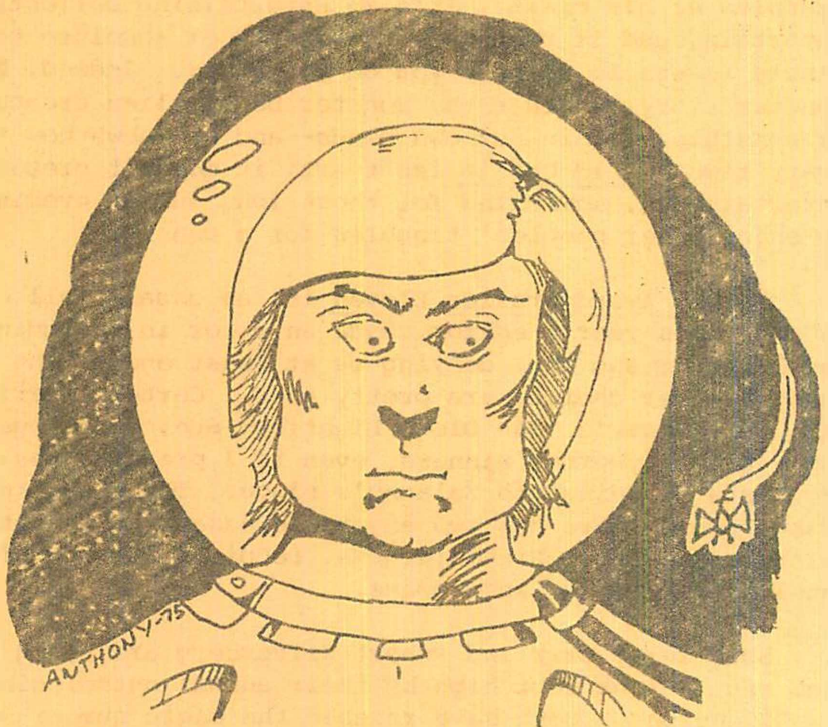
I suspect Carr and Silverberg have similar tastes, for they both manage to balance new and well-known authors, comic and serious visions of the future, good traditional and highly experimental writing. Moreover, one of the real pleasures of both collections is that most of the stories are about people first and scientific problems or ideas second.

Among the best fictions in Universe 7 are Robert Chilson's essay on a new art form, 'People Reviewsa,' Carter Scholz's sad tale of time travel and interference in the lives of great artists, 'The Ninth Symphony of Ludwig van Beethoven and Other Lost Songs,' George Alec Effinger's delightful 'Ibid,' Gene Wolfe's strangely satiric 'The Marvelous Brass Chessplaying Automaton' and Fritz Leiber's mathematical love story, 'A Rite of Spring.'

In New Dimensions 7, Fritz Leiber (again) provides a mordant future fairy-tale, Barry Malzberg one of his usual sardonic visions of paranoia, while Gregory Benford compassionately views a young woman's obsessed search for immortality and Phyllis and Alex Eisenstein take the old theme of the generational starship (or so it appears) and give it a powerfully effective new twist. The two big winners in this collection, however, are by new authors: Stephen Utley and Howard Waldrop tell what happened to Frankenstein's monster after he got lost in the Arctic, and manage to pay twisted homage to most of the great fantasy writers of the 19th century in the process; and A.A. Attanasio philosophizes upon a total change in mankind in the stunningly speculative 'The Blood's Horizon.' Both these collections have something for everyone. Enjoy!

If Robert Bloch is but a journeyman, Thomas M. Disch, one of the most exciting younger prose stylists around, is an explorer. 'Oh, the mind, mind had' -- worlds, flung across empty space, inner or outer. Some we destroy, some destroy us, and some we learn to live in, and with. Or so say Disch's extraordinary fictions, written between 1967 and 1976, gathered together in Getting Into Death and Other Stories.

There are sixteen stories in this collection, all different and all displaying some facets of a large, multiplex talent. A few, like 'Death and the Single Girl' and 'Displaying the Flag' are lightweight japes, but they carry off their jokes with elan. Most, however, despite the often awesome wit they display, are exquisite examples of the art of fiction. A problem for those readers who like narrow categories might be the fact that many of these stories aren't sf. A few, like 'The Colors' and 'The Planet Arcadia,' are, and many others are Borgesian



fantasies. I don't think it matters; Disch is declaiming his artistic freedom to write whatever he wants in this collection and the result is a stunning affirmation of the imagination, one magnificent metaphor of metamorphosis after another.

Disch can cut from something like his devastatingly hilarious takes on Apollo as a man about New York to a classic study of psychological disintegration and the arbitrary and mutable nature of 'reality' like 'The Asian Shore.' This latter story, one of three superb novellas in the collection, is quite early and it limns many of the themes Disch will explore throughout the rest of the book. It is quietly terrifying in its inexorable slow passage to its necessary climax.

But is a story like 'The Asian Shore' sf? I suspect the question is irrelevant: yet, if it's not, what else is it? At any rate, Samuel R. Delany believes it is, and a masterpiece of the genre, too. I'm inclined to agree: it is metaphorically and intellectually speculative, although its imagery is not sf. One thing, though, every sentence, every phrase, every word, counts. John Harris has proposed that 'the quiddity of architecture...was its arbitrariness.' But, 'the sense of the arbitrary did not stop at architecture, it embraced--or it would, if he let it-- all phenomena.' Terrifying freedom, this, if also exhilarating in its potential liberation. For Harris is 'liberated' to choose, truly choose, who he will be. Or is he? The story is fraught with ambiguity. Truly, he changes, but so much of what happens to him, while definitely arbitrary, seems not so much chosen as finally, inevitably, accepted. Still, the existential point of arbitrary and chosen freedom is made. In Disch's final story, '/X Yes,' an ordinary suburban matron discovers such freedom by voting against her usual bias, and the ending is hopefully open. The other two novellas are the title story, which is simply marvelous in its subtle and generous compassion and comprehension, and 'Let Us Quickly Hasten to the Gate of Ivory,' in which a brother and sister find themselves on an eternal picnic in a graveyard, the whole presented with the feeling of Tolkien's 'Leaf by Niggle' except for the incest motif and its emotional complications. Disch is a master of mood, often using little details of behavior to display mood to flesh his characters out. In the stories where character counts, he creates it with a myriad delicate strokes, yet always reminds us of the final opacity of others. So 'Slaves' satisfies completely even though it's utterly open-ended, especially in terms of the implicit focus of the title. 'The Master of the Milford Alterpiece' uses a lot of real names and places, yet it's as artfully constructed as the rest. Fact or fiction, does it matter? It doesn't matter.

I like Disch's work. Few writers can surpass him in the creation of complex, emotionally satisfying fictions. If reality can become very frightening when brought under his penetrating gaze, it also becomes extraordinarily exhilarating. Getting into Death is quite simply a magnificent book.

-- Reviewed by Doug Barbour --

Our Lady of Darkness by Fritz Leiber. Berkley/Putnam, \$7.95.

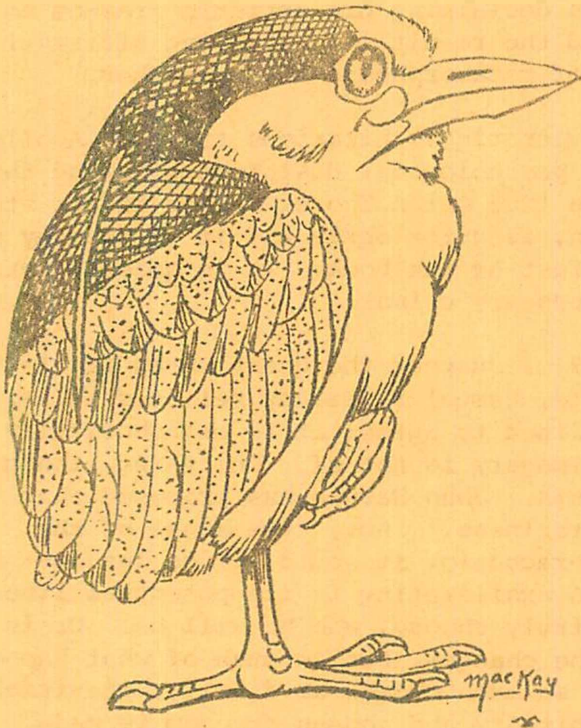
A Scanner Darkly by Philip K. Dick. Doubleday, \$6.95.

The Turning Place, Stories of a Future Past by Jean E. Karl. Dutton, \$9.50.

Three very different books, all of them with much to offer the reader, all of them entertaining in a variety of ways, present themselves to us.

Fritz Leiber has long been a fine science fiction writer, and Our Lady of Darkness stands as a kind of elegant summation of his career and homage to earlier writers of horror fantasy like H.P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith. The horror tends to be psychological rather than physical--until the climax when it's all too palpably there!

Leiber's protagonist is a horror-story writer and aficionado of the whole field



of the occult. A widower who has just emerged from a three-year drunk in San Francisco, during which he bought two strange books, Franz Weston is slowly drawn into a strange situation full of psychic danger. One book, Megapolismancy, is a 'science of cities' by the turn-of-the-century black magician and socialite Thibaut de Castries; the other is Clark Ashton Smith's journal of his encounters with the aging de Castries in the 1920s. Though he is long dead, de Castries is still malevolently out to get anyone who knows about his books: Weston is the next victim.

All the ingredients for a fast-paced horror novella are here, but Leiber is interested in something else, and has chosen to write a leisurely novel filled with lovingly detailed descriptions of San Francisco, lengthy philosophical discussions, and whole stories within the story, such as Donaldus Byer's tale of de Castries' doings in the early 1900s

with such people as Ambrose Bierce, Jack London and other members of the San Francisco bohemia of that time. Leiber obviously loves the ambience associated with these people and seeks to recreate it in his novel. He also invents, in the Megapolismancy, some marvelous pseudo-scientific nightmare visions of what the modern city is like. And that climax, when it comes, is a doozer. Our Lady of Darkness is a bibliophile's delight, with just the right soupoon of horror to top it off.

A Scanner Darkly is not only one of Philip K. Dick's most powerful novels, it is one of his most painful as well, a scream of rage and pain. Dick was in the drug scene of the late 60s and, as his afterward makes clear, he loved it and the people he knew there. But as the list of dead and wounded to whom the book is dedicated in memoriam makes even clearer, the cost of all that fun and joy was too high. In A Scanner Darkly, Dick attempts to exorcise the horrors of that scene, and in doing so he implicates every sector of society in the terrible mistakes that were made.

In many ways, A Scanner Darkly is typical Dick: a paranoid vision of reality and illusion (or are they different?), a savage black comedy of ordinary people caught up by forces they can't control, and a story of the strange resources of courage that the little person often discovers in a Dick fiction. But there is much that is new here, too, especially a terrifyingly bleak vision of the politics of dope on both sides of the law.

Bob Arctor is a dealer, but he's also Fred, a police informer and spy. A Scanner Darkly is about what happens when he's set to spy on himself. All the drugs we know exist in the slightly deteriorated future of this book, along with a new drug, Slow Death, which utterly wrecks the minds of those who use it too long. Arctor loses more and more control, and Fred comes to fear and hate him, but both are being used by a Police Agency to track others. The government is more than willing to sacrifice people in its 'war on drugs,' it seems (for an anti-drug novel, then, this book takes an odd tack: almost all the heads come across as better, more likeable people than the various 'straights' with whom they come in contact).

A Scanner Darkly is a requiem for a generation which lost too much to its

dreams. It is a starkly brilliant, powerful and generous lament, and at the same time a particularly pertinent exposé of the evils of a political system which so willingly plays the game the big-time dealers can profit by. It is not a very happy novel, but it is a genuinely provocative one, and it hits home.

The Turning Place, Stories of a Future Past is Jean E. Karl's first book of fiction. It is a thoroughly charming variation on the standard sf concept of a 'future history,' written by someone who enjoys all the virtues of good old-fashioned fiction. Ms. Karl has long been the director of Atheneum's children's book department, so perhaps it isn't coincidental that the protagonists of all nine stories are young adults, people on the verge of change. Yet, like all good 'children's literature' (and it's not marketed as such), The Turning Place is fully satisfying for the adult reader.

Sometime in the not-too-distant future, another star-travelling civilization, fearing what an expanding humanity (Earth is already overpopulated) might eventually do to it, manages to destroy most of the life on Earth (though not permanently). Among those who survive, and eventually reunite as a controlled population, a change occurs: the descendants of the survivors are more self-aware than their ancestors, and better people. Each of these stories is set at a different time in the centuries to come; together they trace the slow development of a civilization which is ecologically sane, inner-directed, intelligent and rational and yet emotionally stable, and whose members eventually develop great Psi-powers. Of course, they finally reach the stars and help to forge a union of races in our galaxy. Yet each story carries the implication that intellectual curiosity and a willingness to seek adventure are necessary if a culture is to avoid stasis. Again and again, the youthful protagonists find themselves amid a stagnating culture, and they break out.

On the level of economic and political philosophy, a lot of nits could be picked with these stories; this is a very Romantic/liberal book, a generalist's delight. But it is, after all, an entertainment. As such, it is well written, contains moments of great humor and great warmth, and does entertain, thoroughly.

--Reviewed by Doug Barbour --

The Dark Tower and Other Stories by C.S. Lewis. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$2.95
Sword of the Demon by Richard A. Lupoff. Harper and Row, \$7.95
Rocannon's World by Ursula K. LeGuin. Harper and Row, \$6.95
The Passion of New Eve by Angela Carter. Gollancz, ??; Clarke, Irwin (Canada), \$10.95

C.S. Lewis is famous not only for his Narnia books but also for the adult fantasies, Out of the Silent Planet, Perelandra, That Hideous Strength and perhaps his greatest fiction, Till We Have Faces. It is perhaps not so well known that he wrote about science fiction and contributed some stories to The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. Lewis believed science fiction to be a form of fantasy, nothing more, and certainly his own fictions are more fantasy than science. In The Dark Tower and Other Stories, Walter Hooper has gathered all of Lewis's unpublished and uncollected fiction together. It includes four short stories of merit and two fragments of what were intended to be novels.

The title story concerns alternate time-lines, is set in the late thirties and involves Ransom, the protagonist of Out of the Silent Planet and Perelandra. It is a good example of Lewis's old-fashioned story telling and vivid imagining of other places, other times. Lewis did not actively seek to preach in his stories, indeed he insisted they always began with his 'seeing pictures' about which a story would take shape. Nevertheless, his Christian fear of spiritual perversion discovers new and powerful images of the degradation and loss of spiritual freedom in even the few chapters he completed of this work. 'After Ten Years' began with a vision of Yellow-

head Menelaus sitting with his men in the Trojan Horse. It was obviously going to become a story of him and Helen after the war, but Lewis lost his desire to create after the death of his wife and never finished it. It's a brilliant beginning to a story we'll never read now. Despite the fact that two of these six pieces are fragments, all are vintage Lewis and therefore worthwhile and entertaining.

Richard A. Lupoff's Sword of the Demon is about as far from Lewis's type of fantasy as you can get (although Angela Carter goes further). It is a strange, somewhat distanced story, based on Japanese mythology; a quest that traverses various realms of possibility only to conclude in almost as abstract a place as it began in. Yet it has a logic and a power that compels a certain interest.

Although the pretentiously abstract early pages don't quite work, they are necessary to the story, and Lupoff soon gets down to business with Aizen, the man-god and--the real protagonist of his story-- the always learning, always growing Kishimo. In an odyssey of dream-like shifts and logic, she passes through realms of human and demon endeavor on land, on sea, below the ocean, and in the sky. A myriad possible universes are displayed before her as she pursues her quest for power and knowledge. Lupoff is interested in the dream as myth, the myth as possibility. He has set himself a limited goal in this book, I believe: to capture the flavor of ancient Japanese myth in a fantasy narrative which acknowledges modern scientific concepts of the cosmos. He achieves this, and in so doing offers his readers a strange, somewhat outré, yet occasionally compelling story of arcane events.

Rocannon's World is Ursula K. LeGuin's first novel, finally published in hard-cover, and the first story in her classic Hainish Universe series. It's a good novel of its type, recounting Rocannon's quest to find the enemy who has killed his friends on a world where ancient Terran myths come to life. As Ms. LeGuin admits in her Forward to the new edition, she mixed fantasy and science fiction here as she would never do again (her Earthsea Trilogy is pure high fantasy; her other Hainish Universe books are sf of the highest order). The hybrid may be awkward in places, but it still makes for very good reading, and as the first tale in the Hainish Universe mosaic, it's a must.

Angela Carter's The Passion of New Eve is also science fantasy, but for Carter the science is sex and the myths are those of the Mother Goddess and Eros in all their transformations. Evelyn, a young Englishman, comes to New York in the latter years of this century and thus begins a quest in which he discovers, over and over again, that things are never what they seem. The grand myth of this novel, even more central than that of the Goddess, is the myth of eternal metamorphosis.

Evelyn's quest takes him from the social chaos of New York, through a landscape of destruction to the desert and eventually to a California in the midst of civil war, and as always, the apocalyptic apotheosis of America. Carter's delineation of various backgrounds is sure, yet is only of peripheral concern, for it's Evelyn's transformations that really count. Evelyn begins in a lustful macho relation with the young black girl, Leilah. Escaping from her, so he thinks, he heads for the desert where Mother's little helpers find



find him. Mother is a surgeon who wants to be Cybele, and by the time Evelyn escapes s/he's Eve, a new woman who immediately falls into a perfect woman-as-slave situation with Zero, the map poet, and his harem.

From the very beginning, the celluloid image of Tristessa, who represented womankind's great beauty as transformed by pain, suffering and grief, haunts Evelyn. But nothing is as it seems, and before New Eve sails away from America's western shore to seek a new beginning, she is impregnated by the aging star.

Angela Carter has concocted a subtle, witty, erotic, philosophical and apocalyptic fable for our time in The Passion of New Eve. Her style is superbly controlled throughout; her vision is bleak yet dynamic; her sense of human possibility is even hopeful in that it is so ambiguous. Seldom has Baraclitus's 'Flux is all' been presented with such fictional verve.

--Reviewed by Doug Barbour--

Saving the Queen by William F. Buckley, Jr.
Warner Books, \$1.95.

The publishers of this book show their confidence in the author and his work by putting the worst line in this novel on the second part of the tricky two page front cover. Publishers of books have been known to be this candid with an author's work before. Most notably was the first edition of the first novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the manuscript of which arrived at the publisher's office so rife with simple spelling and grammatical errors that they figured it was Fitzgerald's style and published the thing verbatim (with no trace of editorial fingerprints). Fitzgerald was only a little bit more appalled than the reading public who mostly wrote it off to the lax literary habits of the new generation. No such worries about Saving the Queen and its creator even though it contains a stick-in-the-forebrain line like: "Blackford knew all about the Queen. Yet he hadn't known that she was a generator of power and sex. He sensed she could, without serious emotional turmoil, order him shot--or order him to her bed."

I like Bill Buckley. I think he's neat. Well, maybe this marks me as a reactionary of the foulest sort but, even so, I like to think that I can recognize and applaud quality no matter where it pops up; even if it is as much on the right as, say, Marcel Duchamp or even Harlan Ellison are on the left. If the Marxists (or even the Soviets) attain their ideal state there still will probably be rich folks around unless androids replace us all. Let's hope that there will be writers as adept at fleshing out the moves and motivations of the powerful and wealthy as Buckley.

In some ways this book is a continuation of Buckley's previous non-fictional work and in many



more ways it is more pervasive and persuasive than that work. What could be more enjoyable and charming than the chronicle of the efforts of a rich, handsome, young man to protect the potent, lovely queen of a somewhat obscure country from the noble vizier or advisor who is really in the employ of a huge and distant nation ruled by a madman? Sounds like rousing fantasy, doesn't it? And so it is. The only difference between this alternate world fantasy and most others is that Buckley was able to do his homework on site (if memory serves, while he was in the OSS). This book is set in the Cold War era (so you already know most of the major off-stage characters) in an England ruled by a Queen Caroline (the queen of the title and the 'generator' of the quote above). So the fantasy elements that Buckley uses to introduce his viewpoint are shored up and heightened by actual fact. Stalin was a monster, everybody knows that, so it doesn't seem so dirty that the CIA is called in to use pretty much the same dirty tricks that Stalin has been using against his enemies. This is what I mean when I say that this is one of Buckley's most persuasive works. Buckley, the polemical editor, is present here as much as Buckley, the artist. But since the good guy spies he's talking about here are on our and well hung to boot (or at least there's much there to love about them) there'll not be much complaining from this corner.

The strongest complaint I can muster is against some of the dialog in the first few pages. Do rich folks really talk like this? Now, I've never been to any parties in Georgetown but I have been to some in downtown Alexandria (which, according to some, is nothing but a surrogate Georgetown) and the banter wasn't this bad (or maybe I was just excusing the vacuity of some friends of friends). Once Blackford gets out of the country the forced and yet rarified atmosphere that rich folks breathe becomes less nerve-wracking and more exotic. That this atmosphere should be breathable at all (just annoying and perplexing instead of immediately fatal) is evidence of the command of Buckley's chemistry.

-- Reviewed by Bruce Townley --

The Gods Abide by Thomas Burnett Swann. Daw Books, # 222, \$1.25.

There's something that is making me rush over to the typewriter and write this; I'll have it in the mail to Frank in the morning. I've just finished reading Thomas Burnett Swann's The Gods Abide, which might be his last novel, and I'm excited.

Not that it's a great book, because although it's good, quite good, and certainly the best of his recent books, it's not up to the level of some of his classic novels, the ones that took me by surprise in Muswell Hill more than four years ago, and still please me when I look at them today. But even though this one might not be a classic, there is an element of the immortal about it. And not just because it deals with the last of the demi-gods, and the death of the Roman deities.

The book has the rushed quality of all of Swann's last works. One assumes that he was rushing to finish as much as he could before he died. And it is just this assumption that has me so enthralled. Because The Gods Abide is both a marvelous affirmation of life and the beautiful facing of death, and even though these are themes which have been in all of Swann's books, they take on a special grace and feeling here.

One can almost sense him pulling out all of the stops. The main female character is called Stella, and she is the apotheosis of the worldly-wise and lovely Swann female; as well as bearing more than a coincidental resemblance to Stella Stevens. The other characters include Corn Sprites, Roanes, Sirens, a Telchin, and the son of Cerebrus. They are existing in the time of Constantine, when the strange new One God threatens to drive the Old Gods to extinction.

I don't need to review the plot. There are many of you out there to whom, like

me, Swann has given so much. "Love is a dragonfly"...how many times have I repeated that line to people? His books were an almost anachronistically and certainly inordinately lovely part of my world for four years, and they will continue to be, forever.

In The Gods Abide Stella asks, "What is hello without goodbye?" I've now said both to Swann, and with this book I don't think he could have said it any better to me.

Now I look for someone to give one of his books to. Hello.

-- Reviewed by Michael Carlson --

Sword of the Demon by Richard Lupoff. Harper and Row, \$7.95.

Lupoff has always been an interesting writer, although not a prolific one. I've heard that he worked for six years on this novel. It's based on a Japanese legend and is an interesting departure from the run-of-the-mill fantasies we usually encounter. Lupoff has studied his Japanese culture. He weilds armorial terms right and left, but is always careful to put it into English as well, so that the reader is not completely lost.

Two beings coalesce from raw energy to begin the book, and soon Aizen, the man-god, and Kishimo, the young woman, are engaged in a battle against evil forces in the Sea of Mists. From there they struggle to reach the kingdom of Tsuna. There are battle, fantastic creatures, an encounter with an eight-headed dragon. I struggled with the present tense at first, but soon fell into the rhythm of it. This is particularly enjoyable if you are interested in the Orient, but must be considered one of the outstanding fantasies of the year.

-- Reviewed by Frank Denton --

SHORT TAKES (Sometimes Known As Filler)

I saw Jack Chalker at Westercon and realized that I hadn't given his prose a try yet. So, to remedy that, I've started Midnight at the Well of Souls. Not bad stuff; pretty straightforward planetary adventure, and the 360 pages could probably have been pruned some, but probably worth the money. Nice to see Jack hitting the market; I may even try Jungle of Stars when I get back in the fall.

Just finished The Ganymede Takeover by Phil Dick and Ray Nelson. I'm not sure why this was re-issued. It's simply not that good. 1967 was the original publication and they should have left it like that.

Sydney van Scyoc has improved greatly. Her latest, Cloudcry, is well worth reading. Only available in hardcover at the moment, but remember the title when it comes around in paper.

Excited about Fritz Leiber's new collection of Fafhrd and Gray Mouser stories, entitled Swords and Ice Magic. It's all appeared elsewhere, but it's nice to have it collected in one place. By golly, here's the bottom of the page.



FEATHERS

// There have been a few remarks floating in from points around the world which still follow up on the Eric Mayer article of two issues ago. In that article Eric spoke to the usages of caricature in science fiction. Rather than let the remarks of various people waste away in a bottom drawer, let's start the letter column off with them. //

DAVE COCKFIELD, 31 Durham Court, Hebburn, Tyne & Wear NE31 1JX England

Eric's article was well enough set out, particularly the way in which he used Dickens' characters to illustrate his train of thought. Personally, I think that he is getting worried about a nonexistent problem. He wants more straightforward caricature to help push ideas and less intellectualisation.

I've lost track of the number of people who say that they prefer sf with mainstream standards of writing and above all high standards of characterization. I myself prefer characters to be developed in depth. However, most of these people, and perhaps all of them, have read a great deal of old style adventure sf which survives purely on ideas, pace and readability.

It is the Ellisons, Silverbergs, LeGuins and Delanys of this world who receive the critical acclaim. Their books sell, but how many of their novels would you put in a top twenty list. No, for the average reader, and I'm sure that covers 80% of the readership, it is people like Niven, Asimov, Clarke, and Anderson who continually capture the hearts and minds. Perhaps Eric will say, "But those authors still veer from the old style of caricatures," and he would be right, but a blatant caricature, such as Prof. Jameson, is no longer acceptable today. I'm very fond of the Jameson stories myself, but find the character "cute" and amusing and often a distraction. Eric should be satisfied with what we have. It may be a select few gaining intellectual criticism and publicity but they are not representative of the whole field. Now, more than ever before, sf has expanded to allow such great variety that there is something for everyone, so let's not campaign to topple the balance in favour of one style above the other.

That leaves Richard's (Stoker) piece; at first I thought that odds and ends presented in such a manner wouldn't work too well because there would be too many boring, ordinary scraps of information that everyone knows already. As I read it I thought to myself how right I was until I discovered that there was nothing more to read. I'd read it from beginning to end without pause and I actually wanted more. Thinking back on it I decided that it was the ordinary things which made it so good.

The hassle with customs, grumpy bookstore dealers, black-faced sheep, all are things we have come across but they provided a nice comparison to the more usual things. I especially liked the notes on the Indians and the Chinese restaurant. I eagerly look forward to part two.

ERIC LINDSAY, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, N.S.W. 2776 Australia

Eric Mayer does his usual fine job of defending another aspect of sf. I'm tired also of literary types telling me it is junk, when I enjoy it, and don't enjoy their productions (and it is not that I'm against reading outside of sf, because most of my reading is outside it, but when I read for enjoyment I want to enjoy, and when I read for enlightenment I want enlightenment - and when I want to read case histories of neurotics I'll read case histories, not modern novels.)

VICTORIA VAYNE, P.O. Box 156, Station D, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

I started to write some commentary on caricatures in sf, but tore up the page, my line of reasoning was going nowhere fast. I guess what I wanted to say is that today's stories with the "well rounded characters" with their obligatory sex lives and hang-ups are becoming a stereotype in their own way - a writer is dumped on pretty quickly if his characters don't ring true. But so many people in today's fiction are no different from Joe Schmuck down the street, and it would be nice to read about interestingly different people, too. I'll agree that the characters in that early pulp stuff I've seen were pretty gross, and the same goes for a lot of the garbage in "popular culture" - the Super Macho Secret Agent, or Super Cop for that matter, is pretty recent and to me hard to believe. I am convinced, though, that a character can be created who is highly unusual and still be made to ring true. I know enough unusual people to believe it - both nowadays in fandom and back in college with my off-beat classmates. And as far as "stock players" go, I would be happy to accept a mad scientist, or a dumb broad, in a story if the author managed to make the character ring true. Give - or at least imply - the reasons for the character being that way, convincing reasons, and practically any screwball type could be made believable.

I suppose that, as the article suggests, deliberate caricature people in a story has its purpose when the idea is to drive home a specific point rather than put over a realistic story. I'm not overly familiar with Dickens, but have seen enough to know that his writings are social protest for one thing, and to today's readers are a cross section of his times, but realistic life histories not at all. Depends on where the writer wants the story to go, then, where to place the characters on a spectrum between caricature and realistic. I'm not that fond of Dickens, and can't offhand recall a single realistic character in either book that I've read, A Christmas Carol or Great Expectations. Don't know if there's a connection.

The way I would do it would be to "design" characters according to the needs of the plot in the first place, making those characters consistent and "true-ringing" by having full details on what made them that way in my own private background notes even though only the minimum necessary information would be used in the novel where called for, and then making the details in the story follow logically from the character types. Interplay of plot requirements and character-consistency requirements, in short. If I had to use caricature characters I would try my damndest to make them convincing, and realistic.

ONWARD TO OTHER TOPICS, BUT PERHAPS TO RETURN:::

NEIL KVERN, Box 258, Cataldo, ID 83810

This is, perhaps, the best fanzine I've read this year; it comes close, anyway.

Jeff Frane (and I'm writing a letter to Jeff directly after this one even if it is about two in the morn, though it's still very dark outside with coyotes howling and whooping and maybe even a few owls...) does a tribute to fannish fanwriting with "Neo Meets Big Mac," A great piece of writing, one of the best fanreports (I mean conreports, scuse me) written, I'm sure. Shull's backover is especially good and it isn't even a funny-looking arthropod!

Save the whales, indeed! I mean, really! I'd give you a thousand if I had any, but I only have a story called "Whales, Volcanoes, Anne Boleyn, and the Man Who Had No Zodiacal Sign," which I (hopelessly) sent to Damon Knight. I'm in love with whales. Volcanoes are great, too. Try Mt. St. Helens some time; it's not too far away. Or any of the Cascade Range volcanoes. Fascinating! A book called Fire and Ice: the Volcanoes of the Cascade Range is really wondrous - all about volcanoes and glaciers in the Cascade Range. Superb. I'll send the name of the author and where it's published if you're interested (I don't have the book immediately at hand; it's at my mother's library). As for eggs, I played Easter Bunny for a bunch of little kids a few days ago. A real riot. I was giving hints like, "Look in the boot" or "Check the clothesline," very subtle stuff, this Easter Bunnying. Have you any need for an experienced used Easter Bunny around Seattle?

The Blenheim piece was interesting, but I much prefer harpsichord and organ and violins to orchestra. William Byrd, Vivaldi, occasionally Bach. Vivaldi's concerti for flue and oboe (though violins, etc. are also used in some cuts) are also quite good.

Strange. I actually found myself agreeing with most of the Doug Barbour reviews. I must be sick. Seriously, Doug is quite an authority. Just keep him subdued when you mention Samuel Delany, please.

I tend to disagree with Darrell Schweitzer's handling of Eric Mayer. Though Mayer may be completely incorrect in any or all of his assumptions, Darrell is a little too brief with his comment, "In short..." "anyway." (page 38, bottom). I think that in sf things become trite much faster than in mainstream (certainly mundane in some cases, just as is some sf) because there is the constant search for the Idea, as well as, in the last few years, the Character. In some cases, the Idea must be sought without the aid of extremely literate prose - I have always, for one example, found Cordwainer Smith fascinating, and Smith has certainly never been considered one of the stylistic geniuses of his/our time. In the same vein, artery this time, Samuel Delany's science fiction may have a few shortcomings (especially in Triton) because it lacks scientific foundation - but, without doubt, Triton is one of the best sf novels I've read in several years.

The issue is very complicated and complex. Sf itself is the reason behind enjoying a completely illiterate author: the Idea can be a carrying factor in some cases. There isn't any justice, in truth: everything has to be determined case by case, and everything is, in general, fucked up. And I'm poking my nose into something which is strictly between Eric Mayer and Darrell Schweitzer (and Jim Meadows III, and Harry Warner, and Mike Horvat, and ...).

And good luck.



I think Perhaps Douglas Barbour is confounding the matter by being afraid to categorize. Calling a duck a bird is all right, but being able to distinguish between "bird" and "bird" is sometimes difficult. We call ducks "ducks" and robins "robins" to place mental pictures with the words; to categorize "mainstream" as mainstream and "science fiction" as science fiction doesn't necessarily mean anything except that these words are easily identifiable name-tags, nothing else. Names, for example. My name is Neil - I am not Neil; it's simply a label, a category, which makes it simpler for people wanting to attract my attention.

Mountains out of molehills again.
I loved Ash-Wing 21.

RANDY REICHARDT, 834 Henday Hall, Lister Hall, 116th St. & 87th Ave., Edmonton,
Alberta T6G 2H6 Canada

It has come to my attention that you are a fellow Steeleye Span addict. Laurine White tells me you've turned her on to them, as well as Steely Dan. Both of these groups are current favorites, tho I must admit Steely Dan is a band I find I can't listen to enough. Anyway, my interest in the English folk music scene goes back some years, to 1971 to be specific. A friend of mine was a deacon (and my boss. He's now a priest), and he introduced me to Fotheringay, who at the time were still together. I still have that album; it's quite superb, don't you think? / Yes, a very fine album. For those unfamiliar, Fotheringay was Sandy Denny's own band during a hiatus from Fairport Convention._/

From there on in, it snowballed. A review of Below the Salt popped up somewhere in '72, and I was hooked on Steeleye Span permanently, and have been ever since. It's an interesting point that I don't own one of their albums. My brother has six, tho, and when at home, he's just a few feet away. "Gaudete" is a great shower song! It's great to sing anywhere. And The Bride's Favorite is a great jib, as is the Moon-coin Jig. Did you know that Maddy Prior and Tim Hart have an album out together called Folk Songs of Olde England, Vol. 1? (I don't know if there's a Vol. 2) I have the album in front of me. It's from the record collection of another SS fanatic on my floor here in residence. The label is Mooncrest. You may want to get it. / I already have it, old chum. Yes, indeed, there is a Vol. 2._/

Perhaps the most important thing I want to be sure you hear about is "The Electric Muse," and I am enclosing a review of it for you to use. Kurt, the fellow on the floor here who has the SS collection introduced me to this magnificent 4-record set; just examine the line-up on that collection. Fairport, Steeleye, John Martyn, Pentangle, Ralph McTell, Richard Thompson, Martin Carthy, Dave Swarbrick, Davey Graham, John Redbourn, and so on. You have my assurance that it's an excellent press. When back in Winnipeg at Christmas, I found perhaps the only copy available in town. It is now perhaps the most cherished volume in my collection. Knowing your interests, you simply must get it, Frank! /Susan Wood first told me about this collection and asked if I could find it for her. I was unable to do so, but later she found it herself. I still have not been able to round up a copy. It has been in and out of both of my favorite record shops in town, where I pick up most of the folk music which I have in my collection. But I am always there at the wrong time. Some fellow just bought it yesterday. I wish that they would hang onto a copy for me. _/

Some years back, I was listening to America's second album, Homecoming. Side 2, Song 3 is "Head and Heart" by John Martyn, which I kinda liked. Some time later I stumbled across his album, "Bless This Weather," which featured "Head and Heart." By now I have seven of his albums, and hope to get the other two in the summer. He is a fine example of that group of "folkies" working over in Great Britain today. Oh, yes, side two of The Electric Muse contains one of the finest collections of jigs and reels I've ever heard.

An article on Sandy Denny many years ago in Rolling Stone explained what happened with Fotheringay, a band I hated to see dissolve. I have the issue somewhere at home. The first song on her first solo album, The North Star Grassmen and The Ravens, was intended to be the first song on the next Fotheringay album, but it was not to be... Her second album has many excellent cuts, including, Listen, Listen, and the fourth song on that side, something about a gypsy, I think. Damned if the name hasn't slipped my mind.

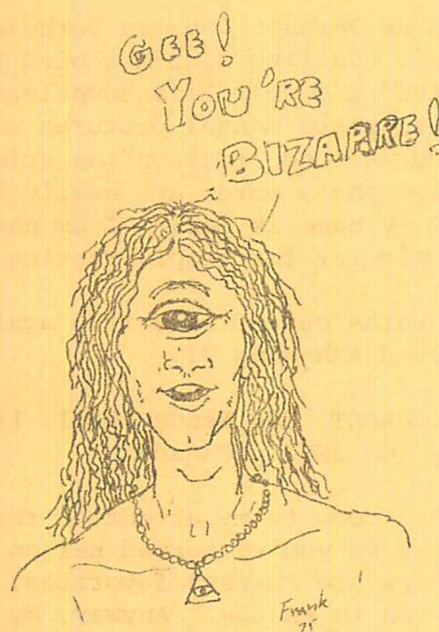
As for myself, I've played guitar for over ten years, leaning toward acoustic since 1972. I'm now the proud owner of a Martin D18. I hope to learn some of SS's material, including the jigs in the summer. I'm a backup lead guitarist for a Winnipeg folksinger. We've been playing together for about three years. Quite frankly, I love playing.

Whew! I hope some of this has been of value, and keep listening to SS. One of the few joys of living in Edmonton for this past while has been meeting and getting to know Doug Barbour. I know you've met him, because he has mentioned you before. Knowing Doug's marvelous literary ability, I thought at first that I might not be able to hold a conversation with him, because when it comes to sf and literature in general, I read primarily for enjoyment. My critical mind isn't sharp, and I wish it were a little sharper. But it never happened. Doug has this remarkable ability to put me (and I suspect many others) at ease when talking, when rapping with him. I was afraid we wouldn't be talking on the same levels, but it isn't the case with Doug. I've been able to sit and rap for the longest time about books, movies, music, fandom, you name it. Doug has what appears to me to be this other ability to set you thinking unconsciously while talking with him, and I discovered ideas popping out of my head that I never thought were there. For that, I thank him. I'm surely going to mention something about this in the next WINDING NUMBERS. Last Friday, it was all we could do to finally end the great conversation we had for over two hours. I look forward to more of them before I go home in April. He's a fine fellow.

/ All of which is certain to embarrass the hell out of Mr. Barbour. Too bad, Doug. It's all there in black and white. Everything that Randy has said is true. Doug is an incredible conversationalist. I'm only sorry that I was unable to hook up with him last summer while he was teaching at U.B.C. Since I last saw him, he and Sharon have been to England, so I'm anticipating a great convention-long conversation at Westercon this July. Yes, a word should be put in about Sharon as well. I don't think that she talks as much as Doug does, but when she speaks, you had better listen. It's sure to be an insightful remark; Sharon is critically sharp. I've enjoyed them both so much when we've had time together at conventions. At any rate, I think Doug is capable of handling the egoboo, and I've been very pleased to have his articles and reviews in Ash-Wing. /

LESLEIGH LUTTRELL, 525 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703

/ Herewith a plug for Lesleigh, which I'm sure she didn't think would happen when she wrote: / ...One reason I expect to be very busy in the near future is that I'm either going to have to get a great deal of work done on my Ph.D., or start thinking



about doing something else. I am planning to do some looking around for a job, to see if there are any possibilities for teaching jobs for someone with only a Masters. I'm sure if there are, they will be mainly in junior colleges, but that would be fine with me. I'm mainly interested in teaching, and am becoming more and more convinced that I'm never going to make much of a research worker. However, I expect finding a teaching job will more or less require a Ph.D. so I may go ahead and finish it. Still, if you hear of any jobs for a human biologist/anthropologist in your area, perhaps you'd let me know? / OK, folks. If you hear of any jobs for which you think Lesleigh qualifies, drop her a line and let her know where they are. /

We enjoyed the Ash-Wing you sent recently, and were a bit surprised to see the piece from Rick Stoker in it. I had no idea he was keeping such a journal on that trip (though I know he did a lot of writing), and while it was very long, as you pointed out, I did enjoy reading it.

CAROLYN "C.D." DOYLE, 1949 N. Spencer, Indianapolis, IN 46218

I'm now in the process of reading an excellent book by Jack London called The Star Rover. It's an old hardcover, circa 1917, and the little inscription on the first page, "Xmas 1917," proves it. Someone I babysit for has a meeting in their house, while I watch their kid, and one of the members brought this for me to read. Do you, or anyone else, have an idea to its worth (though the guy doesn't want to sell)? I really wish it could be reprinted, it's that good, but I'm afraid you'd have to tamper with the writing style to suit the public taste. To many "ere's" and such, for a lot of them, I'd wager. Oh, but it's so good. / Fear not; according to the 1976 Books In Print, The Star Rover is currently in print. It is published by Macmillan and costs \$4.95. The imprint date is 1963. /

I went to Chambanacon, had a great time. Lots of nice people were there, including Bob Tucker, Eric Lindsay, Rusty Hevelin, Mike Glicksohn.....It's a very nice regional.

I received Agents of Fortune by Blue Oyster Cult - WOW! It's different than I'd expected. I'd heard a few snatches of "Reaper" and that was all, but the rest of their music, while good, was not quite as nice. "Reaper" is best, then "Vera Gemeni," then...the rest all sort of tumble together into a pile of niceness, except for "ETI" (so-so) and "Tattoo Vampire" (ugh!). Are their earlier albums more like "Reaper?", the softer things, or more hard rockish, like "Summer Love?" I wish they would've included the words to the songs, because it's hard to catch some of them. The cover for the album is wonderful. I've been told I should listen to the Moody Blues, and Emerson, Lake and Palmer, too. My grandmother gave me Agents of Fortune for Xmas, and told of going into one of the hipper stores in Indy, and feeling so nervous because everyone was staring at her that she went out, and bought the record elsewhere. But I'm glad she did. Also got Chronicles of Narnia for Xmas - great stuff. / Yep, Agents of Fortune is a very mellow and laid back album in comparison with Secret Treaties and the earlier albums. BOC is a rocker, no way around it. Moody Blues might be more up your alley, a very consistent sound through all of the albums. Hayward and Lodge did an album that retained the Moody Blues sound after they split up; now each has a new album of his own. The Lodge one doesn't make it for me; his voice just isn't good enough. As I write this I haven't heard the Hayward album, but will soon. I'll be interested to hear any comments you have on Moody Blues, or for that matter, on Emerson, Lake and Palmer. /

Rick's Ramblings are indeed interesting, and I read them through to the end as well. But they really aren't the sort of things you can comment on at length. For some reason, Ash-Wing and Starling remind me of each other. (MacKay's birds are nice.) / Comparing Ash-Wing with Starling is indeed a compliment. Thank you. /

