



Kinney

FANAC POINT, Volume 2, Number 13, a fanzine of news, views and reviews, published bi-weekly, is available for news, all-for-all trades (both editors, please) or 6/\$1. Editor: Colleen Brown (410 - 61st St., Apt. D-4, Brooklyn, NY 11220). Managing Editor: Joyce Fisher (c/o Browns, Apt. D-4, 410 - 61st St., Brooklyn, NY 11220). Invaluable help: rich brown and Arnie Katz. Illustrations by Jay Kinney, Steve Stiles, Joe Staton and Bill Rotsler. Women's Liberation Issue: "Equal Egoboo for Equal Fanac." SUPPORT THE SHAW FUND!! September 14, 1970.

TAFF. Elliot Shorter, the new TAFF administrator, has announced that there will be a TAFF race this year. Deadline for nominations is Jan 31, 1971, and five nominators (three European and two American) are required. It has been reported that Pete Weston may stand for TAFF again, although this must be regarded as somewhere between rumor and speculation. . . . If true, fandom will have the splendid opportunity of having two fine fans from overseas in attendance at Noreastcon -- a feat which was last accomplished when Walt Willis was brought to the ChiCon on a Special Fund while Ethel Lindsay was brought over via TAFF. :: Steve Stiles, lame-duck TAFF administrator, begs pardon for having inadvertently omitted the names of Greg Benford, Hilary Benford and Edward C. Connor from the list of people who voted in the last TAFF election.

A GIRL Arielle Broneta (Kitten) White was born Aug. 28 at 5:18 a.m., to Ted and Robin White at New York Hospital (est. 1799), via natural childbirth, weighing in at 7 lbs., 9 oz. Mother, daughter and father are all at home now and doing fine, if loosing a lot of sleep. Congratulations!

NONCONS There were two noncons held over the Labor Day weekend. On this coast, there was one held at the home of Brian and Sherna Burley which attracted about 30 fans. Activities were informal and relaxed, but the highlight of the weekend was a Great Frisbie Fling. Several regulation frisbies, a miniature one, and two plastic garbage can lids filled the New Jersey air. Among the attendees were the Boardmans; Ted Pauls, Dave Halterman, Elliot Shorter, Eli Cohen and Jon Singer. Meanwhile, the noncon west was being held at Bill Donaho's, drawing at least (but possibly more than) 20 fans, according to our Spy S. Stiles. On hand were Bill Rotsler, FM & Elinor Busby, Bill Blackbeard, Redd Boggs, Gretchen Schwen, Miri & Jerry Knight, the Benford clan, Dicks and Pats Lupoff & Ellington, and John D. Berry. People came from allabouts to make

a splash in Big Bill's pool and sauna complex.

OPEN ESFA This year's Open ESFA meeting will be held on Saturday, Oct. 3, at the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark, N.J. The meeting, which begins at 1:30 p.m., will feature Hans Stefan Santesson, Walker science fiction editor, as Guest of Honor. Other featured speakers are to be Isaac Asimov, Lester Del Rey, and John L. Nanovic, the first editor of the DOC SAVAGE and SHADOW pulps. Admission is \$2.

The banquet commemorating the 30th anniversary of the first world-con will be held in conjunction with the Open ESFA Sunday, Oct. 4, 12:30 p.m. at the same hotel. Isaac Asimov will be the toastmaster, and others, including Sam Moskowitz, will speak. The banquet costs \$6.75 per person, and all checks for that amount should be sent to Paul Herkert, Secretary, Eastern SF Association, Box 111, Belle Mead, N.J. 08505, by Sept. 28.

NEW COMICS AWARDS PLANNED The Awards Committee of the Academy of Comic Book Art, under the chairmanship of Archie Goodwin, is seeking to establish a series of 15 awards to be presented by the Academy. The slate of awards will be voted upon at the Sept. 16 meeting. The proposal carries three awards under the category of Humor -- for penciller, inker and writer -- and a like trio of awards under the category of Drama. Awards honoring the best letterer and colorist are also suggested, plus special awards for best individual story and best continued feature. Rounding out the proposal would be awards for foreign comic books, outstanding new talent, a Hall of Fame award and a special recognition award, much like the special Hugo.

APAC The 16th mailing of MYRIAD, for 14 August 1970, set a page count record of 114pp. The group, which puts out mailings approximately every six weeks, has a full membership and a short waitlist. The Official Editor is Steven Carlberg, P.O. Box 1958, Sarasota, Fla. 33578. :: A new apa is being formed in Southern California -- Apa H, as in "Hoax." The only requirements for membership are that you a) have been accused of being a hoax or b) are a hoax. If you want more details -- such as whether you can join if you fit both categories -- write to Jeff Cochran, 424 Kioldstad, Placentia, Calif. 92670. :: The 12th ANZAPA mailing, from Down Under, was in the hands of some members, running 117 pages, or between 50 and 100 pages, depending on who did the counting. (source: NORSTRILIAN NEWS)

GALAXY RETURNING TO MONTHLY GALAXY magazine will return to monthly publication with the December issue -- the one in which the Heinlein novel, I Shall Fear No Evil (see review in this FOCAL POINT) will be completed. Improved sales figures were cited as the reason for the move, however, VISION OF TOMORROW will cease publication with the next issue due largely, it was said, to distribution difficulties. (source: LOCUS)

CHANGES AT MERCURY Edward L. Ferman, managing editor of F&SF since 1960 and editor since 1966, has been elected president and publisher of Mercury Press, Inc., replacing Joseph W. Ferman who served in that capacity since 1954. Joseph Ferman was elected chairman of the board and will be available as a consultant to the management. In addition to FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, Mercury also publishes VENTURE SCIENCE FICTION and the psychic and occult magazine, INNER SPACE.

ROBERT HEINLEIN RECOVERING

Robert A. Heinlein is reported to be in Stanford University Hospital, still recovering from major surgery and now suffering with a virus infection which is not dangerous, but painful. (source: LOCUS)

U.K. GOING TREKKY?

While not gripping British fandom quite as hard as it did some American fan, "Star Trek" apparently has the general public of the United Kingdom by the gonads. Leonard Nimoy, as Mr. Spock, was voted number two television personality there, while William Shatner, as Jim Kirk, tallied in as number five. (source: LUNA MONTHLY)

NYC

Both Steve Stiles and Hal Hughes have recently returned from trips on the West Coast to the asphalt jungles of New York; they look strangely healthier, seem to have had a very fine time of it, and will preach the Gospel of the West at the drop of a bottle of corflu. Both are considering moving Out There, although neither in the near future. A popular local theory has it that the U.S. has cracked at the continental divide and all the East Coast fans are sliding off and coming to rest in the BArea. :: Judy Sephton will be going to The Catholic University in Washington, D.C., starting this month, to study for her masters in Teaching Science-Psychology. Her New York address will still remain good for all mail.

CAL.: WINNIE, our friendly competition out there on the West Coast, is not folding as reported previously in WINNIE and LOCUS. Mike Ward (Box 41, Menlo Park, Calif. 94025) will remain on as news editor, while Berkeley fan Randall G. Millen will take over the newsletter as publisher, effective with issue 51. :: Los Angeles comix fan and sometimes LASFS attendee Keith Tucker was one of those arrested at Disneyland in connection with the "long-hair riots."

SAN DIEGO

A relatively new club, the Headquarters for All Fannish Activities in San Diego (or HAFASD, for those interested in snappy abbreviations) has been formed and meetings are being held in members' homes. Meeting dates are the second and fourth Sundays of each month, beginning at 1 p.m. For information about HAFASD contact Roger A. Freedman, 8479 Scarf Pl., San Diego, Calif. 92119, telephone 714-469-4280.

AUSTRALIA

Meetings of the Sydney SF Foundation now coincide with meetings of the newly-formed Melbourne SF Society; the first meeting of the latter was held in early August with about 15 fans of various types refusing to draw up a constitution, elect an officer or even charge dues. Having thus proven themselves trufans of the first water, they accepted as an unwritten consensus that no meeting should be held without being within easy walking distance of a pub, in order to assure that they could be fans of more than the first beer. A second meeting was set for Sept. 4. (source: NORSTRILIAN NEWS)

COAs

Dale Jordan, 207 E. Park St., College, Pa. 16801
Lawrence W. Propp, 3127 N. Sheridan Rd., Peoria, Ill. 61604
Perri Corrick, 1308 Spring St., Apt. #211, Madison, Wisc. 53715

BOSH FUND NEWS

\$90.86 That's the amount which has been collected for the Bob Shaw Fund, as of Sept. 10.

This includes money for Special Publications which is already on hand, but not money expected in as a result of the sale of several auction items completed this issue.

For those who have forgotten (or never knew) the Bob Shaw Fund is a project designed to bring famed writer, wit, and trufan Bob Shaw to the 1971 worldcon in Boston from his home in Northern Ireland. Arnie Katz and rich brown are co-chairmen of the Fund, backed by a committee including Steve Stiles, Colleen Brown, Joyce Fisher, Dave Lewton, Terry Carr, Ray Fisher, Bruce Pelz, John D. Berry, and F.M. Busby.

The goal is \$1000, which we would like to raise before the TAFF race officially begins February 1.

There are any number of ways to help the Fund come to a successful conclusion. Donations of money can be sent to rich brown, 410 - 61st St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220 (make checks payable to Richard Brown, not to the Bob Shaw Fund) and contributions of auction material should be sent to Colleen Brown at the same address. Faneds are being encouraged to publish special issues of their fanzines, available on a cash-only basis with money collected going to the Fund. If you publish a fanzine and think this is the way you can help, get in touch with us, and we'll announce your fanzine here. Members of local clubs are encouraged to do their bit by passing the hat at meetings, or perhaps you can come up with some more novel way of bringing in bread for the BoSh Fund. A number of clubs such as Dallas SF Society have joined the Shaw bandwagon; how about your club?

FOCAL POINT 12.5 PUBLISHED The Special Bob Shaw Issue of FOCAL POINT is now available for \$1 (all proceeds to the BoSh Fund) to all those fans who didn't have enough faith to order it before publication. 52 mimeo'd pages including offset covers front and back, this issue of FP contains material by Burbee, Demmon, Boggs, Colleen Brown, rich brown, Steve Stiles, Bob Shaw, Gordon Dewey, Ted White, and Arnie Katz. Art is by ATom, Kinney, Rotsler, Staton and Stiles. Among the featured pieces are reprints of "The Fansmanship Lectures" by BoSh and "Big Name Fan", a long piece by Burbee, and the latest installment of Stiles' TAFF Report "Harrison Country". Order from Arnie Katz, Apt. 3-J, 55 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR the allegorical faan fiction piece authored by Bob Shaw and Walt Willis is being sold at \$1 per copy, again with all proceeds going to the Bob Shaw Fund. This is a new edition with illustrations throughout by Ross Chamberlain. At present it is only a few pages short of being completely stenciled; the illos have been approved, and the first half has already been illoed. If you haven't got a copy of TED, this is a golden opportunity to possess a superb piece of fanwriting out of print for many years. If you already are familiar with the piece, the edition is worthwhile just for the illos. Orders should be sent to Arnie Katz.

MICROCOSM #14 will be a Special BoSh issue, obtainable for 50¢ from editor Dave Burton (5422 Kenyon Dr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46226). Guaranteed to be a stellar issue of an always entertaining fanzine.

INFINITUM #5 will soon be available from Dave Lewton (735 E. Kessler Blvd., Indianapolis, Ind. 46220) and is shaping up nicely. Faan fiction by Jim Lavell, fanzine reviews by Lee Lavell, and material by Arnie Katz, Leon Taylor and Lewton himself highlight the zine. Your 50¢ not only gets you this issue, but also brings Bob closer to Boston.

BEABOHEMA Frank Lunney (212 Juniper St., Quakertown, Pa. 18951) has a Special Bob Shaw Issue scheduled. He's rounding up material to make this BAB extra special. It's available for \$1.

A SPECIAL NOTE Terry Carr has offered to send 20 fanzines of recent years to anyone who contributes \$1 or more to the Bob Shaw Fund. This, of course, does not include such things as purchasing special Bob Shaw issues of fanzines, The Enchanted Duplicator, auction items, etc., but only bona fide across-the-board donations. Send those donations to rich brown, and he'll send your name to Terry.

ALL BIDS for the auctions listed below, old and new, should be sent to Colleen Brown (410-61st St., Apt. D4, Brooklyn, NY 11220). Send no money, just a bid or bids on the items you want.

AUCTION ENDS FOR The copies of INNUENDO Nos. 10 and 11 donated by Terry Carr, and QUIP 13 (five separate copies) donated by Arnie Katz. The two INNs go to George Senda for \$15 and \$20, respectively, while a copy of QUIP 13 goes to him for his top bid of \$19 -- or \$54 for the lot, which is a nice big boost to the Shaw Fund. The other four copies of QUIP 13 go to Don Fitch, Dick Bergeron, Dave Burton, and Michael A. Harisimides. The auction on these fanzines is closed and they will be mailed upon receipt of checks or Real Money from these fine people.

AUCTION STILL ON Last issue a file of SLANT, donated by BoSh himself, went on the auction block. SLANT was a printed fanzine edited by Walt Willis (Bob Shaw became associate editor with the fifth issue) from the late '40s thru the early '50s. It contained some of the best fiction ever printed in a fanzine (many items were reprinted in U.S. sf prozines), alleviated by the gentle wits of Willis, White and Shaw. The complete run of SLANT contains some real fannish classics -- editorial columns by Willis (including his first pun), Clive Barnes' "A Swordsman of Varnis," wood and linoleum block prints by White and BoSh, and of course BoSh's classic "Fansmanship Lectures." SLANT was a superlative fanzine, perhaps the best of its time and certainly the best of its kind. As of now, the top bidder is Don Fitch, who has priced the set at \$26.

Also up for auction last issue was a Terry Carr Sampler, donated by Terry Carr. The Sampler contains OMEGA #1, March 1953, one of his first fanzines; THE GOLDEN GATE TO SCIENCE FANTASY, a 1954 collection of stuff from S.F.-area; THE BNF OF IZ, by Carl Brandon (R. Ellick and T. Carr); KLEIN BOTTLE #5, Aug., 1960, edited by Miri and Terry with stuff by them and Rotsler, Atom, Nelson, Bjo; THE EXPURGATED BOOB STEWART, a collection of his writings and cartoons with anecdotes by Terry, published in 1960; HOBGOBLIN 15, July 1965, a SAPSazine with Nelson, Aldiss, Atom and reviews and fannish fiction by Terry; HOBGOBLINS 3 and 4 from 1960 and TROLL CHOWDER 1, 1962, with fanzine reviews by Terry; DIASPAR 11, Nov., 1968, a FAPazine featuring Terry's "A Modest Manifesto" and Carl Brandon's "The Gafiated World," the beginning of a J.G.

Ballard parody. Don Fitch has bid \$6, the highest bid so far. This auction will be closed if no bids are received by Wednesday, September 23, 1970.

NEW AUCTIONS A file of WARHOON from issue #7 to issue #26, inclusive, has been donated by Dick Bergeron to the Shaw Fund auctions. The 20 issues of this Hugo-winning fanzine, dating back to April 1960 contain in its approximately 900 pages material by the editor, Dick Bergeron, Rotsler, Greg Calkins, Dick Eney, Bob Tucker, Jerry Pournelle, Virginia Blish, Brian W. Aldiss, Charles Wells, "William Athling", Philip K. Dick, Harry Warner Jr., Ted White, Bob Bloch, and Harlan Ellison. WARHOON has as columnists people such as John Berry, Walt Willis, Redd Boggs, James Blish, Robert A.W. Lowndes, Walter Breen, John Baxter, Bob Shaw and Terry Carr, and a letter column you wouldn't believe. FOCAL POINT editor Arnie Katz has entered a bid of \$20 on the set.

DIMENSIONS #14 and #15, ELLISON WONDERLAND #1 to #3, CRYSTAL BALLING SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN, and VECTOR donated by Lee Hoffman are going to be sold as a group. Some fans don't realize that Harlan Ellison once published fanzines, too. This packet of rare Ellisonania is highlighted by two mammoth issues of DIMENSIONS, including material by a galaxy of famous names. DIMENSIONS #14 has an article on the Harold Shea stories by Fletcher Pratt, and material by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Dave English, Algis Budrys, Dean Grennell, Greg Calkins, Andre Norton, et al. DIMENSIONS #15 has Poul Anderson, Damon Knight, Bob Bloch, Ted Cogswell, Ted Sturgeon, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Algis Budrys, Dave English, Greg Calkins, Dean Grennell, Andre Norton and many others. And of course Harlan. Minimum bid is \$5.

THE COMPLETE FAAN containing choice material by BoSh fellow Belfast, John Berry has been donated by Ed Reed. Minimum bid is \$1.

HARLEQUIN a large fanzine written by John Berry and illustrated by ATom published to boost Arthur's TAFF candidacy. Donated by Ed Reed. Minimum bid is \$1.

FANHISTORY #1 to #4. The first three issues were done by Lee Hoffman in 1956. #1 deals with Jack Speer, #2 treats Numbered Fandoms, and #3 salutes Damon Knight. #4 was published by Ted White, John Berry, Terry Carr and Arnie Katz in 1968 and consists of VOID #29. FANHISTORY #1 to #3 were donated by Lee Hoffman, #4 was given by Ted White. Minimum bid is \$4.

MOJO-NAVIGATOR ROCK & ROLL NEWS #s 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, donated by Greg Shaw, the original rock paper which was the inspiration for the foundation of ROLLING STONE. Greg was co-editor. These are very rare and considered collectors' items by rock fans. Minimum bid: \$5.

Two Books: INFORMED SOURCES: DAY EAST RECEIVED by Willard Bain, published by Chester Anderson and the Communication Company, contributed by Greg Shaw. This ultra-experimental sf book was later picked up by Doubleday; this limited quantity early edition is considered quite valuable. Minimum bid: \$5. Also donated by Greg Shaw, INFORMED SOURCES: NIGHT EAST RECEIVED, the sequel to the above, also published by ComCo, in a limited edition of 100. Not at all like the first item, it contains some poetry, some social commentary and a long list of hip people all over the country with addresses, plus other stuff. Undoubtedly rare. Minimum bid: \$7.50.

CRAWDADDY, two issues: No. 9, May '67 and No. 14, April '68, donated by Greg Shaw. They're in fairly good condition, not mint by any means, but scarce enough to be worth something to rock buffs. Minimum bid: \$2.

Keep those auction items -- and bids! -- coming.

BOSH TOSEH

--BOB SHAW

Some people are putting it about that SciCon 70 was about as enjoyable as a game of blow football against a halitosis sufferer. But it's wrong to go around making statements like that, quite apart from the fact that it could embarrass any halituous people who were listening. All conventions are bad --- for some people. Equally, all conventions are good --- for some people.

Perhaps it's a question of what one expects. For me the British convention is the annual opportunity to have a beer and a yarn with some of the fans whose names and writings I see in fanzines the rest of the year. Some of them are always there, the beer is always there, and there are two or three days available in which to enjoy both --- so the only complaint I have about conventions is that they end so abruptly, producing a gloomy sense of let-down which sometimes lasts for days.

Flying over to SciCon with James White, however, I was in a state of gloating anticipation because this time I had even worked out a scheme to enable me to taper off from the heady pleasure-plateau of the con to the humdrum satisfactions of the everyday plain. An old boozing companion, a Belfast man called Sam, was now living on the outskirts of London. In his youth Sam had been so devoted to the pursuit of liquor and conviviality that he had contracted mild TB. The slowness of his recovery baffled the hospital staff, who were unaware that he was climbing out over the wall after lights out and roistering in the Red Lion --- a free and easy pub which does not object to an occasional customer showing up with pajama legs projecting from below his raincoat. Anyway, I had arranged to go round to Sam's place late on Monday afternoon when the con had ended, have a meal, then settle down for an evening's boozing and reminiscing.

The con hotel was characterised by extreme shabbiness, plus the fact that it was about a mile long and had no other dimensions. I was astonished to learn that it had also been the venue for the very first con I had ever attended, back in 1951, because I couldn't remember one thing about the place. This proved to me once again that I ought to keep a diary --- we think we can remember our pasts, but great areas of experience are lost to us.

The con programme was remarkable one for me --- it was the first in which I failed to see even one item. This was more due to the strength of the rival attractions than to any weakness in the bill. There were the usual assets to any British convention --- Rog Gilbert of Cambridge, who drinks pints almost as fast as he talks but miraculously without losing lucidity; Vic Hallett, the walking encyclopedia of science fiction; Sid Bounds, a veteran SF writer who in 1952 invited me to his house for dinner under the impression that I was Walt Willis, and was gentlemanly enough not to throw me out when he discovered his mistake half way through the main course; Frank Arnold, who packs more of the flavour of old London into one sentence than Ernest Raymond got into an entire novel; Bill Temple, chairman of the Harrow Water Babies ---

an exclusive club which was formed when he and I were caught in a flash storm at Harrow and found shelter in a house which turned out to be the one in which Kingsley wrote "The Water Babies"; Gary Klupfel, the genial German fan who attends British conventions almost as regularly as Dave Kyle, who was there too of course...

The convention week-end, during which I tried to cram a year of normal fannish contact into two days, went by like a briefly glimmering dream. Suddenly it was Monday morning and everyone was leaving. This was the stage at which the Post-convention Blues would have begun to pound in my head (chorus: "The Con Hall's just a hall, when all the fans have gone"), but this time it was different --- ahead of me was an evening with the redoutable Sam, the man who thought nothing of walking into a pub in his pajamas. My sole worry was that I might have difficulty matching his phenomenal drinking ability, so I even refused a farewell pint with Rog Gilbert --- an action which visibly shook his faith in me.

On the way to Sam's place I called in at Billy Pettit's sumptuous flat in Maida Vale where an excellent lunch was Made Available --- that's an oral pun, opposite in type to visual puns such as the Willis classic, "A Miss is as good as a Mlle." By the time I had properly inspected Billy's fanzine, beer and whiskey collection it was after six o'clock and well past the time I had promised to arrive at Sam's place. This made me feel a bit guilty --- I could see a parched Sam staring at his watch and computing the minutes to closing time --- so I hurried over to Hounslow, happily burping beer and Bourbon fumes, feeling as if on the way to another convention.

On reaching Hounslow station I phoned Sam and said, "Get your drinking pajamas on, mate --- I've finally arrived."

There was a lengthy and rather puzzling silence, then he said, "We kept dinner back for you, and now the meal is spoiled."

This was a different greeting to what I had expected from an old pal I hadn't seen in years, especially from a man whose sole interest in food had formerly been limited to Hannigan's meat pies swilled down with pints of stout.

"Never worry," I said. "We can eat it cold after we've been out for a few jars."

Another silence. "We can't go out --- there's no babysitter and I don't want to leave Mary on her own with the children."

"Oh! We'll have a few in the house then?"

"If you like."

Feeling slightly subdued, I gave Sam my location, received a telling off for having got out of the train at an inconvenient station, and shot into the next-door pub for a quick one to revive my convention spirit. Things were not working out as I had planned, but I decided that this strange Puritanical Sam would revert to his familiar form once we had settled down in front of a roaring fire with a crate of good English ale between our chairs. I debated buying the beer before he arrived in his car, but decided to wait for Sam because one crate would give us only twelve bottles each, which might not be enough for one of those sessions in which the talk is running free and one can conjure memories out of the fire's sinking embers until far into the night. There was a definite possibility we would need two crates. Finally Sam arrived, looking curiously neat and respectable, and I told him I wasn't sure about how much drink to bring.

"Leave it to me," he said, striding into the off-licence. I followed him gratefully --- this was more like the old Sam. A very correct old lady enquired what he wanted, and Sam held up two fingers. I nodded in satisfaction.

"Two bottles of pale ale," he said.

I grabbed his arm and whispered, "Sam, old son, do you think that's enough? We've got the whole night ahead of us."

"It's all right," he replied grandly. "I've got another two bottles at home."

I stared at him in something approaching terror. I had heard of good Irish lads moving to England for a few months and coming back carrying rolled umbrellas, but this was incredible. Suddenly the proverbial great light dawned on me. Sam must have gone off beer and progressed to something harder for his regular tippie.

"And a bottle of John Jameson's or Powers," I said to the old lady.

"Don't be mad," Sam gritted. "You can't buy whisky here."

"Why? Don't they sell Irish?"

"It's not that. You'll have to pay the full price here --- they don't give a six-shilling discount like you get in the supermarket."

"But the supermarkets are closed at this time," I said reasonably. "What else can you do?"

"Do without," he said, equally reasonably, and a great cool gulf opened between us.

I bought the whisky, lugged it along defiantly and he drove me to his semi-detached house in one of Hounslow's quiet little avenues. It was a nice enough spot, but to my convention-fevered eyes it looked something like Dundonald Cemetery. A little of what I was thinking must have showed through because Sam's wife immediately began to explain the area's peculiar delights.

"This house is well situated," she pointed out. "The only post box in the district is right outside our windows, and at night we can watch the people coming to post their letters."

"There you are," I smirked. "Some people think Hounslow's a dead place, but you just have to know the right spots."

We sat down for the evening at a fire which, while not being big enough to give off any appreciable heat, served to create an icy draft rushing round my ankles towards the chimney. Sam's two children clambered over me for two hours while he thoughtfully analysed for me the taxation advantages of turning myself into a limited liability company.



(CONTINUED SECOND PAGE FOLLOWING)

HEINLEIN: END OF THE ROAD



--GREG BENFORD--

Now that Robert A. Heinlein's I Shall Fear No Evil has appeared in GALAXY, it's time to take a look at how it lines up with his other important work of these last stages of his career. I saw I Shall Fear No Evil in manuscript and think it's terrible, but I can't deny that the book is about the major themes of fiction -- Love and Death -- to an extent that few sf novels ever are.

One specific parallel that strikes me is the continuing preoccupation Heinlein has with a certain type of character. I think I Shall Fear No Evil looks at the same figure from a different point of view. (I won't go further into I Shall Fear No Evil because it's not through being serialised yet, and anyway it's more fun to let you see if you find the same elements repeating when you read this latest -- and probably last -- Heinlein novel.)

The character I'm talking about is Mike. In both The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress and Stranger In A Strange Land, Mike was the innocent, possessed of great powers, and Not Quite Human. Perhaps Heinlein became fond of Mike, and didn't want to lose the work he'd put into him by using him in only one book. The other characters in MIAHM are, of course, quite similar to the Stranger analogies -- Heinlein only knows a few well-defined types, and he has to use them -- but I wonder why he found it necessary to dispose of Mike in almost the same manner in both books. In the last pages the reader sees, perhaps, the necessity of computer-Mike (in Stranger, we have Valentine-Mike) being knocked off: he was fine for running a revolution, but he's also the perfect agent for a dictatorship, and who's going to run that?

It's interesting to see Heinlein escape his essential problem here, instead of trying to find some solution -- you might say it's Stranger all over. He just kills the character who embodies the problem. And for those in the audience who came to like Mike (I did, for one -- but then, we were supposed to), there's the usual Heinlein consolation prize of a vague feeling that He's Out There. Somewhere. In Stranger Mike's life after death was perhaps theologically necessary, but in MIAHM it's really just an emotional convenience. If Mike had lived, there would've been hell to pay, and the basically anarchist-antiproletarian bias of Heinlein would've had a hard time with a computer who was a nice guy but who could easily take over the place any time he liked. Heinlein would have to conclude that the presence of such an all-powerful agent or factor necessitates his removal, if man is to be free. All through MIAHM the elite has run things, and also has taken a good number of the risks and sustained damages; and all this for the rabble, too. But after the revolution, what then? Well, the elite is going to have to defend itself against the masses, and one has

the feeling that Heinlein is going to be quite willing to use Mike against them. (This leaves aside what I mentioned above, namely that the obvious long-term problem is how to keep somebody from using Mike against virtually all of the population, ~~the elite~~ the elite included.)

The analogy with the American Revolution that runs through The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress should've given the reader the clue to the eventual outcome from the very beginning. The revolutionary cell corresponds fairly well to men like Patrick Henry, and the elite who know what's right (and what will work) would've gotten along fine with Alexander Hamilton. And Patrick Henry, of course, had no hand in the running of the government that followed the revolution; Hamilton and his friend lost out to Jefferson and others early in the next century, and haven't reappeared since, in any political faction.

This is the crucial point Heinlein always evades. A superhuman is a threat to ordinary mankind. But Heinlein clearly loves the superhuman, the man who knows how to do things marvellously well (and the philosophy behind it, too). He won't let go of it. In every novel there is a Mike. Mike the greater-than-man. Mike the transcendent. Each novel ends with Mike having found Love and, finally, defeating even Death. I Shall Fear No Evil -- and isn't it curious how these three books have such long titles? -- follows precisely the same pattern.

This is Heinlein's major theme as a fully matured man. His earlier fist-shaking declarations that man is the meanest, toughest animal this neck of the galaxy, have been softened into an abiding faith that it lies within us to transcend the very extinction of our bodies. I Shall Fear No Evil and the others carry what must be a comforting message for an aging man -- you will live through even this. It isn't hard to understand why Heinlein has fixed on the theme.

And what do I think of it? Not much. I'm a young man, perhaps naively undaunted by the prospect of Death. I'm a skeptic. Bertrand Russell maintained until the last that as far as his intellect could discern, when the blood flow was shut off from the brain, man and his mind died. It seems to me this is a harsh but strangely satisfying view of man's finite nature. My own intellectual honesty demands it.

But I think I understand Heinlein and in many ways I believe I am somewhat like him. Maybe in a few short decades I will turn, as he has, to the brave hope that I, too, will somehow pass through that final barrier.

And you, dear reader -- maybe you will, too.

--Greg Benford

(Bob Shaw, continued)

Keeping my thoughts away from the fabulous fannish evening I might have been having in London, I tried to get a glow on with the bottle of John Jameson's, but Sam wouldn't have any and in that atmosphere it didn't taste right. After a while I even began to brood about having paid the full retail price....

I don't know if I'll ever visit Sam again, but I can tell you that if I do it will be before a convention.

--Bob Shaw

LATE NEWS

FOCAL POINT RECAPTURED! Waving their banners and chanting "Equal Egoboo for Equal Fanac!" the Femmefan Liberation Front, in the persons of Joyce Fisher and Colleen Brown occupied the offices of FOCAL POINT. They demanded fancier titles in the colophon, shorter hours, an automatic collator, and more mention of their names in print. A demand that their names be rendered more visible through use of the red color-change kit was advanced, but withdrawn when Joyce Fisher realized she was the only person capable of changing the ink gun. The parties being unable to agree on the shorter hours point -- the editors offered 56 minute hours while the FLF wanted 51 -- the insurgents announced they were taking over.

Things have now, however, been set back to normal again. rich brown (410 61st Street, Apt. D-4, Brooklyn, NY 11220) and Arnie Katz (Apt. 3-J, 55 Pineapple Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201) are again the editors. Assistant editor Colleen Brown and Invaluable Helper Joyce Fisher have been sent to their rooms without their crottled greeps, and bedtime readings of The Enchanted Duplicator have been suspended for the next week.

-- Arnie Katz

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