Solaris

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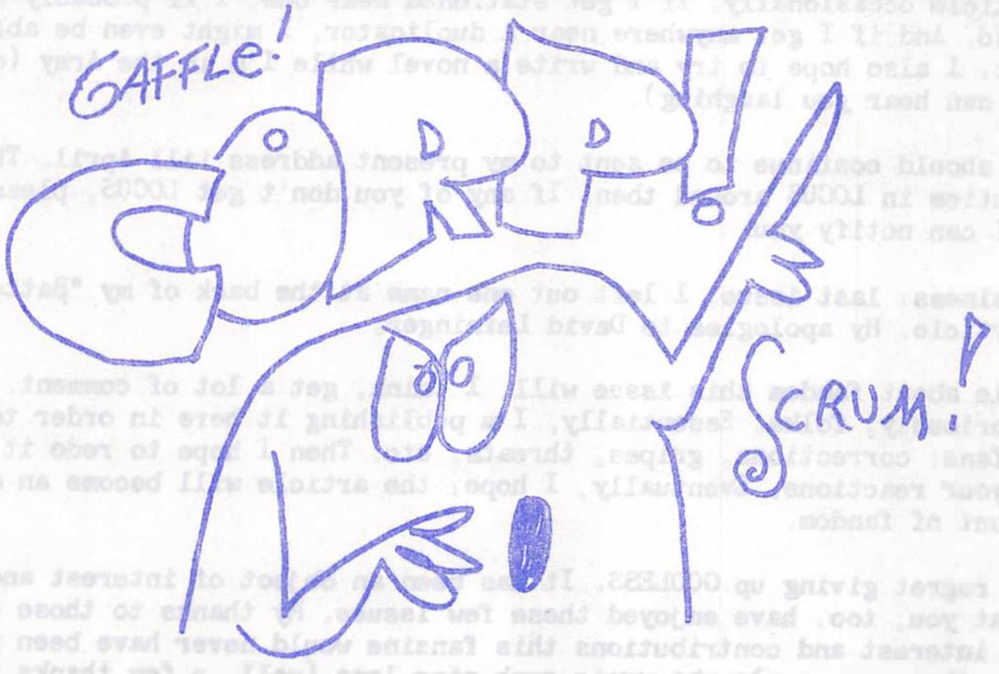
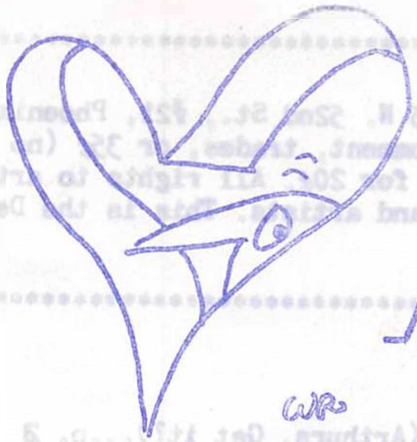




The King in Flux

by B. D. Arthurs

This is the second and last issue of GODLESS.

Before anyone shouts, "Gafia! Run for your lives!" let me say that I give up GODLESS with regret. The simple reason that I am giving up GODLESS is that I have enlisted in the Army and leave for basic training January 24, 1972.

As to why I decided to join the Army, I have thought about how to express it for many weeks, and have decided that the reasons are so multitudinous and/or personal that I cannot accurately express myself in the limited space available here. Certainly my draft lottery number of 32 was an important influence. I almost certainly would have had to go sometime, so it is probably better to go now, when I'm fairly enthusiastic about it.

The reactions I've gotten are very strange, though. Almost everyone who has not had military experience has given out with a flat "You'll hate it!" while those with service behind them have said, "You'll hate it! But it'll be good for you." Fool that I am, I'll probably end up enjoying it.

As for fanac, I hope to keep up with it as much as possible; writing letters, perhaps an article occasionally. If I get stationed near one, I'll probably show up at a con or two. And if I get anywhere near a duplicator, I might even be able to put out a one-shot. I also hope to try and write a novel while I'm in the Army (okay, rich brown, I can hear you laughing).

Any mail should continue to be sent to my present address till April. There should be a notice in LOCUS around then. If any of you don't get LOCUS, please drop me a card so I can notify you.

On to business: last issue, I left out one name at the back of my "βattern and Plagiarism" article. My apologies to David Leininger.

My article about fandom this issue will, I think, get a lot of comment. Don't take it too seriously, folks. Essentially, I'm publishing it here in order to get the reactions of fans; corrections, gripes, threats, etc. Then I hope to redo it, taking into account your reactions. Eventually, I hope, the article will become an accurate and true account of fandom.

Again, I regret giving up GODLESS. It has been an object of interest and fun for me. I hope that you, too, have enjoyed these few issues. My thanks to those people without whose interest and contributions this fanzine would never have been possible. Thanks also to the many people who wrote such nice locs (well, a few thanks too to those who wrote not-so-nice locs). Goodbye.

The Fan in the High Castle

by Alex ~~Vitek~~ Vitek

He Traveleth to Noreascon

After months of absolutely no planning, the night before had arrived. (Only two days before, though, we had changed the departure time so as to leave six or seven hours earlier - that was the only planning we had done.) We (myself and wife, along with two friends) put our clothes in paper bags so as to be able to distribute them in our VW without having to worry about large luggage.

The night of departure arrived, Sept. 1, 1971, and all concerned converged on the library where I work. The paper bags, boxes, cameras, tape-recorders, and miscellaneous were packed into the BEM. Included among the junk was a silk-screen, since my two passengers were planning on doing some Noreascon souvenirs, silk-screened t-shirts. So, we got the stuff in the car, which took us two hours. The time was now 10:30 P.M., and the finishing touch to the car was a silk-screened poster of the t-shirt and a small sign saying B.E.M. on the side of the car. We really set the car up for the trip. There was reflective tape on each side and front and back. We left around 11:00 P.M. and arrived approximately 2:00 P.M. Friday afternoon. Now, you may wonder why it took us so long to cover the 800 miles from Detroit, even in a VW. Well, we kept away from the X-ways, and stuck to state and country routes, looking at the small towns, the trees, and mountains.

What was great about doing it this way was the amount of time we could spend looking at the scenery. We had to pass through the Adirondacks which are beautiful mountains. The excellent part was passing through the back country of Massachusetts, and being able to see the small towns and roads which were mentioned so often by H.P. Lovecraft. Of all the little towns we saw, it is quite possible that Lovecraft never mentioned them, but I at least got an idea of the area he was talking about.

Boston is an old city, and that is apparent as soon as we entered. There is a charm and heritage to it, but as I've given the implication, cities do not enthrall me. I will say this, though, the Prudential Center, where the hotel was, is a marvelous piece of architecture. I've never seen anything quite as marvelous as that center. The hotel was great; I was at ST. Louis, and this had it beat hands down. After checking in and getting the keys to my room, my wife Loretta and I went down and checked in with the convention committee.

He Roameth the Corridors

After that we walked around so I could see who was there; other fans from across the world, and which authors were there. We came to the Huckster Room. At first I thought it was kinda small, and that there were few people who had decided to sell anything. In fact, what was being sold was comic books, both traditional and head type, along with movie stills and such. Then I found out that there were at least two other rooms, more to my liking. Here the dealers were dealing, for the most part, in SF; old pulps, the magazines and paperbacks and hardcovers, with, of course, some Star Trek

junk thrown in.

The art room was big, but it was nowhere near the size of St. Louis. Naturally, there were some great paintings for sale, and to be auctioned off. Since I was more concerned with the books and magazines, I spent more time in the Huckster Room than in the art show.

Each day saw its share of Panel Discussions with the Pros. The meeting time and the topic were announced by placing a notice on a bulletin board in the main area for the con. There must have been 10 or more of these discussions a day. I can't remember all the topics. The one I attended was on SF films. Forrest J. Ackerman was also there and ended up giving something like a 45 minute speech on the subject. I can say this much, therewas no one there who became bored.

There were the usual Pro-discussions. Members of the panels included Lester Del Rey, Bob Shaw, Gordon Dickson, Ben Bova, Alexei Panshin, Poul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, Hal Clement, and Clifford D. Simak, among others. I didn't get to very many of them, but those I did attend were fairly good. The topics ranged from SF criticism to possibilities of the future, even weather control.

I talked for quite a while with Lou Tabakow (in case you don't know who he is, he wrote some stories in the early '50s and puts on Midwestcon. He is also a member of First Fandom.). The main topic of our talks was concerned with sense of wonder and how it comes about.

He Seeth Many Strange and Wonderful Things

The highlights of the con, in the order they appeared were as follows: The Costume Ball. Many of the people came in some very excellent costumes. By this I mean that they also had originality to them. But some were similar to the ones I saw in St. Louis. One that sticks to mind is Lin Carter's of the Emperor Ming. The high point of the evening was the woman who came out topless and gave a little speech on how the Queen of Mars is the only one qualified to give the necessary fashions for women. The people reacted the way I thought they would. Since they were all fans, and had been exposed to all of the magazine covers, this did not seem to thrill them too much. But more pictures were taken of that costume than any other. It was not even that well done.

The 2nd highlight was the skinny-dip party in the hotel pool. At the high point there must have been 25 people in the pool. It all stopped when the management came out. Since I was on the 25th floor at the time, I wanted to go down and see. I found myself becoming very involved with watching the viewers. No one was sitting down at the tables around the pool....they were all standing around and watching what was going on, or should I say coming off?

The memorable thing was the Hugos, of course. Silverberg was toastmaster, and his opening line went as follows; "I would like to welcome you to the 29th World Science Fiction Convention, held here in the Boston Sheraton, sometimes known as the Tower of Grass." Apparently, no matter what hall you walked down, it could be smelled. Lester Del Rey did an excellent tribute to John Campbell, and Asimov was presented with the honor of presenting the Hugos. If you do not know by now, the winners are: Fan writer- Dick Geis; Fanzine- LOCUS; Fan artist- Alicia Austin; Prozine- F&SF; Pro artist- the Dillons; Short story- Sturgeon's "Slow Sculpture"; Novella- Leiber's "Ill Met at Lankhmar"; and Novel- Niven's Ringworld.

Much more happened, of course, but that would take another six pages or so to tell.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

Science Fiction: the genre that came in from the cold

by William L. Rupp

For many years science fiction has languished in a chilly limbo resulting from scholarly and critical neglect. Recently, however, there has been a great deal of academic discussion concerning science fiction's place in literature. I shall attempt to deal with this problem by asking the following questions: What is good literature? Can science fiction be good literature? Is science fiction good literature? What do critics think of science fiction and why?

I do not claim to have any final answers. However, I hope my remarks will shed some light on this interesting area of modern fiction.

What, indeed, is worthwhile literature? Writing in the Encyclopedia International, Stanley Hyman states that most critics consider literature to be an embodient of truth and value. One could then ask, what is truth, and what is value? These questions are difficult to answer under any circumstances. Perhaps it would be best to allow the reader to rely upon his own conception of truth and value as we consider the nature of good literature.

Critics have analyzed and evaluated literary works in terms of sociology, psychology, philosophy, psychoanalysis, etc. As a result of this diversity of viewpoints, literary criticism is less rigorously defined than disciplines such as chemistry and physics.

How does one tell whether a work does or does not embody truth, beauty, value, or whatever other qualities one considers characteristics of good literature? I believe that the best way is to apply the test of time. Most works are soon forgotten, and one which lasts over the centuries must have some special qualities. The trouble with this criterion is that we can't wait around three or four hundred years to see whether anybody still remember's CHILDHOODS END.

Another option is to use the criteria by which critics currently evaluate literature. However, I believe that no single, definitive list of standards has been set forth. On the other hand, certain general critical principles can be inferred.

Damon Knight says (in IN SEARCH OF WONDER) that the literary establishment recognizes two basic characteristics of reputable fiction. First, Knight says, such fiction is "laid against familiar backgrounds," and second, "it tries to deal honestly with the tragic and poetic theme of love-and-death."

I have the feeling that Knight has correctly summarized the attitude of most academicians and critics. While the validity of the first criterion is, I feel, debatable, few would question the legitimacy of the second. Most recognized works of literature (at least those written within the last 100 years) are laid in rather ordinary settings,

and most also say something about love-and-death.

When we look at these recognized works of literature, we see that they are, for the most part, detailed analyses of individual personalities. Joyce's ULYSSES, Shakespeare's Hamlet, and Faulkner's THE SOUND AND THE FURY, are typical examples of this tendency.

Broader concepts, such as sociology, are present to one degree or another in some cases, of course. But generally the emphasis is on penetrating the psyche of an individual character, rather than on portraying a whole society or an abstract concept. One is tempted to ask, must a work of fiction concentrate on such a closely drawn character study to be considered worthy of consideration?

To facilitate discussion, I will state my own definition of worthwhile literature, and refer to it in the balance of the article. (This does not mean that I reject the criteria previously stated, however). I believe that worthwhile literature can be defined as works of imagination which impart to the reader some significant insight into man's situation, either in terms of ordering and evaluating perceived reality, or in terms of offering ideals and values for the betterment of human life.

The first part of my definition refers to descriptive works (i.e. art as a mirror of reality, an idea at least as old as Aristotle), while the second refers to prescriptive works (e.g. utopias, the Bible). Or, to put it bluntly, I'm saying that worthwhile literature does a particularly effective job of showing the reader the way life is, or suggesting to him the way it should be. I believe that this definition encompasses beauty, truth, value, imaginitive concepts, etc.

The foregoing discussion has only begun to define the nature of worthwhile literature, but perhaps it has given us some basis for asking the second question. Namely, can science fiction be literature?

Let me again refer to the thoughts of Stanley Hyman:

> The best literary criticism tends to regard the work of literature as having a unique organic form, to measure its success or failure in terms of its own intentions, and to hold that any literary genre is as valid as any other and as capable of masterpieces (Encyclopedia International, Vol. 11, p. 18).

If Hyman is correct, and I believe he is, science fiction holds as much potential as other types of fiction. Damon Knight agrees, saying that "Science fantasy is a form; what matters is what you put into it" (In Search of Wonder, p. 2).

It is unfair, therefore, to condemn a genre on the basis of a few bad books. Science fiction can be great in the hands of a great writer. This position puts the emphasis on the genius of the individual author, not on the conventions of the literary form he uses. Such conventions, after all, serve as starting points for works of literature, not as discrete guidelines to be followed religiously.

Assuming that science fiction can be good literature, we must now ask a harder question. How much science fiction actually is worthwhile literature? What percentage of science fiction works offer significant insight into man's situation, either in terms of ordering or evaluating perceived reality, or in terms of offering ideals and values for the betterment of human life?

Sadly, it must be admitted that such a percentage is small, though perhaps not so small as some of SF's detractors like to think. One can only agree with Theodore Stur-

geon's estimate that 90% of science fiction is crap. Not all of the remaining 10% is of the highest quality; it merely rates higher than the dregs. That is certainly no compliment to the field as a whole.

Perhaps the situation is not so bad as the foregoing comments make it seem. Bruce Franklin suggests that in any field of endeavor, most works will be ordinary, few outstanding. Though there is much bad science fiction, SF is not without its outstanding examples. A number of writers, such as Bradbury, Clarke, Heinlein, Sturgeon, and Ballard have produced some very creditable fiction. And a few (Wells, C. S. Lewis, etc.) are universally recognized.

Why isn't there more really outstanding SF? Is it because science fiction is extremely difficult to write well? Surely that is a factor. Is it because few really talented writers have entered the field?

Talented artists must take up and use a form in order for it to produce masterpieces, and only recently have the outstanding mainstream authors begun to toy with SF concepts. In the meantime, science fiction has been entrusted to the questionable literary talents of pulp hacks and engineers. Some fine stories and novels have been written by these people, but by and large their output has fallen in the 90% class. One could hardly expect otherwise.

A crucial factor in the relative scarcity of great SF is the unwillingness of the literary community as a whole to recognize the possibilities of the speculative mode of writing. Branded as a literary outcast, science fiction has attracted few of the really outstanding writers without whom a field cannot grow and mature. Some, like Vonnegut, have dabbled in the genre for a while, then turned their back on the whole thing in order to take up something more "respectable." To continue in science fiction is to ensure that one will never become a "prestige" writer.

Why has science fiction been considered trash by the literati? I believe there are several main reasons. The first, and most obvious one, is that SF has been pulp literature for most of this century. But this was not allways the case. Science fiction's earliest practitioners included some of the finest writers in the world. Poe, Verne, Wells, Doyle, Twain, Kipling, Fitz-James O'Brien, Bierce, and many other outstanding authors wrote at least a few fantastic stories.

Science fiction, in other words, has a reputable past. As Thomas Clareson reminds us, "Fantasy...of which science fiction is the latest expression, has existed side by side with what has come to be called the mainstream - the "realistic", the representational - throughout literature..." (SF: The Other Side of Realism, p. 3). But just as science fiction began to coalesce into recognizable form, the great movement of literary realism began to grip modern literature. Labeled "...one of the great delusions of the last century," by Clareson (SF: The Other Side of Realism, p. 5), literary realism looked with disfavor on any writing which was not strictly 'true to

life.' Science fiction was, therefore, considered trivial and not worthy of consideration.

By 1920, SF had lost the prestige it had enjoyed around the turn of the century (when fantastic stories by Wells, Doyle, Stockton, and others, appeared in the better magazines and in hardcovers). The shift to realism in literary circles was only partly to blame for science fiction's fall from grace, however. Equally guilty was Hugo Gernsback, admittedly one of the grand old men of science fiction.

Gernsback, more perhaps than Verne or Wells, was the true father of modern science fiction. Before Gernsback, there was no self-conscious genre devoted totally to fantastic stories. Writers such as Kipling and Stockton wrote SF in addition to other types of fiction. Gernsback changed all that. He was responsible for the creation of the pulp category we now call science fiction.

Gernsback's was the mind of the experimenter, the engineer. He had an almost utopian faith in the wonders of science, and he believed that SF should be the vehicle for the propagation of scientific knowledge and speculation. While the science fiction stories in his AMAZING, and the other pulp SF magazines which sprang up around 1930, contained imaginative concepts, the quality of writing declined. Gernsback, unfortunately, was only peripherally interested in literary considerations.

Clareson charges that Gernsback's disregard for human experience, and his conception of SF as "prediction along a linear reality," (SF: The Other Side of Realism, p. 20) further alienated the genre from the spirit of that time. Science fiction used a naive realism to propagandize for technology while the main literary thrust of the 1920s was inward, toward the mind.

Hugo Gernsback was responsible for the entrance into the field of many fine writers, and was instrumental in the creation of a market for their work. But it cannot be denied that he was also responsible, however innocently, for SF's decline in prestige.

We are not in the 1930s, however. The evolution of science fiction has gone through John Campbell's Golden Age of the Forties, Boucher and Gold's sociology and satire period of the fifties, and Ellison's style revolution of the sixties. SF in the 1970s is no longer a crude form of pulp paper nonsense. Writers of talent are producing an increasing amount of interesting speculative works.

And yet, despite the fact that many members of the academic world are showing interest in the genre, science fiction continues to suffer from critical neglect. Altogether too many teachers and critics consider SF not worth bothering with (e.g. SATURDAY REVIEW's Granville Hicks recently found science fiction of no greater interest than mysteries, westerns, etc.). Can this continuing attitude be blamed totally on Gernsback's AMAZING STORIES and the Japanese monster movies?

I believe not. An additional, and possibly more important, cause of SF's lack of academic stature is the philosophy of the academicians themselves. Mark Hillegas, a professor of English at Southern Illinois University, has written penetratingly (EXTRAPOLATION, 1967, vol. IX, pp. 18-21) of academia's literary nearsightedness. Hillegas believes that most accepted definitions of literature are too narrow in that they declare man's inner (or psychological) world to be the true subject of literature. This limitation, Hillegas charges, is part of a rigid set of standards which most literature instructors cling to slavishly. Science fiction obviously does not fit these definitions. Secondly, Hillegas believes that academia's dislike for SF is re-

ally a manifestation of "...the deep hatred of most literary intellectuals for science and technology" (EXTRAPOLATION, 1967, vol. IX, p. 20). The influence of the classical 19th century English educational tradition is still strong today, and this influence resists scientific ideas.

I would like to suggest a third reason why science fiction has not received a more favorable reaction in academic circles. I refer to a feeling of elitism which recoils at the very suggestion that a 'popular' literature might be of value. (This is ironic, because SF never really was a mass literature as were westerns and mysteries.) Or to put it another way, academics tend to reject the notion that any type of fiction understandable to the masses might have true literary worth. Literature is, to them, something to be savored by the chosen few, not by the doltish masses, and if SF is enjoyed by the masses, then it can't be good.

At least one authority agrees with me. Fritz Leiber, in Clarion, says:

> Sometimes I think that today every critic, editor, writer, even... has developed a crazy compulsion to become a specialist or sub-specialist, exactly as the scientists and doctors have done, in some little realm he rules alone, or at least can count himself a prince of (p. 132).

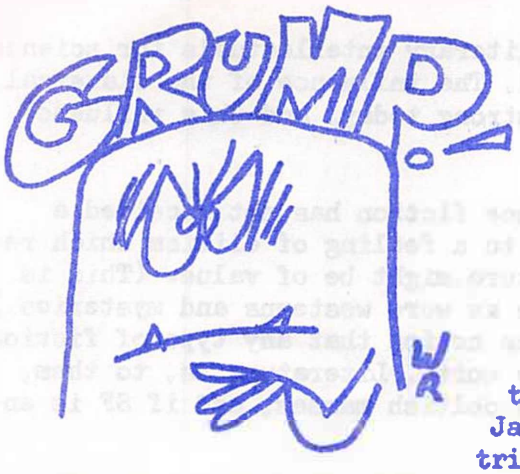
It should be stated here that many knowledgeable critics and academics have taken the time to inform themselves about science fiction. Mark Hillegas, Willis McNelly, and Thomas Clareson are just some of those in the college ranks who consider SF worth looking into. One can only hope that their many colleagues will do likewise soon.

Another source of valuable criticism in the area of speculative fiction is an increasing number of writers and editors in the field who are interested in the scholarly study of SF. Damon Knight has already been mentioned. In his book In Search of Wonder (Advent, 1967), he suggests that science fiction should pay more attention to the"tragic and poetic theme of love-and-death." Robert Lowndes concurs, adding that SF can handle love and death without the science fictional elements being pushed into a subsidiary, and therefore unnecessary, role (SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, Feb. 1958, pp. 7, 128-130). If SF cannot really handle the theme of love and death, Lowndes contends, then it can never be great literature.

James Gunn challenges this viewpoint (SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, Feb. 1958, pp. 5, 7). He believes that good science fiction can be, and usually is, written on themes of broad scope rather than love and death. Mainstream fiction deals with the individual, Gunn says, but SF deals with society as a whole, which he claims is a perfectly legitimate function. A story can't be about both themes at once.

This question of the individuall versus society as the proper theme of fiction is a difficult one. There are two types of science fiction. The first type is one in which the story focuses on people and their problems. The people involved may be involved in the future or on another world, but they remain the most important aspect of the story. "Flowers for Algernon" and A Canticle for Leibowitz are examples of this first type, which is more closely related, in focus if not in detail, to mainstream works.

The second type of SF is one in which the background or concept is the real focus of the story. Kingsley Amis (in New Maps of Hell) calls this the "idea as hero" an apt phrase. In this class are stories in which a whole society or environment is the protagonist (Vance's Big Planet and Clement's Mission of Gravity are examples), and stories in which an intellectual concept or gimmick is the hero (such as Latham's "The Xi Effect," or Heinlein's "And He Built a Crooked House").



Is this latter type good literature? I think it can be. C. S. Lewis certainly thought so. He believed that literature should study everything, including the whole universe, and not just man's inner world. Since man is affected by the whole range of environmental forces, why should literature not include them in its range of study? It can and should.

Several science fiction writers have given their views as to what is wrong with current SF. James Blish says too many science fiction stories are trivial because their themes are essentially trivial (see The Issue at Hand, 1964, pp. 121-130). Most SF, Blish contends, fails to come to grips with such basic and universal questions dealt with by Huxley, Orwell, and Vonnegut.

Joanna Russ suggest that science fiction ~~suffers~~ suffer because it is still a genre. Genres, she contends, tend to stifle creativity and insure staleness by forcing the writer to follow a set of prescribed rules (Clarion, 1971, pp. 182-186). Leiber disagrees, saying that genres "...are no more than pigeonholes in a vast desk and have no more to say about the importance and truth of papers that are shoved into them" (Clarion, 1971, p. 132). Both would agree, I feel, that a really good writer can create great fiction whether he uses realistic or fantastic elements in his work.

Alexei Panshin has written an important series of articles in FANTASTIC STORIES dealing with the nature and future of SF, or "speculative Fantasy," as he calls it. He agrees with Russ that the genre restrictions characteristic of Gernsback's day are too confining. While I am disturbed by Panshin's disregard for the scientific element in speculative fiction, I do believe that he has made some provocative points about the genre. He explains, correctly, I feel, that SF is in the didactic/romantic mode, a respectable tradition which goes far back into literary history. SF, Panshin believes, is the type of literature most capable of treating man's widening range of concepts. Only when SF writers expand their own horizons will the genre reach full maturity.

On a more science oriented note, Reginald Bretnor and the late John Campbell (in Modern Science Fiction, 1953) set forth their concept of science fiction. For them, SF is a type of literature which makes a unique response to the rapidly changing world which science and technology have wrought. Bretnor is outspoken in his praise of SF and his denunciation of traditional fiction:

> Today, science fiction appears...because the main currents of our literature still adhere to sets of principles which are pre-scientific....It was developed because the scientific method has no more been allowed to change those principles than to revise the pattern of our general educations (p. 272).
>
> Science fiction...can bring a new perspective to every theme already known, and can create innumerable fresh ideas, unknown today, but possible tomorrow. It is not a genre. Its scope is universal. It holds the promise of an entire new literature. (p. 273)

Bretnor is clearly dealing with the potential of science fiction rather than its current strengths and weaknesses. His ideas are drawn on a grand scale and present both an inspiration and a challenge to future writers.

Two divergent views of science fiction appear to be common. First, there are

those wish to deemphasize science and technology and increase more traditional literary characteristics (style, characterization, etc.). Their aim seems to be a reintegration of SF with the mainstream. Second, there are those who see science fiction as a means of interpreting scientific and technological impact on society, with perhaps less emphasis put on purely stylistic considerations. This latter group aims at creating a new, distinct branch of fiction which can serve a unique function beyond the scope of the mainstream.

To conclude, I believe that speculative fiction is a form rich with possibilities for the creation of great literature. It is difficult to say whether mainstream literature will begin to look more like SF or whether SF will be absorbed by general literature and vanish as an entity, but academia's long time embargo on science fiction does seem to be lifting.

For me, science fiction is an exciting form of literature, and I hope it continues to flourish. In any event, it is time for SF to come in from the cold. I think warmer days lie ahead.

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FAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, cont. from page 4...

He Speaketh of SF in Libraries, and of Personal Collections

Assuming that a library, public or institutional, already has a half-way decent collection of books belonging to the SF genre, then some people ask the question, "How do we get new readers in to read the stuff?" The question really boils down to, "How does any library get readers to patronize it?" and "Why?" Naturally, there are people who enter a library to do research, but what about the people that are just looking for something to read?

Nobody can be forced to read SF, or anything else, unless they already have an inclination to do so. The way to get someone to read SF is by making suggestions of noteworthy books; books that have both an interesting plot and are well written. Otherwise, the reader might pick up a book that is bad, both in storyline and style. Since this is possibly his first SF, he might make a prejudgement, and feel that all the others are the same.

It seems that most fans who try to get others to read SF are over 15, and so are their friends. By this time, most people have been exposed to what is good, or bad, in a story and literature in general. The strong point is to then hit the reader with concerns his field of interest. The ideas and themes talked about in SF are as varied as there are people, so it naturally seems that something could be found. Assume that the person is interested in sociology and psychology and has some knowledge of the two fields. The "New Wave" might then appeal to this person, so the book or story can be chosen from it. Harlan Ellison might be a bit too strong but on the other hand someone like Norman Spinrad might be the author being looked for. Choose one of his stories, give it to the new reader, and see what happens. If the person is open enough, he just might like it. Chances are that he will not become a fan, or even a devout reader, but at least an interest might be sparked. He might go so far as to ask for more suggestions of titles, or go out and find something on his own.

All it takes is a little coaxing, waiting till the person's curiousity is up, and a place to get a copy of the book. It has to come from a library of some sort, and in most cases of this nature it will be a personnal or private collection. If a public library owns a copy then the person can obtain it for himself, and also think of future titles just from what he has seen on the shelf. Since this is not always possible, then a privat collection might become necessary.

(CONTINUED AGAIN ON PAGE 24)

SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM AS A DEVIANT SUBCULTURE

(or, EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT FANDOM...BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

by B. D. Arthurs

A deviant is one who fails to obey the rules of the group. There are many degrees of deviance, from the habitual traffic violator's light deviance to the heavy deviance of the homosexual. There is one group of social deviants whose activities, though not illegal, are frowned upon by normal society. These are the science fiction fans. This report is intended only as a general introduction to their minor subculture, and should not be regarded as the last word on the subject.

Howard S. Becker, in Outsiders (New York: The Free Press, 1963), has outlined four steps to making deviancy a career. They are: 1) the deviant act is committed; 2) the deviant action is punished; 3) the newly labeled deviant comes into contact with similar deviants, who reinforce further deviant actions; and 4) the original deviant will enter into an organized deviant group.

These steps each have their counterparts in fandom. The potential fan reads some science fiction. He develops a liking for it and reads more and more sf, until it begins to dominate his free time.

The second step, punishment, occurs more or less constantly throughout the other steps. In other words, a fan cannot avoid it, only try to ignore it, for it is just about everywhere he goes. This punishment is not a concrete punishment, like being jailed. In the main, it is the derogatory attitude held toward sf by the majority of the public. It is this attitude that can cause English teachers to refuse book reports on works of science fiction, make employers wary of you, and cause the public in general to make caustic remarks regarding yourintelligence and sanity, all of which can and have happened to fans (interview with the Phoenix Science Fiction Club, April 7, 1971). This attitude stems largely from modern science fiction's origins in the pulp-magazine format. As Ted White reported it in the editorial of the September, 1969 AMAZING STORIES:

> The early sf magazines...were classed as pulps, had covers nearly as lurid, and printed nothing but fiction --- and a "sensationalistic" sort of fiction as well...you know that rockets-to-the-moon nonsense is fillin the boy's head with pernicious claptrap!
>
> ...it was a commonly held belief that pulp magazineswere for the semiliterates, and at least two stages in quality below comic books. A boy could buy a comic book openly; he was ashamed to be seen carrying a pulp.
>
> The lettercolumns of the sf pulps of the forties are full of tales of torn-off covers, hidden covers, and other signs of the paranoia which infected most of the magazines' readers....Our magazines portrayed boscmy babes, monstrous bems ((Bug-Eyed Monsters)), and orante ((sic)) rockets and rayguns on their covers --- and it made no difference that their interior texts were moderately literate and well written. People go by appearances.

Even when some work of science fiction is popularly accepted, it is not received

by the public as science fiction, in the generally accepted sense of the term. A fan's typical quote: "When I try to show people that science fiction is good, like 1984 or Brave New World, they always say, 'Well, that's not science fiction, because that's good.' Science fiction is, by definition, bad." (PSFC interview.)

Now that it has been determined that the fan does suffer a punishment, a psychological punishment, for reading sf, we can proceed to the third step, where he is introduced to fandom.

Under the pressures placed on them by parents, peers, and society in general, most potential fans do eventually give up sf or relegate it to a very minor role in their lives. But occasionally the potential fan will come into contact with another fan, one who can tell him about fandom. Norman Spinrad, in "Ø FIAWOL" in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #41, describes his reaction far better than I:

> By God, here are people who are just like him! Like him, they are in on the Secret. Like him, they have their secret doubts, fostered by the World's scorn, but they have banded together to create their own alternate reality, an international community of True Believers, a microcosm in which the reading of science fiction is the highest wisdom.

The final step is moving into organized fandom. Fans tend to be individualistic, and this, coupled with the geographic gaps between most fans, has never allowed them to become more than numerous clubs, organizations, and individuals whose common tie is their interest in science fiction. Therefore, fandom has never become a solidly knit international organization. It is, however, a "tight-knit national community." (Spinrad, see above) that will support and aid each other. Here are two recent examples of this fannish comradeship: At the 1969 World Science Fiction Convention (or Worldcon), a fan participating in the traditional masquerade stumbled and tore a rented screen. Rather than let the convention committee pay the damages, the hat was passed around and the fans volunteered four hundred thirty-two dollars from their own pockets (Robert Bloch, "Diary Found In the St. Louis Zoo," January, 1970 If). More recently, an anonymous fan donated three hundred dollars to the Bob Shaw Fund to help finance the trip of Irish fan and science fiction writer Bob Shaw to the Noreascon, the world science fiction convention held in Boston over the 1971 Labor Day weekend (reported in FOCAL POINT #22, January 18, 1971). All through fan writings are tales of money lent, housing and transpotation shared, food given, and other aid to fellow fans.

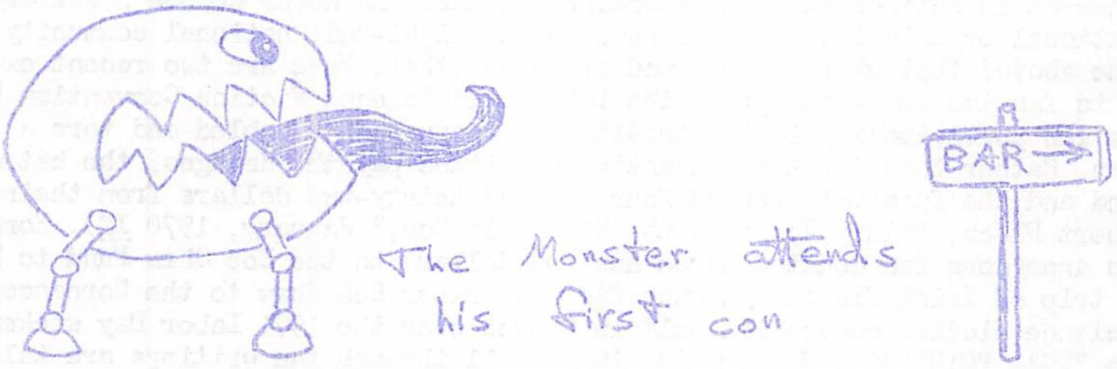
Fan writings form the major tie between fans. Because fans are scattered so widely across the globe, correspondence is the main means of contact between them. Most fans write numerous letters. According to Harry Warner, Jr.'s All Our Yesterdays, the champion letterwriting fan was horror writer H. P. Lovecraft, who wrote some one hundred thousand letters in his lifetime, averaging eight a day, and up to sixty pages of longhand in length.

Besides letters, another form of writing dominates fandom. This is the phenomenon known as "fanzines." Fanzines are small fan publications, usually produced by mimeograph or some other low cost process, for the enjoyment of other fans. They can contain amateur fiction, comment and criticism on professional sf, talk about current fan activities and doings, letters to the editor, and, occasionally, comment on areas not concerned with science fiction. Most fanzines also contain drawings and cartoons drawn by fans.

Most fans dream of editing or contributing to a fanzine. Their names placed before fandom provide a major source of "egoboo", or ego boosting. Not only do fans respect and admire professionals in the science fiction field, but an active and ardent fan may eventually become a "BNF," a Big Name Fan, known and respected in fandom itself.

If one has gotten the impression so far that fandom is one big happy group all smiling and cheerful toward each other, it is a wrong impression. Science fiction is actually such a vaguely defined field, and fans are such individualists, that conflicts of opinions and personalities are almost inevitable. In fact, feuding is one of the more popular pastimes of fandom. Fan followers of a feud get a kick from watching the arguments flow back and forth, and I suspect that the participants also have fun ranting, raving, dragging each other's name in the mud, and generally making complete fools of themselves. The letter columns of fanzines are filled with these feuds. Although an occasional feud does degenerate into vicious innuendo and backstabbing, most feuders remain "bitter friends," if I may coin a term.

Besides fanzines, the other major characteristic of fandom is its conventions. There are many regional conventions held throughout the year, but the largest is the Worldcon, held annually on the Labor Day weekend. Here fans can "listen to speeches and participate in panel discussions, ...see films and artwork, purchase manuscripts and printed matter at auctions, applaud award-winners, enjoy a banquet and masquerade and poolside party, /and/ attend private parties of their own." (Bloch, see above.)



These private parties are usually the best part of the convention, and the most notorious. Fans who may have been corresponding for years finally meet each other face to face, fans can meet their favorite writers informally and vice-versa, and an air of unrestrained good humor is rampant, helped not a little by the traditional bottle of ~~Jack~~ Jack Daniels or Jim Beam that is passed around. The spirit of these parties is well shown in the following piece, reprinted from a 1941 report on the Denver Worldcon in Harry Warner, Jr's "All Our Yesterdays" column in FOCAL POINT #28, April 12, 1971:

> That night at the party, a large keg of foaming stuff was placed in the kitchen. Fans sneaked cautiously around it. Leonard Jenkins, a Denver man, had a small pump, and promptly pumped up pressure. Granny Widner led the fans in a devil dance around the sacred fluid, and Adam Lang...turned the first tap. For the next hour we got nothing but foam. The party had to suffice on wine while McKeel, Martin, Wiggins, Madle and the others bailed out the foam. Towards eleven, we began to get some liquid. But it was then past hotel drinking hours and the barrel was removed. Cries of anger and remorse. The kiddies being boisterous lay down on a rug in the lobby and whistled at doormen. When they were kicked out, they took the rug with

them and made an encampment on the street. All was going nicely when sirens were heard in the distance. Fortier wanted to know if they were blond or brunette sirens, but when he was told they were sirens with red lights, he joined the rest of us in scattering down a side street. The fans re-formed again, slightly above 17th St. on Broadway, and headed northward looking for a bar.

There are fans to whom fandom is a way of life, which they devote the majority of their time to, often holding down a mundane job only so that they will not die of slow starvation. Indeed, the phrase "fandom is a way of life" has evolved into the fannish slogan "fiawol," as opposed to "fijagh," or "fandom is just a goddamned hobby." However, with few exceptions, "fiawol" is just wishful thinking on the fan's part. Most fans enter fandom in late adolescence, and as they grow older, they gain new responsibilities; business, family, etc. All this while, the fan is still beseiged by the public's opinion of sf as trash. Under this barrage, the majority of fans eventually give up fandom and move away from sf. This process is known in fandom as "getting away from it all" or "gafia." (Fans seem to have a strange weakness for acronyms, as you may have noticed.)

The Slan Shack (the name is taken from A. E. van Vogt's novel of a telepathic superman, Slan) was an admirable project designed to make fandom a true way of life, to enable fans to become self-supporting. Begun in October of 1943, ten fans bought an eight room house in Battle Creek, Michigan. Their plan was to obtain jobs in Battle Creek and use their savings to form a corporation that would purchase an entire city block on the city's outskirts, to be known as Slan Center. The center é was to contain homes, a grocery store, general store, heating plant, and its own electrical generating plant, all to be owned cooperatively by fans. Internal dissensions among the participants cuased the abandonment of Slan Shack in September of 1945.

In conclusion, one must say that fandom is deserving of a larger, more detailed and professional study of their habits and views. However, because of fandom's obscurity, it is doubtful is a careful study will be forthcoming in the near future. The only professional study that I now know of is an as-yet-unpublished investigation of fanzines by Dr. Frederic Wertham. I seriously doubt, however, if Dr. Wertham's study will be of much worth, since his previous works (particularly his 1954 best-selling "expose" of the comic book industry, Seduction of the Innocent) have been classic examples predjudiced opinion, insufficient study, glory-seeking, and a highly unprofessional hysteria.

If it were possible for me to pick someone to head such a study, I would probably pick Dr. Robert Lindner, who has had previous experience with science fiction nuts. (And I mean "nuts." Read "The Jet Propelled Couch" in The Fifty-Minute Hour and see what I mean.) But I can only hope that such a literate study will eventually be done of the microcosm of science fiction.

+++

MISCELLANY:

I was leafing through a volume of CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS a few weeks ago and found that Phil Farmer's address was right in nearby Scottsdale! That particular volume was four years old, so I had little hope of finding him still living there, but I decided to at least see where the Great Man had lived. The house was now occupied by the Morey family, who were quite nice about my inquiries. The Moreys told me that they still get mail for him occasionally, so if any of you do have his address, would you mind telling him so he can be sure of getting it?

-BDA

MINDSPEAK

Spencer R. Lepley
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I didn't know that ditto could look so good. GODLESS 1 has to be the best looking ditto work I have ever seen. When I finally get around to publishing my own little fanzine (don't hold your breath, though), I think I'll start with ditto. ((I was pretty lucky. The machine was almost brand new, with an experienced operator (not me), and the masters were of very high quality. I was surprised at how well it turned out, too.)) Before I forget, thank you for the complimentary copy. Or were you expecting a monetary windfall? ((Well, I certainly don't mind getting money, but locs are a lot more fun.))

Well, to start this in-depth loc, I'll move from the back to the front. "The Fan in the High Castle" (what in hell is that supposed to mean?) was quite a sane discussion on how to get SF books into a library. This will work rather well on the college level. But did you ever walk into a small Midwestern town library and ask the sixty-five year old spinster behind the desk to order something like Bug Jack Barron? She's the one who keeps Brave New World locked in the back room and won't let anyone take it out unless they're eightene and can prove it! It may seem ridiculous, but it is true.

Any way, where was I? Oh, yes. The article shows us (well, it's too late for me, I've been out of college for a few years) how to get SF books into a library. But that doesn't mean they'll be going out. I will admit that in any college a good number of people read SF. But they don't need a library to supply their reading diet for them. My college library was definitely short in SF (the entire collection was three copies of Burrough's Naked Lunch). That didn't stop us from reading SF, because the book store stocked quite a few titles. No, the SF in a library is for those who, as yet, do not read the literature; those who we want to start reading SF on its own merits. Where does the general reader go when he wants to find a book to read? The library, of course. As Alex has said, we can get the books into the library. Now let's get the reader to the books.

Your article on plagiarism was the more detailed account of what I read in SFR. I'm glad you saw fit to publish it here. Unintentional plagiarism happens all the time and is a subconscious error. This kind of thing, however, makes me sick. Also, I see that LOCUS has dug up a recent case, a story just published in IF.

My only complaint about the reviews is they are too short. I hope that with your next issue you will be able to give more space to them. Only publishing twice a year, you should be able to come up with a little more depth and worry less about being current. One or two books covered in detail is better than one paragraph each on a dozen books. ((I think that it depends on whether the book is worth reviewing in detail. But reviews in this issue should be longer.)) In fact, why not have a combination?

"Bounty Hunter" was very good fan fiction. I have a terrible trait of snobbishness when it comes to reading the stuff. But I have to admit that this story was interesting, involving, cohesive, and literate. I will say that a lot more could have been done with the story, but I didn't write it. I did enjoy it. "Bounty Hunter" worked along the same lines as one of the sub-plots of Stand on Zanzibar and a story published in Clarion, "The Secret" by Maggie Nadler. I think this will be the next

idea the best-selling authors will throw at us.

And now to the editorial. You have set yourself quite a goal. It would be nice if you could pull it off. I have a point to submit that you have not considered. True, the best-seller list is bad literature. People read fiction to get away from the troubles of the day. They read about sex to forget war, hatred, bigotry, and civil violence. The recent nostalgia boom is a boom merely because people want to escape from the trash-heap of our present world. I think the crux of the problem is right here. Let's ignore sex, you've already discussed that angle. The two major qualities of science fiction are self-defeating in their mere existence. First, most SF takes place in the future, and these days our future visions are not exactly bright. The last thing people want to read about is a future worse than the present. But the ringer is SCIENCE, "That awful stuff that put us in the mess we're in." Today, the public comes up with the equation science equals evil. "Oh yes, the moon program is nice, but what is it doing for me?"

You state that SF will not become a popular literature. Today, you are right. But I submit that soon you won't be. The young people of today care about the future of our world. That is a step in the right direction. I believe the popularity of SF among the young proves my point. All they have to do to make things work is to believe that science will help get us out of the mess we're in. This gives SF a two-fold task for the future. First, the future visions to scare the reader enough to care, and second, extrapolations on how to accomplish saving our world. We have plenty of the first around. What we need is some of the second. The young people of today are the future, best-selling, popular audience for science fiction tomorrow.

I agree that we must go after the right people, the educated (the ones with open minds), the college professors, and anyone else with whom the young come into contact. This is our hope and theirs. I also believe, however, that we must not give up on the ruling generation. Maybe someday I'll be able to tell you how and why.

Donald G. Keller
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GODLESS is a good idea - a fanzine on literature in general. But why current best-sellers? Most of them aren't worth it. ((What about the few that don't fall under Sturgeon's Law? Don't they deserve mention?))

Your first issue is a bit thin, and I hope that you will improve your size and contents. Your repro is pretty good for ditto.

"Bounty Hunter" was surprisingly good. It's a good idea, tho dialogue and characters well-handled, and all in all it's superior to most fanfic.

Your review column, however, leaves much to be desired. Five books on one page? Even Buck Coulson doesn't skimp that much. Please improve this department; at least three of those ~~fiddle~~ ((my typo)) books deserved a page each (Stapledon's, Brunner's, and Carr's). The Stapledon is an absolute classic, but something should have been said

about it to inform the ignorant. Brunner's is one of the most enjoyable fantasies in recent years. And it's an especial crime to give such short shrift to Carr's important anthology (yes, Pangborn's story was fine, but what about Lafferty's? or Silverberg's? etc.). ((I ttoo regret that the reviews were so short. Hopefully, they've improved with this issue? But I also find Brunner's book highly enjoyable, just not all in one gulp. And I put the Carr review in as a last minute replacement for another, because I was so impressed with it. Otherwise, the review would have been a good deal longer.))

Your little article struck me as mere self-aggrandisement. Don't break your arm patting yourself on the back. And Alex Vitek's piece just rehashes old ground. ((I'm terribly sorry if you got that impression from my article, because I certainly didn't intend it that way. As for Alex's column, while it may be old ground to you, it was probably new information for some others. I got some usefulm stuff from it, for instance.))

Fred Patten
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Thanks for the copy of GODLESS #1. I was curious as to how that plagiarism case had turned out. It seems to have had a just and fair conclusion. A steal that blatant deserved to be caught. I can't help wondering what the student's attitude was when he copied it, though -- was it an outright cynical steal, or did he feel that he had some sort of right to copy it? I recall from when I was in school that some students seemed honestly incapable of seeing any difference between citing a fact from a scholarly work in their class papers (since high school and undergrad students usually lack access to primary source material for their research, citing from already-published books is customary), and quoting passages of someone else's literary work in a piece of their own and taking full credit for it. They seemed to feel that they had a perfect right to this, since they had exercised their own literary creativity in selecting whatever passage they'd copied -- as though the entire body of literature were some vast natural resource which they could mine and cash in on without owing anything to anybody else. This sort of thing is frightening. You see a bit of it among the youngest comic fans, who don't understand why their tracings of some particular superhero aren't greeted with more enthusiasm than some other fan's original work, even though their copy may be neater and a better job as draftsmanship. Fortunately, most of them learn the difference between "being influenced by" and "copying."

The cartoon you published with your writeup was as humorous and appropriate as it was unexpected. Fanzines are filled with good art these days, but most of it is decorative filler bearing little relationship to the text next to which it's published. It's a pleasant surprise to run across a drawing that is really an illustration of the article of it "illustrates."((It is a practice I plan to continue where possible.))

Mike Scott
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Alhambra, Ca. 91803

The first issue of GODLESS arrived and was throughly enjoyed. Your editorial expressed the feelings of many fans. Far too many mundane critics read one cruddy SF novel and form the twisted idea that all SF is bad. This is tantamount to saying because one historical novel is poor all are poor. When will mundanes get it through their heads that all literature has its masterpieces and its hackwork. Sturgeon said it all: "Ninety per cent of everything is crud!" Science Fiction should be judged by people who know what they're talking about and not by some second rate Orville Prescott attempting to air his feeble "wit" by thinking up the best put-downs for the latest SF novel (undoubtedly picked up for 99¢ at the bargain counter in Macy's). I agree that SF will probably never produce a "bestseller" simply because when one is produced, through some Christlike metamorphosis, it becomes the property of the mun-

danes. 1984 is one good example. I can hear it now: "This can't be Science Fiction--it's good." Gahhh! ((Actually, 1984 is not that good an example; it was written by a mainstream writer and published as mainstream. The main fault is that the critics largely refused to acknowledge the debt Orwell owed to SF. Probably the best example of the phenomena you complain about is Miller's A Canticle for Leibowitz, which was first published as straight science fiction, but then became a "classic."))

"Pattern & Plagiarism was well done & should serve as a warning to cretins trying to gain notoriety by stealing the ideas from a true writer. People that plagiarise SF must not be aware of the many editors and fans equipped with unholy long memories.

"Fan in the High Castle" was good but I hesitate before placing Spinrad's rather blah Last Hurrah of the Golden Horde on par with Canticle for Leibowitz. There just ain't no comparison. Besides, LHotGH was a collection of short stories - not a novel.

Rupp's "Bounty Hunter" was ok but if you can put an article (even if it's on the uncollected SF of Richard Nixon) in place of fan fiction - do it. ((I hate to disappoint you, Mike, but if I have a choice between an a mediocre article and as well written a story as "Bounty Hunter" was, I'll pick the fiction every time.

((Before I forget to mention it, Mike Scott recently revived COLLECTOR'S BULLETIN, which I recommend to the more serious sf fan.))

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Very many thanks for the first issue of GODLESS. Despite the title, you must have invoked some kind of divine intervention to get so many words into such a slender fanzine. I opened it with the thought that I could read it through in four or five minutes, judging by the feel, and before I reached the last page I was wondering if this might be a fannish equivalent of the loaves and fishes. And I hope you don't turn out to be another Jack Speer hoax. He stages one on a regular schedule whose frequency I can't remember for sure, but instinct tells me it's about time for it again and every new fan in the Southwest becomes automatically suspect. ((If I am Jack Speer, it comes as a very definite surprise.))

I like the proposal to include all kinds of literature in GODLESS. But don't bother too much if the "intelligentsia" doesn't show proper respect for science fiction. The people in that category are just as human as the rest of us, just as subject to irrational preferences and dislikes, and in the long run, what does it matter if the intelligentsia doesn't approve? Not quite as many critical articles in university periodicals, I suppose, perhaps fewer quotes from Important Names on the back of science fiction book jackets, but hardly any substantial difference in the sales of paperbacks and hardbounds or in the decisions of publishers. ((Once upon a time, a carpenter built a house which was of a different style than all the other houses of the town. When the townspeople walked by, they would either turn their heads away and pretend that the house was not there, or they would shout deprecating remarks at the people who lived in the house. The carpenter, though the house was soundly built, felt bad about having built a house with such a poor reputation. And the owners, though they loved and enjoyed living in their house, felt bad about living in a house which so many people disliked.))

"Bounty Hunter" is a quite good story. I liked particularly its ending, which seems quite true to the premises of the story. So much fanzine fiction seems to have been written only for the sake of some kind of an improbable gimmick intended to offer a sensational final paragraph, and the reader immediately wonders if he wouldn't have been better off if he'd skipped everything except that final paragraph. But I do have some doubts about the economics which this kind of bounty system for tattling would

create in the future world if the story. There are enormous numbers of abortions occurring today and the future will probably contain just as many women who don't really want to have the babies that were conceived unintentionally or before the woman's circumstances suddenly changed. So, in the world of the story, the woman who decided she didn't want the baby she was carrying could make a deal with a friend, who would turn her in, collect the $10,000, split it with her, and she would be rid of the future child and wealthier by $$ $5,000.

Mixed reactions occur in me when I read about the trend toward science fiction courses in universities. I'm overjoyed to know that students can get this kind of guidance to what to read and how to read it. Simultaneously, I'm a trifle worried about the longrange effects of such courses, if they become so numerous that they seem to be a permanent part of the scholastic establishment. Will students rebel against science fiction the way they do against the "literature" they must read in English courses or against the serious music that they encounter in music appreciation courses?

There's no problem in Hagerstown about science fiction in the public library, and I've spotted a fait amount of it in the school libraries I've happened to be around in recent years. The public library even has a special mark which it puts on the spine of each science fiction volume, to enable devotees to find their favorite kind of fiction. ((Sure! And whilewe're at it, let's tattoo a number on the forearms of science fiction writers.)) Some fans would undoubtedly consider this a horrible example of the ghetto in which they claim science fiction is confined. But there's no reason why these people couldn't look only at the top half of the spines, just as the prigs used to avoid looking at women's legs in the era when skirts were beginning to creep upward.

I'm amazed at the quantity of people who recognized the plagiarized story. It's been quite a while since Fredric Brown was publishing new stories, and I'd hardly expect some of the younger fans among your informants to have read a reasonably obscure Brown book. Or maybe the story has been anthologized generously and has been widely read over the years in that manner. I assume that the student who did the nasty deed is not a fan. But fans are occasionally guilty of this very thing. Not too many years ago I ran across in a Virginia fanzine a story that simply turned the opera Tosca into an advebture in the future; I'm not sure if the bulk of the story was borrowed literally from one of the books containing opera plots, but it certainly sounded like a synopsis. Further back was the lamentable case of a baltimore fan who made trifling changes in mundane fiction so it would become science fiction, and not only published them in fanzines but even sold several to prozines before the word got around.

No need to say that you have a fine cover, considering the source. Ø I worry about things like the Rotsler picture on the ~~pag~~ back page, researchers in the distant future will have such a terrible time figuring out which cartoons bear Rotsler captions and which were given a caption by the editor. ((The reason for that caption was because when I first wrote Rotsler, asking for some drawings, I promised that if he sent me some I would declare him a Deity. So now you can all pray to him without being embarassed in the slightest.))

Terry Carr
1525 Oregon St.
Berkeley, CA 94703

Thanks for GODLESS #1, and in particular for the good words about Universe 1. Edgar Pangborn's "Mount Charity" is getting a lot of praise in the letters I've received, and I wouldn't be surprised to see it on an awards list next year. Edgar has written another story for Universe 2, and this one's a 12,000 word novelette. It's called "Tiger Boy,"

and it's set in the same future as his novel Davy, though a couple of centuries later I believe. I'll be interested in your reaction to that story...and, of course, to the others in the second book. ((Due to the big shakeups at Ace recently, the future of the Universe series is rather vague at this time. The latest information I have is that Universe 2 has been delayed till February (Hey! I won't be around to get it!), and that future issues will be published by Random House.))

Re your hope that "maybe someday a book by Lafferty or Zelazny or some other good science fiction writer will appear on one of those 'recommended reading lists'" -- you must be on a benighted campus at Arizona State, because the number of SF Specials alone that have been chosen for college reading lists around the country is very large: Panshin, Lafferty, LeGuin, Brunner, Compton...I don't remember them all. And Chaos Died, too, of course. Academia has been discovering science fiction in a big way for several years now; I think the academicians see sf as a field that's virtually untapped for literary papers, and since publish-or-perish still has validity on the campuses they're writing reams of learned studies of this or that aspect of the field. Check the Secondary Universe Conferences, for instance, and you'll find how incredibly dull the professors can make science fiction sound. ((Hmm. Tell me, Terry, those reading lists you mentioned...were they just for courses in sf, or for "general" reading (in other words, it's okay for you to read it, but don't try to tell us it's good!, or were the sf books right up there with the big name mainstream writers?))

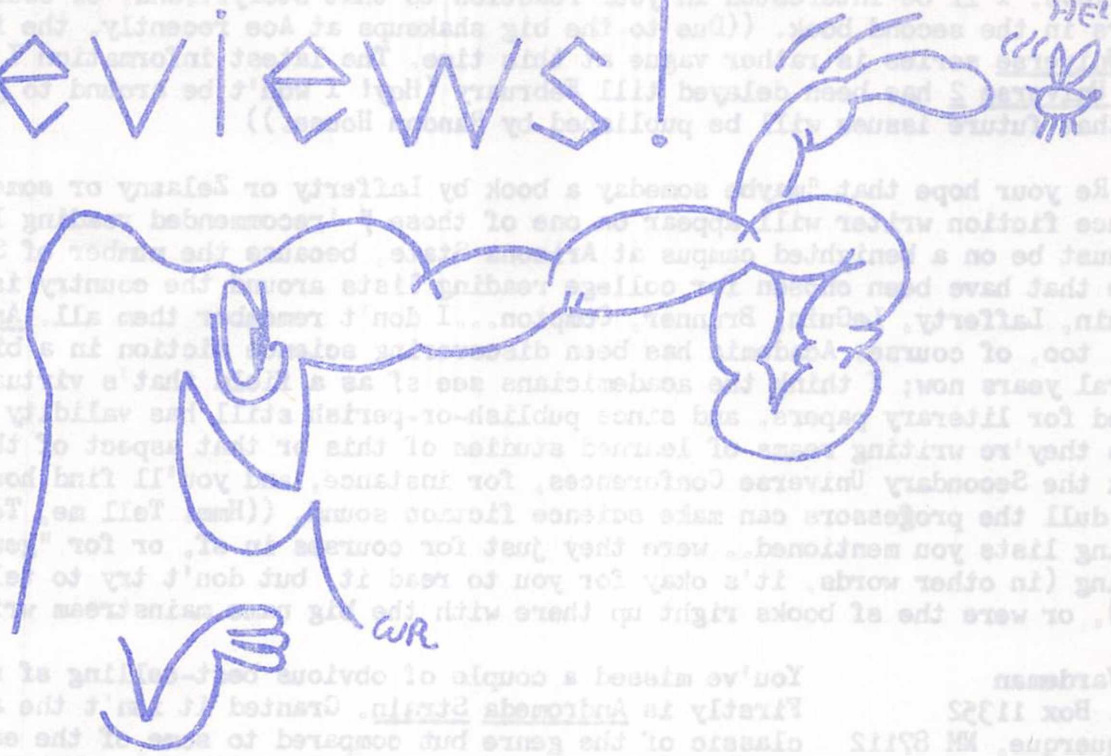
Bob Vardeman
P. O. Box 11352
Albuquerque, NM 87112

You've missed a couple of obvious best-selling sf novels. Firstly is Andromeda Strain. Granted it isn't the all time classic of the genre but compared to some of the early thud and blunder along the spaceways stuff, it's pretty fair. Then, I seem to remember that Stranger in a Strange Land is in its umpteenth printing and might have even seen a cover blurb saying "1,000,000 copies in print" or some such. Even if it isn't up to a megabook in sales, it has been well received by the mundane world. Then there is Dune. I unfortunately have no figures to offer but I doubt if sales have been disappointing. Then, as for staying power, we have novels like 1984 and Brave New World and War of the Worlds and 20,000 Leagues under the the Sea. ((Bob, while undoubtedly the books you mention are sf, are they considered as sf? 'Fraid not. Most of them have undergone the "metamorphis" Mike Scott mentioned, into "classics." Stranger in a Strange Land has become "the Hippy Bible," while Dune is, I kid you not, an ecological novel. As for Andromeda Strain, I was incredulous at the reception it got; I even saw the words "science fiction" in one or two reviews. But actually, Strain is an example of the current-interest bestseller; it came out just when a lot of news space was being devoted to the dangers of bacteriological warfare and to the astronauts' quarantine. A year or two sooner or later, and the book would probably have gotten only moderate sales. But the critical reception was encouraging, and may be a good sign for the future.))

If I seem to hesitate about this "SF is literature" business, it might be because I'm not all that disposed to go forth and proselytize. For some reason, well educated people will read sf but not admit to it -- they'd sooner admit to reading horny porny stuff. Around Sandia Labs here in Albq. the newstands are stripped bare of all the copies of ANALOG within a couple days...but get just one buyer to admit that he enjoys that silly Buck Rogers stuff. In a way this is a self-defense mechanism. After all, an engineer or scientist or professor has a reputation to maintain and if people think he reads kiddie fiction. ((Bob Vardeman is the editor of SANDWORM, which has one of the best letter columns around in fandom. Although I don't agree with everything he says (to say the least), I wholeheartedly recommend it.

((And that wraps up the letter column. I also got letters from Mike Montgomery and Stephen Gregg, and short comments from Bill Rupp and Alex Vitek. Thanks, everyone!))

Reviews!



Philip Wylie, Sons and Daughters of Mom. Doubleday, $5.95

In this book of essays, Philip Wylie, writer, agnostic, and professional iconoclast, gives his views on the Youth Rebellion, the under-thirty generation. By turns, he is bitter, angry, disgusted, and generally pissed-off.

The main theme of the book is that the Liberal Intellectual Establishment (or LIE, as Wylie calls it) is the main reason behind the deterioration of American Society; that the LIE has never been competent, indeed, has never allowed itself to become competent, to judge the world's problems and tp prescribe solutions, though it has continuously judge and prescribed, with obvious ill-effects. And that, to begin to solve the world's problems, mankind must cease thinking of itself in terms of "man as omnipotent man" and begin to think in terms of "man as animal," and act accordingly; i.e., that continuance of the species must be the first and major instinct of mankind, overriding even individual self-preservation.

In this context, Wylie discusses education, materialism, Marxism, his famous "Momism," the sex revolution, alienation, TV, the silent majority, racism, marijuana, and other subjects, in the same vitrolic style that made Generation of Vipers so famous.

But no matter what your viewpoint, Sons and Daughters of Mom will make you angry; either because you don't agree with Wylie, or because you do. And - if you're lucky, and have a spark of intelligence - this book might make you think.

-B. D. Arthurs

Thomas Disch, Camp Concentration, Avon Books, 75¢

This book is, I think I may safely say, a little-known science fiction classic. Little-known, as it was released by Doubleday with no advance advertising and came to

the attention of very few fans and readers. Now, it seems as though it is beginning to receive a great deal of recognition from a much larger number of people. As to it being a classic, as I stated above; I think it is, though that would depend mainly on the reader.

The plot of the novel is this: Louis Sachetti, a poet/conscientious objector is imprisoned in Springfield Penitentiary for anti-draft action; all of this is told the reader in diary form. Ashort time later, Sachetti finds himself in another prison, deep underground. In this prison, things are vastly different; the inmates are given the run of the place (which is rather like a small city), may have just about anything they desire and are requested to build or create anything which comes to mind. Sachetti seems almost to like this "prison" -- until he discovers its true purpose.

He learns that all the inmates -- including himself -- have been injected with a drug which "maximizes" their intelligence. The drug, Pallidine, is a derivative of syphilis, as the hero discovers, and is fatal. Therefore, as the prisoners create and learn more and more, their bodies are gradually being destroyed until death results nine months after the initial infection. They are guineau pigs; intelligence, as Sacchetti is told, is a nation's greatest national resource, and must be used at any price -- including death. The book is well-written and plotted, covering Sacchetti's journal and experiences in the prison. My only real complaint is the ending; it seems as though Disch was rushing to finish the book and stuck this one on to end it. The end is, in my opinion, the only thing which detracts from what would otherwise have been a brilliant novel -- it all boils down to something of a let-down.

I found curious parallels between this and Daniel Keyes' Flowers for Algernon: namely the theme of what effect increasing intelligence has on the protagonist (but there is a world of difference between the two, let me assure you). But, whatever you do, don't by any means pass this one up; I can promise you that if you read it you will be rewarded greatly for having done so.

-Doug Robillard

Don Pendleton, The Executioner: War Against the Mafia, Pinnacle Books, 95¢

Mack Bolan, sharpshooter and sniper, is called back from Vietnam to attend his family's funeral. His surviving kid brother tells him the story: Bolan's father had needed to get a loan, but was unable to get the money except from a loan shark outfit. The interest payments soon outweighed the original loan. In desperation, Cindy, Bolan's sister, goes to the loan shark and pleads. The loan outfit convinces her to become a prostitute to pay off the loan. When the father finds out, he goes insane and kills Cindy, her mother, and himself, also severely wounding the kid brother.

Bolan, in revenge, kills five officials of the loan company. It is reported as a gang killing, as the loan company is revealed to have had Mafia relations. Now the Mafia is out to get Bolan, and he decides to spend his life fighting the cancer of organized crime. And fight it he does, with over forty people dead by the end of the book, and another fifty or sixty wounded or injured.

Regardless of whether one approves of Bolan's methods, this is undoubtedly an excitingbook, that holds your attention steadily. And obviously I'm not the only one who thinks so, since this, the first volume in a series, is now in its sixth printing. After all, it was Mickey Spillane who made Signet into one of the most successful paperback companies around, and Pendleton just might do the same for Pinnacle. I'm looking forward to reading the future volumes of the Executioner.

-B. D. Arthurs

Evangeline Walton, The Children of Llyr, Ballantine Adult Fantasy, 95¢

This new volume in the Adult Fantasy line is an original novel, and a very good one. Miss Walton's previous representation in the Adult Fantasy books, The Island of the Mighty, was written in the 1930's, and editor Lin Carter presumed that she had died since then. Surprise! When Island was republished, she popped up alive and kicking in Arizona. Better yet, she had written another fantasy novel, that is now published for the first time.

Like her first book, The Children of Llyr is based on the Welsh national epic, the Mabinogian. This volume tells of Bran the Blessed, ruler of the Island of the Mighty, of the marriage of his sister Branwen to the Irish King, of the treachery of the Irish and their destruction in the war that followed, and of the passing of the Children of Llyr. I don't usually use the word "masterpiece," but Miss Walton has the greatest control of prose since Peake's Gormenghast. Masterpiece!

-B. D. Arthurs

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FAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, cont. from page 11...

Personal libraries are a unique phenomena onto themselves. Like their larger counterpart, the public and institutional libraries, their contents are as varied as the personality of the book orderer and the budget available. Most of them will be devoted to books, mostly paperbacks, with some hardcovers. Of course, there can also be found a few shelves of the professional magazines if the owner feels so inclined. If a trufan is running the collection, then there is always the possibility of finding space for some of the fanzines.

Just when a shelf full of books stops being that, and starts to be a Science Fiction Collection Library is usually something that no one, not even the owner, can determine. For one thing it takes a willingness to spend a lot of time and money. Then there are such things as a lot of needed space, either for book shelves, or to store the boxes. Once all of this is available, there is the necessity of keeping it up, which is an eternal task unless all hope is lost.

There is much that can be said about having a personal library. Probably the best thing about it though, is the personal ego satisfaction of actually having done something of intrinsic value.

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