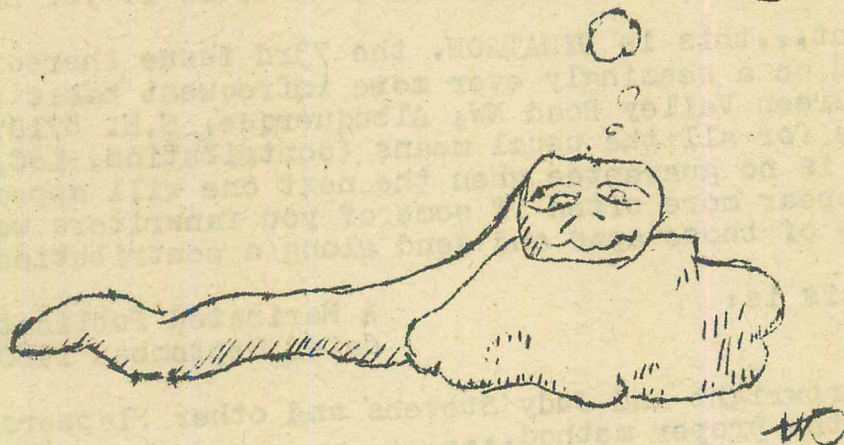


OMNATRON!



"The main problem with vermouth," the late Mr. Fields was wont to say, "is that you have to dilute it way down with gin in order to make it drinkable." I'll drink to that. According to one of his biographers W. C. Fields once, in his youth, entertained the Waziri tribe in Africa. That, when you consider it, is a wonderful thing. It is a statement that truly croggles the mind. Ah, well, he was an entertaining gentleman and we celebrated the 100th anniversary of his birth this year.

What you hold in your hands, or paws, or tentacles, as the case may be, may not be as entertaining and is only one-fifth as old as Mr. Fields. It is, yes, the grand and glorious 20th Anniversary Issue of DYNATRON. To be sure it is no more grand and glorious than any other issue of DYNATRON but you get a full 20 pages. What? DYNATRON always has 20 pages. True.

However, in celebration we do have a cover. It is by Hank Heath and I thank him for it. Inside on page 15 you will find an article by none other than Arthur H. Rapp and somewhere there is a short book review by Rick Sneary. All the rest is by Horrible Old Roy Tackett which is why it took so long to produce this issue. It's due to the expanding universe, you know. It takes longer to get things done. It would probably have been done more quickly and more entertainingly if the editor had taken on the proper input of martinis. It will probably read better if you have done so.

In any event...this is DYNATRON, the 73rd issue thereof. DYNATRON is produced on a seemingly ever more infrequent basis by Roy Tackett at 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N.M. 87107, USA. Copies are available for all the usual means (contribution, LoC, trade, 50¢) although there is no guarantee when the next one will appear. It would probably appear more often if some of you fanwriters would tear yourselves free of those apas and send along a contribution.

In any event this is:

A Marinated Publication X
dated September 1980

And now for Becky Cartwright and Judy Stevens and other Flappers who just aren't sure of the proper method....

ED COX, DOODLE IN THIS SPACE:

WRITINGS IN THE SAND

Who would believe snow in Albuquerque on the 12th of April? Snow in Albuquerque is a rare enough occurrence at any time but on the 12th of April? There we were going along fine, getting the garden out and all that sort of thing when the weather chappie said "Snow tonight". He's got to be kidding. He wasn't. The temperature dropped to 20° F and the snow came down...well, not exactly. It tried to. However, those 66 MPH winds kept it airborne. There was so much dust in the air one could hardly see the snow.

But the boosters and babbits and other chamber of commerce types will tell you all about our wonderful climate. They will not tell you about competing dust and snow storms with 20 degree temperatures and 66 mile per hour winds on the 12th of April.

I have finally reached the place where I could afford to move out of Albuquerque if I could afford it. What? That doesn't make sense? Sure, it does. I've stuck here for years because I was more or less stuck, so to speak. Too many years of federal service to throw away. No openings in my field in the federal service elsewhere. So now I've reached the age and time where I can retire from the good old federal service and can't afford to because inflation and the tight money market has me by the short hairs. Even with inflation I'd take a chance on it but...sigh...now I find I can't sell the place because of high interest rates and lack of mortgage money.

And where would you go if you could, Roytac? To the coast. Northern California probably. Maybe one of these days....

Speaking of northern Califfunny, Chrystal and I made a quick trip out there in mid-March. Arrived in Oakland (Oakland? Gawd!) on a Saturn's Day. Planned to head for Eureka on Monday. A mountain fell on highway 101 on Sunday. We had to take the long way around, though the valley and then across the mountains to Eureka and thence to Weott. Back the next day. Dinner of cioppino in San Mateo. Lunbh of fish the next day in Santa Cruz. San Francisco....ah, the changes and the sameness. The streets are familiar. The people aren't.

(A few...a very few. Hello, Chung Li, you ancient sonofabitch, aren't you dead yet? I'll outlive you, he said, and he probably will. I think he's two hundred now. What times we had in other days as friend and foe but always friends. I retired. I don't think he did.)

I do not believe I could live in the Bay area again. Too many people and too much rushing about. I'm getting too old for that. I want peace and quiet these days. (You two guys over in the corner can stop laughing...) I am an old fan and tired. Even this fanzine is tired.

This being a fanzine I suppose I should make some mention of things fannish but since my publication schedule is somewhat infrequent these days I'm not really up to date on things fannish. I note that the TAFF race was between Jim Barker and Dave Langford and both names are unfamiliar to me. My name is probably unfamiliar to them so it evens out. Anybody know who won?

Arthur Hlavaty sent me a copy of the FAAAAAAN ballot. I was not impressed. A few fanzines trickle in. It reinforces my belief that 90% of the fanzines being published (including this one) are a waste of time, effort, and money. But, what the hell, they provide amusement for the editors (including this one) who think they have something to say. Truth is that most of what those editors (including this one) have to say is

- a. trite
- b. unoriginal
- c. unhumorous
- d. dumb
- e. all of the above

Something called FANTASY ARTISTS NETWORK sent me a flyer inviting me to join their ranks. Boy, did they have the wrong fan. I can't even draw stick figures.

I get "fannish" fanzines that are supposed to be humorous. I find them more dumb than humorous. I suppose that is because I am getting old. At one of the recent meetings of ASFS it was suggested that fans are perpetual juveniles...and there is some truth in that...which is why we continue to enjoy what is an essentially juvenile literature and the juvenile antics of fans in general. Perhaps so. It seems to me, though, that over the years the level of juvenality has become progressively younger and fannish humor has gone from sophomoric to highschool and now to a grammar school level. Fourth grade at the most. ((That's just because your years are telling on you, you old fool.)) Or maybe my sense of humor is withering away.

Do you think Steve Martin is funny? I do not. Some people at the lab insisted that I catch one of his television shows because he was a funny guy. So I turned on the tube and sat down and waited for him to be funny. Martin came on and did a number of things which the mechanical laugh track thought to be funny. After while I switched over to the PBS channel. Maybe he had a bad night. Tried again a few weeks later when Martin was on another show. Did you watch Steve Martin? I was asked. Yeah. Wasn't he funny? Yes, he was not funny. Different tastes, perhaps. Did I see Martin's movie, "The Jerk"? If I didn't think he was funny for free most likely paying three bucks wouldn't make him any funnier. ((Now, that's funny. The "m" in "most" there was a typo so I changed my sentence to accomodate it.))

So what makes me laugh? All sorts of things. W. C. Fields makes me laugh. The Marx Brothers make me laugh. Harpo's antics, Groucho's quips and Chico's fantastic word play are funny even at this late date. George Carlin makes me laugh...about 75 percent of the time...Thorne Smith's books make me laugh. Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and John Anderson contesting for the U.S. Presidency makes me laugh. Even funnier was Teddy Kennedy who apparently never really learned to talk.

Despite the fact that Heinlein once declared politics are second in importance only

(cont'd on p 17)

BOOKS AND MAGS AND SKIFFY AND THINGS OF THAT ORDER

Starting off with a western. A western? In a stf fanzine? Why not? It is a special one anyway. The Night Riders by Keith Jarrod, published in 1979 by Doubleday. And what is special about THE NIGHT RIDERS? "Keith Jarrod" is Albuquerque fan and promising professional writer Victor Milán. Vic is one of the mainstays of the Albuquerque Science Fiction Society, has had a short story or two in Asimov's, has a couple of stf novels accepted and pending publication. He prefers, he says, to write science fiction but one writes what one can sell.

The setting of THE NIGHT RIDERS is New Mexico in the 1880s and draws on the history of the state to portray the clash between cultures that still exists.

New Mexico, Arizona, California, parts of Colorado, Utah, maybe one or two other states, were all a part of New Spain. In 1821 Mexico declared its independence from Spain and the area was designated as New Mexico and it stood right in the pathway of "manifest destiny". The United States declared war on Mexico and acquired the territory in 1848 as a result of the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. The "Anglos", as they are called around here, began moving in and taking over the land where they could either through purchase or through a variety of shady practices because descriptions in the old Spanish land grants were not precise. The descendants of the old Spanish settlers, the "natives", found themselves on the losing end and sometimes took desperate measures to try to protect their rights. THE NIGHT RIDERS details (with a twist) one such incident. The story is overlaid with the usual "western" trappings but is well worth reading for what is underneath those trappings.

There are a couple of Tuckerisms: a character named Kring appears briefly and "The book was Duran County Days, by a Mrs. Penelope Vardeman, published in 1880 by a Santa Fe company. Mrs. Vardeman was the widow of Col. Robert E. Vardeman, one of the first white settlers to move into what would become Duran County..."

It is interesting to note that in earlier days New Mexico was considered to be bi-cultural, Anglo and "native". No one paid any attention to the Indians. The only point of agreement between Anglo and Spanish settlers was that the Indians ought to be eliminated. These days New Mexico is considered tri-cultural: Anglo, Hispanic and Indian. The Indians have become enough of a political force that they have to be included. The "Hispanics" are divided into two groups the Spanish and the Chicanos or Mexicans. The sons and daughters of the oldest settlers are quick to point out that this area was part of "Mexico" for less than 30 years and that they are descended from those who came from Spain not from Mexico. There's a bit of racism there...the pure Spanish as opposed to the mixed blooded Mexicans.

And I do ramble on. Go get a copy of Vic Milán's book. The Night Riders by Keith Jarrod, \$7.95 from Doubleday.

Vic and Vardebob have co-authored a couple that will be coming out from Playboy Press, I believe. Stfish tales which is what Vic really wants to write.

And Mike Kring has a book due out which may even/published before this is. Who knows?

I have to admit that I haven't been reading much during the past few months. Particularly fiction. Local fan Jim Elliott asked me if I had read Heinlein's new book THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST. I told him it was my understanding that the book wouldn't be published until sometime in 1980. There were, Jim said, some excerpts in OMNI and I then had to admit that I had yet to pick up a copy of OMNI. Jim loaned me the October and November issues of the magazine which contained the fragments of Heinlein's story.

In days of yore we classified magazines as pulps and slicks. The pulps are no longer with us having moved lock, stock and suppository advertisements to the television screen. (It should be noted that with that move there has been a decrease in quality on all levels--even in the suppository ads.) We still have the slicks, such as they are these days, and OMNI is, verily, a slick. 182 pages of advertisements, articles, advertisements, interviews, advertisements, opinion, advertisements, fiction, advertisements, art, advertisements, cartoons, advertisements, photographs and advertisements. The fiction is minimal and not very good. The articles tend towards pseudoscience. HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY TO SEE THE FUTURE? shouts a house ad for the magazine itself. Get a year's sub for only eighteen bucks.

Nah, I said...it ain't worth it.

As for THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST it seemed to fit very well with OMNI in that it was not very good and tended towards pseudoscience. Heinlein, either for the fun of it or because it seems to be the thing to do in SF these days, leans heavily on other author's characters and settings. He may have had fun. I was not amused. The usual group of Heinlein characters go dashing off through all possible (and impossible) universes, dimensions, whatever. If there is science here it is the rarified realm of quantum physics which I approach with the caution of a starship captain in the vicinity of a black hole. I know it is there but I don't understand it and I don't want to get too close. It may well be quantum physics that takes us to the stars since there seems to be indications that the limitations of C are only relativistic. Do not ask me to try to explain that...I'm just a technician.

Art Rapp should be interested in one small segment of THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST which concerns gyroscopes. In explaining the creation of universes without number (well, actually, that's the number of the beast...) and dimensions at right angles to each other, one of the characters mentions the gyroscope as an example of an instrument that does the unexpected. When a force is applied to a gyroscope, he says, instead of moving in the expected direction the gyroscope moves off 90 degrees from that direction. Put a gyroscope in a frame and impress equal forces from all three spatial coordinates at one time and the gyroscope would, the character says, disappear having rotated 90° into another dimension.

If you believe that you'll cash a check. The statement appears preposterous. But I have never studied nor played with gyroscopes so I do not know. It would be interesting to know if the experiment described has ever been attempted. My own thoughts are that if one put a gyroscope into a frame and applied equal forces from all three spatial coordinates at once then nothing would happen as the forces would cancel each other out.

as soon as he pops back into this dimension.

I'll ask Rapp

If prizes were awarded for dumb titles then STAR TREK THE MOTION PICTURE would have to be right up there with the winners. That title is even dumber when used on a book. Still it does identify the product for the consumers and that is the idea. Musn't have those consumers putting out their dollars for Brand X. The idea was to tie the book in with the movie and since those in the television business are convinced that their audiences are not too bright they obviously did not want to do anything to confuse the poor consumers. (Let me say that those in the television business are probably correct in that general assessment of their audiences but the same assessment also applies to those in the business.)

There is no need to go into any great detail inasmuch as most everyone interested has by now seen the movie and possibly even read the book. As is usually the case the book (STAR TREK THE MOTION PICTURE by Gene Roddenberry) is superior to the film and if you have yet to see the film read the book first. It helps to clarify the movie.

Objectively the book is pretty good science fiction. It is better than a lot of the stuff being published as science fiction these days. Roddenberry, if he actually did the writing, is somewhat better than the current average and the story, while familiar and less than original, is interesting even to those who are not Trekkies. The characters in the book are much more alive than those in the movie. Particularly the supplemental characters such as Uhura, Sulu, Chekov and Rand. They were included in the movie, no doubt, because they were a part of the original cast but they could easily have been replaced by cardboard cutouts at their stations on the bridge.

I saw the movie, yes, about two months after it opened. I was not going to put out four dollars so waited until the theater management began showing bargain matinees. (Ah, you are cheap, Tackett.) The movie tended to drag in spots and would have benefitted by having about 15 minutes cut from it. A typical STAR TREK episode and I'm not going to knock it. As "sy--fy" it was better than average and got the message across. Those of you who have read DYNATRON for any length of time know that I am much in favor of movies and/or television plays which depict the exploration of space in a favorable light. We'll get that television audience converted yet.

Pocket Books and Paramount, both subsidiaries of Gulf & Western, have brought out all sorts of material supplementary to STAR TREK in an effort to cash in on the renewed popularity engendered by the movie. That is the capitalist way. (The automobile industry, particularly Chrysler, seems to have lost the capitalist way.) I do wish that the people connected with the whole thing were more knowledgeable about the basic sciences and more given to scientific accuracy. In SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #34 Charles Sheffield mentions that sciencefictionists are generally found unacceptable by scientists and it is sometimes easy to see why. Consider something published by Pocket Books called STAR TREK SPACEFLIGHT CHRONOLOGY by Stan and Fred Goldstein and illustrated by Rick Sternbach. There are some nice Sternbach spaceship illos and what is supposedly a brief history of the venturing into space of Earthlings and the formation of the United Federation of Planets. It starts with Sputnik I in 1957 and goes to and beyond the uprated Enterprise in the 23rd Century.

But.

One of the little fantasies here concerns the journey to the "edge" of the galaxy by the starship Horizon. The edge of the galaxy. One gets the impression that the writers imagine the galaxy to be something like a dinnerplate and that if one travels out one will come to a definite edge (and where have we heard that before?). What happens when you reach the edge of the galaxy? Do you fall off into intergalactic space and get eaten by the giant turtle on whose back the galaxy rests? Do you fall off into the dishwasher?

The specs given for the Horizon are a speed of 27C and a standard range of 150 light years with a maximum of 500 light years. The Milky Way, as we all know (and if you don't know why are you reading Dynatron?) is about 50,000 lightyears in radius and Sol is located about 30,000 lightyears from the center. We are about 20,000 lightyears from the outer limits if one follows the galactic plane. At a speed of 27C it would have taken Horizon some 750 years to reach the galactic rim if it had cut straight across and another 750 years to return. Ah, but the Captain's log says "we warp on our long course to the tip of the Milky Way's Orion Arm." Long course indeed. The arm is a spiral and a journey from Sol to the tip would be almost a circumnavigation of the Milky Way--at Sol's distance from the center that would be roughly 188,000 lightyears. It would take Horizon some 7,000 years to reach the tip of the arm and another 7,000 to return. Even if it had the range.

What about going perpendicular to the plane? At the center the galaxy is about 15,000 light years thick. Out here in Sol's neighborhood it is considerably thinner...only about 5,000 lightyears thick.

That's what I mean by ignorance of basic scientific facts. If the Star Trek people are going to use the Milky Way as a setting then it would seem they could at least go for a bit of accuracy. Ah, but these writers are not astronomers...how are they supposed to know all that? I'm not an astronomer either. It took me ten minutes to dig the information out of the books on the shelves. Any writer who won't spend a few minutes verifying his background material shouldn't be writing in the first place.

And the National Broadcasting Company devoted six hours to telecasting Ray Bradbury's THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES. What a waste of Roddy McDowall.

Charles L. Harness is one of the field's better writers. His latest (from Pocket Books) is THE CATALYST. This is the story of the attempt to produce trialine, a wonder drug, good for almost anything that ails man, beast, plant or mineral. Small amounts can be made under high pressure. The yield is minimal. The search is for a way to produce maximum yield at atmospheric pressure. The chemist, Serane, is the catalyst who provides the catalyst which does the job.

So this is a well written book with enough stfish trappings to make the future seem real. There is character development. Is there ever character development. There is nothing but character development. Nothing happens. THE CATALYST is well written, full of character, and dull. ((What do you want, Tackett, space opera? A little dab would help.))

I thoroughly enjoyed THE DEMON OF SCATTERY by Poul Anderson and Mildred Downey Broxon. (Ace \$4.95). But let RICK SNEARY tell about it:

"I've just read THE DEMON OF SCATTERY which is one of the over size and over priced paperbacks. With pictures. With 210 pages, of larger type, and 50 of them with pictures (some used more than once) it isn't a very big novel for \$4.95. It is also more a Saga than a fantasy, as it deals with vikings in Ireland, and excepting for the "demon" everything is very realistic...and good Anderson storytelling. It isn't really like the sagas, in that the details of the fighting are skipped over, and those of love making aren't, but Poul makes it sound believable. Well, I take it back, there is a touch of fantasy in that the whole story is supposedly being told by someone during a lull in fighting between elves and trolls though there are no elves or trolls in the world of the story...a neat switch if you think about it...the people of Faerie telling Real tales..."

RICK

((Rick Sneary's review appeared in FIVE BY FIVE.))

And then there is Robert Anton Wilson's SCHRODINGER'S CAT. Five years ago Wilson and Robert Shea combined to give us ILLUMINATUS! which is one of the finest rollercoaster rides to ever appear in print. It is said that they delivered the manuscript to the editors at Dell who promptly threw out 500 pages and brought out what was left in three volumes: "The Eye in the Pyramid", "Leviathan", and "The Golden Apple". My own thoughts are that Shea and Wilson probably dropped the manuscript, lost 500 pages, got the rest all mixed up and that's the way it went to press. Not that it matters. ILLUMINATUS! is utterly fantastic and I highly recommend it even at this late date.

And then there is SCHRODINGER'S CAT which is an attempt by Wilson to recapture the magic of ILLUMINATUS! which doesn't quite come off. There are some good scenes, some good lines, some interesting thoughts but SCHRODINGER'S CAT is no ILLUMINATUS! Maybe it needed Shea. What has become of him?

Particularly interesting is the portrayal of the "People's Ecology Party" and the election of Furbish Lousewart V as president in 1980. "The PEP platform, a weird mixture of tangled religiosity and New Left anti-rationalism, became official policy". The PEP campaigned for a Revolution of Lowered Expectations. "The Revelation of Lowered Expectations had triumphed. By 1984 nobody in the country had any higher expectations than a feudal serf."

There's a lot of that going around, isn't there? Government officials, people in multi-national industry, all telling us that we've got to lower our sights, that we've got to cut back on our use of this and that, telling us that we've got to lower our expectations.

Uh-uh. Not this poor old fatman. He isn't going to do it. Because we don't have to. Because we have the means and the technology (a nasty word to some) to keep our standard of living high and raise it higher. What we don't have is the leadership with the will to see it done. We have a political leadership that is afraid to strike out in new directions, to try new things. Instead of spending a couple of billion dollars on new energy sources the government prefers to do some sword rattling (that's tried and true when it comes

to buying votes) and spend more money or arms. In the almost 50 years since Franklin Roosevelt's revolution the national government has grown timid and conservative and blind to new and startling ideas. It is time for a new upheaval. It may well be that the Kondratieff cycle will have/turn full circle before revitalization takes place and if the various economic indicators can be believed that will take place during the 1980s. It is bust time and it is going to be a shambles.

If you are not familiar with Kondratieff...he was an economic historian whose studies led him to postulate that the economy takes a sharp downturn into depression every 50 years (give or take a few). Nothing can stop it, said Kondratieff, not the combined efforts of industry, government management, whatever. When it is bust time it comes. He checked it all the way back to the beginnings of industrialism. The last depression started about 1929, really hit bottom in 1932 and didn't really end until the start of World War II. And so it is bust time.

Do you believe all that?

Would you cash a check?

You (not me, Clyde) can buy from Ace for only \$5.95 something called INTERFACES An anthology of speculative fiction edited by Ursula K. LeGuin and Virginia Kidd. Right there inside the front cover it says "Science fiction comes of age". You can read it if you want to. I won't.

ATTENTION! You will all run out to your local newsstand, bookstore, supermarket, whatever and for the mere sum of \$1.75 purchase a copy of THE SPACE MAVERICKS by Michael Kring. No, you will not pick one up at your local 2nd hand store. You will pay the full price, by damn, cause Mike needs the money...he's a starving student. So is his wife.

THE SPACE MAVERICKS is published by Leisure Books. The cover, by scribble, is a ghastly red thing with blue lettering. There is some kind of complicated machine (apparently a spaceship) coming apart with pink fungus in the background. Never mind that. The story is high adventure on alien worlds. Yes, by Foo. PLANET STORIES lives. At least in the minds of Albuquerque authors.

Und zo...liebchen, you vill buy a copy of THE SPACE MAVERICKS. You vill send me reviews of it. Next issue I want to run reviews of THE SPACE MAVERICKS by Michael Kring. Lots of them. Read the book. Buy the book. Send your reviews in. Don't just sit there and dream about laying Leia or Luke or Han...or the damned wookie even...read THE SPACE MAVERICKS.

You betchum.

ONE OF OUR YESTERDAYS

Occasionally I get in the mood and have the time to tidy up a bit, as it were, which usually involves going through the accumulation of stuff that has piled up over the years. Not long ago I was sorting through some of the papers I've been meaning to get around to ever since my mother died in 1972 and came across an unopened letter postmarked November 4, 1943 at Hartshorne, Oklahoma. It was addressed to me at the Wayside Inn, Fountain, Colorado. That was, he said, a long time ago.

A bit of fannish history to share with you:

JAMES RUSSELL GRAY
BOX 204
HARTSHORNE, OKLA.

Mr. Roy Tackett
Wayside Inn
Fountain, Colorado

Dear Roy:

I got your name and address out of an old copy of Startling Stories. A group of science-fiction fans are trying to get fandom to organize. I am sending you an article by Art Sehnert, the originator of the idea.

We have a loose organization already, a few enthusiastic fans scattered all over the nation. As yet we have no definite policy, not even a name; we're just trying to get ideas now. Later, we plan to have an official fanzine to keep members abreast of developments.

Won't you please write to me, or to Art, and let us know what you think of what we are trying to do. Your ideas will be appreciated, even if you disagree with us. We feel that people who read science-fiction are pretty swell guys, and ought to get together. Every person I've contacted so far has answered, even though some did not wish to join us.

Of course, there have been, and are, other fan organizations. But we feel that there has never been one such as we propose. "Of the people, by the people and for the people," you know. Anyway, I'll be waiting to hear from you.

Sincerely,

James Russell Gray

Enclosed was the following mimeographed letter:

1414 Poplar
Memphis 4, Tenn.
October 17, 1943

Dear Roy:

This letter is going out to all fans who have been working with me in the attempt to organize fandom on a nation-wide basis.

You all know the original plans so they will not be reviewed here.

But we now find that there are very few fans who are actually interested in organizing and bettering fandom. So few in fact that it has become necessary for an entirely new planning concept to be devised.

Before presenting to you this new concept I think it would be wise to list those fans who are either working whole heartedly or are least more than interested. These fans are: Jay Chidsey, James Russell Gray, Lionel Innman, Joe Kennedy, Francis T. Laney, Milt Lesser, John C. Nitka, M. J. Nuttall, H. Loren Sinn, Guy Trucano, Raym Washington, and Douglas Robillard. There are four or five other fans who have professed interest, but have not shown it. I am sure there are other fans who are actively interested in this movement, as J. R. Gray informs me he has contacted several, and others of you no doubt know fans who are willing to go along with us.

Since our efforts at organization are progressing so slowly and since fans are becoming interested individually rather than in batches I think it is now time, those of us mentioned above, did something constructive in the way of organization. I propose that those of us mentioned above unite as we are. In other words we shall be the basic or charter members of the organization. We shall select a name, elect officers, and do other things incidental to the forming of the organization. The wisdom of us, the nucleus, organizing lies in the fact that we could then present a solid bloc of fans for the rest of fandom to join. After we are organized we will continue to work for the unification of fandom as a whole.

When I first contacted fans with my original circular I asked for all the ideas that could be presented. All of you have sent me a few pet theories or suggestions. Briefly here are these suggestions with credit to their authors:

Joe Kennedy suggests the following procedure: (1) Get a complete set of officers (temporary) lined up. (2) Get the constitution written. (3) Gigantic drive for members. (4) Limit terms of office to one year. (5) Publish an official fanzine. (6) Nominal dues, but only if necessary.

F. T. Laney comes through with these five points: (1) The organization should collect prozines and retail them to fan collectors at a nominal sum. Thusly, bursting the fan collector-dealer racket. (2) The organization should handle reconditioned typewriters, mimeo's and supplies at cut rates. (3) Profits from these two features would help the club. (4) A fanzine anthology to be compiled cooperatively by fandom. (5) The organization should sponsor and help fanzines of all kinds, and publish a good one itself.

Milt Lesser says: "There is to be two bodies of officers each with its own chairman. The first is to be a Board of Directors whose job will be twofold. First the board must gather public opinion--each director constantly inquiring to his area--and learning just what is wanted, etc. Separated from this board will be an entirely different group. A group which I have tentatively called the Board of Specialists. The name obviously speaks for itself. This group will be set up also for two purposes. The first, to modify and change - and build around any of the peoples ideas sent to them by the directors. Also, they will make ideas of their own - each one in his own specialized field."

J. R. Gray passes along a suggestion he received from Frank Bryan, Jr. of Nelson, Oklahoma. Mr. Bryan suggests our proposed group be aligned with the Science Fiction League. He also suggests that a judiciary group be selected to act as a counter balance for Directors. Said judiciary group to have veto powers over directors.

That covers the suggestions received here. Others have made suggestions, but they were duplicates of the ones mentioned here.

We feel that this report is long over-due and we apologize for its lateness, the truth of the matter is, and we can't resist a bit of boastfulness, we are now the proud father of a three weeks old boy. How'd that editorial we get into this paragraph. And let me tell you gentlemen that taking care of a three weeks old baby is quite a job.

I hope that this letter has, in no way, left the impression with you that I have become discouraged. Far from it. I think that I had the wrong concept on this organizational procedure. Some of you told me as much and I'm forced to agree with you now.

The new idea should not be considered in the "oh-hell-another-fanclub" attitude. For this is not to be just another fan club. It can be considered alongside--or rather we might draw a parallel to the Futurian Society of the Lowndes-Wilson-Pohl-Wollheim-Perri era. But we shall not stop with the mere original membership, but shall continue to accept fans for membership until the membership has reached a stage we can consider unification. Then we can re-elect our officers, write our constitution, etc.

This letter has been written in the proper atmosphere. A servant's house down the street became a near funeral pyre this afternoon, and in the process of burning to the ground it (the fire) burned all the electric wires. I am writing this in the dim light of a candle stuck in a champagne bottle. Yeah, I was rich one time.

Well, this about winds this up. I shall look forward to hearing your replies. I would have liked for this to be a personal letter and not one mimeographed, but I haven't the time right now to do a lot of writing.

Yours always for Fandom,

Art R. Sehnert

In the late autumn of 1943, when the above letters were written, I was busy contesting with some soldiers of the Japanese army over some rather swampy real estate on the islands of New Guinea and New Britain. I was not really giving much thoughts to things fanciful. Looking over these letters 36 years after they were written is somewhat bemusing. James Russell Gray and Art Sehnert are names that do not ring even the faintest of bells although they must have been quite active during the early forties.

A proposal to unify all fandom. Ah, yes. I do believe that the National Fantasy Fan Federation was in existence even then with much the same objective. The early Futurians had some visions of fandom as a political force. Some time later along came Claude Degler and the Cosmic Circle and I doubt that anyone

even those who were deeply involved, have ever truly perceived the Cosmic One's murky motives.

Fandom, in the past at least, has always been too individualistic and anarchistic for anyone to organize. Apparently Art Sehnert's plan never got anywhere at all. The idea of organizing fandom into some sort of force is not dead. Nowadays, though, it is usually some huckster making the attempt to cash in on a book or movie or television series. The Star Wars and Battlestar Galactica people have tried, unsuccessfully, to organize fandom for commercial purposes. It didn't work.

Could it be done? Could the vast amorphous mass of fandom be molded together for some purpose or other? I doubt it. Fans are still individualistic, anarchistic, and not all that interested in causes.

Still Degler came close to doing it. If the idea is nutty enough....

Roy Tackett

XXXXX

BUBONICON 12

Albuquerque's group of resident weirdos are going to give it another go. Parties. Tracer-gun wars. A couple of the worst scifi flicks ever made. A guest of honor. The opening of Bob Vardeman's Delphi file. Maybe even some programming.

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For information send a SASE to Dennis Virzi
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And in between those two there is

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September

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BACKWARD GLANCE AT A FORWARD LOOK

by

ART RAPP

The following is excerpted from Redd Boggs' column "File 13" in the January 1949 issue of SPACEWARP wherein Redd selects the ten best stf yarns appearing in magazine form during 1948:

"Of course, if you're the slant that you think you are you'll speedily notice that instead of merely ten stories, this list has thirteen yarns on the Ten Best. Inasmuch as I'm numbering the stories, it won't be too difficult to notice the fact, unless I happen to misnumber, whereupon we'll all be confused.

1. "Children of the Lens" (E. E. Smith)
2. "Pillar of Fire" (Ray Bradbury)
3. "The Valley of Creation" (Edmond Hamilton)
4. "What Mad Universe" (Fredric Brown)
5. "Ex Machina" (Lewis Padgett)
6. "The Shape of Things" (Ray Bradbury)
7. "...And Searching Mind" (Jack Williamson)
8. "Now You See It" (Isaac Asimov)
9. "Dreadful Sanctuary" (Eric Frank Russell)
10. "The Visitor" (Ray Bradbury)
11. "And the Moon Be Still As Bright" (Ray Bradbury)
12. "In Hiding" (Wilmar Shiras)
13. "The Monster" (A.E. van Vogt)

"No, heck no, the selections aren't in any particular order. Hey, look, Archibald! Ray Bradbury landed 4 stories on File 13's Ten Best. He's really in the big-time now! But, just between us and the brass rail, isn't that a sorry list, though? How many of these yarns will be remembered 10 years from now, let alone rate as classics? Well, the Smith serial, since it's a part of the greatest saga yet written in the field. Maybe one or two of the others. But the rest? Naw, they were good enough yarns but they just don't rank with the top farns of 1941, for instance. Or do you think that you and Merwin can convince me that stf's at an all-time high?"

Boggs was, of course, utterly and gloriously wrong. At least four of the titles he cited ("What Mad Universe", "...And Searching Mind", "And the Moon Be Still As Bright", "In Hiding") could appear on any present-day list of all-time science-fiction classics without causing raised eyebrows among knowledgable readers of the genre; on the other hand "Children of the Lens" is, I suspect, seldom read today except by those with a specialized interes in the works of E. E. Smith.

Wrong or right, Redd's audience apparently did not dispute his prognostications, for the subsequent issues of SPACEWARP carry no contradictory diatribes, or even mention of his list in the letter column. In 1949, as today, Redd Boggs was one of the best-informed, most

intelligent and articulate of fanzine contributors, and his summing up of the year 1949 may be considered fairly to reflect the views of fandom.

Incidentally, without a bibliography available I am pinched to cite anything published in 1941, the year he used for comparison. It is barely possible that 1941 was the year "Slan" appeared in ASTOUNDING. And Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll" dates from around that year, if memory fails me not.

In spite of Redd's pessimism, stf in 1948-49 was indeed near an "all-time high" which turned into an all-time low not long afterward as the spreading availability of television doomed most of the pulps and many of the mass-circulation slick magazines as well. (In 1949 TV was already being discussed in the fan press, but had actually been seen only by the lucky (or unlucky) few who lived in major metropolitan areas where TV stations had gone on the air.) It is noteworthy that a few fans already foresaw that the mass readership upon which pulp magazines depended would eventually desert any form of reading in favor of gazing, hypnotized, into the Big Glass Eye. No fanzine writer who has come to my attention, however, extended his forebodings to include the demise of radio drama, which in 1949 was gladdening the hearts of fans by dramatizing such stories as Leinster's "First Contact" on the newly-launched series DIMENSION X.

At any rate, Redd's failure as a prophet regarding the future fame of particular stories should not be allowed to obscure the evident literay acumen which enabled him to select, from the vast prozine output of 1948 (97 issues, said Coswal in the Sep50 SPACEWARP) a handful of stories which are mostly still familiar in 1980 and some of which turned out, despite his doubts, indeed to be classics of science-fiction.

ART RAPP

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Editors notes: You see, Redd, no matter how much you try to play the role of the poet there in Berkeley, your past will catch up with you so long as there are fans such as Art Rapp to dig it out and fans like me who will print it.

Both "Slan" and "The Roads Must Roll" date from 1940. As for 1941...here's a few of the memorable stories from that year:

Second Stage Lensman by E. E. Smith

Bullard Reflects by Malcolm Jameson

Adam and No Eve by Alfred Bester

Nightfall by Isaac Asimov

The Seesaw by A. E. van Vogt

and a few from Heinlein: By His Bootstraps, Common Sense,

Methusela's Children, We Also Walk Dogs.

There were others but those come readily to mind. Pretty good year 1941. Hell of a lot better than 1979.

ROYTAC

The story last issue, Goal by Ed Cox, concerned a fan who wanted more than anything to be Tuckerized (as we say). Here is what Bob Tucker has to say about that:

"Cheers:

"As usual I'm tardy in my acknowledgement of the last two DYNATRONs but I appreciate them none the less. There is something reassuring in the sight of the familiar green fanzines arriving in my mail box at periodic intervals: the color and the smell of the ink always carry me back to the 1940s and the heyday of the personal fanzine.

"'Goal' by Ed Cox leaves me with mixed feelings. I suppose it is a proud and lonely thing to find one's name in a Tucker novel, but is there anything more than that? I doubt it. Will it bring the fan fame, fortune, and the admiration of lovely women. I doubt it. Will it cause him to be a social lion at the conventions, and earn him invitations to closed room parties? Not likely. Will it get him free drinks, meals, and other 'favors' when he appears in public? No. Will fan historians name him when they write their books about the good old days? Negative.

"What then, you may ask, will accrue to the fan who finds his name in any science fiction or mystery novel? The best that may be expected will be a sneering reference in some critical review, written by a half-assed fan who (1) lacks all credentials for writing any critical material, (2) cannot spell properly, (3) skimmed or sped-read the book in question, and (4) thoroughly misunderstood the plot and believes it to be space-opera when in reality it was a religious tract.

"That, sir, is what happens to fans who are used as characters in novels. I don't think the friend of Ed Cox would like that.

"Best,

Bob

"PS: My name was used as a character in a novel once. I think I was killed in the first chapter. Six transit gloria tuesday."

Not to mention Wednesday and Thursday and let's get off and have a cuppa tea. Edco's story was first pubbed in Dynatron about 15 years ago and if I wasn't so lazy I'd look in the files to see what your reaction was then. Except I don't have any files anyway. I suppose Dynatron does have a fortyish air about it. Truthfully it should be fiftyish since I am midway through that decade but, yeah, I'm stuck in the 1940s. They were pretty good years. Somewhat bloody, to be sure, but then what years are not? Ah, yes. Some might think I am longing to misspend my misspent youth all over again but that isn't so. Damned if I would want to go through that whole mess again. Once is enough.

There is something in what you say about the non-benefits of appearing as a character in a story. For example, Mike Kring says he promoted me to general in his new book but apparently those people at Headquarters Marine Corps haven't gotten the word...my pension has not increased any...

New Mexico is a land of volcanos. There are vast ancient lava flows throughout the state and some of the better known mountains, Capulin, Jemez, Mt Taylor, are volcanic in origin. The state is crossed by two great bands of vulcanism. One runs generally southwest to northeast and the other is the Rio Grande Rift. The "valley" of the Rio Grande is not a valley at all but a great crack in the Earth into which the river found its way in the ancient past. The recent eruption of Mt St Helens seemed to make some people nervous so the editor of the Albuquerque JOURNAL, with one eye on the line of nine volcanic cones just to the west of the city, sent a reporter to the University of New Mexico to interview a geologist.

Were volcanic eruptions possible in New Mexico? he asked
Possible? she said. Well...yes...possible but...

Where? Where? Where? the reporter wanted to know.

Hold on, said the geologist. You simply asked if it were possible.
Where? Where? Where?

She sighed. There are two possible spots. One is Jemez Mountain which is situated where the state's two volcanic bands cross. The Jemez crater is one of the largest in the world and small cones inside the crater indicate that it erupted several times after the main eruption formed the mountain. In the Rio Grande Rift between the towns of Belen and Socorro, some 50 miles south of Albuquerque, the magma is only 18 miles below the surface and earthquakes could bring it up.

OH, OH, OH, said the reporter. When? Wneh? When do you expect this to happen? Will it be soon?

I don't expect it to happen, said the geologist. You simply asked if eruptions in New Mexico were possible....

But the reporter had dashed for his terminal. VOLCANIC ERUPTION POSSIBLE IN STATE screamed the headlines.

the "4th Estate". Bah!

So it goes with members of

X
The 7th of July was the 50th anniversary of the death of Arthur Conan Doyle and that marked the expiration of British-copyright on his works. Sherlock Holmes is now in the public domain and stories about him can now be written without paying royalties to Doyle's estate. There have been a number of pastiches in the past few years and I expect that there will be an increase in them now. None, however, seem to match the original.

X
You wouldn't believe this room. Belay that. Being fans, you would. There are so many books scattered about on shelves, on boxes, on chairs, on the floor, that I had to spend quite a bit of time in locating the one I wanted to write about. City of Cain by Kate Wilhelm.

There was a time when I did not care much for the works of Kate Wilhelm and maybe that was my fault. Maybe it was that I saw some of her stories in the ORBIT series and I did not care much for anything that appeared in that series edited by Damon Knight. Why not? I really cannot say. Too experimental, maybe. Too artsy. Smacking too much of "little magazine" fiction. But, of late, I have discovered, so to speak, Kate Wilhelm. I thoroughly enjoyed Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang even though I hate the title. The Clewiston Test was good. Juniper Time is in that pile somewhere waiting to be read.

is City of Cain.

And there

City of Cain is not exactly science fiction. As a matter of fact it may not be science fiction at all. Maybe. It isn't fantasy. It is...mainstream...psychological novel...thriller...government intrigue. Yes. And more.

Basically this is the story of Peter Roos who discovers the government's secret plan to give up control to the military and to build an underground city for the bureaucratic elite leaving the mass of the populace to shift for itself in case of nuclear war. The bureaucracy knows what Peter Roos has discovered and is out to shut him up.

That's the bare essentials and what makes the story interesting and different is the character of Peter Roos for he is somewhat different. A brain injury in the Viet Nam war (this was written in 1974) has left him with the not so happy talent of being a telepathic receptor. To be sure the talent helps him dodge the efforts of various government officials who want him drugged and permanently hospitalized but it is also something of a curse not to be able to turn it off.

Wilhelm does a fine job of showing what uncontrollable telepathy could mean. And she also takes some fine swats at the federal bureaucracy.

Is there, I wonder, still anyone naive enough to believe that the great benevolent bureaucracy would not behave in the manner described?

X
On a somewhat similar theme but no where near as good as City of Cain is the recent movie "Hanger 18". "What" asks the advertisements, "is the secret of Hanger 18?" The secret is that this is a dog, a turkey, and just plain terrible. The ads in this area played it as a semi-documentary of something that has happened. Actually it is a semi-stf film ("Sci-fi" if there ever was any) set sometime in the future when the shuttle is operating. (That would almost make it a fantasy...will the shuttle ever become operational?) A shuttle crew launching a satellite is observed by an "UFO" which is (not) damaged in collision with the satellite and lands in the Arizona desert. For political reasons the whole affair has to be hushed up and the white house staff with the cooperation of the air force and the CIA wipes everybody out who has any knowledge of the incident. The UFO, by the way, is vondanikenesque (make up your own words, Tackett) and that's the extent of the fantasy in the picture.

In explanation of that "(not)" in the last paragraph...the machine wasn't damaged but a "poisonous" chemical was knocked off a shelf which asphyxiated the crew. Yes.

It should have been used on the producers of this turkey. We saw it on dollar day and it wasn't worth the buck.

X
THE THIRD WORLD WAR AUGUST 1985 by General Sir John Hackett and other top-ranking NATO Generals and Advisors is a scenario of events that could occur should the Warsaw Pact troops invade the west. Unfortunately General Hackett and company still see events in the light of the Second World War. Only two nukes are used, one on Birmingham England and the other on UK after which the Warsaw Pact and the USSR completely disintegrate. Sure. No tactical nukes, General? Want to bet?

Nonsense! Page 17 is not missing. It is right there between 16 and 18 where it ought to be.

Until the nextish...which will appear eventually....send manuscripts.

HORT
6 Aug 1980

FROM:
Roy Taokett
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