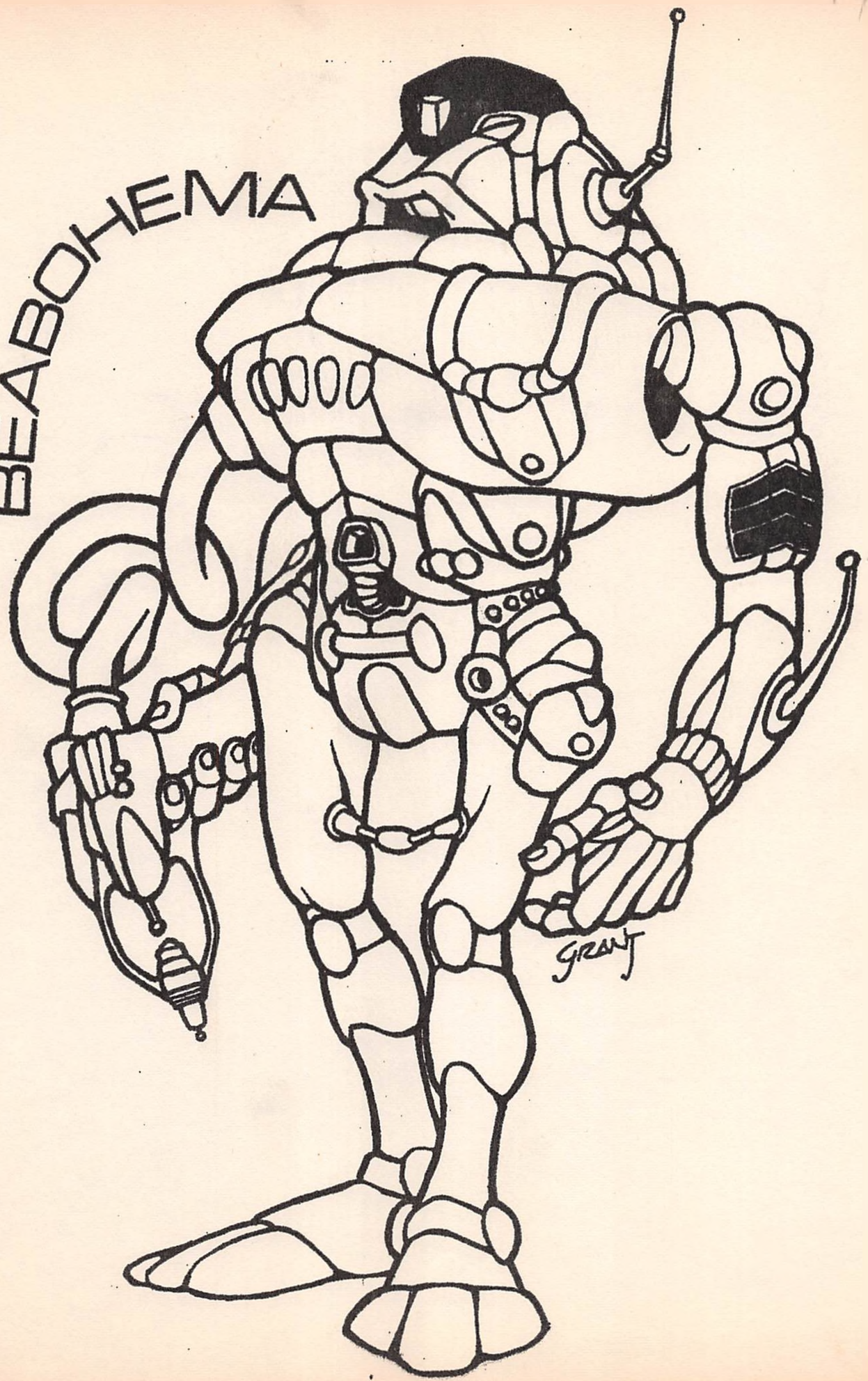


BEABOHEMA



BEABOHEMA 14

This is BeABohema 14, the issue coming out just preceding #13, produced in a fit of appoplexy. I've been trying to do a lot of things for the past week and a half, of which publishing this issue of BAB has been but one.

Codes have been partially done away with on the mailing list for this issue. As I typed them up, I made up new codings as I went along. A always has something to do with artwork, either I have some of yours, I want some of yours, I need some more of yours or some of yours is printed within. C has to do with contributions. loc means you wrote one, trade means you do, and the dread triple X has made itself visible on the labels of a select few of you receiving this issue. That means: Get off your asses or kiss the easy life goodbye. I mean one, the other or both. Near the end of the alphabet I let some people have quadruple Xs, and some of you Ws may have more, the tail-end being rendered in a state of exhaustion. The dread they inspire should remain the same, however.

BeABohema is edited and published by Frank Lunney. Everything should be sent to PO Box 551, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. 18015. Mail sent home will only delay my reading it by a few weeks. This is Ditch Needle Press publication 18.

BAB is published monthly, if I feel like it. This is the special Final Exams issue. See the gradual decline of a simple mortal...witness the eventual breakdown of a human. Subscribe to BAB and catch all the fun. Back issues are for sale like this: 2 is sold out; a few copies of 3 and 4 are left at 60¢ each; #5 is 75¢ and is the first annish; #s 6 through 9 are 60¢ each; 10 is 50¢; 11 (the special Back to School issue) is 50¢ and 12 (the special In School issue) is 50¢; 13 is the special Bob Shaw issue and will set you back \$1. The second annish is about #11, I believe. A landmark issue, yes. I only have about four copies of that issue left, so if you were holding out, you'd better no hold out much longer.

Today is January 4, and New Years was a Big Thrill. I won another game of risk that night...

On page 2 in my editorial, "Bellowings"; page 6 is the start of "Outlined in Fog" by George Hay; page 8 is "I Really Don't Know Much About Music" by Jeff Smith; page 12 is the first page of "Turnip Country" with reviews by Ted Pauls, Darrell Schweitzer, Jeff Smith, Gabe Eisenstein and Donald G. Keller; "Cum Bloatus" starts on page 21.

The cover is by Grant Canfield. Interior art is by Jim McLeod--1,14,22; James Shull--2,21; Terry Jeeves--3,17; Joe Pearson--4,25,27; Grant Canfield--5,12,13; Mike Symes--8; Jeff Schalles--10,26,27; Jeff Cochran--11,23; Andy Porter--15; Alexis Gilliland--16; Alpajpuri--18,19; Mike Gilbert--20; Doug Lovenstein--24.

For Roy Tackett: End of TOC of BAB, the Hugo nominated fanzine.



WHERE I AM It's been over three months since I wrote my last Bellowings. I do believe it was written at an improper time for an editorial to a fanzine that hopes to be lots of fun and rosiness, but my editorials are always produced on the spur of the moment. The last was written during a fit of melancholy when I knew very few people at school and was fed up with things that were going on around me.

This time I hope the improvement is readily apparent. I'm in a much better mood, and any bit of melancholia could be produced only by the final exams starting a week from tomorrow. Keep that in mind.

Things have apparently gotten better for me, though. Instead of Room Mate and I jousting, scoring points when the other's back is turned, we simply ignore each other. It works fine with me, but I wonder how he must be taking having to live with me. In former times RM and I felt we had to say an obligatory word to each other, just to let the other person know he wasn't really hated that much. I'd come in at lunch and say, tilting my head towards the window (which I like to have open, with the drapes closed; of course, he likes the drapes open with the window closed), "Hot." "Grunt," he'd answer. Or he'd come in just after eating dinner and say, "Bad dinner," and I'd say, "Bleech."

Even conversations after we'd just met went only that far. Before long we both realized it'd be easier to simply ignore each other, which is what we now do. There are times when we are each other's pet peeves, though, I'm sure. Like the time he felt it his duty to totally redecorate my side of the room while I was gone for half an hour. Or the time I got fed up with Led Zeppelin (the three records spread across the top of his shelf, the second album unfolded with the interior tacked onto the wall as a poster, a page from Rolling Stone inserted by ASCAP saying something like "Led Zeppelin flies to the top," and a Led Zeppelin poster) and burned his poster, throwing the flaming remains to the ground out the second-story window, startling a group of maids passing by the window at the time. M&M A-216 is just constant thrills every minute of the day.

Bellowings



As I was starting to say, though, it's been three months since the last BAB has come out. That was #12 and this is #14, obviously. Thing is, I'm trying to produce #13 at the same time, it being the special Bob Shaw issue. That's the last mention of that in this BAB, because it'll cost you a buck to get that special issue.

People were asking if BAB were defunct, or I was just taking a long time to get the issue out. The answer to both is neither.

BAB is issued on a monthly schedule, and I'm only missing that schedule by about two weeks with each issue, so I don't feel too badly about taking this long to get two issues out. Al Snider used to say that CROSSROADS! was published monthly, but he let eight months go by without an issue. Then he came back with a bi-monthly magazine that came out every two years, and I believe the last issue of C! was a bi-monthly, but two generations out of date. So getting these two issues out during Christmas vacation makes me feel pretty good. I'm almost getting back onto schedule.

DEATH ROW #172 The last time I reviewed fanzines was in BAB #2. That was also the first time I reviewed fanzines. The title of the column was "Ten Mags to Doomsday," following my time-honored tradition of adapting titles of books for names given to my own publications and works. (The name of the apazine I published a few years ago for N'APA was MINI-YUN, from Piers Anthony's Chthon; for Al Snider's Gestalt I published THE PLANET EARS, from John Campbell's The Planet-eers (I have a cover for THE PLANET EARS on electrostencil, if anyone is interested in taking up where I left off due to lack of interest two years ago).) I simply looked at a Michael Kurland book I had in a bookcase and mutated the name Ten Rocks to Doomsday. The column has the same originality.

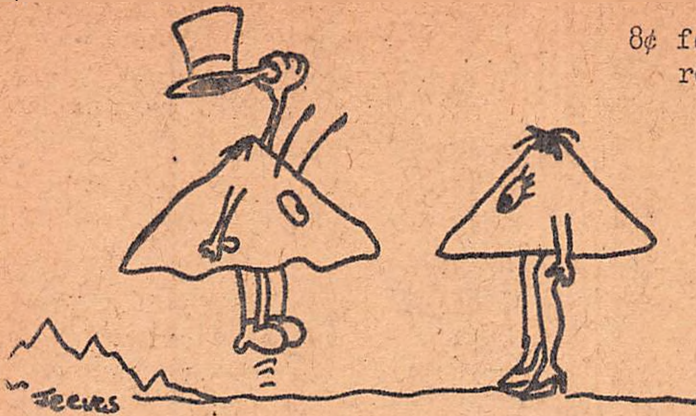
At the end of the column and in that issue's editorial I asked the readers if any of them would like to review fanzines for me. Al Snider took over in the next issue with Fandom's Vocal Point, not simply reviewing the contents of certain fanzines, but dealing with overall concepts he felt were growing in fanzines or in fanzine publishing.

Al hasn't answered the last couple of inquiries I've sent, and from the scarcity of CROSSROADS!s in the last few months it looks like he may have gaffiated, or at least dropped his column from BAB. He hasn't had a column since #9, and even that was intended for #8, but was received by me after the rest of the issue had been run off.

I would like to have some type of intelligently written fanzine reviews, though, if only because fanzines are the most important aspects of fandom for many people and should be covered in some way. So: I'm throwing it out to everyone again. I'd like to have fanzine reviews in BAB again, but more along the lines of Greg Benford's "Scalpel" that used to be in QUMP and has appeared once in FOCAL POINT, or Harry Warner's "Opere Citato" in RIVERSIDE-QUARTERLY. Charlie Brown-Buck Coulson five liners aren't desired at this time, simply because Charlie Brown and Buck Coulson are around to do them now.

If anyone would like to try his hand at reviews, or resume reviews in a column that died with a fanzine years ago, let me know. But, of course, rejection rights remain in my possession, as always, though I am setting this question down.

HUP TWO! HUP TWO! I'm sure that all faneditors are plagued by having readers move without sending notification in time, if at all. While not an overly costly inconvenience, it's still just that--an inconvenience. Fanzines have been returned to me with "Addressee Unknown" or "Moved--Left No Forwarding Address" for the past couple of years, and I haven't thought too much of having to pay the



8¢ for the return postage. And usually I'd resend that copy of BAB to the new address of the person if I ever found out what it was.

Not all editors have done the same thing, and I'm coming to see why. For some reason, I'm getting more returned copies of BAB lately than ever before. I realize the last issue was put out just in time to clash with students' changes of addresses, but most of the returns haven't been people leaving for college, simply people who are

moving and not letting anyone know--meaning me, Charlie Brown or Arnie Katz (or anyone who prints COAs)--they have moved. It's not a lot of fun coming home and staring at the pile of undeliverable fanzines that have been waiting for me.

As I said, other editors have charged people whose fanzines have been returned because of a COA or some other foulup. And that's what I'm going to start with this issue. No more Mr. Nice Guy. From now on I'm going to be just like Charlie Brown when it comes to returned copies. It's going to cost you 25¢ if mail comes back to me for any reason except when it's my fault due to incorrect addressing, etc. The cost hasn't been great to me in the past, but if it's not going to be great for me, it's not going to be great for you, either. But you will be charged for the inconvenience you cause me, because I have better things to do that re-address BABs.

And it'll be up to you to let me know that you haven't received an issue, and if that issue has been returned because of an out of date address, I'll let you know, after I receive your inquiry, not before. Copies lost in the mail will be resent by me for nothing, of course.

Everyone has now been warned.

HUNG UPSIDE DOWN A few months ago the commandos tried to rescue POWs from a camp in North Vietnam, and I read about the operation the next day in a New York Times I had taken from in front of the door next to mine in the dormitory. "We've invaded North Vietnam," I said to no one in particular as I scanned the headlines, the activity I'm most apt to do with the Times, since I find it an unreadable paper. "So what else is new," was the only reaction, reflecting the fact the the war has become so everyday in our lives, another war could only be more of an everyday thing. I pursued the topic no further, politically apathetic as I am.

A few days later I read that Nixon had given the leader of the raid, a Colonel, I believe, a medal for his action. I read that intelligence leading up to the raid had been perfect. I read that the leaders of our country regarded the mission as a success, apparently not reading in the Times that when the commandos got to the POW camp, there were no POWs left. I forgot about it for a week or two..

And then I read another Letter To The Editor in the paper. "The war is beginning to smack of Joseph Heller," the letter said. "Yossarian received a medal for bombing the ocean, and we're giving out medals for rescuing POWs from a camp where there are no POWs any more." It was the first time I had realized the parallels between the two happenings, one factual and one fictional. And rethinking back through the whole of Catch 22 makes me realize the whole conflict in Vietnam

is nothing more than a factualization of Heller's book, from the M-M syndicate to Major Major to the vast black market flourishing aboveground in Saigon. Only thing is, Heller's war never ends, it just keeps going on and on, with people participating and dying or ultimately escaping.

Knowing Nixon's backward nature, I wonder how he presented the medals to the glorious commandos...

TIGHTROPE It shouldn't be necessary to say something like this, I guess, but because I publish some bit of material it doesn't necessarily mean that I'm in agreement with what it's saying, or even that I go along with its basic premise as being one that I'd like to discuss at all. The reason I bring this up is that this issue starts off a record review column by Jeff Smith, and out of the three records he reviews I'd call the Grand Funk Railroad album moderately bad, I don't like the Carpenters at all, and I've only heard one or two cuts from the SRC album, regarding them as simply another of the endless stream of Detroit high-energy bands. Therefore, some of Jeff's opinions wouldn't coincide with mine, and I do believe some of his statements are made in ignorance of previous occurrences in music outside the bounds of Top 40.

And, not being a Mary Hopkin fan, I didn't know whether or not to take the last line of his Carpenters review seriously or not. I decided to take it on faith, though, and chalk it up to differences in listening habits.

Not all future columns are to be of the format used in this issues "I Really Don't Know Much About Music," according to Jeff. Eventually he wants to get it into the rambling sort of column he uses for the editorials in his own fanzine, PHANTASMICOM. He suggested I slap the three reviews I had from him together and make it the first installment of his column, only to get it started.

Next installment he plans to discuss the Jesus Christ, Superstar album, and in following columns fall into his planned format. So hopefully, the column will gradually evolve more into a separate entity rather than an extension of the review section.

PACHUCO CADAVER Delaney and Bonnie and Friends came to Lehigh (along with Lee Michaels) in October, which was a concert I looked forward to for a long time, since the last time they came through Philadelphia the car broke down and I wasn't able to make the concert. I even thought Room Mate would try and get to this concert, but I knew it wasn't for him when he asked me, "By the way, who are the friends now that Eric Clapton has left the group?"

He stayed in the dorm during the concert, throwing the frisbee up and down the halls along with the other Cream fans in my section.

THEEND

--FL



OUTLINED IN FOG

GEORGE HAY



Overhead the gas-lamps glimmer, hinting of Old Chelsea Bridge, an overarching mass just dimly visible through the fog, the damned yellow, lung-searing, all-pervading fog. Somewhere behind you, in the general direction of Cheyney Walk, footsteps echo, muffled yet sonorous. You flash your patent acetylene lamp in that direction; ten feet away the pale beam dies in the gloom. The footsteps halt; there is a hammering on doors, the sound of a window sliding up, an exchange of voices, a woman's laugh. The window can be heard closing; a door opens and shuts. Silence once more--silence and the omnipresent fog, thickening by the second.

Far off, Maffeking is being relieved, Kitchenor is at Khartoum, the Prince is misbehaving, Disraeli is scheming, the Queen is writing a letter complaining about the intolerable Lord Palmerston. But where you are, all there is is cold and silence and swirling yellow fog.

What?

Of course I'm writing about science fiction; in Great Britain, anyhow. I'm just allowing myself the luxury of being subjective, that's all. The above description represents my feelings as one trying to get something done about sf, in the sense of working to get across to John Public what sf really is, as distinct from the Mickey Mouse version currently extant. This includes functioning as the Publicity Officer for the British Science Fiction Association, as well as anything I may be doing in a purely private capacity.

I write this in November 1970. In the past few months Phil Harbottle's magazine VISION OF TOMORROW has folded, followed by British distribution of IF and GALAXY. Why?--distribution, that's why. As far as VOT is concerned, it is also my opinion that the magazine, though neautifully produced--after the first couple of issues--had the wrong format, which didn't help. Ted Carnell's NEW WRITINGS IN SF continues to sell, and sell well--in fact, I believe earlier issues are being reprinted. This periodical--not a magazine, but a pocket-book of stories--is the right format.

What of IF and GALAXY? Caught with only the first part of Heinlein's latest yarn, I felt that, if only for selfish purposes, I ought to try and get something done. As it happens, Ralph Stokes, of Universal-Tandem, is an old acquaintance of mine; I once did a John W. Campbell story collection for him. He received me with his customary courtesy and explained that New English Library, who had been doing the distributing, had not been doing the distributing, if you follow me. Not being in the business for his health, he had decided to axe the operation.

Would he be willing to get things moving again? Well, yes, in principle--but how? He had his own reps on the road, but would be unwilling to employ them for distribution on this count unless his costs were covered. £5/6,000 would cover

him for long enough to get the distribution tied down. Got that amount on you, anyone?

Thinks. Again, as it happens, I know a distributor who, it seems, actually knows his business and might be able to get the magazines out where the public could see them. This stemmed from my previous attempts to help VOT; frustratingly, I had just fixed Phil up with this man when the backer pulled the plug out.

Mr. Stokes rings the man up there and then. Is he interested? Yes, but he needs data. Just where had NEL distributed? Could Mr. Stokes guarantee prompt deliveries, month after month? Yes, he could. As to the distribution history, that would have to be gotten from NEL.

That was some weeks back; I'm still in the process of trying to extract that distribution history. So far, I've learned that NEL had pushed the magazines to about 200 of some 500 possible outlets. I need an exact geographical breakdown of where those 200 are--to date, in spite of promises, I've not got it. Well, let's be fair--the guy didn't promise; he just said he'd do his best.

Press on. All is not darkness. Over yonder, at the far end of the West India Dock Road, in Barking, Essex, the N.E. London Polytechnic has agreed in principle to support our academic SF FOUNDATION. (The director, along with Arthur C. Clarke and other notables, was an early member of the British Interplanetary Society, which helps.) Anyway, we are now getting down to particulars--so much so, in fact, that I'd best say no more on this here, except that you can keep your eyes open for official announcements on this.

RADIO LONDON, the BBC local VHF station, wants a regular sf programme; this, I think, will be the first-ever regular sf radio programme in these fog-girt isles. The first number is being put together now, and should go on the air before Christmas; apart from such minor slip-ups as an interviewer asking Jim Blish about "bug-eyed monsters" and the director almost losing Ken Bulmer's custom by greeting him as a "sci-fi" writer, all has gone well.

Underground magazine FRIENDS has carried an article by myself setting out some basic data on where British sf is at, where writers and fans can meet, what prozines and fanzines to read, and where they can be got, etc. As a result, I'm now getting requests to speak at schools, put up exhibits for libraries and the like. Talking of libraries: next May the National Book League is giving us a two week exhibition of international sf books, "The Best of SF." This will travel around; already Pete Weston tells me that the Birmingham and Midlands Institute has asked him to run an SF Conference next June, and can we shift the book exhibition thataway? Universities as Aston, Surrey, Liverpool, Cambridge et al. Meanwhile, I'm hunting for somewhere where I can open a Museum of the Future (John Brunner's idea) and think I may have found it.

So things are moving. But hell--the fog! To operate with minimal organization, no reliable communication lines, not even a nameplate or what I would consider a decent letterhead? Sorry--I shouldn't moan. All these ills are mending. I should also state emphatically that those I've mentioned, as well as others I haven't, have given me rapid and very practical support, without which most of the things I've mentioned would have happened. And really, I'm very appreciative.

But oh, the fog...

AFTERPIECE: I've done it! I've done it! Ladies and gentlemen, I hold here in this very hand a listing of sixty-two cities and townships in the UK which, as of June 1970, had actually received distribution of GALAXY--and, one presumes, IF. The quantities are as fascinating as the names. Only two in Cheltenham--well, what could you expect? But then, why twenty in Aylesbury? If twelve in Galashiels, why only nine in Ayr? And how come twenty in Tunbridge Wells--riddle me that, my masters!

I
REALLY
DON'T
KNOW
MUCH
ABOUT
MUSIC



Mike SYMES '69

a column by Jeff Smith

SRC, Traveler's Tale, Capitol Records

There are times when our most cherished views are upset. For instance, sometimes you can tell a book by its cover. Or a record.

There is no reason why I should have ever wanted to listen to SRC; I had never heard of them, and my tastes are such that if AM program directors don't like something, I don't either. A deplorable state of affairs, but unfortunately a true one.

On a very dull day, I decided to sort my brother's and my records. Steppenwolf in his pile, Paul Mauriat in mine... He had lots of groups I'd never heard of, among them SRC.

The cover (uncredited) to Traveler's Tale has a Mongol (?) on a horse, wielding a lightning bolt and attacking a dragon. A dog and a hawk are also involved, but I can't determine whose side they're on. Hm, I said to myself, if the record is anything like the jacket, this is my kind of group.

And, you know, I really like this album. SRC has an incredibly rich sound for two guitars, drums and organ/piano. It sounds a bit like Santana (which has about the same instruments), though there is more of the hard rock sound in SRC, and more emphasis on the vocals.

SRC's use of vocals is the strangest part of this album. The singing is all but drowned out by the music on the first two songs, "A New Crusader" and "Street Without a Name." Naturally, then, these two songs concern themselves with unusual subjects and have unusual treatments for rock--and you can barely hear the words. The first could possibly have inspired the cover, though the fantastic elements are missing. (There is an instrumental part that could easily represent a dragon, however.) It takes place in the past but has obvious implications for today. "Street" begins: "This world is filled with orphans/ Who are lost and can't explain/ Where they've been or where they're going/ Down the street without a name." Sounds fascinating; I wish I could hear it all. The words on "Midnight Fever" are clear but the singer's voice is about low average rock--and I think the most die-hard rock enthusiast will admit that rock voices cannot compare with rock instruments. "Never Before Now" and "By Way of You" return to the old rock theme of Love, but a couple of lines reinforce my belief that the SRC people are our kind of people: "A million years is not too far/ I'd follow you across the stars." The thought expressed in the second line is typical of these two songs, but I like the use of "years" and "far" in the first.

"Diana" is another love song, a bit better, with most of the words understandable. "Across the Land of Light" is an instrumental (and I'd particularly wanted to hear the lyrics to that, too). The final selection is "The Offering," for which SRC brought in an orchestra. Predictably, the music is excellent but the words are almost completely lost.

In the future, when I play this album--and I intend to do so often--I think I'll just relax, ignore the fact that there are words, and let the music wash over me. That stuff is good.

Grand Funk Railroad, Closer to Home, Capitol Records

The radio plays a song called "Closer to Home" by Grand Funk, so when you pick up their album by that name and don't find the song on it, you tend to wonder.

That question was answered by their first album, Offering, which is a paean to mediocrity. Nothing on it approached the singles--even the album version of "Ticket to Ride" is inferior to the single.

On Offering Richard and Karen Carpenter had not yet found themselves. Sometimes they sounded like the Cowsills (horrid thought!) and sometimes like Spanky & Our Gang (which is a bit better). Most of the songs were composed by Richard, and it is entirely safe to say he is not one of the industry's great lyricists. Only once does he rise above the old love cliches (with "Eve," if you're curious) (excepting the "Invocation" and "Benediction" frame) and at times he dredges the absolute bottom of everything. ("Love is a groovy thing/ It knows how to make you sing/ And it fills up your life with sunshine and joy.")

Close to You would almost have to be an improvement over the first album, so merely saying that it is proves nothing. Close to You is as good as the Carpenters are, and few groups lately have produced albums worthy of themselves (as the Beatles did with Abbey Road.)

Richard and Karen Carpenter are not just two singers with a studio orchestra behind them. Their backup crew never exceeds four people. Richard--who sings lead blissfully seldom--plays the keyboard instruments and does all the arrangements. These arrangements and Karen's voice are what make the Carpenters.

Karen also plays the drums, and this is the one big point that I cannot analyze. She is not a great drummer in the sense of great drummers, but I can put on the album and listen to nothing but drums for half an hour. She seems to have an instinct for percussions, and what is on record is untrained, perfect and absolutely delightful. The best is on "Close to You," at the end--particularly the part cut off the single.

It's hard to appreciate her brother's arrangements without comparing his version of a song to another. "Help" is a good example. "Help" is a Beatle song; nobody does it but them. Now the Carpenters have done it, and it is completely different from the original. Neither better nor worse, just different.

The one disappointment on the album is "I'll Never Fall in Love Again," which is too much in the shadow of Dionne Warwick. Richard couldn't ring any changes on this one, it seems.

He wrote only four of the songs this time, and there real is an exchange of quality for quantity. None of the four are at all bad, and "Maybe It's You" in particular is a very nice little song. The surprise is "Another Song" which is anything but. This is a serious composition that works on more than one level.

Richard and Karen Carpenter have got to be the most listenable people to emerge from popular music since Mary Hopkin.

--Jeff Smith



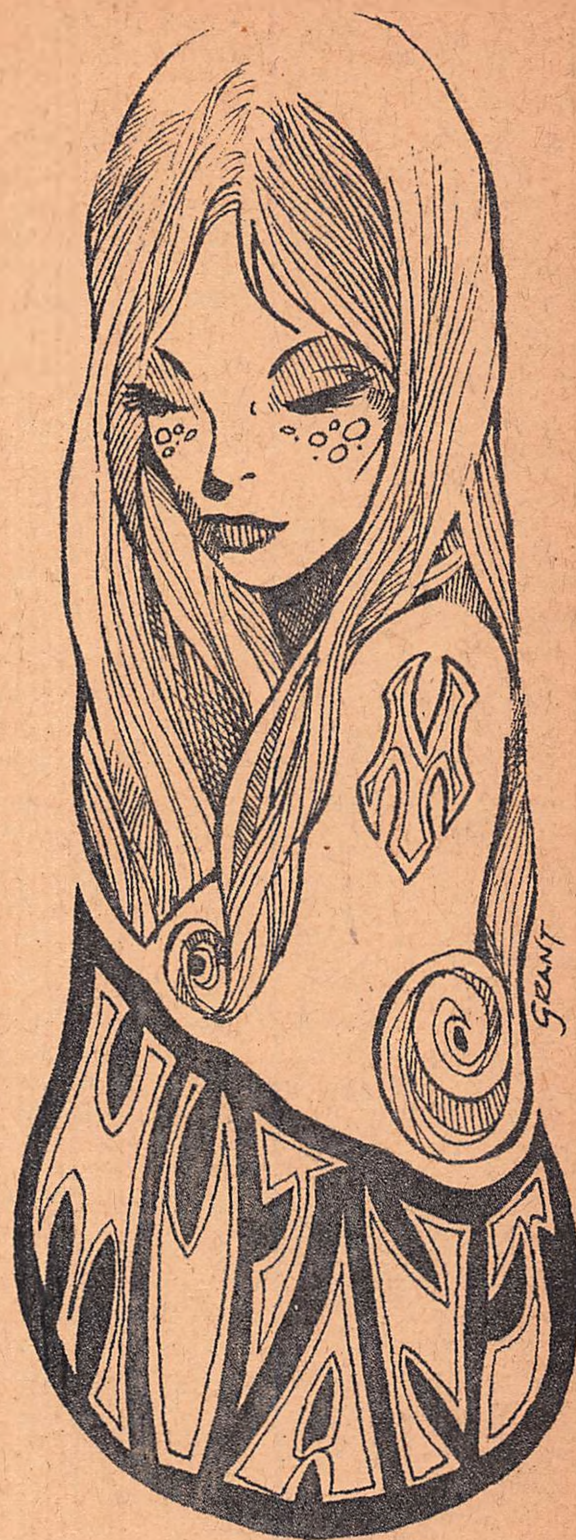
TURNIP COUNTRY

BOOKS

Anti-Man, by Dean R. Koontz, Paperback
Library, 63-384, 60¢

This is a rather difficult novel to describe in a review, because it is one of those books for which it is important that the review not reveal awfully much of what happens after a certain point. Taking place some undetermined number of decades in the future, Anti-Man concerns an android which evolves beyond its creators' expectations (among other things, it develops sophisticated healing powers and is able to resuscitate corpses) to such a degree that, in fear, they decide to destroy it and terminate the experiment. However, a doctor on the project, Dr. Jacob Kennelmen, "kidnaps" the android in order to save it, and together as fugitives they flee from the World Authority while the android continues to evolve. Kennelmen, though he hopes that what he has done will benefit humanity, is tortured by doubts as the android changes more and more radically, and keeps remembering the Frankenstein myth. Things develop most interestingly from that point, but it would be unfair to both the author and the potential reader to go into further detail as to how.

Anti-Man is an extremely compact novel: less than 140 pages of fairly large print, written in a prose style from which every ounce of fat has been pared. The smoothness, professionalism and stark reality of the writing is remarkable because, in other respects, this novel shows signs of having been written hastily. For example, after it has already been demonstrated that the android can reshape his fingers into sensitive, wire-thin lock-picks, he and Kennelmen



REVIEWS

seek refuge in a mountain lodge belonging to an associate of the Doctor's and have to break a window in order to gain entry. A little later, to cite another example, Kennelmen goes out to hunt the meat that the android needs in vast quantities while undergoing its accelerating physiological changes, lays low a pack of wolves with narcotic darts, and kills three of them with his rifle. When he brings the three carcasses to the android, it immediately demands more food, and instead of going back to collect the half-dozen anaesthetized wolves that are presumably still lying there, Kennelmen goes out to hunt an elk. This sort of sloppiness, however, is confined to details of plot; none of it carries over to the writing, which is very precise and clear.

This is not likely to be recalled as one of the major or enduring novels of the decade, but it is highly readable and highly competent. Anti-Man is a product of the same Dean R. Koontz who wrote Beastchild, not the Dean R. Koontz who used to write those horrid Ace Doubles, and that is a recommendation.

--Ted Pauls

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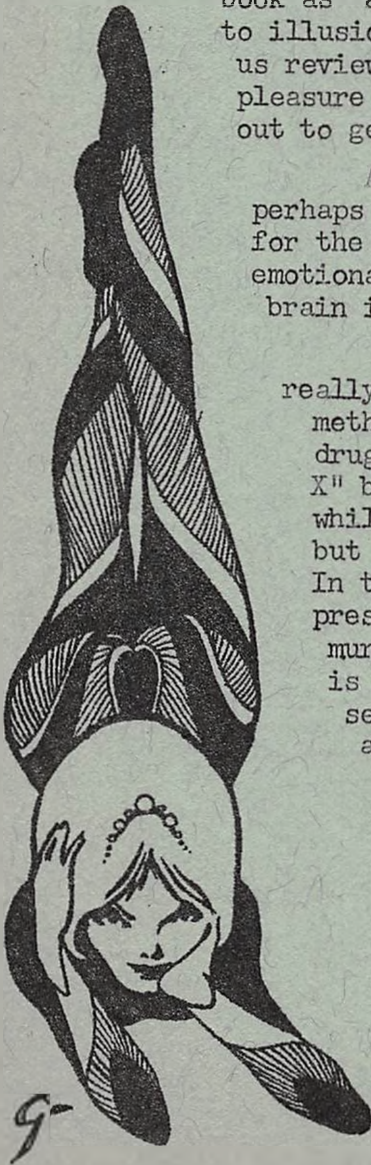
Cryptozoic, by Brian W. Aldiss, Doubleday, \$4.50 (Avon, 75¢)

Writing in a recent SPECULATION, author Aldiss refers to this book as "a disintegratory novel, since it portrays man's descent into illusion." Such statements are cleverly designed to frustrate us reviewers. Aldiss has said it all and thus deprived me of the pleasure of slapping such an impressive label on his book. He's out to get us all, I'm sure of it.

About the book: First of all, it's a helluva fine story, perhaps the best long work he has done. Magnificently written for the most part, it gets the reader intellectually as well as emotionally involved and presents concepts that will twist your brain into a pretzel. Just about anything you could want.

Cryptozoic presents, among other things, perhaps the only really plausible method of time travel ever presented in SF. By method, I don't mean how they get there--they take a miracle drug called CSD, which is just a variant on the old "Element X" bit--but the conditions that the travelers remain under while in the past. They are physically gone from their present, but are immaterial in the past and cannot affect it one bit. In turn, the past cannot affect them, only things from the present can. (At one point we are told that a traveler was murdered by a man from his own time, of course.) Also, it is exceedingly difficult for a person to communicate or even see clearly with another who is even a few years detached and of course it is impossible to have any contact (beyond the visual contact) with people from the far future. Therefore, any type of time paradox has been neatly eliminated:

The story concerns Edward Bush, an expert mind-traveler (as they are called) and textbook-case neurotic (dependent on his mother emotionally, sexually, the whole bit). When he comes back from one of his journeys, he finds that his mother has died; he goes to pieces and is committed to an asylum. Now, that's all that goes on objectively. The reader isn't told that Bush is insane and his hallucinations and fantasies are pre-



sented as real, since to him they seem to be. Bush imagines that he is sent on an important mission into the past, to assassinate a Dr. Silverstone (whom Bush met once in the Devonian era) who is preaching the heretical theory that time really runs backwards to the way we perceive it. There are signs that this is all false --Bush travels into the Depression era after we are told that no one can reach that historical past--but we are not sure. Aldiss does his very best to convince us that time could actually run backwards, but cannot quite do it because it is obvious that he and all his characters are thinking in the usual order. It becomes difficult for us to conceive of the whole story running backwards. Aldiss is getting incredibly ambitious these days. He's trying to do the impossible. You just cannot convince anyone that time runs backwards and have them take you seriously. Aldiss comes closer to doing it than anyone else ever has, though, and you do take him seriously for a while. Finally, when the whole thing falls apart, he has sense enough to tell us that Bush is insane and this is all going on inside his head and nowhere else. However, unreal or not, Bush's imaginary adventures are extremely powerful experiences. As we go along with him, it all seems very real.

The book is beautifully written, with a tremendous command of style, and ironically it is this fact that exposes one rather irritating flaw. The fight scenes are ghodawful. There are several brawls in the course of the novel, and each time the characters seems to stop living and perform some grotesque puppet-like ritual. Some writers who can't do anything else can write a good, bloody, slam-bang fist-fight; it's quite irritating to find that literate, intelligent Brian Aldiss can't.

Also, the very skill with which the time-runs-backwards bit is presented causes the reader to look closely and find a seeming contradiction in the internal logic of the story. We are told that the reason that men can't reach the historical past is because of something called "the entropy slope" which involves a lower level of energy in the distant past, thus making an approach to the historical past "uphill." However, it is only in Bush's insane, fantastic theory that this is justified. If time runs backwards, greater entropy will be found in the "future" which is our past as the universe gradually "unwinds." Bush's idea is nonsense, we are told, but the entropy slope is still there, contradicting the true concept of time-flow.

Everybody slips occasionally. Read the book anyway.

--Darrell Schweitzer

8 8 8 8 8 8

Damnation Alley, by Roger Zelazny, Berkley S1846,
75¢

You've heard it said over and over again that Roger Zelazny never repeats himself. That is quite possibly true, although I won't bet that he didn't try something over once in his life.

But I've never seen him do something like Damnation Alley. It's a long way from the greatest poet in the world to the last Hell's Angel.



The storyline is simple--the United States has been bombed out, and all that's left of any consequence is Boston and California. After California survived a plague--on top of everything else--they kept the antiserum which had kept them alive. Then word came from Boston. They now had the plague and needed the antiserum. Could California ship it to them?

This was no simple matter. There are no airlines, no railroads. A boat would take too long. It would have to be a cross-country auto trek.

Trouble is, the country has suffered the ultimate bomb-out. Not only is the land a desert, it's inhabited by giant desert animals (gila monsters, bats, buffalo, etc.). The sky is filled with clouds of garbage. It doesn't rain water; it rains crud.

No one had ever crossed the country since the Bomb. Until John Brady went from Boston to Los Angeles with news of the plague. Six cars had started from Boston, though, and Brady died soon after reaching his destination.

The road from coast to coast is called Damnation Alley, and you just don't run it if you want to live.

California sent three cars out to Boston with the anti-serum. The one we follow through the book is driven by Hell Tanner. He was offered freedom from prison if he'd make the run, and that was his only reason for accepting the suicide job. He couldn't care less about the people in Boston.

Damnation Alley chronicles not the trip from LA to Boston but the subtle changes in Hell Tanner's attitude, from I-don't-give-a-damn at the beginning to I-very-much-give-a-damn at the end. And the beauty of it all is that the changes are subtle. There's no big incident in the middle of the book that changes Tanner's life; there are little things along the way that affect him slowly.

My one quibble is that while Roger planned the thing to be headlong at topspeedalltheway, with no chapter breaks or anything, half a dozen or so times he switches to Boston to see how the plague is getting along. These are all (save one) very good scenes, but they get in the way and disrupt the structure of the novel. (The one scene that isn't effective has every third word blotted out by the continuous drone of a church bell, when it wouldn't get that every third word so neatly. It's a trick, and it doesn't work.)

Since he was working from an already existing novelette, Zelazny wrote the novel in three weeks. It's a better novel than most that take many times that to write.

Jeff Smith

8 8 8 8 8 8 8

RECORDS

New Morning, by Bob Dylan, Capitol

Hank Stine's article (review, whatever) on McCartney was impressive for its enthusiasm and notice of things that I, and probably most of us, have thought



about in much the same way before. McCartney is great and always has been great, although in different ways. There have been elements of honesty, naivete and pure creative brilliance from as early as "She Loves You" and "And I Love Her," through "If I Fell," "Norwegian Wood," and the separate developments of Revolver, Sgt. Pepper and the white album—all as significant as the latest, most mature developments in Let It Be. There is no denying the importance of the Beatles in musical history, nor their place among the most imposing names that one can conjure up out of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But...

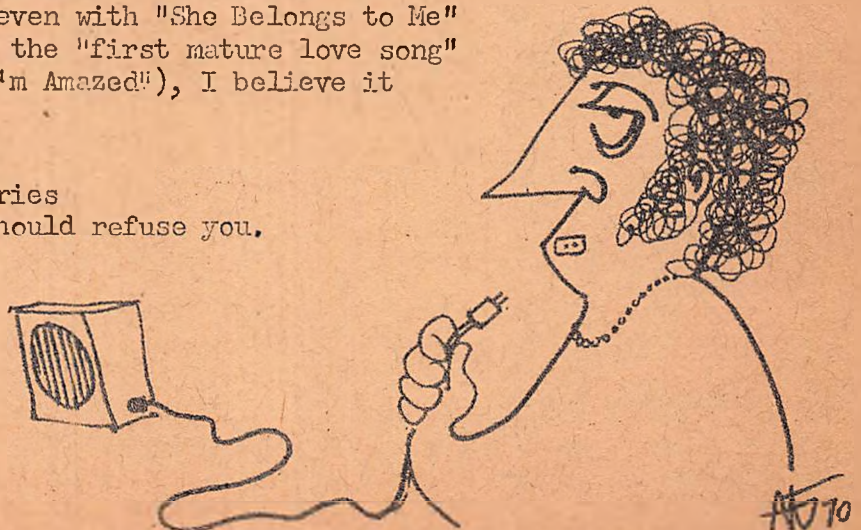
"...a breadth of human understanding as great as any living artist"—well, let's say that's an exaggeration. Secondly, McCartney is simply not that good. The voice may be good but musically the thing is just not as good as it could easily have been with some help from his friends. The songs are of varying quality, varying enough to make any statements about "pound for pound and groove for groove" unacceptable. And third...

What also influences my reaction to Hank's review at this exact moment is the illogical thought that another Talent looms so far above and beyond the abilities of McCartney that praise of the latter is misdirected. Illogical and irrelevant, but I've had New Morning for almost a week now, and I know that the man who remains the largest figure in modern music (American music, songwriting—how large can we extend the category without hesitation? As far as I'm concerned the category of Music is not too large) is named Bob Dylan.

There are many parallels between New Morning and McCartney. They are both statements of maturity by artists who achieved greatness in their youth. It seems that each of them plans to lay back in seclusion with his wife and write (since each possesses an artistic integrity which alone would distinguish them from most in their genre) basically unangry songs of emotion and reflection. "Maybe I'm amazed at the way I really need you," showing the same state of mind as "If Not For You." It is also the state of mind first indicated by Dylan in "I Threw It All Away" and other pieces on Nashville Skyline, and in fact we might be more justified in comparing that album with McCartney's first solo effort, and letting the next one go against New Morning.

But look back a minute. In terms of pure art the Beatles have never had hope of more than second best. There is nothing in their huge body of work which could ever touch the likes of "Visions of Johanna," "Memphis Blues," "Mr. Tambourine Man" or "My Back Pages," without even considering the songs that will remain as cultural landmarks ("Masters of War," "Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," "The Times They Are A-Changin'," "Blowin' in the Wind," etc.) McCartney has said nothing to a woman to compare with "Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands," perhaps not even with "She Belongs to Me" and "Love Minus Zero." As for the "first mature love song" (Stine's appraisal of "Maybe I'm Amazed"), I believe it to be "I Want You."

The guilty undertaker sighs
The lonesome organ-grinder cries
The silver saxophone say I should refuse you.
The cracked bells and
washed out horns
Blow into my face with
scorn
But it's not that way, I
wasn't born to lose
you.
I want you...





I wonder how many people have listened to that nasal voice weaving those strange images and felt the same piercing beauty I have, and still feel.

New Morning is Dylan's latest work, coming after a batch of cast-off pieces of awfulness assembled by Columbia to compete with the bootleg albums. It was produced (according to Rolling Stone, although Johnston is still credited on the album) by Al Kooper, who said before the release that it was Dylan's best album ever. Which turns out to be true only in a couple of ways; if it

were true absolutely then it would have to be the ("pound for pound and groove for groove") best album ever made, period. But it isn't quite Blonde on Blonde, maybe not even Highway 61 Revisited. For one thing, there will never be, as it looks now, another song from Dylan which will go onto the list of cultural landmarks. He is damnably contented, up there in Woodstock, or "a cabin in Utah," as it says in "Sign On The Window":

...marry me a wife, catch rainbow trout
Have a bunch of kids who call me Pa
That must be what it's all about.

Nevertheless, this album is just so good. Stine's praise of P.M.'s voice (which is as good as Biggs on harpsichord or Hendrix on guitar?? god..) fits in with a review of New Morning, for it is in his development of musical refinement, including the voice, that Dylan has reached a new level of excellence which immediately places this album above John Wesley Harding, if only considered on the level of arrangement and production. Dylan has never had a great voice (none of them); but he knows how to sing. There are phrases on this album where his voice almost rasps, grates, slides--and these are the very phrases, it often seems, where he evokes a beauty in nuance and inflection that is amazing. It's difficult to convey to a reader the feeling given to the lines in "Went To See the Gypsy" just by inflection:

His room was dark and crowded
The lights were low and dim
How are you? he said to me
I said it back to him

Otherwise, New Morning is musically superior even to Highway 61; Dylan's piano playing is excellent--a welcome replacement, to some, for the harmonica--and with he and Kooper on guitars and Kooper on organ and French horn, plus the usual set of country help, things are at a simple level of high quality.

The songs themselves are exactly what one would have expected after Nashville Skyline, assuming that he would maintain the old level of greatness. They are neither of the angry classic variety, nor of the strange story-telling sort on John Wesley Harding. They are merely an extension of the simple forms on Nashville Skyline infused with the talent and artistry of Blonde on Blonde and the others. "New Morning" is just a fine song, as good as you could imagine within the theme of:



So happy just to see you smile
Underneath this sky of blue
On a new morning with you

"Day of the Locusts," on the other hand, is a major song, based on the day Princeton made Dylan an honorary PhD. "Time Passes Slowly" and "Sign On The Window" are also just fine songs in the contented mood, but containing much more than that. "Went To See the Gypsy" is an enigmatic song that seems to mean something--set, by the last line, in his native Minnesota--but damn if I know what. "Winterlude" and "If Dogs Run Free" are rather disgusting songs and no use saying they're not, and "One More Weekend" immediately strikes one as an extension of "Leopard-skin Pillbox Hat." "Three Angels" and "Father of Night" are rather disturbing, but I personally find them charming and definitely worthwhile. Dylan was as shattering as Beethoven and Bach some years ago. He is now simply engaged in the pastime of making fine music.

A lot of people would like to see again the Dylan of Highway 61. A word on this was given even before this album by Dylan's friend, Robbie Robertson, via the title song to The Band's latest album, Stage Fright:

See the man with the stage fright
Standin' up there to give it all his might
He got caught in the spotlight
But when he gets to the end
He wants to start all over again.
Please don't make him stop, let him take it from the top
Let him start all over again.

--Gabe Eisenstein

8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8

Volunteers, by Jefferson Airplane, RCA Victor

First, there is nothing. Slowly sea-sounds become audible: waves washing up on shore, the creaking of rigging. Then the music begins, soft guitar, piano and drums, laying fown a quiet yet insistent rhythm. And then a voice begins to sing, telling a tale of post-Armageddon.

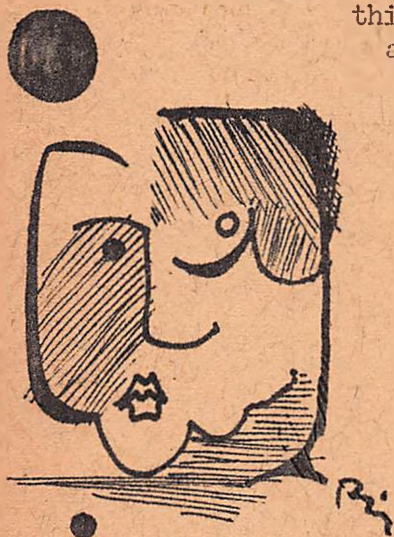
Such is the beginning of "Wooden Ships," the best song on probably the best album by what is perhaps the best American rock group extant.

At this writing, I have been an Airplane fan for about a month. Before that, I had heard "Somebody to Love," "White Rabbit" and "Volunteers," acknowledged their excellence, but hadn't paid much attention. Then all at once I became able to buy albums, read two articles in the Airplane and became fascinated by their personalities. So I bought Volunteers and really liked it. Since then I have eagerly devoured three previous albums of theirs. They have a fantastic body of music, so

that I will have to restrain myself from running on about those previous albums. But on to matters at hand.

Volunteers, their latest album (barring the one just released, perversely titled The Worst of the Jefferson Airplane), is an oddly balanced album: nearly every number matches up with another. It is also an excellent album, with only two duds.

The two most important songs on the album are "We Can Be Together" (the opening cut) and "Volunteers" (the title song and closing cut) which stand as manifestoes of the youth revolution, and not coincidentally, I think, have the same instrumental background. The title song is a simple yet powerful call to arms which went over big at Woodstock. (Another interesting note: this song, as well as the album, was to have been called "Volunteers to America," but a real right-wing group by that name threatened to sue.) "We Can Be Together" is more complicated. It has a rather odd tone: in such line as "We are obscene lawless hideous dangerous dirty violent and young," the content seems to be at bottom deadly serious; but it is phrased in such a way as to make it clear that the song is a deliberate pose. I think the song is aimed not at the kids but at the parents, the Silent Majority. It is as if the Airplane was saying to them, "Here we are, we're evil and we're out to get you, and you've really got a problem." But then, at one point, they start to sing, la-la, like that, as if laughing it off and saying, "Hey, kids, you know we aren't really like that, but we've got to make them think that if we're going to win." The irony of the song is also heightened by setting these harsh words in a very pleasant melody. It's an excellent song, one of the most advanced things they've done.



Grace Slick of the fantastic and inimitable voice has two songs on the album, among the best things she's done. They are full of dense and elusive poetry set in fine musical settings. "Hey Frederick" is especially good. Each of its two verses is divided into three parts: the first is harsh and jagged, the second loud and bluesy (I think), and the third flowing and lyrical. Grace trips like a virtuoso from change to change, binding them in one unit and infusing the whole with that incredible tension which she alone of all singers I have ever heard can generate. The song's one flaw is that it only takes up half the cut: the other half is a long instrumental jam which is simply not my bag, and bores me no end.

"Eskimo Blue Day" is essentially the same kind of song. There is the same tension, the same effortless transition from soft to harsh, and the same poetry. I still haven't figured either song out, but both are deep, evocative and excellent.

Lead guitarist Jorma Kaukonen also has a pair of songs, "Good Shepherd" and "Turn My Life Down." Both sound somewhat religious; indeed, "Good Shepherd" has no author--it is labeled "Traditional," which means Jorma probably arranged an old hymn of some kind, though I don't recognize the source. "Turn My Life Down" sounds like a gospel song, but Jorma did write it. Both songs are good and pleasant listening.

There are two songs I don't care for on the album. The first is drummer Spencer Dryden's "A Song for All Seasons." Its lyrics are an interesting look at life in a rock group, but its music is country, which grates on my ear. "The Farm" is sort of wacky, camp I suppose. You would think that San Francisco people like the

Airplane would advocate farm life (back to the farm and all that), but the sarcastic tone of the song obviates it. (But it was not written by them, so this may explain it.) I don't really think it fair to call these two songs duds, but I don't like them at all.

The only song which does not match up is the one minute instrumental throw-in, Meadowlands." I do not know its source, but I have heard it is a Russian folk-song. It is an organ piece, to me full of infinite sorrow and longing, yet full also of the deeper joy which often accompanies those emotions. It is a truly lovely song, perfectly satisfying.

Last but far from last is "Wooden Ships," whose twin is, of course, Crosby, Stills and Nash's version. I like the Airplane's version a little better, but the other is also excellent. They are quite different: CS&N's version has more of a rock background, while the singing is relatively soft with interesting harmony. The Airplane version's background is quieter but more pervasive, and the singing is louder and more urgent. In both versions, the essence of the song comes out well: it is a hauntingly effective piece whose long, free-flowing lyrics suggest what life after the bomb will be like. It is one of the best rock songs in several years. (But I still would like to know why neither group sings the opening section, "Black sails knifing through the pitchblende night..." which is the most effective poetry in the piece.)

"Wooden Ships" is also important for its form. It is a kind of song which is being more and more used nowadays: a series of short verses with instrumentals in between, running six to eight minutes. I think this is a much more effective form than another one, which is to stretch a three or four minute song to enormous proportions by endlessly repeating something at the end (Donovan's "Atlantis" and the Beatles' "Hey Jude" are successful examples). The Airplane has been using the form a lot lately, and some of their best songs are like that. "We Can Be Together" is an example, as is their tremendous "House at Pooneil Corners" on Crown Of Creation.

I feel that Fefferson Airplane is the best group in America today. I can truthfully say that, except for the Beatles, no group has made as much of an impression on me. Volunteers is a very fine album.

—Donald G. Keller



Perry A. Chapdelaine, Rt. 4, Box 137,
Franklin, Tenn. 37064

Ted Pauls' review of The Dis-
appearing Future was good. Will you
permit me to except my own story from
the anthology, and to comment on things
about the anthology which perhaps were
unknown to Ted?

George Hay, of course, should
explain his own anthology, and why
and how it was put together. But
surely he would overlook the self-
congratulatory aspects due him for
the pioneering attempt.

As I understand the anthol-
ogy (or finally came to understand
it once it was out), George wanted
to print an interesting science
fact article illustrated by a sci-
ence fiction story. This is still
a fine idea, and I hope George gets
the privilege of trying it again,
and that he will be more successful
in what he wanted to do.

He wasn't too successful in
accomplishing his aims in The Dis-
appearing Future, evidently. At
least I don't think so. Probably
he had to meet publishing deadlines,
and really didn't have the time to
seek out new stories which illus-
trated conventional fact articles or
philosophies; or vice versa, did not
have time to buy good stories and
to then commission scientists to
write fact articles the stories
could pretend to illustrate.

In my opinion it was a
grand pioneering attempt, showing
a high order of creativity, and
I'd like to see the next one,
better done, with or without
any contribution from me.

I've liked the idea
so well I sent one of our
better editors a short nov-
elette using some of the as-
pects of the Unknown formu-
la, mixing magic with science
in a rational way, and asked
for permission to create an
anthology of similar stor-

**cum
bloatus**



ies (better written than the one George got from me, of course) with a short intro of the author and a short spiel on the particular science being rationalized in the story. I'm about to write a follow-up to see if the idea was lost somewhere, or just what. If that house isn't interested in the idea I'd sure like to try another. I think it's a winner, and would love to try it, and I'm prepared to match my sample story against most any editor's judgment, except one magazine editor's, where it was rejected.

Poor David Gerrold! Does he really believe that Paul Hazlett or Perry A. Chapdelaine or whoever is doing those stinks lately is out after his brave contribution to SFWA?

An interesting phenomenon about Paul. If he mentions sex and pot and controlling Hugos, Harlan Ellison gets named. If he mentions Patronage Pigs, two or three other writers respond, as though the damn things were written just for their benefit. ((Untrue. The specific names were mentioned in connection with specifics and not glaring generalities, and you damned well know it, Perry. You built a personality around a core--that of being popular with most of fandom--of Harlan Ellison, threw in some trimmings, and assumed that people reacted to the whole personality described, which described no one. The same in the case of David Gerrold, who contributed a sum of money to SFWA, and responded for that reason, not because he thought he had been described as a Patronage Pig.))

I'll bet that had Paul Hazlett mentioned the sum of \$25 instead of \$100, we would have heard from someone else, just as irate, just as capable of rationalizing a reason why the article was aimed at only him.

Still, David, if you feel offended, and if you feel I've been party to harming you, I most assuredly, publicly apologize. I have no reason-- or have had no reason--to think you a wrongdoer--at least personally I've had no reason.

Your letter, and Michael Ward's, in Moebius Trip #6, bothered me because I kept wanting to stick the name Perry A. Chapdelaine in the blanks which both of you, and Ed Coonor, have been kind enough to make. I've wanted to find some of the background behind the treatment I received at the SFWA West Coast "professional" meeting, and I'm beginning to narrow things down.

Well fine!

I'm isolated, know virtually no pros or fans, seldom get to conferences and hear no gossip. I originally argued away Mike's queries to me that I was being boycotted for one reason or another, thinking this simply more rumor mills. But by God, you've both got something in writing at last, and I'm seriously thinking of dragging everything into the open--and then again, maybe not. It depends on certain letters I'm waiting on.

Whichever, I'm about convinced now that SFWA is just not my bag, and it has probably hurt me far more to be associated with it than had I stayed a loner.

I've asked one big* star*pro* for some rationale on why SFWA is a help to newcomers, but have yet to receive an answer.

Well, thanks. If I do get back to you, David,



it'll be through Ed Connor's Moebius Trip, and I don't think it'll be pleasant from shore to shore.

*

*

David Gerrold, Box 526, Hollywood, Ca. 90028

Somewhere in your lettercol, an error crept in. Generation is scheduled for 1971, not 1967 as printed in BAB #12. Please note the correction. (I don't think I want to wait for 1967 to come around again. Once was enough.)

*

*

Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 74, Balaclava, Victoria 3183, Australia

The most interesting thing in the issue of DAB that just arrived was the short article on Paul McCartney. While I am not a great fan of his I suppose that he has done something for the future of rock music. I won't go as far as saying that I feel he has done something good for the whole of music as that would be going a little too far.

Even when Lennon and McCartney weren't writing their songs together for the Beatles there was still the intention of recording them together so that in effect these songs were still collaborations and, if there was ever one group of musicians to influence the direction of music, it was the Beatles.

The reason why no one man can have any lasting effect on the future of music is simply because there have been no musicians of this century who had the artistic ability. (I am confining myself here to rock music since I feel that men like Stravinsky, Bartok and Britten have been a great influence, obviously). Paul McCartney is the writer of ballads, he is not particularly adept in the handling of either blues-rock or even good old fashioned rock-'n'-roll. In the Beatles this task seemed to fall mainly to John.



HOOWOO BOY!
So that's what
a pistachio nut
is like.

If there is any way in which rock can have an effect on the direction that serious (must be careful with a term like that) music is taking, it is in that rock can give the other form an energy which has been drained out and lost since that period of the romantic composers (and when I think about it, an energy which maybe serious music never had). Of course I am not at all sure that serious music needs this energy but since I love both forms just as much I would like to see them combined.

The above four paragraphs are supposed to say why I feel that Hank Stine is a steaming nit. Perhaps I didn't go about saying it the right way, but there it is. Bach is (so far in history) the absolute in the composition of pure abstract music and Beethoven is the ultimate (so far) in the composition of music which expresses the greatest ideals of all the noblest in art. McCartney is nowhere in comparison to them or at least fifty other composers and (I hesitate here) performers. Even Bob Dylan (another person I'm not all that pleased with) had a better understanding of where the human spirit lay. True, all his work was the work of youth, but even in this he had far more insight into the human nature. He was obsessed with certain images and these came out in everything, but at moments the whole universe opened out.

*

*

James Blish, Treetops, Woodlands Rd., Harpsden (Henley), Oxon., England

Chapdelaine apologising for Hazlett is virtually incoherent, and small wonder, since he has no case. Neither he nor you--you are both responsible--faces up to the central issue: that most of his damaging allegations were unchecked and turned out to be untrue. What few facts the present pic purports to contain will have to be regarded in the same light. Much of the damage he has done is indeed to himself.

I'm baffled by Benford's remark that most of critics hate each other unless they clump into schools--a hedge that can be extended indefinitely in any direction. True, one of us erects into "a vicious personal enemy" anybody who catches him in an error, and another throws about the word "dishonest" nearly at random; but on the whole, I see surprisingly little rancor, certainly nothing to compare with the clashes between mainstream critics, which Stanley Edgar Hyman once compared to the mating combats of bull elk.

He is quite right, though, that my novels lack Schwung (as Richard Strauss once said of Debussy's Pelleas). That is why I am marooned in this tiny village, which lacks sewers, gas, street lights and even a post office, with nothing to look at beyond the garden but fields of barley and clumps of trees all the way to the horizon, and nothing to do but worry about three missed deadlines and five more coming up. But there seems to be nothing I can do about it.



* * *

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md. 21740

There's one thing to remember about college roommates. They're approximate peers in age, purpose, hours, and often interests. This distinguishes them from roommates that you get when you're unfortunate enough to spend some time in the hospital, if you aren't one of the three men in town who are rich enough to afford a private room. I could tell some wild and wonderful stories about the people I've been sick alongside, all the way from the juvenile delinquent whom the nurses were afraid to put in the children's section of the hospital to absolutely mad old men. In any event, I liked the way your editorial rambled.

((Roommate and I don't share as many purposes, hours or interests as you might think. He usually stays up until 4 in the morning playing bridge, and sometimes stays up all night. He doesn't let those hours simply fall through his fingers, though. He spends the next morning sleeping, while I'm trudging to classes, tired though I had a good ten hours the night before. And on celebration nights, he sleeps through the next day, a feat I have yet to do. Since the only action around Lehigh is in one's room, I disregard his sleeping and play my stereo and type, which gets on nerves and prevents him from sleeping as soundly as he'd like.

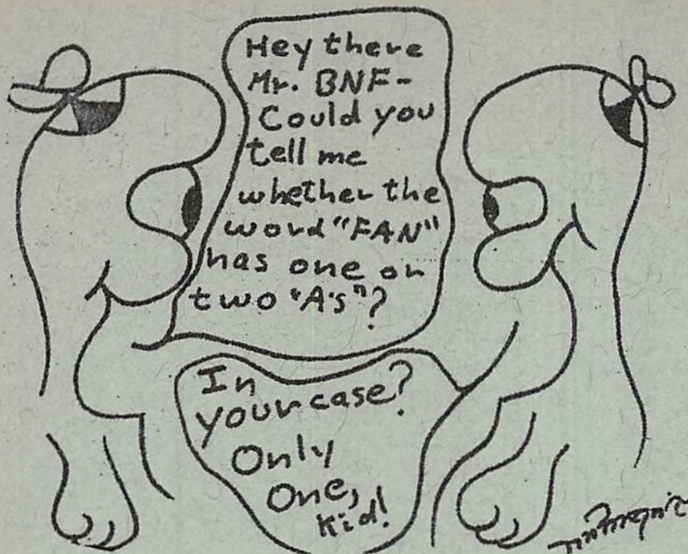
And I don't know if his interests and mine are even distantly related. To make everything easy in our Lehigh lives, we just don't talk to each other. It's ok with me because as far as I'm concerned he's in another world entirely and it's as if the world were empty when he's around, and it must be ok with him because it gives him more time to play bridge when he doesn't have to talk to me.))

Greg Shaw sounds very authoritative on a topic which he knows too well for me to try to argue about. The only safe kind of comments, when you feel so ignorant on the subject matter, consists of questions. For instance, I keep wondering: how much real effect do the record companies, promoters, Madison Avenue executives and other non-consumers have on waves of popularity for performing groups and whole types of music? Gene Lees keeps writing in High Fidelity as if the young people were being led by the nose by the money changers. He's undoubtedly exaggerating, but I would still like to be inquisitive among a lot of people who are in the know and might speak frankly. Then I feel curious about the implications of the progression which Greg describes from classical to jazz to pop to rock & roll. I wonder if he finds in this progression any clues to what characteristics the next big musical thing will possess. I can see a couple of possible developments in this progression. One would be from complexity to simplification, not in any insulting sense, but as a simple description of how complicated each of the four types of music has been in key structure, polyphony, subvarieties within the main type, and so on. Yes, I know that lots of things are happening simultaneously when I rock group is performing, but the effect on the ear isn't the same as in some other types of music. The other progression seems to be increasing importance of how music is performed rather than the music as compositions.

I could fill these two pages with remarks on Greg Benford's column. There is a large colony of Seventh Day Adventists in this area, with their own residential area, private school, store and convalescent home. By religion they are strict vegetarians and by every possible indication they are the healthiest, happiest people you can find for many miles around. I've been too accustomed to meat once or twice daily to want to be a vegetarian, but I wonder if population pressure won't eventually force most of us to give up meat. Everything we consume except water and salt derives indirectly from vegetables, anyway, or rather from vegetation, and it takes a lot of valuable space and materials to indulge in the luxury of converting the vegetation first to animals and then to our tables. The Adventists around here aren't fanatic about their diet. They admit members of other faiths to their convalescent home and are happy to serve meat to those persons if relatives or friends prepare it and bring it in. As for the press coverage of Maria Mayer's discoveries, Greg should simply remember that every newspaper editor, rewrite man and reporter puts himself in the place of the typical reader and makes sure that the story is written so he can understand it. Therefore newspaper stories are written on the level of moron comprehension.

Alpajpuri's remarks force me to point out that looking and dressing like a square can attract the same "hostility, fear and incomprehension vibes" that he finds people directing toward his long hair and casual dress. I must wear a coat and tie while on the job and it's too much trouble to change a couple of times a day so I go around looking like a stoopshouldered, underfed Rotarian whose dry cleaner is on strike most of the time. You'd be surprised at the number of dirty looks and brief comments I attract from tough kids in passing cars, the sneaky petes who panhandle on the courthouse corner and various other ethnic groups, obviously because I seem to be a member of the establishment. To compound the deceptive appearance, I wear a hat most of the time, not as a





part of the uniform but because I discovered long ago that this prevents headaches in daylight and head colds in cool weather. The hippies and hippie imitations rarely notice me, I'm happy to report; the only place I have felt myself stared at by them was in Greenwich Village. The real problem is that people just don't like other people very much any more, and sometimes I wonder if all the complicated cliques and hostilities are the result of this fact, rather than the vice versa situation.

*

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Okay, so now we all know what a noble fellow Perry Chapdelaine is and Hazlett has totally dislocated his arm trying to pat "himself" on the back and has stretched the Credibility Gap beyond belief in his attempts to rationalize the Hazlett articles, so now perhaps they'll be quiet and go away? Not because they are so disturbing to the in-group of science fiction or of fandom and we can't bear to have our skeletons exposed, but merely because they have outlived even their amusement value by now and are becoming awfully boring.

I haven't read Black Corridor, but I published Leon Taylor's review of it in the last issue of my fanzine and he thought it one of the worst books he'd ever read. In fact, he called it a "thoroughly bad" novel. Reading Darrell Schweitzer's "utterly superb novel" sort of makes one wonder. Just how much use are book reviews anyway? I suppose it's a matter of finding a reviewer whose opinions pretty well match yours and staying with him. And ignoring reviews from people who have tastes you don't agree with. It's sad; as soon as I read that book I'm going to look with disfavor on the entire future review output of one of those fellows. Ah well, that's fandom.

Will Straw has misinterpreted my statements somewhat. Or perhaps I just didn't make myself clear enough. What I meant was that there are fen who, once they've discovered fandom, use it as an escape from their insignificance in the mundane world. Since most people are unaware of the nature of fandom it's probably true that they don't consciously enter it looking for an escape from mundania (except in the broad, general sense that anyone who adopts a hobby is seeking an escape). However, once in and aware of the nature of the microcosm, there are people who choose to totally submerge themselves in fanac to the point where they do nothing else in their spare time. I think Mr. Straw and I agree on this but he placed words in my mouth that did not belong there.

Nevertheless, while I didn't say what I was quoted as saying, I cannot help but agree with the sentiment assigned to me. There are people aware of fandom but not interested right now in being in it. I'm sure every fan has had the experience of discovering another science fiction reader and trying to get them into fandom without success. When I was an undergraduate at Toronto, I tried to start an sf club. I found many readers, all right, but when I tried to organize a regular meeting and described fandom to them, they turned me down to a man. Now whether those people will ever become fans if they get bored with what they're doing now, I cannot say. But the potential is there.

[illegible]

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((WAHF on the next page.))

WAHF: Rick Stoker, David Gerrold, George Inzer, Terry Jeeves, Mike O'Brien, Bill Schaub, Jerry Lapidus, Paul Anderson, Darrell Schweitzer, Yale F. Edeicken, Jack West, Thomas Collins, George Hay, Donald G. Keller, Joe Pearson, David William Hulvey, Mike Kring, Gary Labowitz, Peter

Roberts (whose loc I especially would have liked to quote, but I couldn't make out a lot of his writing in certain areas--a warning to future brilliant loc writers), Larry Herndon and Bob Silverberg, in no particular order.



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