

ack 8-20-73

DYNATRON

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Number 54, I do believe.

DYNATRON, as you well know, Ish, is a fanzine devoted to fantasy, science fiction, and things related thereto and dedicated to the proposition that you can fool most of the people most of the time.

DYNATRON is "edited" and published by the ancient of Albuquerque, yes. Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107, USA on a schedule that has baffled some of the finest minds in the universe. It is available by the usual means: trade, LoC, contribution or for 40¢ for a sample copy. (See note.)

Note: (This is the one you are supposed to see) For the past decade while others have been putting out fanzines for utterly ridiculous prices I have firmly held the price line of Dynatron at 25¢. I do feel, however, that in these times of economic crisis with the dollar falling to unheard of low levels and inflation galloping to new highs that all red-blooded Americans should do their utmost in assisting the President to bring about the economic ruin of the U.S. Therefore, I have raised the price of Dynatron to the new Phase IV price of 40¢. NRA (National Ruin Association). We do our part.

A Marinated Publication

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dated August 1973  
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BOOK DEPARTMENT: (I'll bet you think I'm going to fill this issue with the usual lousy comments on books. You may be right.)

I am, I admit, a sucker for stories about great plagues or threats of plagues. So when I found PANDEMIC by Tom Ardies (Doubleday, 1973, \$5.95) I really couldn't pass it up. This is the story of one William Horatio Orsovin, eccentric multi-billionaire (arethere other kinds?), who is concerned that man will destroy the Earth by pollution and decides to destroy mankind (except for a small select group, of course) before this happens. Orsovin and his team have cooked up a mutated form of influenza guaranteed to do the job. Charlie Sparrow, an agent of one of those secret government departments, is out to foil this dastardly deed, which, of course, he does. PANDEMIC took me about an hour and a half to read which is probably about the length of time it took the author to write it. It isn't very good although there is all sorts of action and people are getting knocked off or beat up every other page. Still, it does contain one rather remarkable passage....

Sparrow has just met super moneybags Orsovin and is having dinner with him and one Wang Fu, Orsovin's son and chief scientist.. Super agent



"Wang, among other things, is a microbiologist," Orsovin said. "The executive director of one of my subsidiary companies, World Genetics, and a major contributor, I might add, to some of the more remarkable advancements being made in the field. If he wasn't so reticent about his accomplishments, he'd have had a Nobel prize long ago."

Wang made a face. "I'd rather have Einstein's balls."

"Poor Wang," Orsovin said, retrieving his glass. "He has a thing about the gonads of the dearly departed. There is no insuperable obstacle, he advises me, to keeping testicles alive in artificial culture for many years after the decease of their proper owner. One desirable male, highly intelligent, especially gifted, could continue to procreate long after his death. He could father many thousands of children."

"It's true," Wang protested. He sounded slightly petulant.

"I know," Orsovin said. "I know..." He took a careful sip of his drink. "I fear we've missed our opportunity with Einstein, but let's be good sports about it, shall we? There are other gems for the plucking. Whose balls would you like, my dear Wang? Linus Pauling's? André Malraux's? Henry Kissinger's?"

"Isaac Asimov's."

"Very well," Orsovin said. "You have my word on it. Asimov's balls..." The tone of his voice suggested that he meant to deliver.

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Good thing this was fiction.

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This issue has to go out rapidly so it will be another quickie. Eight pages at the most. Letters and articles held over for #55. This will be mostly a trip-con report, I expect. Buck Coulson can go read something else. You can all go read something else. Read the next issue.

Oh, to answer numerous questions about the last two issues ...#52 was indeed completed and mailed about a week before #53. The difference was the mail. #52 went 3rd class, #53 went first class. Usually we ain't got no class at all.

Shuddup, Cox.

We have been promising ourselves a trip to Canada for some time and the worldcon in Toronto provided a focus around which we could plan half a trip anyway. If all goes expectedly well (I am slippery, I tell you, when it comes to changing sentences because I'm too lazy to reach for the corflu) we will complete the whole thing next year with a trip through the Canadian Rockies and west ending up in Santa Barbara for the Westercon.

The question of moving from Albuquerque is still very much alive so we'll be looking around the northwest for something suitable while we're at it.

We start, no doubt, with Bubonicon (and the committee is to be congratulated for coming up with a genuine case of Plague to set the theme this year) which I attended for only a short time on Friday, 17 August. Dropped in at the convention room for just a couple of hours to see who was about. About 10 people were about including Rusty Hevelin and the Silverbergs. There was also this vast tub overflowing with bottles of iced beer. Unfortunately, Pat McCraw, the chairthing, had run off with the only opener in the place and I



may never forgive her for that. Unless, of course, she comes up with a full Bubonicon report for the next issue. And promises never again will she run off with the bottle opener. After some talk we adjourned to the Hacienda or the Taco Bell or one of those places for some Mexican food and after that I adjourned from Bubonicon. Barbara Silverberg asked me in Toronto what happened to me after the dinner. I told her true: we went to Canada.

The trip had been planned for some time. We had thought first about taking the camper but what with the gasoline situation the way it was supposed to be the difference between 10 mpg and 30 mpg decided us in favor of the Toyota. That, plus the fact that there would be only three of us this trip. Diana had other commitments including a trip to San Francisco to be bridesmaid at her cousin's wedding and classes starting at the University of New Mexico immediately thereafter.

The trip to San Francisco was probably the best thing that has happened to her of late. It opened her eyes to the fact that there is a whole world outside of Albuquerque with all sorts of interesting things in it besides horses. She came back with a whole new outlook on life for which I do homage to the Eternal Sky.

I digress.

Frequently.

We spent the first two days in Kansas. Hot, humid and utterly uninviting. My mother's people live there and I had not seen any of them for 25 years or so. After my mother died I got considerable pressure from them to come visiting. So we spent two days wandering around Plainville, Hays, Gorham, Russell and places like that visiting with aunts and uncles and cousins. We discussed farming and the price of wheat and went to see the "old home place" and the cemetery where my grandfather and grandmother are buried. I was urged to come to Kansas to live. No way. Too hot in the summer, too cold in the winter, and too far from the ocean. Being some 800 miles from the ocean in Albuquerque is bad enough. I have, at times, a powerful longing for things to be found along the coast.

Tuesday we moved on through Nebraska and South Dakota, taking our time and staying off the Interstates. Spent Wednesday night in Grand Forks, NoDak, and Thursday moved on across the border into Manitoba, through Winnipeg, around the lakes and ended up in Whiteshell Provincial Park for the night.

Two items of particular interest discovered on this day. About 16 miles north of Winnipeg is the parish church of St Andrew's on-the-Red. St Andrew's on-the-Red is one of those historic places. The oldest surviving stone church in Western Canada. Construction was started in 1845 and the church was completed in 1849. I like to visit old churches. Lots of history involved in them. What was interesting about St Andrew's on-the-Red, however, is, I am quite certain, completely unknown to the clergy and the local historians. Way up on the second level near the loft I found inscribed in the wall a symbol of the Great Goddess. No way to tell how long it had been there but it was obviously carved into the stone many years ago. I would have suspected the girl who was serving as guide at the church but she was obviously much too young. Even if she did carry around a science fiction book with her.



The other item of interest was the "Boulder Mosaics" in Whiteshell Park. This is an area of three or four acres in which are to be found outlines of turtles, serpents, and men made from various stone. The figures are quite large and quite old. I don't know how old but according to the information available Canadian archaeologists consider them to be ancestral to other Indian artifacts found farther south.

And isn't it wonderful that the figures are still there? Out in the open, unprotected, with viewing towers available for climbing. In the States the stones would have been carted off long ago by the tourists.

From Whiteshell to Thunderbay. No way to get close to Lake Superior. The lakefront is all private property. Thunderbay to Sault Ste. Marie with stops at Wawa and in Superior Provincial Park. Chrys wanted to see the goose at Wawa and I wanted to see the pictograms in Superior Park.

The pictograms are located on a cliff overlooking the lake and can be reached only by walking along a narrow ledge which slants steeply into more water than I care to think about. "You're not going out there," Chrys said. But of course I did. The pictograms tell of a raid by a party of hostiles from the south shore of the lake. They are of fairly recent vintage as they depict a man on horseback.

Even more impressive was a huge crack in the rock which runs down to the shining big-sea water. I went down there, too. I keep being reminded that I cannot swim but, what the hell....

At Salt Ste Marie we took the obligatory tour of the Soo locks and were properly impressed at the tonnage figures and at the amount of pollutants poured into the St Mary's river by the steel mills there.

Canadian rivers and lakes are abundant and beautiful (from a distance) but they are heavily polluted. Way upstream even the lumber companies and paper mills dirty the waters. Kakabeka falls trades on a legend of an Indian maid who threw herself over the falls for love. One look today at that dirty brown water and she'd do it out of despair.

Whitefish, Sudbury, North Bay, the miles flowing by and merging into one. Algonquin Provincial Park, a vast wilderness in which, happily, wolves still abound. We took a leisurely side-trip to Bancroft. Why to Bancroft, forghodsake? Why not? Spent the night at Golden Lake. Hot, humid.

Come to cool, beautiful Canada. Beautiful, yes, but cool? Temperature and the humidity both in the high 90s making each day miserable.

We went to Ottawa to watch the changing of the guard. The RCMP is striking in its scarlet tunic and bearskin hat but not particularly impressive.

A cruise among the Thousand Islands and a boring recitation of the millionaires who own them. More history at Fort Henry. We're getting pretty close to Toronto so zip across to Saint Marie among the Hurons. Impressive. More history, of course. Finally the unavoidable trip to Niagra Falls and then Toronto and the con. Bet you thought I'd never get there.



We checked into the Royal York too late for the first day's program but nevertheless in time to continue a fannish tradition of long standing. The first fan one sees at a convention is always Forry Ackerman.

Where does one start with Torcon? The biggest yet, of course. Registration was somewhere around 3,000. Around 2,500 were wandering around the hotel. Large. Too large. There were vast numbers of fen I wanted to see, did see, and vast numbers, lost in the milling throng, that I didn't see. There were far too many brief "hellos".

The committee is to be congratulated for managing to keep some sort of control. Rent-a-fuzz were posted at the entrances to the various rooms and no one was admitted unless their Torcon badge was on display. I approve. With a mob that large what else can be done? There was no end of attempted gate-crashings. One young thing approached René and wanted to borrow her badge "to get a girl friend in". René politely refused. Despite the security some one made off with a Freas painting from the artshow. I don't know of any other flagrant ripoffs, though.

The programming was moderately interesting. Much of it was concerned with how to avoid doomsday. Isaac Asimov, quoting from his F&SF essays, hit hard at the population problem. I sat down prepared to be thoroughly hostile to Kate Wilhelm's talk and ended up as the one in the audience who applauded her most enthusiastically. She talked about the trend towards too much safety and security in everything from children's games to the care of the old. We are, she said, taking too much of the zest out of life by attempting to wrap everything in cotton-wool. She's right, of course. Without an element of suspense or danger there is no spice in life. One tends to grow bored. Extremely bad for the individual and for the race. Pour the wine, friend, and let's think up ways to live a little.

John Brunner discussed trends and things that we might or might not look forward to. He mentioned, for example, the probability of increasing Arab influence in the world since the Arabs are sitting on top most of the world's oil.

Reflections of this can be seen in Standard Oil's proposal for a reassessment of the U.S. position in the middle east. Back in 1948, or thereabouts, regarding the establishment of Israel, Harry Truman asked, "How many votes do the Arabs have?" The question is now changing to "how much oil do the Jews have?" In the event of another Middle-Eastern war the answer may well be "all of it".

The fan panel discussed the future of worldcons and what to do about the ever-increasing attendance. Lester del Rey suggested that one possible method of controlling size of the cons might be to eliminate all programming aimed at fringe groups. Those who were sf fans and wished to attend would be welcome as sf fans but there would be no special programming designed for comics, monsters, ERBites, Trekkies, and the like. A rather sensible suggestion. The rest of the panel, George Scithers, Rusty Hevelin, Chuck Crayne, Ted White, Milt Stevens, Linda Bushyager, and Terry Carr discussed the problem at length but, so far as I know, arrived at no answers. Such panels seldom do, really.

And what else?



The Costume Show was interesting but with the absence of Bruce Pelz there was nothing really outstanding. Mike and Carol Resnick as Chun the Unavoidable and Lith the Golden Witch were quite good. Kathy Bushman was notable as a cobra queen which raises the question of why not next year as the Snake Mother? Difficult costume but would be effective. Lin Carter was handsome as the Ice King of Castillo. And Kevin Gould was good as a Sirian Commander. I think that the show at last year's westercon topped this one.

The awards banquet went quite well since tables were assigned in advance. Rotsler and Bloch both gave good speeches. Lester del Rey was fine as toastmaster. The awards are getting as numerous as the Oscars almost and with the addition next year of the Gandalfs (for fantasy and honoring Tolkein) it will be a long program. The special award to Pierre Versins for his "Encyclopedia of Utopias and Science Fiction" was a deserved one and I do hope someone translates that into English one of these days.

There were complaints about commercialization of the convention and a couple of instances of it bothered me. I attended what was billed as a "seminar of fanzine publishing" and it turned out to be a sales talk for Gestetner.

And it was Tuesday and time to start back to Albuquerque. No problems until I filled up with watered gas at Rolla, Missouri. Nursed the Toyota into Springfield where we had a slight hold up for repairs. And Texaco has heard about that.

Back in Albuquerque at noon on Friday the 7th. Total distance traveled this time out was 6,330 miles. That calls for one for the road.

Roytac  
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