



Dunwich Horror

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FR is available for loc, trade, contribution of art, reviews or calligraphy, and an effort is made to supply a copy to all whose material is reviewed herein. In addition, FR may be purchased at the rate of 50¢ each, or 6/\$2.50. Yes, this is a higher subscription rate than before; due to increased costs of stencils, ink, and postage, some sort of increase was necessary, and 50¢ seemed to be the most obvious transition.

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ART USED IN THIS ISSUE:

Cliff Biggers: pp. 5, 9, 17, 21
Jeannie Corbin: cover
Wade Gilbreath: 14
Don Herron: p. 19.

Reviews are individually credited at the beginning of each review; refer to the body of the fanzine for reviewer information.

BOOKS REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE:

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With the next issue of FR, Wade Gilbreath has tentatively agreed to take over as art director; "tentatively" because Wade is also a co-chairman of the 1977 Birmingham DSC, and all this has to come second to his convention obligations.

We still want as much art as we can get, preferably in the form of spot illustrations (although we do need covers--but since we can only use one cover per issue, we have only a limited need for full-page drawings--and we ask that you continue to send the art to us at the 621 Olive Street address. We will, in turn, get together with Wade, who will help us plan the layout for each issue of FR. Hopefully, Wade's talent will help us eliminate the problem of too-close columns, cramped layout, etc., that seems to be plaguing a few pages of FR.

We have also been asked about advertising in FR; we will accept advertising, at a rate of \$15 per full page; divide it yourself and you can come up with the half page and quarter page prices. I doubt that there will be much of a call for advertising, but since we have had requests, we are giving these prices. Naturally, all advertising will be electrostencilled, so submit any advertising you wish to include exactly as you wish it to appear.

We also plan to electro stencil art beginning with the next FR, rather than handstencilling (as we've used for the past eight issues, covers excepted), so any spot illustrators may want to bear this in mind.

Hopefully, next issue will have material by Page, Mason, Moudry, Bishop, Burns, Biggers, Salmonson, Whitehead, Steele, Gilbreath, Bryant and others--be here then!

PERSPECTIVES IN RETROSPECT

In retrospect, I guess I could safely say that it's been a busy summer; in fact, for someone who hasn't been working between June 4 and August 22nd, I've been doing a phenomenal amount of keeping busy-type activity; between Kubla Khwandiy? in the first weekend of June and the amazing rush that went on at Atlanticon, the 1976 Deep South Science Fiction Convention, we've made this a fannish summer to surpass any we've spent recently.

Besides attending conventions (a leisure activity that manages to wear me out more in two or three days than a week at work does--although I never know about the exhaustion until the day after we get home), we managed to visit a large number of fans, friends and towns we'd wanted to see; in fact, our fifth anniversary (June 15th of this year) was spent at Piers Anthony's home in the afternoon and at Alan Hutchinson's apartment that evening. The Florida trip was one we'd wanted to make since we were down there originally in March of 1975, and Piers, Cam, Penny and Cherry turned the return trip into a real occasion for us--Piers and his wife are extremely personable, highly interesting people with whom a conversation is an event to remember, and both girls are truly charming young persons, filled with their father's enthusiasm for life and their own childlike energy and spirit.

We managed to make it over to Birmingham and Tuscaloosa in late June, where we shared a weekend of smooching and tale-swapping with Wade Gilbreath and Joe Moudry & his mystery-expert wife (and cookie expert) Phyllis. Then we hosted a couple of gatherings at our place--and even in the hottest part of the summer, with no air conditioning, the fannish company made the weekend an upbeat and enjoyable one. We've seen people this summer that we've seen all too little of previously--Wade Gilbreath, Rich Garrison, Ginger Kaderabek, Janet Davis, Avery Davis, Steve & Binker Hughes, Joe Celko, as well as the usual grouping of Rome/Cedartown fans. Yep, it's been an active summer...

There have been a few major changes as far as Susan and I are concerned, too; we've finally given up the OEship of the amateur press alliance MYRIAD to someone else, after five consecutive terms as COEs. Larry Mason follows us as the tyrant of that apa, and while Larry's close by, it's a real change. Knowing that you don't have to put out an apa every six and a half weeks. We've lived with that pressure for 5 years; maybe we can let it overflow to our FR-production.

We've also watched a few totally non-fannish happenings with interest and concern; as I expected, Jimmy Carter is

a sort-of editorial by Cliff Biggers

a real candidate for the Presidency, against Gerald Ford; it's one of the lamest choices the US has had since I've been old enough to be aware of our political system--and it's ironic that the first state political election I recall well involved (once again) Jimmy Carter, and (once again) I felt he didn't deserve the office of governor (for which he was running at the time). That time, he won; this time, I strongly hope he loses the election to Gerald Ford. I have no real affection towards the Ford administration, and in fact he's done a number of things with which I disagree; but I see in Carter too much of the Southern politician, the win-by-any-means type candidate whose syrupy words and glaring smile serve to capture the public's fancy, while there is no leadership ability behind the facade.

The Hugo Winners are chosen, and I'm far from happy with many of the choices. Although they've been listed elsewhere, I'll briefly refresh your memory:

BEST NOVEL: THE FOREVER WAR, Joe Haideman
BEST NOVELLA: "Home is the Hangman," Roger Zelazny
BEST NOVELETTE: "Borderland of Sol," Larry Niven
BEST SHORT STORY: "Catch that Zeppelin," Fritz Leiber
DRAMATIC PRESENTATION: A BOY AND HIS DOG
PROFESSIONAL EDITOR: Ben Bova
PROFESSIONAL ARTIST: Frank Kelly Freas
FANZINE: Locus
FAN WRITER: Dick Geis
FAN ARTIST: Tim Kirk
JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD: Tom Reamy
GANDALF AWARD: L. Sprague de Camp

Needless to say, I wasn't too pleased; Susan was even less pleased than I, for her major point of concern was the JWC Award, where she felt John Varley had shown himself heads and shoulders above the rest; his loss was particularly frustrating for her. I'm sorry to see Silverberg lose the novel, because I honestly feel that his was by far the better work; and his latest novel, SHADRACH IN THE FURNACE, lacks the force of STOCHASTIC MAN, and thus will probably fail to make the ballot.

I could go on with this sort of thing in every category where my choices varied from those of the majority--but I'm sure it would be hopelessly tedious, and I'm certainly not wanting to bore my audience. Oh, and lest I forget, let me publicly thank Larry Mason, whose diligent reporting of the winners enabled us to list them in this issue of FR.

* * * * *

There's one book, available immediately, that I feel a need to call to everyone's attention--in fact, there should be a flyer about it elsewhere in this zine, but I want to reemphasize it here. Rich Garrison's Heritage Press is publishing a limited edition hardcover of Thomas Burnett Swann's last written work, finished shortly before his death, *QUEENS WALK IN THE DUST*; as Thomas Burnett Swann had wanted, the book is illustrated, in color and black-and-white, by the brilliant fantasy artist Jeff Jones. Tom had always been a steadfast admirer of Jeff's delicate style, and he had more than once mourned to me about the lack of "proper cover art" on his novels; according to Tom, only Jeff had captured the mood of his writing with his cover for *MOONDUST*. Tom Swann never lived to see the finished illustrations for his novel, nor to be presented with his hardcover copy of the book, so he can't appreciate the beauty of the art. I've seen the paintings, and I can attest to the fact that they represent a new style for Jeff Jones, and the heavier brush and palette work on the paintings is truly stunning. I can see no reason to speak for the quality of Tom's writing; I have only read one excerpt of *QUEENS WALK IN THE DUST*, a segment Tom had shown me, and thus must wait until publication to offer a review of the book; but I can assure you that the book is a worthwhile investment. I urge you to order the book from Heritage; the price is \$16 (postage included) for a numbered edition--the book is limited to 2000 copies--and you can order a copy from Heritage, PO Box 721, Forest Park, GA 30050.

The next scheduled hardcover from Heritage is a volume of L. Sprague de Camp's poetry, by the way; while I don't believe that a price has been set as of yet, you might write Rich and Ginger and ask to be put on their mailing list for information about upcoming books.

Also, please note the page about their calendar (found elsewhere in this issue); the SF Calendar sounds like a fine idea, and I recommend it to everyone.

In other areas of publishing, Arkham House has just recently released a new Ramsey Campbell collection, *THE HEIGHT OF THE SCREAM* (to be reviewed next issue). I'm not sure of timetables, but de Camp's *LITERARY SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS* should be nearing print from Arkham soon, also. And you might note that *SELECTED POEMS* by C. A. Smith and *SELECTED LETTER III* (HPL) are both in print from Arkham; I've seen a number of dealers listing these as OP and charging rip-off prices, and I don't approve of the practice.

Due from the British publishers Neville Spearman are two books of interest: a *WEIRD TALES* reprint anthology and an edition of *THE NECRONOMICON*, co-compiled by Colin Wilson and another author (I lack sufficient information to

give the other author's name right now). You might inquire via Arkham or a mail-order bookseller about the prices on these books; they aren't out yet, but should be available soon.

One item we failed to review but feel that it deserves mention: Lawson Hill (3952 West Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062) has published *MYRDDIN* #3, a fanzine milestone of sorts; as part of the special issue on the World Fantasy Con, Lawson has included a 33, 3 rpm recording of Robert Bloch's and Frank Belknap Long's speeches at that convention--this is the first time I've ever heard of this being included in a fanzine, and I'm amazed at the good sound quality. I recommend *MYRDDIN* #3 highly--the text, including con reports and articles, is excellent, the printing and layout is top quality, and the price is reasonable--\$1.50 for #3.

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SUSAN WRITES

As you've undoubtedly suspected by now, I'm not particularly fond of doing editorial matter/news; I'd rather stick to the review pages, where I feel much more comfortable. A lot of people asked why Cliff got two editorial pages last issue, as opposed to none for me, so I thought I'd take a little space to explain that there's no chauvinistic in-print domination going on around here--I happen to prefer reading Cliff's editorials to writing them myself.

I'd like to take a few lines to urge any fanzine editors receiving this to review FR if possible, however; Cliff hasn't been noting this in print, and very few zines have reviewed prior issues. We like all the coverage we can get!

Tara Wayne MacDonald noted in a review in *SHADOW* #60 that FR was (to paraphrase) a good quality counterfeit of Dick Geis' *SFR*. Frankly, I found the terminology invalid, and I'm taking a little space to find out if that seems to be the feeling among others. *SFR* has been the source of our layout and letter-review mixture, certainly, but I feel the tone of Dick's fanzine is totally different from the tone of FR, and as much as I respect Tara Wayne MacDonald as a reviewer, I can't accept that opinion. But I'm pretty much partial, so I'm asking others; quite frankly, I'd like to produce a product that is more than a "good quality counterfeit," and if this classification seems apt, maybe Cliff and I need to adapt our format a little. Let us know, okay?

Next issue's FR looks pretty full already, what with the reviews we're hoping to receive from our contributors and our featured review/articles; we're hoping to look at the new batch of Tolkien material, some of the Trekkie material that's been appearing on the market, the revivals of the Ace SF Special and Ballantine Adult Fantasy series, and a few of the calendars being offered. And if we have space, Cliff has murmured something about adding another editorial page; next issue should tell if all that comes about.

the HPL revival

The Ballantine H. P. Lovecraft Series:

THE LURKER AT THE THRESHOLD (with August Derleth) #25077, \$1.50; THE MASK OF CTHULHU (August Derleth), #25085, \$1.50; THE TRAIL OF CTHULHU (August Derleth), #25017, \$1.50; THE HORROR IN THE MUSEUM, #25094, \$1.50; THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD, #25118, \$1.50; THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SARNATH, #25189, \$1.50; LOVECRAFT: A BIOGRAPHY (L. Sprague de Camp), #25115, \$1.95. Covers and interior covers by Murray Tinkelman. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

Few authors have experienced the posthumous success that H. P. Lovecraft has had, particularly not in the almost ignored sub-genre of horror literature. Since Meade Frier-son's HPL brought to the forefront a new wave of interest in the fiction and letters of Lovecraft, the paperback market has been filled with various editions of the fiction of the man (and the fiction that his creations inspired). Now, Ballantine has begun a monthly reissue of the HPL fiction (or to be more precise, the fiction by HPL or that fiction related to his Cthulhu Mythos) with uniform covers; but while the idea itself is superb, the series of reissues has gotten itself off to a very slow start.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the Ballantine reissues is that, while they rely upon the popularity of HPL for their success, the fiction presented has rarely been purely Lovecraft's, and two volumes are entirely August Derleth's work, even though HPL's name features prominently in the cover design.

Derleth himself has added a great deal to the Mythos but his works are of secondary interest. THE LURKER AT THE THRESHOLD, a "posthumous collaboration" that is more Derleth's than anything else. LURKER is a novel-length work, and is probably Derleth's finest work within the Mythos; while he at times veers away from HPL's view of an alien race totally unconcerned with humanity, he manages to capture much of the quality of horror that HPL had developed in his own works. Ambrose Dewart becomes a more recognizable character than most of HPL's people, and this aids Derleth as he strives for the feel of horror that is so integral in Lovecraft-derived fiction. THE LURKER IN THE THRESHOLD offers very little Lovecraft, but it offers a great deal of entertainment.

THE MASK OF CTHULHU and THE TRAIL OF CTHULHU are flawed efforts though, and one wonders why they were reissued prior to the better works that followed; both vol-

umes are made up of the Mythos-related shorter fiction of August Derleth, and these two illustrate most graphically the Derlethian tendency to reduce the grand mechanistic view of HPL's fiction to the Christian dichotomy of good beings versus evil beings, with humanity's continued existence riding on the outcome. This is one of the two major faults with the Mythos tales of August Derleth--Lovecraft's deities are not akin to humans, and the anthropomorphism of Derleth cheapens the fiction. Derleth's second fault lies in the ending to his tales; Derleth relies heavily on the shock ending-complete-with-an-italicized-final paragraph; this sort of clincher didn't work for HPL (and he abandoned it for many of his stories) but Derleth persisted in it, much to his readers' irritation. Both books are interesting to the HPL fan, but are not up to the quality of any of Lovecraft's Mythos stories. And despite careful editing (there are relatively few errors in copy in any of the Ballantine editions), the copyright page for MASK is unprinted, replaced by the copyright page of TRAIL, which makes any comparison of original publications to these stories very difficult.

THE HORROR IN THE MUSEUM is another offering that presents collaborative efforts between HPL and, this time, the many authors for whom he did revision work. Many of these stories are far more the work of Lovecraft than of the revision clients. While the paperback edition is abridged from the Arkham House clothbound edition (which, incidentally, is still in print for those who prefer a complete and more durable copy), the ten stories presented in HORROR are superb works, including "The Diary of Alonzo Typer," one of HPL's best, collaborative or otherwise.

Lovecraft wrote only one novel-length work, THE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD, and the slim volume seems to slip in and out of print very quickly. This is the first American paperback printing in five years, and is, thus far, the highlight of the Ballantine reissues. The taut development of horror in CHARLES DEXTER WARD makes the reader realize how much of a loss it was that HPL avoided novel-length fiction--pacing, characterization and plot combine to make the book a treasure for the horror fan.

THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SARNATH is another hard-to-find HPL edition; the first printing was a part of the excellent Ballantine Adult Fantasy series; and it presents a showcase of the development of HPL's style and writing form throughout his life. Lin Carter's editing occasionally proves to be a nuisance, as Carter seems to regard editing as a chance to

present himself as an expert in whatever he happens to be working on at the time, thereby giving his editorial notes more of an irritation value than anything else. Nonetheless, *THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SARNATH* is a fine smorgasbord of HPL fiction (and one rarely seen HPL poem, "Nathicana").

The non-HPL companion to the reissue series is the first pb printing of L. Sprague de Camp's *LOVECRAFT: A BIOGRAPHY*. De Camp's non-fiction work was by necessity shortened by 13,000 words; the real shame, however, is that a great deal of the shortening was done by the elimination of the bibliography and footnotes. As others have pointed out, the original system of footnotes in the Doubleday edition (reviewed in FR #4) was misleading and unclear as to many of the original sources for quotations and references. It had been hoped that the Ballantine paperback edition would correct and/or clarify the footnotes rather than make reference-checking even more difficult by forcing the scholar to refer from the pb to the hardcover for reference material. Footnotes notwithstanding, however, the de Camp biography is one of SF's most substantial non-fiction works, and I heartily recommend the Ballantine pb to any and all who passed up the Doubleday hardcover for reasons unknown.

I assume that Ballantine plans to continue the HPL reissue series in future months; I certainly hope so, because the combination of new editions of these books and the visually striking Murray Tinkelman covers and inside cover illustrations make these handsome, impressive paperback volumes, certainly worth acquiring.

DON'T BITE THE SUN. Tanith Lee (DAW #UY1221 -- \$1.25), cover by Brian Froud. Reviewed by Susan Biggers.

DON'T BITE THE SUN is a completely different type of book from Tanith Lee's other two novels, which have been very fantasy-oriented. It has more of the traditional SF elements in it and can be approached in two different ways; first, it can be read with no more ambitious motives in mind than pure entertainment, and under which scrutiny it stands up very well. Second, the book can be approached with an open mind for the symbolism which can be read into the story. The second approach is by far the most interesting and rewarding, for many facets of the book become visible when it is read for symbolism.

One writer's trick which Tanith Lee has employed here, and which used to annoy me to no end before my tastes matured, is that of leaving portions of the story (such as background history and explanations for various aspects of the story's society) to the reader's imagination. Herein lies the real fun of reading such a novel: trying to piece together from random facts and utterances of the characters exactly

what happened to bring about the existence of the society as it is in the novel.

Using my own imagination to fill in some of the gaps, such as time and circumstances, the setting of *DON'T BITE THE SUN* is in the far future in a utopia carried to the extreme. People are coddled and pampered throughout their life, from a test-tube birth to an undisclosed, perhaps never-arriving, death. The cross-section of this life is presented by a predominantly female inhabitant of this utopian society who is undergoing Jang, a period of life somewhat like teenage adolescence. During Jang, the narrator--who remains nameless throughout the novel--is supposed to be doing all sorts of wild, crazy stunts such as committing suicide innumerable times and being revived in a new body of her own design, "having love" at any and all times of the day or night, and making destructive but futile raids on the Robotics Museum. However, this particular Jang adolescent gets very bored with being Jang and tries everything from becoming a maker (of another person, that is) to joining an archeological expedition into the desert. Nothing succeeds in releasing her from the preordained route her life is to follow, as she encounters regulation upon regulation that prohibit her from doing something satisfying with her life. Finally, during the desert expedition, she discovers a piece of pottery with the ancient inscription which gives her the inspiration to deal with the more frustrating aspects of her existence.

On the surface *DON'T BITE THE SUN* seems to be just another minor adventure novel, but once the surface is penetrated and the story concept more closely examined, it can be seen that Tanith Lee has written another novel that deserves recognition in its own right. I recommend *DON'T BITE THE SUN* to anyone who enjoys interpreting symbolism and likes to exercise his or her imagination.

POSTCARD FROM RICHARD L. TIERNEY (7-20-76)

"Thanks for the last two issues of FUTURE RETROSPECTIVE, and for the nice review of *THE WINDS OF ZARR*. Much interesting material here.

"I liked your review of the Lovecraft letters also. I'd like to point out a logical impossibility concerning the last volume, #4, which I'm not sure many people have considered. Since Derleth and Wandrei worked together on the editing up till Derleth's death in 1971, and James Turner did not come into the picture till later, how come Derleth and Turner are considered co-editors to the exclusion of Wandrei? Turner alone would be possible, as would Turner, Derleth & Wandrei; but Turner and Derleth to the exclusion of Wandrei is logically impossible."

((While I was in total agreement with your line of reasoning at first, and can still see a lot of careful thought behind your

speculation, I think there's one possibility you might have overlooked--namely, the co-editing could be a sort of "collaborative effort," with Derleth having gathered letters, made notes, etc. before his death, and Turner having gone into the Derleth files on the book later on and completing the task; in fact, that seems the most logical method of explaining it, in my opinion. But the two people who probably know for sure are Roderick Meng and Don Wandrei--and I'd love to see them reply to the question.))

TRADER TO THE STARS. Poul Anderson. Berkley Medallion (#03199 -- \$1.25), cover by Richard Powers. Reviewed by Gary Steele.

If you are to believe the blurb on the book cover this is "The first book in the future history of the Polesotechnic League." That may well be; while I've only read SATAN'S WORLD and one or two other smaller selections concerning Nicholas Van Rijn, I cannot see anything in particular, however, that would distinguish this collection from any of the other stories in the series chronologically. Most are familiar with Anderson's novels and stories concerning van Rijn, interstellar trader--owner/manager of the Solar Spice and Liquors Company.

TRADER TO THE STARS is composed of three novellas: "The Hiding Place," "Territory," and "The Master Key." For the reader who enjoys sf adventure stories with a touch of mystery, I recommend TRADER; while it's true that the stories are all pretty much from the same mold--in each, Van Rijn uses his brains and experience and plays a semi-Sherlockian armchair detective, reasoning out the answers to the problem at hand while he sits back with his drink--the stories are handled with a great deal of craftsmanship.

In "The Hiding Place," we find that Van Rijn and his crew, their ship damaged, are being pursued by hostile spacecraft. With only a matter of time separating them from a confrontation with their pursuers, and no friendly star system within range, Van Rijn risks contact with a totally unknown type of alien spacecraft; finding the alien pilots reluctant to establish contact, Van Rijn and crew must grapple onto the spacecraft and board it. Once inside, they find that the ship is a zoological craft carrying specimens for an alien zoo, and that the crew has removed all evidence of what they look like and are hiding in one of the cages, passing themselves off as more zoo specimens. Van Rijn must find the crew and determine how to operate the ship before his pursuers catch up; and from here, Anderson develops a highly interesting, and often amusing story that's by far the best in the book.

"Territory" takes place on a planet with a dying ecological system; Van Rijn arrives to check up on scientists' progress in determining the cause of the situation and to

establish trade relations with the natives. While he's there, the aliens stage an uprising against the humans, forcing them to desert the planet--and in the rush, Van Rijn and a female scientist are left behind. The problem is one of survival coupled with Van Rijn's determination to discover why the supposedly friendly natives turned against the humans in order to correct the situation--for the profit involved in the situation. While "Territory" is probably the most stereotyped story in its situation in the volume, it is nevertheless enjoyable.

The final story, "The Master Key," is told via flashback by one of Van Rijn's trading captains. At a party hosted by Van Rijn, the captain retells how he was forced to abandon camp after being attacked by natives of the forested planet on which they had landed. Being the second story in the book based on the plot of a native uprising, the story suffers somewhat in comparison; however, Anderson avoids many of the stereotypes he used in "Territory," and the story manages to stand on its own.

TRADER TO THE STARS provides light, entertaining reading to while away a couple of hours. Since Berkley has made a point of blurbing this as the first of the history of the Polesotechnic League, hopefully they have plans for reissues of other collections of such stories.

SCOP. Barry N. Malzberg. Pyramid (#V3895 -- \$1.25), cover by Steve Fabian. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

Like many of us, Barry Malzberg seems to be concerned with the events surrounding the Kennedy assassination; his earlier novel THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE deals with a re-enactment of the assassination that takes on mystic overtones, and his short story, "Overlooking," dealt with an alternate world in which Kennedy had not been President during the Cuban Missile Crisis. To this we now add SCOP, an internalized story of a time-traveller hoping to subtly alter the events of the assassination.

SCOP is more than a mere cash-in on the Kennedy popularity, though; instead, it is a novel that shows the complex absurdities of life in a tragic manner. Scop hopes to break regulations and alter the assassination events; as it turns out, many of the things he hopes to utilize, including a girl he rapes in various timestreams, are not real segments of the past at all, but elements of his time transported into the past to prevent the success of his attempt.

SCOP is Malzberg at his best: it's moody, introspective and allegorical, but also intense in its storytelling. Malzberg successfully switches narrators in the story to give an alternative viewpoint of Scop's failure, reinforcing the strength of the novel. All in all, SCOP is a superb, literary SF novel that deserves your attention.

RANDOM BURROUGHSING

A review of the ERB series continuations:

HADON OF ANCIENT OPAR (Philip Jose Farmer, DAW #UY1107 -- \$1.25 & FLIGHT TO OPAR, Philip Jose Farmer, DAW #UW1238 -- \$1.50, covers by R. G. Krenkel. MAHARS OF PELLUCIDAR, John Eric Holmes, Ace #51590, \$1.50, cover by Boris Vallejo. BUNDUKI by J. T. Edson, DAW #UW1243, \$1.50, cover by Michael Whelan.

Reviewed by Barry Hunter.

The popularity of Edgar Rice Burroughs seems to have gone into a recent upsurge, almost equalled in intensity to the sudden increase in ERB's popularity in the early 1960s. It might be due to a number of new readers entering the field and wanting action-adventure, or it could be due to the interest caused by the Farmer "biography" of Tarzan, the AIP Burroughs films, etc.--THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT and AT THE EARTH'S CORE are already released, and LORD GREYSTOKE, a "serious rendition of Tarzan" is promised for the near future.

Whatever the reason, though, publishers are increasingly aware of the interest in Burroughs' works, and as a result, there has been a recent release of new works in the ERB series, using his characters and locales.

Aside from a single Tarzan novel by Fritz Leiber released in conjunction with a movie tie-in, the first serious ERB continuation was Philip Jose Farmer's Hadon, a citizen of Opar some 12,000 years in the past, when it was a thriving city. Hadon has won a series of Lesser Games and is sent to Khokarsa to fight in the Great Games. Hadon wins the games, but manages to make enemies of the rulers and must flee for his life. The first book details his experiences as he and a girl, Lalila, escape from the king's men. Written in the almost-melodramatic style of ERB, but modified so that it's uniquely Farmer, HADON is the first book of a "prequel series," in that it deals with a civilization that Burroughs created, but it explores life in the culture thousands of years before Burroughs introduced Opar in his works.

The second book, FLIGHT TO OPAR, continues with the trek of Hadon and Lalila back to Opar. Hadon makes Lalila his wife and, on the advice of the Keeper of the True Goddess, they try to return to Hadon's home city before their child is born, for the prophecy tells them that the child will be known throughout the land if born in the temple in Opar.

Both of Farmer's novels utilize the method used so well by ERB and scores of pulp writers--action building to a climax that, in turn, leads to an even greater climax in the next book of the series. Farmer handles the method well, making his Opar series loyal in form to Burroughs' works.

J. T. Edson's Bunduki is a quasi-Burroughsian series; Bunduki is the adopted son of Tarzan--his real name is James Allenvale Gunn, whose father was killed by Mau Mau terrorists when he was a small child. Raised by Tarzan, Bunduki is another man of the African wilds; his travelling companion is Dawn, daughter of Sir John Drummond-Clayton (Korak) and Lady Meriem.

In BUNDUKI, he and Dawn are trying to subdue an injured antelope when their land rover plummets over the side of a cliff.

Rather than being killed, Bunduki passes into unconsciousness; when he awakens, he finds himself in the bole of a tree, his hunting bow and his knife alongside him. Bunduki begins to search for Dawn and, at the same time, to determine just where he is. Unknown to Bunduki, though, Dawn has come to elsewhere and is just as concerned with finding Bunduki and determining what happened.

From here on out, BUNDUKI is typical Burroughsian adventure; there are incidents with slavers, Mangani and the opposite sex as they both continue their search, and Edson uses Burroughs' method of alternating chapters with main characters to give the book a cinematic effect, cutting from Bunduki to Dawn and back again, building to a conclusion where both of them are reunited.

Edson is a new writer in the US, although he has written for the British market a good deal. BUNDUKI is the first American publication of this novel, which first appeared in England; the second novel, BUNDUKI AND DAWN, is available in Great Britain already, and will hopefully see American publication soon. Edson's series is fine escapist fare that utilizes the Burroughsian characters only as a stepping-stone to get Bunduki onto an alien world with adventures of his own; but Edson is a most enjoyable pulp-style writer, and the books make successful use of the action-adventure formula.

While Farmer and Edson deal only marginally with ERB creations, John Eric Holmes has taken Pellucidar and given us a picture of the Inner Land as a stronghold of the Mahars that David Innes must have missed. While none of ERB's characters appear, the Inner World itself is uniquely Burroughs', and Holmes' novel is closer to Burroughs' own work in concept than Farmer's or Edson's.

In MAHARS OF PELLUCIDAR, Christopher West, a biology student, becomes involved with Dr. Holmes, who is using a disintegrator/reintegrator ray as a probe into the Earth. The probe has broken into a cavern 200-300 miles beneath the surface. Visual contact is established, and Holmes, West,

Moritz and Kingsley (the two who developed the probe) witness to movements of a man in the cavern where no life was suspected. The doctors wonder about the occurrence for two weeks--then they witness yet another unbelievable incident. An antelope is sacrificed on a makeshift altar, then humans are brought forward; aware of what is about to happen, Chris decides he must go "down the beam" to save them.

Chris takes a jackknife and a fire axe with him and is sent down to the caverns, where he saves a girl and kills most of the group that had intended to sacrifice her.

Chris (renamed "Red Axe" by the girl) and Varna fall in love and learn each other's language. Chris learns more about the strange land. Then, through a plan of deceit, Chris and Varna are captured and taken to the city of the reptilian Mahars. Eventually, Chris is sentenced to death, but not before he finds a Mahar secret that can end their species.

Holmes derives much of his storytelling technique from Burroughs; oddly, though, he says that he had originally wanted to write like Lovecraft.

According to Holmes, "I'm working on a sequel, RED AXE OF PELLUCIDAR. I don't know if it will ever see print. The understanding I have with ERB, Inc. right now is that we will wait to see what response there is to the first book. If it sells well, they will consider marketing another. I've planned several sequels, though, and I'll write them whether they are published or not.

"MAHARS was a labor of love. For years I have entertained my two sons by reading to them. I've read aloud most my favorite books, including ERB's Mars and Pellucidar series. When they mourned the fact that there were no more stories about Pellucidar, I decided to write one myself. The book was written very slowly and read to the boys chapter by chapter--I named the hero after my younger son, Christopher West Holmes.

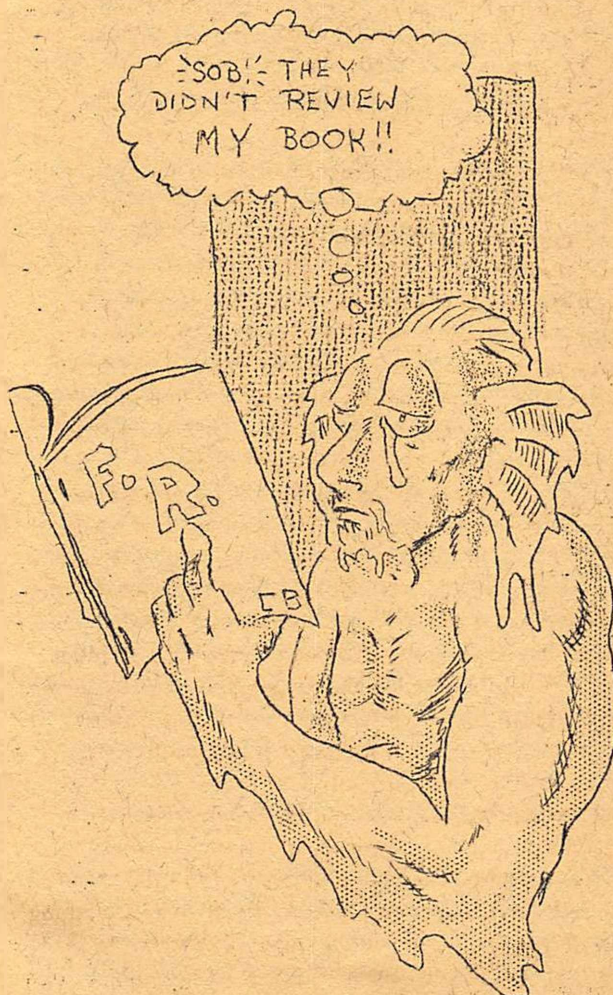
"I got the manuscript typed by a variety of commercial typists and friends and tried to sell it. I was turned down by Ace and by AMAZING, with nice personal letters of rejection. Then I sent it to DAW Books and got a letter back from Don Wollheim saying he liked the book but it could never be published without permission from ERB, Inc. I sent off the manuscript to them and after a long correspondence, Mr. Hodes of their company agreed to having it published and set out to market it for me. Danton Burroughs told me his father, John Coleman Burroughs, liked the story and I'm sure that helped.

"I met ERB while he was in Hawaii during WWII and I still have a copy of TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD MEN he auto-

graphed for me. I've been a fan of Philip Jose Farmer since "The Lovers" appeared in STARTLING STORIES way back when. I like his Tarzan books--all of them. (Incidentally, do you recognize "Lalila" in HADON? She's from ALLAN AND THE ICE GODS by Haggard.)"

Holmes' influences are noted in his work; he derives a great deal of his almost serialized storytelling aspect from ERB, although his hero lacks the depth of a David Innes. RED AXE should give us more insight into the Holmesian Pellucidar, which seems to have a far more alien cast than ERB ever utilized. MAHARS OF PELLUCIDAR is closer than Farmer's Opar or Edson's jungle to the world that ERB visualized, but even Holmes refrains from bringing in Burroughs' characters. In a way, it's a disappointment, because the continuation of the characters could be almost as enjoyable as the continuation of the series itself. All in all, though, MAHARS OF PELLUCIDAR is well-done escapist fare, and well worth the time of the SF reader, Burroughs fan or not.

Upcoming releases may bring about even more ERB continuations of this sort; if they all are handled as competently as the first three series have been, it should be a fitting memorial to the literary accomplishments of Edgar Rice Burroughs.



LETTER FROM JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON (undated)

"Your remembrance of Thomas Swann was moving. I'd been enjoying his poetic short stories a long while, but for some reason never picked up a novel until a relatively short time ago. I loved it and began immediately searching out other of his titles. Then, two weeks after I discover a new favorite novelist, a post card from Jerry Page informs me that the man has died, and much too soon. So I too was stunned, though not so hard as you who knew him. I don't even like to think about the fact that some of my favorite people are in their 70s and 80s and any letter could be their last. It's a bad business, dying; I wish we all didn't have to patronize.

"That article and the Vaughn Bode Index review sort of cast a gloomy shadow on this issue. Vaughn was so pleased by the idea of an index, and he didn't even get to see it. Sure are a lot of bummers in the world. This is one da Hat will never get a chance to philosophize about.

"I'm not as impressed by Terry Carr anthologies as you, though admittedly I stopped reading them quite some time ago. Damon Knight is, to me, the better editor. Knight I'd lump with Silverbird. Carr I'd lump with Conklin. (Next step down is Moskowitz or Elwood.) Knight is about the only editor who regularly features a lot of women writers. Carr has a distinct aversion to the fiction of women. ((Hmm--I'd never noticed that, and I still have qualms about accepting it--perhaps Terry would like to respond...))

"Buck Coulson & Loren MacGregor have at various times tried to convince me--and to some degree succeeded--that Laser novels, even at their worst, aren't such a bad thing. They're the Tom Swift novels of SF. I tried to read 4 different Lasers, including one of Buck's, but they were unfinishable. I don't like Tom Swift, but it's a personal preference. . . If I weren't more of a High Fantasy fan, I might even find it worth the time to find Laser's gems. I can't agree with Freas that the art is good, however. (But then, I think Frazetta, Barr and Jones do bad covers.) Good covers..I mean GREAT covers, are done by Garvasio Gallardo and David Johnston. Freas' covers really look hacked out. Frazetta is more fad-art, appallingly sexist, and often downright ugly. (Barr is more interesting, certainly better than run-of-the-mill. But he and Jones both show the Frazetta worship syndrome. All the women are broads with fat asses, all the men are stiff with sinewed thews.) I can't imagine why these guys are so highly praised and loved when Johnston & Gallardo are never even discussed. I'll admit, though, that most sf book covers don't even merit rating! At least everyone named in this paragraph deserves a close inspection."

((Frazetta and Jones--two artists I like, by the way--are very similar, certainly, but I don't really feel that George Barr should be classified in the same group. Barr has a delicacy the other two lack for the most part (although that delicacy has been moving into the forefront in Jones' more recent

work). I was much more impressed with Kelly's DAW work than his Laser work, I'll admit. And, finally, what's wrong with females with ~~fat~~ pleasantly developed backsides? While a "fat ass" might be a somewhat repulsive subject for a painting, I like the Jones female...but in fantasy art, I'm really impressed by Gallardo and LoGrippe, both of whom have a superb sense of color and layout.))

PERILOUS DREAMS, Andre Norton. (DAW #UY1237 -- \$1.25), cover by George Barr. Reviewed by Susan Biggers.

Upon reading halfway through DAW's newest Norton adventure, I became somewhat disappointed; I had eagerly begun reading PERILOUS DREAMS expecting a full-length novel, only to find that the book was composed of four short works. Granted, the novelets are related, though not with a character or characters common to all, but with a common theme. Still, when one is anticipating another of those highly entertaining Norton novels that the reader can really get into and hates to see end, a book of novelets can be a bit of a letdown.

Happily, all of Norton's renowned story-telling magic is present in abundance in PERILOUS DREAMS. The plot of each novelet concerns the dreamers of Ty-Kry and their abilities to turn dreams into reality. Parts I and II of PERILOUS DREAMS--which could almost be a novel in themselves since they comprise over half the book--are about the adventures of Tamisen, an action dreamer of the tenth level, who develops an original variation on the average action dream. Parts III and IV have entirely different characters with Ty-Kry's Hive of dreamers remaining as the only link relating the novelets.

Although it wasn't the Norton novel I was hoping for, PERILOUS DREAMS is still solid, entertaining Norton fantasy, and for those readers who like their fiction divided into segments which are easily read at convenient times, this book may be just what you've been looking for.

DEUS IRAE, Philip K. Dick & Roger Zelazny. (Doubleday -- \$5.95). Jacket by John Cayea. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

Philip Dick and Roger Zelazny have, individually, made more of a mark on SF during the 1960s than any other author with the exception of Harlan Ellison. Dick's strange quasi-reality is legendary, and every new novel he writes is an event in the field--Zelazny's blend of realism and mysticism has made him much in-demand, as well. This novel, a collaboration by the two of them, is one of a small handful of truly powerful SF novels to appear in the past decade, and it establishes a mark of quality few authors will ever match, much less surpass. This novel will most probably be 1976's Hugo winner--and deservedly so.

DEUS IRAE is a quest novel, dealing with Tibor McMaster's pilgrimage to find the true identity of Deus Irae--the man who was responsible for causing a nuclear war--in a post-holocaust world. McMasters is a limbless mural artist, and his job is to find Deus Irae, take a picture of him and then return and prepare a mural revealing the true face of the God of Wrath. Pete Sands, sent with McMasters, is of a different religious affiliation and fears that the discovery of Deus Irae might be the fulcrum to force his religion out of existence. Sands internal conflicts and McMasters selfless devotion to his given task are the integral aspects of this novel, one of the most moralistic and somber works produced by either author.

Dick and Zelazny work well together, countering any faults the other might have as the story develops, and the book is perfectly blended, revealing none of the rough edges all too often visible in a collaboration of two men with distinctive styles. There is no attempt on the part of either author to "show off" or to highlight his part in the work, and while the novel is intensely serious, there are moments of humor, farce and whimsy that make it evident that the authors are leading you into a carefully planned mood, one they are working toward at all times. DEUS IRAE is a book of paradoxes, a book of morality, a tale of the adventurous quest and a novel of characters--and it just might be the best thing either author will ever write.

LOGAN'S RUN. William F. Nolan and George C. Johnson. (Bantam #X2517 -- \$1.75). Reviewed by Cecil Hutto.

Those of you who have seen the movie made from this book, but who have not yet read the book itself, will find upon reading the first few pages that the film follows the popular trend of SF movies based on another source in that it is only "loosely" based on the novel. Indeed, besides the most basic storyline, the only similarity between the novel and the movie is a few characters' names. There is even small resemblance between the personalities, motives and goals of the few characters of the book who are depicted in the film. But the film was excellent; but the book was excellent--but they are different.

The book, of course, goes into much more detail, especially concerning how the world has gotten into a state that anyone who reaches the age of 21 is systematically murdered. It began with a youth uprising against a constitutional amendment restricting the number of children a couple could have. After this disorganized and improbable revolution had taken over the country, a young, persuasive man raises this solution to limit the population and, more as a coincidental side-effect than anything, insure that the young will never again be trod upon by the old. The book attempts to explain why years later at the time this novel depicts the people are still falling for this line expounded by this man who was the

first to voluntarily go to Sleep upon reaching that, until recent years, all-important age. A possible theory is put forward in the very first paragraphs of the story:

"You know how it is, citizen," he said. "Nobody feels like he's done it all. All the traveling, all the girls, all the living. I'm no different from anybody else. I'd like to live to be 25, 30... but it just isn't going to happen. And I can accept that. I've got no regrets. None to linger on, I mean. I've lived a good life. I've had my share and nobody can say that Sawyer is a whiner."

Is simple social pressure of the peer group strong enough to force millions of people to unquestioningly walk to their death. Many do not, hence the existence of the DS men, the government hired guns to seek out and murder those who Run-- a man such as Logan, trained since 14 to kill Runners, now 21 and running.

DS Men--Deep Sleep Men--Sandmen--totally dedicated to the system, exhaustively trained in their art, and equipped with specially designed pistols which will function only in the right hands, firing the Homer, which never misses and sends the Runner to a painful, screaming death. Logan is the first such ever to run.

What is it in this man's thinking that decides him to go against all his strenuous training, to decide he is nothing more than a governmental murderer, and to abandon his very way of life, his people, in fact, that which he holds most holy? Of course, he was trained to survive, to survive to kill. But what makes him different from any of the thousands of other Sandmen, those living and those who died willingly on their Lastday? A failure of the book is to show us nothing more than a few moments of inner torment in this man and no explanation of his extraordinary decision. The movie avoids this entirely by having him four years away from his Lastday and simply chasing Runners--not a satisfactory alteration.

But, in any case, Logan runs, with the inevitable female companion, across the continent of America, running into gypsies; a mechanical watchman; Box, an insane prisoner; Whale, equally as insane and equally a prisoner in some ways, taking him from Washington, DC, now a tropical jungle, back to his own beginnings at a Nursery, where children are kept the first seven years of their life to grow and learn what they need to know to live in the world--including when to die.

Against the training given him during the impressionable years, peer pressure, all sense of duty, patriotism and religion, Logan runs. The question of why he runs, or indeed even how he can carry with him all the indoctrination of the general populace plus the added weight of his own as a Sandman, is not answered, but the story of his run is filled sufficiently with enough excitement and enough characterization to make taking the trip with him a rewarding experience. Seeing the movie is not a substitute--to get the full impact, you must read Nolan and Johnson's novel--it's worth the time and money.

LITTLE FUZZY and FUZZY SAPIENS. H. Beam Piper.
(Ace #s 48490 & 26190 -- \$1.25 and \$1.50, respectively)
Covers by Michael Whelan. Reviewed by Janet Davis.

Fuzzies are sweet, charming, bright little creatures who live on the planet Zarathustra--or are they, really? Jack Holloway, who discovers Little Fuzzy and his furry friends, insists that they are more than just bright little animals; they are sapient beings. Jack's friends and scientists agree, and go to court to prove it. The problem: the chartered Zarathustra Company, which owns and profitably exploits the bountiful planet, is chartered on the assumption that Zarathustra is uninhabited by sapient beings. Thus, they would greatly prefer the Fuzzies to be merely animals. The other problem: by what standards does one define sapience? Fuzzies show independent thought, make and use tools, and bury their dead. But they have fur, they don't build fires like other sapient beings, and they have no apparent language.

For the reader of solid, well-written SF, LITTLE FUZZY is a delight to read, a book noted for its compassionate portrayal of an alien race. The contrast between the delicate happiness of the Fuzzies and the harsh, uncaring human race is powerful and makes LITTLE FUZZY a successful and provocative novel.

The sequel, FUZZY SAPIENS (formerly THE OTHER HUMAN RACE), picks up in the aftermath of the court battle. The Company no longer owns Zarathustra, and Fuzzy-friends are setting up a government (which is no easy task). But the scientists discover that Fuzzies cannot replenish their race. Meanwhile, Fuzzy-friends are finding that there exists a powerful group of enemies who have developed a black market for kidnapped Fuzzies. Relying on the background he created in the first book, Piper has presented a taut, suspenseful sequel that is as well-written as LITTLE FUZZY--an attribute all too few sequels have.

LETTER FROM DON D'AMMASSA

7-28-76

An enjoyable issue of FR this time around. I was curious to see what opinions of Jimmy Carter would emerge in fan-zines from the South, particularly yours since you're from Georgia. I'm very much afraid that Jimmy Carter is almost certainly going to be the next President. I don't really have anything against the man, but it bothers me that he got so far after saying so little. Not that any politician says much. But I really have no idea which way he'll jump on most issues, and with most other politicians of national stature, I at least have some glimmering of how he'll react. On the other hand, I can't stand Ford at all, and Reagan scares the pants off me, so maybe we'll all be pleasantly surprised.

((Carter's original lead has been fading quickly, according to national polls, and I think that his showing in the upcoming debates should reveal him as a wishy-washy confused candidate who has no idea what he's going to do, just an overwhelming desire to become a President. I don't mind the idea of another four years of Gerald Ford, but I wish we had been given more of a choice--I don't feel that I'm truly represented by any presidential aspirant.))

"I don't agree that the FAAN awards are ineffective as an alternative to the Hugo, though having been presented with one last week, I suppose I'm prejudiced. But I'll tell you right now that if I could trade my FAAN in for a Hugo, I wouldn't do it.

((I still feel that the FAAN Awards are controlled by too small a group of people to allow them any semblance of true fannish representation--nonetheless, congratulations on your win!))

"I enjoy your reviews, as always, and was particularly amused by something you said in your review of AND STRANGE AT ECBATAN THE TREES. In correspondence with Mike Bishop, I mentioned that I thought "Blooded on Arachne" would have been a far better story if he had brought out more of the details of the planet's culture. His reply was, more or less, that those details might have interested me, but they hadn't interested him. Thinking about that, I was forced to admit the validity of his point, and I suspect he may make some variation of the same statement to you. So it goes.

"As to Laser Books: I don't recall saying that all of the Laser books were terrible. ((You didn't, but others did.)) They're not. I've read at least two that were competent novels--both by Gordon Eklund, and I suspect that some of the ones I have yet to read will turn out to be as pleasant. But the general philosophy behind the Laser line, as reported in a variety of places by now, is that writing is a job, not an art. That books should be tailored to the lowest common denominator of reader's tastes, thus reinforcing those tastes and destroying the impetus for upgrading them... I have no intention of giving a book a bad review because of its publisher. On the other hand, in any discussion of the goals and methods of publishers, I'll feel free to attack Laser's philosophy with tooth and nail. The fact that they may present an average quality line, or even above average, does not detract from the venial nature of their marketing approach.

"...Disagreed strongly with your review of CLONED LIVES, by the way. I thought the characterization was the outstanding part of the novel, in fact, that if anything it was too strong for the plot. Oh well, to each his own."

((After hearing Kelly Freas' proselytizing for Laser at two cons, I recommend his opinions in the letter in FR7 be recognized as those of a man who's making a good deal of money from

the company in question and certainly doesn't want to see that income falter. I suspect that Kelly's vested interest in the success of the company makes him eager to counter the complaints that Laser is publishing an inferior product; while I agree with his basic idea, I find his claims of some high quality level for Laser Books an unjustified one, and I've found his recommended-reading list of those Laser books he considers above-average to generally reflect the qualities of SF I find outmoded and/or inferior. Kelly's a good artist, but I can see that his literary tastes are in opposition to mine.))

THE CITY 2000 A.D., Ralph Clem/Martin Harry Greenberg/Joseph Olander, editors. (Fawcett #2-2892-4 -- \$1.95)
Cover by Kresek. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

Science Fiction has an overwhelming amount of literature in the genre that deals with life in the cities of the future; from the mechanized, wondrous cities of "Twilight" to the dreary, deadly metropolises of S TAND ON ZANZIBAR, all aspects of the future city have been explored. Clem/Greenberg/Olander have taken a large number of the shorter visions, put them in groups of similar-theme stories, prefaced each section with a brief essay, and this book is the final product.

THE CITY 2000 A.D. is an anthology packed with ideas and visions, and the editors have done a fine job of choosing and classifying the stories; the only real problem with the book is that it accents the science fiction tendency to take today's problems and extrapolate them into some horrendous (and often embarrassingly ridiculous) future situation. In many cases, the problems have eliminated themselves, making the "relevant" SF story ludicrous in the present day.

THE CITY 2000 A.D. has its share of these failures, but it also presents a great deal of intriguing speculation and truly strong story-telling. For the fan of theme anthologies, this book is well worth the price in both entertainment and as a stepping-stone for interesting speculation.

THE BICENTENNIAL MAN and other stories. Isaac Asimov (Doubleday, \$6.95), Jacket by Peter Rauch. Reviewed by Susan Biggers.

To those not well acquainted with, or somewhat forgetful of, the immense popularity in the publishing field of anything Isaac Asimov writes, THE BICENTENNIAL MAN would seem to be either (a) just another gimmick in the long list of items produced to "celebrate" the "Buycentennial" or (b) a collection of new Isaac Asimov stories with artistic integrity behind them as the only motive. However, upon closer examination of the acknowledgements page, one readily finds that neither (a) nor (b) apply, as all of the stories have seen print elsewhere, some as long ago as 1969. This fact does not mar the enjoyability of the stories themselves, though.

The majority of the stories in THE BICENTENNIAL MAN are about robots, and the most outstanding in the collection is the story from which the book gets its title. It's the story of Andrew, a robot who fought numerous battles trying to win human acceptance and equality, and only succeeded after making the ultimate sacrifice. Second best was "That Thou Art Mindful of Him," a story about the difficulties of distinguishing between man and robot as more improvements are made in the robotic design and behavior so that robots begin to resemble man. On approximately equal footing were: "The Winnowing," a tale of overpopulation and the measures men will take to solve the food shortage; "Death at the Tercentennial" concerns the United States' 300th birthday on which a Presidential assassination and subsequent Presidential replacement by a robot double occurs, and of which no one is aware; and "Feminine Intuition," the oldest story in the collection and one in which the notorious Dr. Susan Calvin makes an appearance at U.S. Robots and Mechanical Men, Inc., to help solve the mystery left behind by the death of the company's first successful feminine robot.

Isaac Asimov (and robot) lovers everywhere should be greatly pleased with THE BICENTENNIAL MAN, for not only do the stories provide a high level of entertainment, but the short introductions and afterwords accompanying each story are almost as much fun to read as the stories themselves.

H.P. LOVECRAFT: SELECTED LETTERS V (1934-37). Edited by August Derleth and James Turner (Arkham House -- \$12.50)
Jacket by Rich & Gore. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

with the release of this volume, Arkham House has completed its monumental tribute to HPL as a man of letters; the final volume is also the most important, because it gives us insight into the man who was Lovecraft in his final years.

The 1934-1937 period was an active one for HPL, and the volume of letters written during this period shows that HPL was becoming less inclined to work with his fiction and more inclined to concern himself with discussions (both personal and academic) with his numerous correspondents. Derleth and Turner have done a good job of presenting a widely varied selection of letters, covering all facets of HPL's correspondence. Some have objected that the more philosophical aspects of HPL's correspondence was omitted in the fourth collection of letters; while I have no means of comparison with the actual letters themselves, I can safely assume that the greater emphasis on HPL's personal philosophies, feelings about government and capitalism, etc. is probably more in keeping with the actual tone of HPL's correspondence during these final years.

While the volume lacks the tipped-in photographs that the first three volumes had, this is the only real lessening of quality; the editing and compilation appears to be both sensible and sensitive, and this book is highly recommended.

SEAS OF ERNATHE. Jeffrey Carver. LASER #72034 -- 95¢ cover by Kelly Freas. Reviewed by Susan Biggers.

If you like your science fiction novels with happy endings, all loose ends tied off neatly, and a bit of romance thrown in for good measure, then you ought to love SEAS OF ERNATHE. If, however, you like your science fiction written with a bit more challenge to the intellect and imagination, you would be wise to pass up this novel. SEAS OF ERNATHE is one of those novels in which all the problems seem to solve themselves with little or no effort on the part of the protagonist. The setting of the novel is some time in the distant future when most of the human-colonized worlds have been destroyed in the entropy wars; the place is the planet Ernathe, a mostly-water world inhabited by the Nale'nid, an amphibious, telepathic race, and one small human colony. Ernathe just happens to be the only source of a very valuable drug, mynalar-g, whose effects enable humans to navigate starships in flux-space (virtually the same as hyper-space, I gather). The Nale'nid are harassing the humans and generally playing havoc with the production of mylanar-g. To make a long story short, one of the starpilots sent by the Cluster Council to stop the Nale'nid raids, Seth Perland, is kidnapped by the Nale'nid and after living in their undersea city and being instructed in their ways by Lo'ela, a lovely Nale'nid woman with whom (surprise!) he falls in love, discovers that the ability of the Nale'nid to appear suddenly and with no time lapse in distant places of the planet is in fact their own natural ability to travel in flux-space. With the help of Lo'ela, Seth makes peace with the Nale'nid and converts them as starpilots for the humans and everyone lives happily ever after.

SEAS OF ERNATHE is Jeffrey Carver's first novel and in the introduction Terry Carr compares his talents to those of Norton, Vance and Zelazny. While I wouldn't go quite that far, I have to admit that he has created an intriguing alien race in the Nale'nid. Carver seems to be rather weak on plot, but his creative and descriptive talents are well-developed and were able to carry off successfully what could have been a boring novel. Certainly there is room for improvement in his plot development, but once this is accomplished, Carver may very well be ranked with many of the better-known science fantasy authors.

IMPERIAL STARS. E.E. "Doc" Smith & Stephen Goldin. Pyramid #V3839 -- \$1.25. Reviewed by Frank Love.

First things first: I liked the book and I think anyone who enjoys the "spy thriller" genre will at least get a couple of hours pleasant release from it. However, there are one or two things you might want to know before laying out your buck and a quarter.



For instance... one might be justified in assuming that Doc Smith had a major hand in composing this work, seeing as how his name, in flaming red letters, dwarfs Stephen Goldin's by-line. I don't think so, though. At a guess, I'd say that all Smith contributed was the idea and a pretty sketchy background. Two things seem to support this: (1) the technical element that was always a major feature of any Smith story is virtually nonexistent here. The empire does not use Smith's "inertialess drive;" instead, it uses a sub-ether drive, which is mentioned twice, without explanation. In fact, there is no explanation of technological devices or background--it's just there to be utilized. (2) Smith never blinked at killing a few villains in a good cause but it was always in a life-or-death situation. The characters in IMPERIAL STARS (the d'Alamberts) kill even when it's unnecessary. For example, Yvette d'Alambert uses a blaster rather than a stunner (previously established in this book as existing) to dispose of an enemy operating a control board, even though (sensibly) he was the one man who could give them a great deal of information about the enemy's defenses. The d'Alamberts also use a truth drug called Nitrobarb which kills about half the people it's administered to (after they tell the truth, of course). This antiquated drug was left in, even though we've surpassed it in potency and safety today. Naturally, the d'Alamberts don't use Nitrobarb on good people.

I'd say it's a fairly safe assumption that Goldin wrote this almost entirely on his own--for the person who wants to read Doc Smith, I recommend you start on any of the several books he wrote by himself--all are readily available.

Nonetheless, despite my minor cavils above, this book is fairly tight in its background and well written enough so that the seams don't show--much. If you want adventure, give it a try.

LETTER FROM MICHAEL BISHOP

(7-14-76)

"Your review of ECBATAN strikes me as completely fair. (does a writer ever think a largely unfavorable review unfair? Well, now that I think of it, I do believe that one or two reviewers were kinder to FUNERAL than the book deserved. So much for self-conscious rhetorical questions.) I'm glad to see that Richard Lupoff liked ECBATAN, too, and it may interest him to know that the book will have a "less cumbersome" title when it appears next year in paperback from DAW books. I'm betting on something like A SEASON IN ONGLADRED or the Burroughs-imitative UNDER THE SHATTERED MOONS.

"I like my original title very much, but it has some obvious disadvantages: few people can remember it (my own agent is one of those who admits she has to look it up every time she wishes to refer to the book), and more than one reviewer has apparently felt it excessively fussy, even pretentious. I don't think there was a pretentious intent behind it, however; the title still sounds appropriately evocative to me, as well as being, in the context of MacLeish's poem, thematically in line with the concerns of my little book. Overall response has been lukewarm, I think--but I'm very happy with what I've done here, and, as a rule, I'm harsher on myself than are the reviewers. An indication of either self-knowledge or delusion? I'll leave that to you.

"I appreciate the kind words for George R.R. Martin. Let me put in a plug for him, if I can. His story in Damon Knight's ORBIT 18, "Meathouse Man," is a beautiful piece extrapolating subtly from the idea of the synthabrain, as first introduced in the ANALOG story "Override." To me "Meathouse Man" indicates a considerable growth both stylistically and thematically in Martin's work, and I hope some of FR's readers will look for ORBIT 18 just to read it.

And, George, if you're out there, maybe you also ought to know that my wife, who seldom reads sf, recently suffered a fit of insomnia and reached for Wollheim's latest best-of-the-year anthology to occupy the long hours after midnight. She read your and Lisa Tuttle's "The Storms of Windhaven" and told me in the morning that she thought it was the best novella-length story she has read since Le Guin's "The Word for World is Forest." (I am assuming she exempted a couple of my own novellas from consideration. Hmm. I'd better not ask her.) Anyway, I hope that Martin's new position in Dubuque doesn't make untoward demands on his writing time."

((Say, I wonder what the chances are of getting Jeri to review DAW's 1976 WORLD'S BEST?....))

((George Martin attended Rivercon in Louisville at the end of July and, in conversation, he mentioned that his new novel was completed and, I think, already slated for publication; this excites me as a reader, because it's a difficult

transition from short-fiction writer to novel-writer, and many authors would rather continue doing the same thing than expand into the equally challenging and demanding area of full-length fiction.))

THE LAST CELT. Glenn Lord. (Don Grant -- \$20.00), color jacket by Marcus Boas. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

For a good number of years now, fans of Robert E. Howard have eagerly awaited the publication of Glenn Lord's bibliography of REH. Now, the wait is over and the finished product is available--and for all its worth, it's just a bit disappointing.

Like all Don Grant products, THE LAST CELT is an impressive book, rich in appearance and published in a limited edition that is guaranteed to sell out very quickly; and as a reference work, it is a handy volume, presenting 416 pages of valuable information, reprints, etc. The index is the most detailed listing of REH's work to be presented thus far, and it's a tribute to the patience and determination of Glenn Lord that all this information was compiled.

Biographically, the book is somewhat of a disappointment; there is no definitive biography, as I had hoped for--instead, the 102 pages of biographical information are reprints of autobiographies by Howard, tributes and memoria by friends of REH, etc. This is a let-down, for it seems fair to assume that, with Lord's access to the REH papers, THE LAST CELT could have been a superb narrative of Howard's life, filled with insight; suffice to say it's far less than that, and the material is, at times, redundant and superficial.

The bibliography, superb as it is, suffers somewhat due to the cutoff date of December, 1973; the REH revival of the past two years is thus unmentioned, and it seems like an addendum could have brought the book a bit more up to date. The job is left over for another book and/or another bibliographer, however.

And finally, the Boas jacket itself is less than I've come to expect on a Grant publication; the canvas texture remains dominant enough to distract from the jacket, and the painting appears to have been too small to adequately serve as a wrap-around cover, necessitating the double-printing of a thin strip of the back segment's leftmost edge--a practice both distracting and detracting on a book of this quality.

Perhaps the real question with THE LAST CELT is not "is this a valuable book?"--it is--but instead, it's "is this book worth \$20?" To be fair, the lack of a definitive biography and recent REH material in the index is a detriment to the book, and it makes the \$20 investment a cause for serious deliberation by the casual fan of REH. But the REH collector will find it a great aid to collecting. Decide for yourself.

PRINCE OF ANNWN. Evangeline Walton (Ballantine #24223 -- \$1.50), cover by David Johnston. Reviewed by Jessica Amanda Salmonson.

The most innocent and appealing of Evangeline Walton's otherwise brooding tetralogy is *PRINCE OF ANNWN*. It's a tale of one hero's friendship with Death and his strange adventures and trials as Death's own Champion. It is the tale of love between a mortal and a goddess and the treachery of immortals against a disapproved union. It's one of the most poetic novels I've read in a long time, filled with humor and haunting, imaginative sights and deeds. In some ways a simple heroic fantasy tale, it sets the stage for the more complex novels that follow, which together form a wondrous retelling of the Mabinogian.

What makes fantasy exceptional to me is internal logic--a set of rules possibly contrary to known physics that are never violated within the world created by the author. In Walton's Wales, every impossible happening is logical and consistent to her universe.

The importance of a head is soon realized in this tale. Even severed, the head has mighty power, and this is developed further in later novels. Gruesome as are some of the descriptions and deeds of conscious, undead heads, there is little sensationalized terror in their existence. The heads become, in fact, minor characters to the reader, not mere tools for an author to present as bizarre. This is Ms. Walton's most subtle touch, her greatest ability--to present a fantasy in such a manner that it becomes real and beautiful rather than just odd and eerie. Due to this, *PRINCE OF ANNWN* is an outstanding novel by an outstanding author.

LETTER FROM HARRY WARNER:

7-16-76

"...I doubt if there's much chance that the major parties will ever nominate for President anyone who isn't in the general Carter pattern; it seems more important today to get a candidate who looks good on television and can handle himself with dignity before the camera and doesn't have any strong liberal or conservative tendencies; than to look for the man with principles, brains and executive ability. And yet I suspect that the American people are in a mood to elect a maverick. If the maverick somehow gets on the final ballot, I hope he doesn't turn out to be a Hitler-type individualist.

"Your page about Thomas Burnett Swann is very well done. I'm thankful fanzines published a considerable body of praise for his work, a bibliography, and other material during the last few years of his life, instead of following fandom's usual practice and keeping it out of print until the author dies.

"The survey of the Lovecraft correspondence volumes reminds me that nobody seems to have begun propagandizing for similar attention to the letters of other pros. It's doubtful if any other fantasy writer will have five volumes devoted to his correspondence. ((If any author does, you can rest assured it'll be REHoward, what with the recent flood of Howard material and buyers for same.)) But surely there must be some others, living and dead, whose letter-writing justifies at least one volume. John W. Campbell, Jr., is the most obvious candidate for this honor. Many of his authors must have saved correspondence from him, if carbon copies don't exist in the magazine or family files. I don't see any reason why an author should be dead before his correspondence is collected in print. A live subject for such a collection would probably prevent some interesting letters from being published, but he would be able to provide additional information and commentary on what was chosen for publication, so this would sort of even up the disadvantage with an advantage.

"I feel inclined to side with the Harlequin people in this grumbling over the Laser editions. Some youngsters when they discover science fiction are equipped by intellect and nature to grapple with difficult, thoroughly adult stories. Others are better off if they can ease into this type of fiction gradually. The prozines used to provide plenty of literary fare for this group, but recently there hasn't been much to cater to them. Maybe the whole Star Trek phenomenon is related to this situation... If some thoroughly mature people continue to prefer SF on the Laser level, instead of moving on to Delany and Silverberg, I don't see how the SF field is harmed...

"...At first glance, I thought the cover was sort of sloppy in execution. But the more I look at it, the more I like it and the more inclined I am to think the artist did it this way for a purpose. Most of the interior illos are pretty good, too. I'll never get used to the fact that almost every fanzine being published these days has one or more first-rate artists contributing to it. There was a time in fandom when there was a first rate artist or two in fandom, period."

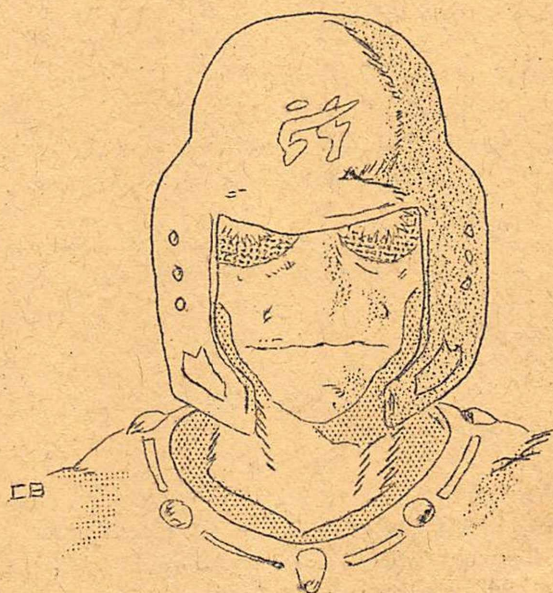
THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #5. Terry Carr, editor. (Ballantine #25064 -- \$1.95) Reviewed by Susan Biggers.

Once again Terry Carr has proven that he is a master at picking solidly entertaining SF. His fifth edition of the year's best science fiction contains some of the most enjoyable stories I've had the pleasure of reading in a long time. Carr, as an anthologist, has never let me down, and I've come to await eagerly the appearance of the newest edition of *THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR*, because I know that

I will like at least 99% of the stories he has chosen.

My favorite of the anthology was the George Martin/Lisa Tuttle collaboration, "The Storms of Windhaven." This is an intriguing story and one into which a lot of symbolism can be read. It is about the fight of Maris, a young girl of Windhaven, to abolish the flyers' tradition; that of handing down the set of wings made from the membrane-ships in which the first settlers of Windhaven arrived to the first-born male in each flyer's family. Aside from the obvious resemblance to the Women's Liberation Movement, the story is a very successful science fictional retelling of an individual's pursuit of happiness and freedom to be what he wants to be. I was left wondering about one thing, though, at the end of the novella, and that was which author was responsible for what. I suspect that George Martin did most of the writing, while Lisa Tuttle supplied the story idea; nonetheless, this was one of the outstanding writings of 1975, and I will be greatly surprised if it doesn't win at least one award.

Coming in in second place on my list of favorites was "The Silent Eyes of Time" by Algis Budrys; this was a surprise to me because I didn't expect to like it. The story came across as being written by someone with an insight into the corporate world of big business. It is the story of Clinton Gallard, ex-president of AWC Electronics, who has come out of retirement to solve the problems created by the invention of a time machine by one of the company's employees. Budrys has created a very strong, very impressive character in Clint Gallard--I can see Charlton Heston playing the part--and his presentation of the more practical problems the invention of a time machine would cause showed that a great deal of thought and understanding of the business world went into the writing of this story.



Two stories, both by the same author, tied for third place favorite. "Retrograde Summer" and "In the Bowl" by John Varley provided the best pure entertainment, adventure fiction in the anthology. Carr tells us that Varley is a long-time Heinlein fan and I would have to cast my vote for him as Heinlein's only true successor. It is really gratifying to read the stories of a new writer who possesses the high degree of inventiveness and the story-telling ability that John Varley has. I can't wait to read a novel written by him. If RED PLANET and HAVE SPACE SUIT WILL TRAVEL by Heinlein bring back fond memories, try John Varley--he's every bit as good as Heinlein ever was and perhaps better.

Three of my least favorite stories in the anthology were "The Hero as Werewolf" by Gene Wolfe, "Clay Suburb" by Robert F. Young, and "Sail the Tide of Mourning" by Richard A. Lupoff. All three were just a bit too obscure and murky for my tastes. I like my stories with plenty of background so that I can tell where the author is coming from. These 3 stories read as though they were individual chapters pulled at random from a novel.

The rest of the stories were all on pretty much equal footing as far as entertainment output goes. "Doing Lennon" by Gregory Benford started off nicely, but foundered about two-thirds of the way through and developed into one of those murky stories I dislike. The outstanding thing about "Croatoan" by Harlan Ellison--other than the author's name--is the Ellison style of writing; the theme--that of a second city existing within the sewer systems of any large city--is more akin to a "Creepy" or "Eerie" story than science fiction. But then, who ever said Harlan Ellison wrote sf, anyway?

I am not much of a Le Guin fan, and "The New Atlantis" really didn't impress me. The story of an Earth depleted down to the last dregs and with new continents rising from the ocean's depths would have made a good novel, but as a short story it was not developed nearly as much as it should have been. "Down to a Sunless Sea," begun by Cordwainer Smith and completed by his wife, was also rather obscure. However, take this opinion with a grain of salt, as this was my first Smith story; for someone who has been a follower of Smith's own particular future world stories, this could be every bit as good as the earlier ones. "Child of All Ages" by P.J. Plauger was the most outstanding of this last group of stories in the anthology; it's the story of a little girl of about fourteen who has been alive for approximately 2400 years, but never grows beyond the age of an adolescent girl. Plauger's insight into the real problems of being immortal make this story a thought-provoking one for all of us who have wished to live forever.

I highly recommend THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #5 as one of the most rewarding books anyone could read. It introduced me to some new authors and some old ones I had thus far overlooked, and it made me want to read more of their works. I don't think that, after reading, anyone would consider their time wasted with this anthology.

S.F. AS BUSINESS

HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS. Brian Aldiss & Harry Harrison. Harper & Row -- \$7.95. Jacket by Randall Richmond.
THE CRAFT OF SCIENCE FICTION. Reginald Bretnor, ed. Harper & Row -- \$9.95.
SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK, REVISED. L. Sprague & Catherine C. de Camp. Owlswick Press, \$8.50. Jacket by Don Simpson. Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

For many writers, science fiction is very serious business, indeed; while relatively few make their full-time living at it, it has added to the incomes of thousands of people, and the opening of new markets makes it probable that even more will enter the field in the next few years. And for every writer, there's probably two or three would-be writers who'd like to get into the field if they only knew what to do. And now, there's a new sub-genre of SF-related writing, the group of books that tells you (a) how certain big-name authors did it, or (b) the techniques recommended for you to become one of the aforementioned big-name authors.

Harrison and Aldiss have teamed up to edit a massive collection of biographical information on six SF authors--Silverberg, Bester, Harrison, Knight, Pohl and Aldiss--that is without a doubt the most engrossing reading in the SF-related non-fiction field to be published this year. In addition to the biographies, though, this book offers a "how we work" section that gives would-be writers something to pattern themselves after. While every author may not want to start writing at midnight, as Frederik Pohl recommends, or derive his titles from the running heads of Day's INDEX TO SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINES, there are a number of items in here that might save would-be writers a great deal of trial-and-error; for instance, I note that more and more authors are going back to handwritten first drafts, simply because you can carry a steno pad with you and write whenever you have spare time, while you might not be able to set up a typewriter just anywhere.

The real purpose of HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS (and certainly everyone realizes that the title is derived from an earlier non-fiction work by Kingsley Amis, NEW MAPS OF HELL), though, is to present biographical information. Not cold, hard statistics in resume form, though, but autobiographical information written with all the style and finesse that made these six men recognized in the SF field.

The book has one outstanding piece, though, and that's Robert Silverberg's "Sounding Brass, Tinkling Cymbal," which demonstrates just how fine an author Silverberg is. More than anyone else in this collection, Silverberg has revealed himself as he would reveal a character in one of

his novels. Everyone I've talked to has seen a great deal of himself or herself in Robert Silverberg as presented in this piece--it's odd that one of his finest works should be a presentation of himself, but it's true. The same piece was published in a recent issue of Andy Porter's ALGOL, and everyone should be sure to read it in one place or the other.

The other five pieces lack the depth and color of Silverberg's; in an autobiographical collection, you expect no real stand-outs, and when one appears, it dwarfs its fellows tremendously. Silverberg does this; and no matter how successfully Bester, Harrison, Knight, Pohl and Aldiss may tell us about themselves, they've been surpassed.

Reginald Bretnor's hefty 320 page CRAFT OF SCIENCE FICTION is a far handier book for the hopeful author; it presents a series of fifteen "how-to" articles by fifteen experts in the field on which they write. Subdivided into three main sections--"The Science Fiction Spectrum and Its Sources," "The Parameters of Creativity," and "Trade Secrets," this is a specialtybook that offers the reader fifteen very special views of particular areas and/or problems in writing SF or science fantasy. Only one piece--Harlan Ellison's section on writing for television--has little relation to the theme, and it offers such a wealth of information on its subject that it's hard to complain too much (after all, teevee is a market that pays far more than SF). There are no real highlights in this book--everyone has one thing to do, and everyone does it well. Probably the two sections that need more referral than any others, though, would be Pournelle's piece on constructing believable societies (so many writers fail here) and Frank Herbert's "Men on Other Planets."

THE CRAFT OF SCIENCE FICTION is a high priced volume, but the basic idea is that careful application and reference to this book, along with a good bit of talent, might make this ten dollar investment pay off many times over.

But when it comes to a solid, well-written reference for the up-and-coming author who wants a little assistance, there is nothing that can be more useful than the de Camps' SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK, REVISED. This book is updated from the 1953 edition; while I know nothing of the first edition of the book, I can attest to the value of this second printing from Owlswick.

In short, SFH,R tells you almost everything you need to know on how to establish yourself as a writer. To be sure, the book has sections on how to envision your future world, how to plot your story, etc., but this is where many such handbooks on writing give up; de Camp and de Camp have gone farther and present invaluable information on keeping records, publicizing

yourself in your area, author/agent relationships, author/publisher relationships, etc.

Looking through de Camp & de Camp's effort, it becomes obvious that this truly is THE Science Fiction Handbook. Naturally, it doesn't guarantee to make any reader an overnight success in the field--it begins with the assumption that you have a desire and talent in the writing field. But if you start with that, then SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK, REVISED, can probably furnish you with all the rest of the information you need.

LETTER FROM FRANK BELKNAP LONG

(8-12-76)

I intended to write weeks ago to thank you for the FR with its review of DREAMER, and the even more recent one in which you most graciously come to my defense in response to a letter from Sprague. But a half-dozen unexpected circumstances of a strain-creating nature ruled out letter-writing for quite some time. Let me say at once that Sprague is exaggerating a little when he states he wrote a mildly approving review of DREAMER for AMRA, if an understatement can be thought of as an exaggeration. It was actually a most gracious review, nine tenths highly favorable, and I told him so. But I am in entire agreement with you that there wasn't the slightest justification for making that review less harsh than it might have been if friendship had not dictated restraint in that respect. I do not believe it would have been a harsh review in any case--he really liked the book, but felt it failed to be sufficiently in accord with his own approach to HPL, and that, naturally, nettled him a little. He knows damn well, however, that I do not see eye to eye with him re many aspects of HPL. I've told him that also, and -- oh, well. There's an amusing side to all of this, and it doesn't change in the least my great admiration for Sprague's many books, and a highly valued friendship of many years standing.

"Both FRs contained an abundance of riches. What impressed me most about the reviews was the way they combine liveliness with a rare quality of thoughtful appraisal."

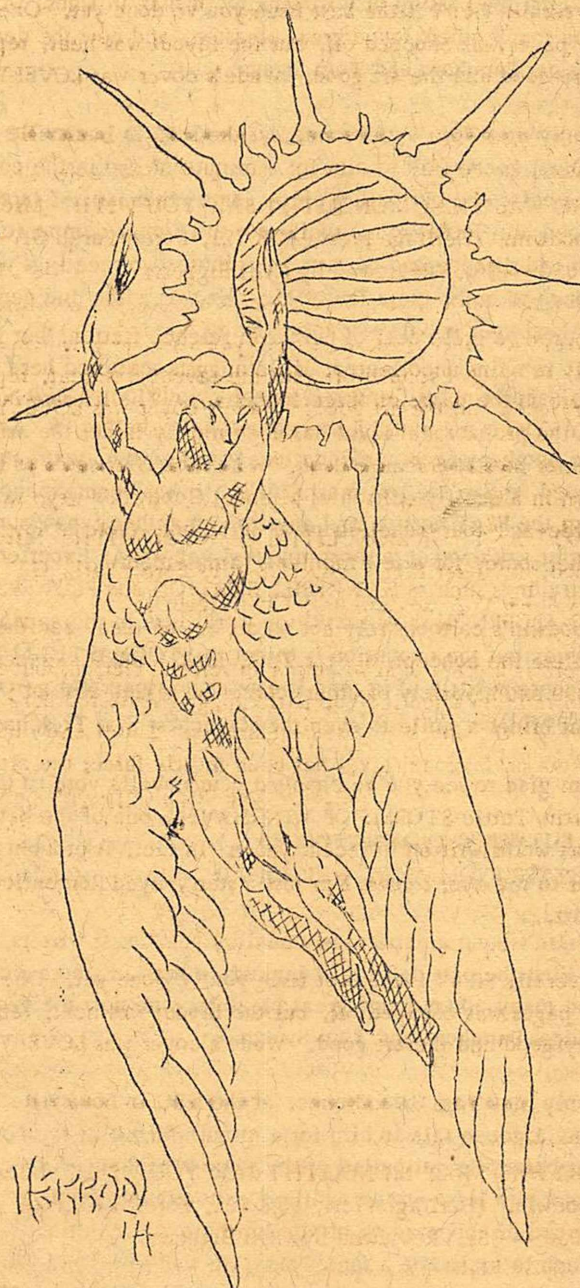
POSTCARD FROM L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

(8-4-76)

"Thanks for FR7. About the reviews of Long's book, I evidently failed to make myself clear. I wrote what I thought about the book when I reviewed it. On the other hand, when I write free copy for a fan mag, I am under no obligation to write anything at all if I don't feel like it. So if, to be honest, I should have had to either pan Long's book or to say nothing, I'd have shut up. That's the extent to which I let myself be influenced by personal considerations. If I were being paid for reviewing, that would be a different ball game. Now do I make myself clear?"

((Very clear--in fact, I can see where the idea of a possibly biased review because of friendship wasn't fully stated, merely left open to conjecture due to the statement, "But then, Frank is an old friend..." The inclusion of "but then" immediately after your summary of your review led me to believe you might be presenting that as a reason for a favorable review. And in conjunction with Frank's appraisal of your review, it becomes more obvious than ever that I simply misread what you meant.))

((When my soapbox gets a little too rickety, just kick it out from under me before I build upon it even more, okay? And the patience of your clarification is most gracious.))



LETTER FROM ANDY WHITEHEAD

(undated)

"It hasn't been a particularly healthy year for sf writers, has it? First the passing of Will Jenkins, a man in whose work I and many others found great pleasure, and now the deaths of Edgar Pangborn and Tom Swann.

"I only met Tom Swann once, at the DSC in Louisville last year. I got to talk to him for a minute or two in the con suite before he got pulled off by some other fan.. I later helped him look--to no avail--for the dinner companion who had disappeared on him. But those two meetings were enough to make me a fan of his. He was a fine and gentle man and your tribute was most fitting.

"On happier notes, I picked up the pb edition of THE STOCHASTIC MAN by Silverberg just the day before FR came in. The number of recommendations it has gotten, yours included, make me less fearful of it. It has been expanded from the F&SF version and anytime an author expands a shorter work--even a short novel--I get wary. Experiences with things such as HAWKSBILL STATION and FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON show that often works lose in the expansion. ((True, but the expansion is minor in STOCHASTIC MAN, for there is little of it, and it affects no important parts of the novel))

"I'm glad to see you've changed your novella vote to the Martin/Turtle STORMS OF WINDHAVEN, one of the better short works written in recent years. In fact, it brought a tear to my eye; I guess I'm just a starry-eyed Romantic at heart...

"Overall, FR #7 is the best issue you've done yet. One of my pages was chopped off, but the layout was neat, repro very good and the art good. Wade's cover was LOVELY!"

WHO WAS THAT MONOLITH I SAW YOU WITH? Michael Goodwin. (Heritage Press, POB 721, Forest Park, GA 30050 -- \$3). Reviewed by Cliff Biggers.

There is a great deal of humor in science fiction, but it usually remains uncollected, little nuggets scattered here and there in the pages of obscure fanzines. The literary humor on the professional level has been mostly farce; the artistic humor mostly Gahan Wilson. With Rich Garrison's publication in a quality edition of Michael Goodwin's wry, satiric three-and-four-panel-strips of SF humor, there is now another source for a few moments' amusement.

Goodwin's cartoons rely not on art but on idea, and they utilize the concepts of Star Trek, RINGWORLD, Space: 1999 and a variety of other sources for a rich dose of wit that brings a smile to even the staunchest Star Trek hater.

I'll admit, my first impression was "a Trekkie book," and I had the negative reaction many readers might expect at first--after all, the Enterprise is prominent on the cover, and in almost every strip in the book. But while the Enterprise is used, the remainder of the Star Trek universe is only touched upon--this is just SF humor, and it's totally successful. While this was originally published in a very limited distribution first edition, the Heritage edition has 12 added cartoons plus the benefit of much higher quality printing and binding. This is one publication that's well worth the \$3 price tag--it's a hefty 112 pages plus heavy covers, and I don't think you'll be disappointed in it.

THE BEST OF HARRY HARRISON. Harry Harrison. (Pocket Books 80525 -- \$1.25). Reviewed by Stan Burns.

Harry Harrison has one major drawback as a writer, which he shares with John Brunner and others. He is a wishy-washy liberal. And his fiction, at times, suffers from this malady. I am tired of writers lecturing me, telling me about all the awful things that are going to happen to me "if this goes on..." (And in case anyone thinks I'm prejudiced, this diatribe is also meant for rabid Conservatives.) SF used to be apolitical--at least to the extent that the political philosophy of the author never used to get in the way of the story. This has turned around in recent years so that the story often gets in the way of the author's pet opinions. When I read a story, I want a story, not a political tract. For that, I go directly to the source... but enough sour grapes. This

This collection of stories dates mostly from the 60s, with a handful from the 70s thrown in. It gives a good overview of Harrison's writing talents--good action/adventure stories (in the DEATHWORLD tradition) and virulent satire (like BILL THE GALACTIC HERO and STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS). It's an excellent introduction to Harrison's fiction, and would make a good gift to those who are not acquainted with it. Anyone who likes Harrison will want a copy; it's good enough to kill a couple of hours, and contains quite a few above average stories.

NOTE FROM JOE GREEN

7-13-76

"Just a brief note to acknowledge RETRO 7, with thanks. I don't have time for long letters, but if you just want appreciation... you have it!

"I don't know why I read reviews. I do not plan to buy the books, except in unusual cases. I receive more free books as an SFWA member than I can read (an excellent reason for joining, if qualified). I try to read mainstream, and I read other fanzines... yet I usually read FR cover-to-cover the same day it comes in!..."



Some faneditors just have to prove what a top quality product they can turn out; this past month has brought two examples of this kind of fanzine, the one we all wish we could produce, and wonder how the editors can afford to. The most impressive is definitely Harry Morris' NYCTALOPS #11/12 (\$4 : 500 Wellesley S.E., Albuquerque, NM 87106). The fact that Harry takes pride in his product shows in every aspect, from the four-color front cover by British artist Jim Pitts to the incredible volume of material relating to weird fiction/fantasy to be found inside. I was particularly interested in the section of the fanzine devoted to Donald Sidney-Fryer's SONGS & SONNETS ATLANTIAN; there is a positively overwhelming volume of critical, background and related material to be found in the section devoted to this work--and the reduced type makes the 122 pages more-than-ample reading for the money. If you can only afford one fanzine this month, get NYCTALOPS #11/12 from Harry Morris, Jr.; of interest to me, in particular, was Joe Moudry's "Three Approaches to 'The Fall of the House of Usher'", reprinted from an apazine--this is an excellent piece, and I'm glad it got full-scale attention.

And what better companion volume could there be for NYCTALOPS than the sf-oriented ALGOL from Andy Porter (POB 4175, New York, NY 10017 -- \$1.50). The latest issue, #26, is a highly polished magazine, highlighted by an interview with Samuel Delany that makes interesting reading; and unlike earlier impressions I had drawn, I must admit that ALGOL manages to show a good deal of fannishness and editorial presence in Andy's writing, giving it a nice, well-rounded, (dare I say it?) fannish feel that I had found lacking in earlier issues I had seen. Does ALGOL look professional? Certainly it does--but wouldn't we all like to if we could afford it? This is also an excellent buy for the cost, and I recommend it to the sercon-oriented sf fan.

For those of you who find fannish writing more to your liking, though, Frank Denton's ASHWING #19 might be what you're looking for--refreshing writing in a low-key zine. While I find occasional pieces in ASHWING that are, to me, dull & unnecessary, friends who have borrowed the fanzine have ex-

pressed enjoyment of the same pieces--to each his own, I guess. I had little use for "Guying Manners" by Dainis Bisenieks, an article on English social history books, nor did I care for Randall Larsen's fanfiction (a personal reaction--I rarely like fanfiction), but the lettercol and the editorial were most enjoyable, and the book reviews well done and serious. If you think you'd be interested, it's available for trade from Frank (14654 8th Ave SW, Seattle WA 98166).

EFFEN ESSEF #3 (Chip Bestler & Phil Foglio, 2312 N. Clifton, Chicago IL 60614 -- \$1.50 or the usual) is an attractive fanzine that offers a wide variety of material. I don't care much for Phil's pen-and-ink work (his brushwork is much more attractive), so I feel this doesn't present his best art, but the zine is visually attractive and has a great deal of well-written material; I'm not sure about the zine being worth a buck and a half, but it's definitely worth trading or loccing.

Tony Cvetko's DIEHARD #8 (29415 Parkwood Drive, Wickliffe OH 44092 -- 75¢ or the usual) is a slim personalzine that is highlighted by an excellent Al Sirois piece on fan art. The fanzine could use a little more editorial presence and the like--it's enjoyable enough, but on a 1-to-10 scale I couldn't give it any higher than a 4.

GODLESS (Bruce Arthurs, 920 N. 82nd St., H-201, Scottsdale, AZ 85257 -- 50¢ or the usual) was recommended to me by many people, so I finally got an issue--#13--and was just a little disappointed; the zine has a lot of facetiousness to it, and the entire feel is that the zine isn't quite balanced out with anything meaty. The lettercol seems to indicate this isn't a common problem with GODLESS, though; perhaps #12 isn't indicative of the faazine overall. It's nice reading, but nothing really heavy.

One fanzine I can't recommend is JINNIA CLAN JOURNAL; there seems to be a problem with organization, and the fanzine seems to be a totally thrown-together batch of comics material, SF material, etc, with no editing to speak of. The latest issue, V3#6, reflects a lot of this disorganization; I think careful editing and more willingness to turn down material would help the zine a lot. (c/o THE NELSON BON SOCIETY, PO Box 1367, Salem, VA 24153 -- 75¢)

Two mailman-zines showed up in our box recently; the first was Harry Morris' NOCTURNE/HAUNTER OF THE MAIL, a zine that attempts the task of listing and commenting on the incredible volume of mail Harry receives. Harry sends this to all the people listed inside, and his capsule reviews, comments, etc., make it worth acquiring. (See address under NYCTALOPS) Meanwhile, Barry Hunter's WHAT THE POSTMAN BROUGHT #3 also came in; while far briefer and less critically-oriented than Harry's zine, this is a competent listing of Barry's mail for the bi-monthly period covered,

and the handy listing of addresses, etc., makes it well worth the time it takes to drop Barry an loc, send him a fanzine, etc. Barry hopes to expand this, if his mail volume picks up--more pages and more listings will make this quite worthwhile. (B Wakefield Place, Rome GA 30161)

One of the best of the fannish fanzines is Arnie & Joyce Katz' SWOON; the fifth issue of which is available now (59 Livingston St. Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201 --\$1 or the usual). SWOON is a fine zine, full of life and a perfect reflection of the personalities of the co-editors. It's filled with hand-stencilled Ross Chamberlain illos, personal columns, humor and an excellent lettercol. I wholeheartedly recommend SWOON to everyone who enjoys well-done fannish material--this is some of the best.

Joe Siclari is publishing a fannish-history zine, FANHIS-TORICA, a treasure chest of fannish lore for those of us who weren't around for the fanzines of the fifties. Joe's first issue is devoted to Lee Hoffman, a former Georgian whose QUANDRY has become almost legendary; the fanzine abounds with fannish ~~the~~ tales, and it's some of the most interesting reading I've found in quite a while. #1 is out, and #2 is due very, very soon (POB 1343, Radio City Station, NY NY 10019 -- 50¢ for #1, 75¢ for #2). Joe will also be publishing Harry Warner's history of fandom in the fifties in a limited edition, mimeographed book form; this may be out already, and it's available for \$8 from Joe.

Ross Pavlac, an active Columbus fan whose AVENGING AARVARK'S AERIE has been appearing in the apa we were formerly the OEs of, MYRIAD, has converted the zine into a small personalzine with #8; AAA is a blending of natter, rumor, news, con reports and reviews packed into an 18 page format, and Ross' light, refreshing writing makes the zine enjoyable. I can't say too much for the reviews Ross does this time--too coy to do anything for me, I fear, as if he wanted to turn a phrase well more than he wanted to make any real statements about the book--but the zine is enjoyable overall, and promises a lot if Ross can keep this quality (4654 Tamarack Blvd, C-2, Columbus OH 43229 -- you can get this for loc, trade, whim, etc., so you might write and request a copy).

And this is it for yet another issue of FR (or, as Taral Wayne MacDonald called it, FRE. That nickname impressed me when I saw it, but Susan isn't too fond of it); we went a bit longer than I'd anticipated, but we're pretty much on schedule, which is good. Next issue should be out about the first week in November, and it may be a little smaller than this one--in more ways than one, since we've toyed with the idea of doing FR in 5.5 X 8.5 wraparound size, and we can't make up our minds on which format to use yet--simply because this is a lot of material when you micro-climate. Look for it in about two months, then!



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