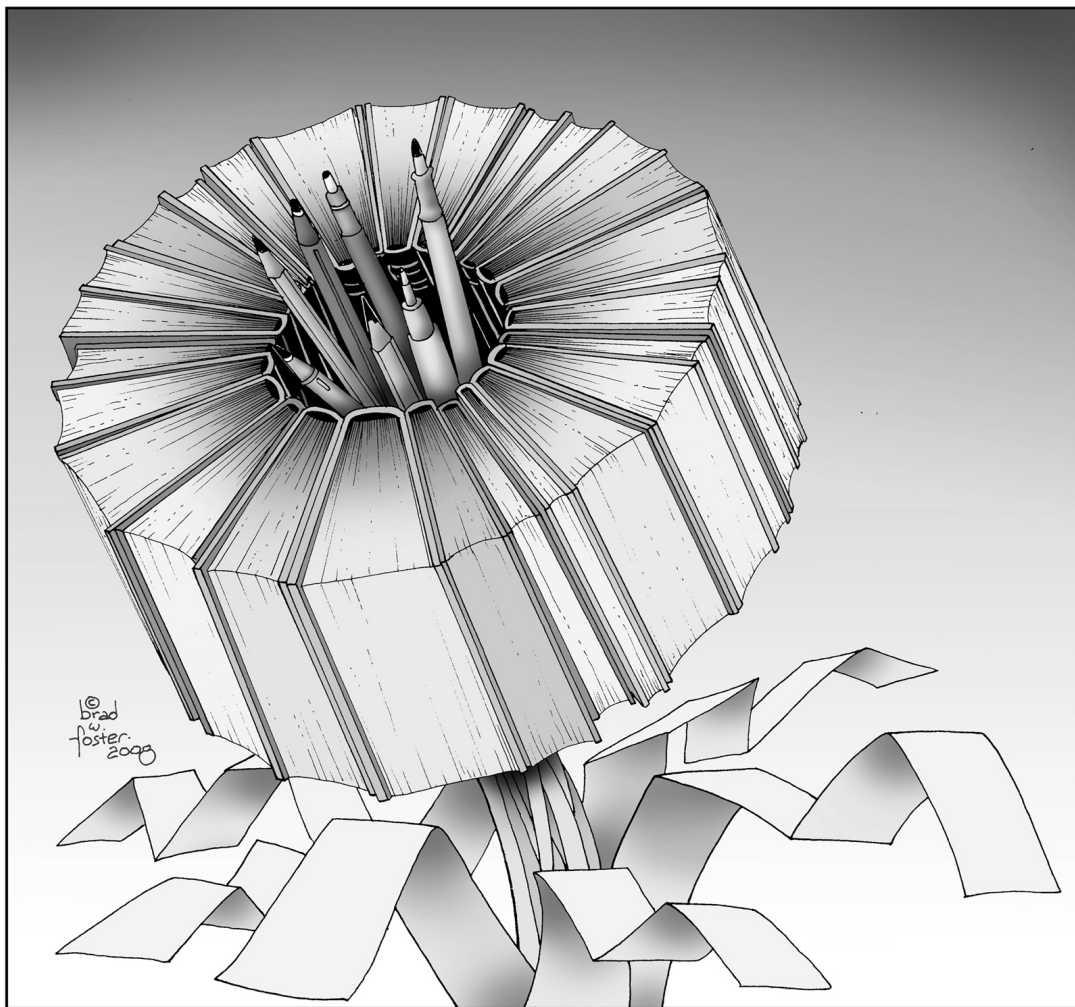


It Goes On The Shelf



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Published at The Sign of the Purple Mouth by Ned Brooks

4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn GA 30047-4720

nedbrooks@sprynet.com

Website - <http://home.sprynet.com/~nedbrooks/home.htm>

'And departing, leave behind us

Toothprints in the hands of time.'

Cover by Brad Foster (this year's fan-art Hugo winner!), other art with associated text, cartoon by Steve Stiles - all rights revert to the artists.

John and Diana Fox kindly sent these three books (and a Christmas card) from Down Under -

The book of Sei & other Stories by David Brooks, Hale & Iremonger 1986, 127pp, wraps

There are 48 entries in the Contents (30 of them chapters in "The book of Sei") - obviously quite short bits. The cover art seems to be a photo of abstract wax (or chocolate?) sculptures stuck in the sand - alas, they are abstracts with no content that I can see. I see that it must be meant to illustrate the terrain of the opening paragraph.

I hope the author (no relation that I know of) has his Poetic License.... I stumbled over the faint shining from the stones and "...starlight salted the leaves of the cassia". But when the protagonist imagines that the woman's large deep-set eyes are the result of suffering or working late at night - hooha. This is followed by pages of bizarre sex acts. Somewhere Arthur N. Scarm is laughing....

Day-Dreaming on Company Time by Robert Hood, Five Islands Press 1988, 96pp, wraps

Here there are only 12 stories, and the print is quite small. The cover is abstract, but an abstract that suggests something to the imagination. A blurb on the back compares the author to Roald Dahl. The only story with a clearly skiffy title is a surreal farce starring Nick Rubber, Agent of F.O.A.M (Fighters of Alien Menaces). Trying the title tale, I find that it starts like a Python sketch but deteriorates to the tune of Saxon violins.

Threshold by Sara Douglass, Voyager/HarperCollins 2001, 549pp, wraps

A mass-market pb, but as with the first two, has no price on the cover. Sara Douglass has written many books - most of the others in several series. And is apparently very popular, as this is the 8th reprint from the 1997 original. I can see why - it's somewhere on the Jack Vance side of skiffy fantasy. A story set on an alien planet with super-science and diverse cultures. I'm sure I would have loved it when I was 12.

And then, just before Halloween, John and Diana sent two more -

Metal Fatigue by Sean Williams, HarperCollins 1996, 458pp, wraps, \$A12.95

Nice Greg Bridges cover art. Where a US pulp writer might set a fantasy in the antipodes, Sean, who lives in Adelaide Australia has set this one in the invented US city of Kennedy, a century in the future. And described every person, costume, weapon, building, scene in such detail that it's clear why this is such a fat mass-market pb!

RealmShift by Alan Baxter, Blade Red Press 2008, 355pp, wraps

And inscribed to John and Diane by the author! This trade pb is about a deal with the devil and a crystal skull - but the skull on the cover is not the "Mayan" crystal skull. There is a blurb by Van Ikin - somehow I thought Van Ikin was long since lost in the mists of history. But I see my sense of when anything happened is faulty as usual - Van Ikin has a website and is a professor, not yet 60. Like Sean Williams, Alan Baxter seems to have been struck by the curse of Lionel Fanthorpe and has to describe everything in cinematic detail - Fanthorpe actually did it only a few places in a book so as to make the text length fit a contract.

How to Scrape Skies by George Mikes, Wingate 1953, 127pp, illus. in line by Nicolas Bentley

This little red-bound book was a thrift store find. It must have been popular in its day - it first appeared in 1948 and this is the 8th impression. Mikes seems to have been a well-known comic - he had previously published **How To Be an Alien** and his style reminds me a little of Dave Barry. His description of the USA of 1948 seems rather over-the-top to me - but I wasn't there at the time, I was 10 years old and living in Concepcion Chile. The cartoon illos are merely competent.

The Star Spangled Manner by Beverley Nichols, Jonathan Cape 1937, 256pp, d/w 2s

Another book about the USA by a British author, but 20 years earlier - it originally appeared in 1928. And where Mikes is merely silly, Nichols is witty in his own odd way. I got this partly because I already had a small collection of his books that I had read long ago. If his account is to be believed, he met a number of notables of the time - Gloria Swanson, Calvin Coolidge, Anita Loos, Henry Ford - and records them as saying very odd and unexpected things. He goes to Cincinnati for the trial of George Remus, who had apparently murdered his wife but was acquitted - I never heard of him, but Wikipedia has a long page on him. Nichols refers to Sinclair Lewis' **Babbitt** but spells it "Babbit".

Edgar's Journal (#8 and #9) by Steven & Vicki Ogden - an Edgar Allan Poe fanzine, done mainly for FAPA. Tim Marion suggested they send me copies. The #9 has a Joe Wehrle cover - hadn't heard of him in decades! Anyone else remember *Fawn the Dark-Eyed* from 1965? Lots of people did 1st-day covers for the Poe stamp - one is included, and pages of images.

Let's Go to Australia! by George F. Taubeneck, Conjure House 1946, 301pp, endpaper map.

Odd that a promotional history and travelogue of the Antipodes was published - with no graphics other than the crude map - by a company that seems to have specialized in books on slight-of-hand and stage magic. It's printed on a thick laid paper and well-bound in boards covered in plasticized cloth. This copy belonged to a George J Roche in Baltimore - he applied a large red rubber stamp to it in three places.

Taubeneck was a blatant racist - his first chapter is entitled "Very White People" and the second "Very Black People", and he is all in favor of a political movement of the time to "keep Australia white". The

chapter on the aborigines gives an account of their creation myths and legendary creatures - the Yarramah-yah-ho, the Keen Keeng, the Wowie. The "Drop Bear" is not mentioned....

There is a chapter devoted to the strange animals of Australia, and another to the slang of the time - mostly taken up with a verbatim account of court proceedings.

There are chapters on "Virile Sports" and "Virile Cities", after which the rest of the text is more technical, aimed at the prospective immigrant.

Tempting the Gods / Hunting the Shadows by Tanith Lee, Wildside Press 2009, 255/256pp.

These are the two volumes of a Selected Stories - attractive dust-jackets (on which no price appears) and nice bindings. The layout seems careless - in vol.1, the pre-title and title pages are identical - the publisher's logo does not appear. The short introduction by Donald A. Wollheim does not hint that he passed away 19 years earlier. But each volume has one previously unpublished story, and I am a Tanith Lee nut, so I had to have them!

The Gothic Flame by Devendra P. Varma, Scarecrow Press 1987, 264pp, frontispiece photo, appendices, bibliography, index, wraps.

A third edition of a "History of the Gothic Novel in England" - it had previously appeared in 1957 and 1966. Dr. Varma had been an English professor at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia for 25 years. Herbert Read (who also supplies a foreword) and Evelyn Waugh supply complimentary blurbs. The author is said to be a world authority on gothic romance, and also published the wonderful title **The Evergreen Tree of Diabolical Knowledge**. But what struck me as I reached the Vs in a project to inventory books I have shelved as non-fiction is that the photographic portrait used as frontispiece is of Jawaharlal Nehru, the renowned non-gothic statesman, in a gray western-style suit and matching homburg topper instead of the "Nehru jacket" and cap he is usually shown in.

The cover, attributed to John Dugan, is a lurid orange and black composition with a knight on horseback, a castle, bats, a hunchback, and a maiden in distress.

If for nothing else the book is useful for the long explanation of how *gothic* came to have vastly different meanings over the centuries. Further on, Dr. Varma drags out (or invents?) words like *pathognominic* and I get a bit lost.... Of the books mentioned I have read only **Frankenstein** and some of **Melmoth the Wanderer** and **Vathek**, though I have some of the others.

News of the Weird reported in 2005 on a Welshman's invention of the "Mosquito," a device that emits an irritating, pulsating, very-high-pitched noise and is marketed to shopkeepers to drive away loitering children and teenagers, since the pitch is audible to them but rarely to anyone older than the mid-20s (because audio range contracts as we age). In June, following an investigation, the Council of Europe (which oversees the European Court of Human Rights) declared the Mosquito a "human rights violation," in that the sounds it emits constitute "torture." [The Guardian, 6-19-10]

- So can we now expect Muzak to vanish as well?

A Pictorial History of the United States of America (vols.3 and 4) by John Frost, Case Tiffany & Burnham 1848, 239/316pp, illustrated by W. Croome and others.

This thrift-store find was bound for S. D. Emerson, whose initials appear on the binding. Re-bound

perhaps - the title page says "4 volumes in one", but the binding is marked "Volume II". Some previous owner has used as a bookmark the undated title page from a playing-card size New Testament.

I bought this mainly for the copious artwork, all done I suppose from engraved metal plates - the long list of illustrations includes every initial letter and decorative header or tailpiece, with the names of both the artist and the engraver. But it is interesting to note the mid-19th-century view of US history. This volume covers the Revolutionary War and the Washington administration on through the war with Mexico. But although there is a small engraving of the Mexican general Santa Anna on horseback, and a brief mention that he had been captured at the Battle of San Jacinto in 1837 - there is neither mention nor picture of the 1836 battle at the Alamo! Did the Texans just make that up for the tourists?

Worldshaker by Richard Harland, Allen & Unwin 2009, 366+pp, illustrated by Eiko Ojala, wraps
The title is the name of the gigantic steam dreadnaught which is the only world the teenage hero has ever known. The illustrations include cut-away diagrams. The crew are a hierarchy of regimented hereditary classes led by the captain, with a "Queen Victoria & Prince Albert" as hereditary figureheads. The economy consists of roaming the globe trading manufactured goods for fresh food and raw materials - and the "ship" can traverse land as well, and pays no mind to who might be using the land at the time.

Inevitably our hero breaks the conditioning and leads a successful revolution - this may move the tale from the steampunk SF column to the political fantasy column. The details are well done, and the action well-paced - it could make a good movie.

History Laid Bare by Richard Zacks, HarperCollins 1994, 463pp, dust-jacket

This is subtitled "Love, Sex, and Perversity from the Ancient Etruscans to Warren G. Harding" and retells scandalous tales year by year from 1400 BC through 1921 - and there is an extensive list of sources for the material. Written in a very smooth light style - I read a few pages every night for several weeks.

Blasphemy by Douglas Preston, Forge 2008, 415pp, diagrams

A thrift-store find. Before the Large Hadron Collider was built in Switzerland, there was a project to build an even larger one in Texas, but the funding fell through. In this novel the ring is 16 miles in diameter and located in the Arizona desert. There is the expected concern over the creation of a "black hole" - but also a farrago of theology, metaphysics, politics, sorcery, and violence. Does it work as fiction? I'll let you know if I manage to read it.

Political Babble *The 1,000 Dumbest Things Ever Said by Politicians*, compiled by David Olive, John Wiley & Sons 1992, 246pp, illustrated by Barry Blitt, \$14.95

The curious thing about this small square over-priced (but I got it in a thrift store) book is that while some of the quotes are indeed astonishingly stupid, others fall far short of the claim in the title. It is easy of course to find an asinine remark by ex-King Dubya and they quote over 100 of them, which probably doesn't exhaust the supply. But other entries seem a strain - Ralph Waldo Emerson (who was not a politician) is quoted as saying "Democracy becomes a government of bullies tempered by editors". I don't see anything stupid about that. Joseph Goebbels (who was never as far as I know an elected official) said "It is the absolute right of the state to supervise the formation of public opinion". That is just a statement of policy followed by most governments - with greater or lesser success - and though Goebbels' intent was evil, there is nothing stupid about the statement.

My Talks with Dean Spanley by Lord Dunsany, G.P.Putnam's Sons 1936, 149pp, frontispiece by Robert Ball

There was also the same year an edition by Heinemann with the frontispiece by Sidney Sime. The Sime art is beautiful, but far spookier than anything in the story, which is a spoof on the Hindu idea of reincarnation where the same soul might pass through both human and animal bodies. The curious italization of the word "Talks" in the title appears only the title page of the US edition.

This book has just been made into a film under the title *Dean Spanley* - I would like to see it, but the DVD is only Region 2 and PAL, where I am Region 1 and NTSC (may the Bird of Paradise fly up the noses of the greedy twits who divided the world up into DVD regions when modern cyber-voodoo would make anything viewable anywhere).

There is very little action in this book, and only three characters (the IMDB website seems to indicate that two women and a swami have been added to the film). The protagonist (though not a Hindu) wants to investigate reincarnation so that he will know what to expect when he dies. He discovers that Dean Spanley, in a certain state of consciousness, seems to remember having been a dog. The Dean is not much of a drinker, but with just the right amount of Imperial Tokay can be induced to remember his canine life. Those flashbacks are the only real action in the story. And they are very well done - we have no real idea of course of the mental processes of a farm dog, but the author must have observed them very closely to be able to attempt this.

Later the film did become available through Amazon as a Scandinavian Region 1 NTSC BluRay DVD - in English with Swedish liner notes and an option for five subtitle languages. The plot was gently expanded to include Peter O'Toole as the protagonist Fisk's aged father. Sam Neill plays the Dean, and Bryan Brown the Conveyancer. Jeremy Northam, an actor I don't recall ever seeing before, plays Fisk. My new player may not play BluRay quite right - the picture was fine, but the sound was only audible at the highest volume setting. And they could have provided an option for *no* subtitles. But I enjoyed it a lot, and thought it was close to the spirit of the novel.

The Bell in the Fog by Gertrude Atherton, Harper's 1905, 302pp, frontispiece photo of the author.

She wrote at least one other fantasy, a life-extension novel, **Black Oxen**. These are short stories, some eldritch or gothic in tone, but only one seems to have a real supernatural occurrence. The style seems rather turgid to me, but was no doubt what was expected at the time - though Twain, Poe, Kipling, Stevenson, Haggard, etc. are much easier to read. "The Striding Place" is curious - it has nothing to do with "striding" at all, but merely describes an attempt to save a man from a swift stream called "The Strid". The rescuer imagines (?) that the man is still conscious enough to grasp a stick, but when he gets the victim out discovers that "There was no face" - a very pulpish last line!

Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There by Lewis Carroll, Ramble House 2010, 107pp, illustrated by Gavin L. O'Keefe, wraps

Gavin had previously illustrated editions of **Alice in Wonderland** and **Hunting of the Snark**, and for me an edition of William Blake's **An Island in the Moon**. He lives in Australia. There are 10 full-page plates and many smaller illos. These are eldritch, iconic pictures, somewhat darker in mood than most done for what was, after all, meant as a children's book. Beautiful work, though I was somewhat surprised to see the Slithy Tove depicted as much more vicious-looking than the Jubjub Bird.

The price does not appear, but you can easily look at www.ramblehouse.com

Broom Sticks by Walter de la Mare, Knopf 1925, 334pp, illustrated by Bold

I found this in a local thrift store and enjoyed reading it. I find it impossible to describe the effect of a de la Mare story - there is a great deal more character and scene than there is plot, but the description is beautifully written. The art, called only "designs", is very like woodcuts.

The Sacred Hoop by Bill Broder, Sierra Club Books 1979, 252pp, illustrations and photos, bibliography
What I noticed about this book on the thrift-store shelf was the beautiful gold-lettered cloth binding, stamped in blind on the front with an aborigine pictograph. Looking into it, I found that it is very heavily illustrated, with fascinating images and photographs from a wide variety of sources (listed in the back).

These pictures illustrate a fictionalized capsule history of the universe and man, starting with the Big Bang and proceeding through primitive man, ancient civilizations, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Industrial Revolution. Each era is represented by one or more stories. Of course thousands of such books could be written, each entirely different - but this one is very well done!

The Outlandish Art of Mahlon Blaine by Brian J. Hunt, G B Graphics, 2009, 451pp, wraps, \$39.99

I have been collecting Mahlon Blaine books for forty years and have several feet of shelf space full of them. Brian Hunt has found and published beautifully quite a lot of illustrations that I had never seen. Another collector told me that with this book he need look no further for books illustrated by Mahlon Blaine. Blaine had a unique style and vision - from the first I saw of his illustrations I knew I wanted more. I had the same reaction to Mervyn Peake, Sidney Sime, Wallace Smith. The past is another country - and they drew better there. This image:



should serve to illustrate the appeal of both this and the following book.

Alraune by Hanns Heinz Ewers, Side Real Press 2010, 372pp, translated by Joe E. Bandel, illustrated by Mahlon Blaine and Ilna Wunderwald Ewers, limited to 350 numbered copies, \$55

The translation is new for this edition. The 1929 John Day edition where the Mahlon Blaine art first appeared was of a translation by Guy Endore. And here we also get, collected in the back of the book, seven plates done by the author's wife for the Georg Müller edition of 1919. A very handsome volume, bound in black cloth stamped in red, green and white. There is also a biography of Ewers by Mark Samuels, an essay on the legend of the *mandrake* plant by Tyler Davis, and an explanation by the translator of the clumsiness and omissions of the Endore translation. And a tipped-in replica of Ewers' own bookplate - a very odd picture. And a drawing that Mahlon Blaine put on the endpaper of the 1929 edition of **Alraune**.

Chikkin Hazard by Charles Readit & Dion Bounceycore, Bradbury Agnew & Co., London 1881, 145pp
I ran across this at a flea-market and they wanted \$195 for it - too much for me, interesting as it looked. Fortunately it's on Google Books, so I downloaded it as a PDF and printed my own copy. The authors' names are part of the joke - I think Charles Reade was a well-known author at the time. *Dion Bounceycore* sounds like something the Pythons might have made up. The name of the actual author is given on the title page - F. C. Burnand. He must have been the Dave Barry of his time.... The first chapter is very short:

"I wants to make your flesh creep."

Fat Boy in Pickwick.

IN a dim cave, lighted by only one small gas-lamp,
sat Michael and Job Friestlor. Michael was Job's
father, and older than the latter by some few years.

"Why have you brought me here?" demanded Job,
in a hollow voice.

"Why? ha! ha!" laughed the elder, grimly, and both
his eyes shooting forth a murderous fire, he rose from his
seat and waved a keen-edged hatchet above his head.
Job turned deadly pale. He could scarcely raise his
glass to his lips as he said with a sickly smile, "Always
the same lighthearted creature, father."

Once, twice, the fearful weapon flashed through the
air, and then descended upon—

But not on the prostrate form of Job Friestlor fell THE
COLD STEEL.

At the beginning of Ch.II the demented cliff-hanger is resolved - Job leaps onto his father's back and bashes him in the head. But another hazard looms - the cave is filling with water!

This book really calls for at least one illustration for each of the 31 chapters....

When Donald Williams was publicly sworn in as a judge in Ulster County, N.Y., on January 2nd, offices were closed, and no one could find a Bible. Since holy books are not legally required, Williams took the oath with his hand on a dictionary.

An encouraging repudiation of the medieval belief in magical objects! Or perhaps they thought this would improve the judge's comprehension or spelling. Perhaps more appropriate would have been a stack of the books containing the laws of the State of New York - but that would have required a lot of labor, and a tall ladder.

Dear Calamity... Love, Belle by Belle Bendall & Calamity Wronsky, Harmony Books 1994, 144pp, illustrated by divers hands, d/w \$17.00

Denny Lien sent me this in trade as being weird, and it is that. Every page is overdesigned, with squiggles, colored print, ugly helvetica, tilted text and generic images apparently lifted from some uncredited cyber source. The content is in the form of letters between two cowgirls (the subtitle is *Life Wisdom for the Cowgirl in Every Woman*) and there was a previous book called **Calamity and Belle**. The table of contents runs 4 pages, with each line carrying an icon that reappears at the head of the corresponding chapter. And what is all this littry litter in aid of? Mere rubbish - bad verse, advice to the lovelorn, reviews of country music, trivial horse lore, short movie reviews, etc. It reads rather like a bad fanzine.

Autumn World by Joan Marie Verba & Tess Meara & Deborah K. Jones & Margaret Howes & Ruth Berman, Stone Dragon Press 2000, 123pp, wraps

This also is from Denny Lien, but much more readable, a short SF novel something in the manner of Ursula LeGuin. I have known Ruth Berman for decades, but never knew she had become a fifth of a novelist! There is are brief biographies of the authors in the back, and a long glossary of alien words.

Defending Principles *The Political Legacy of Bill Brust*, ed. by Jean Brust, Labor Publications 1993, 268pp, photos, wraps

Another tome from Denny Lien, an anthology of recollections by the friends and family of Bill Brust, who was born in Budapest during the Hungarian revolution of 1919 and came to the US with his family the next year - and was still a dedicated Trotskyite Communist when he died in 1991, well known in labor circles throughout the midwest. His son Steven, who contributes a short chapter, is the fantasy writer Steven Brust.

The Fanscient, edited by Donald B. Day for the Portland Science-Fantasy Society, 1949-50.

Definitely a fanzine, but a very fancy one for the time, lithographed from justified typescript. Easy to mail - they are just 4¼x5¼ inches, 32 (one is 64) saddle-bound pages of very small print and sharply printed artwork. This stack from the Dietz boxes is issues 6, 7, 9, 11, and 12. No.6 has articles by Robert Bloch and Ray Bradbury. No.7 has an O. G. Estes illos said to have been omitted from Murray Leinster's **Sidewise in Time** (Shasta 1950) as being too gruesome - well, maybe. That book in fact has no interior artwork. No.9, the 64-page issue, was the 2nd annish, and has color lithography, including a stereoscopic

page. The cover is hideous, but there is an article by Heinlein and a half-page story by Edwin R Corley. Is this the same Edwin Corley who later wrote **The Jesus Factor** and **Farewell, My Slightly Tarnished Hero** (a novel based on the life of James Dean, where he is called "Johnny Lewis" but the dust-jacket art is a solarized image of James Dean)? No.11 has an autobiography of Theodore Sturgeon - and a brief article on statistical analysis and the bell-shaped curve.

These zines were sold for 15 cents or 6 for \$1, with the cover price rising to 25 cents in 1950. What was the print run? Did fans mind the tiny print? I can only read it comfortably with my glasses off, and I am nearsighted, about 20/600.

Do You Speak Klingon?, Zhava Glaser for Jews for Jesus, 6pp, illustrated by J. Colle
A fanzine in the form of a tract or *vice-versa*.... It's dated 1993 and was found in a letter from Lloyd Penney while clearing away old paper. Useless to give the address and phone number now. I will file it as a fanzine. The style looks like a joke tract, and yet the message may be sincere - hard to tell.

For only \$125, Georgia Tech alumni could have spent an evening with Living Legend Debbie Reynolds in September ©

Mystery and Detective Stories: German, Russian edited by Julian Hawthorne, Review of Reviews 1907, 304pp, frontis by Power O'Malley - one of a set of six volumes with 101 stories from "East and West".

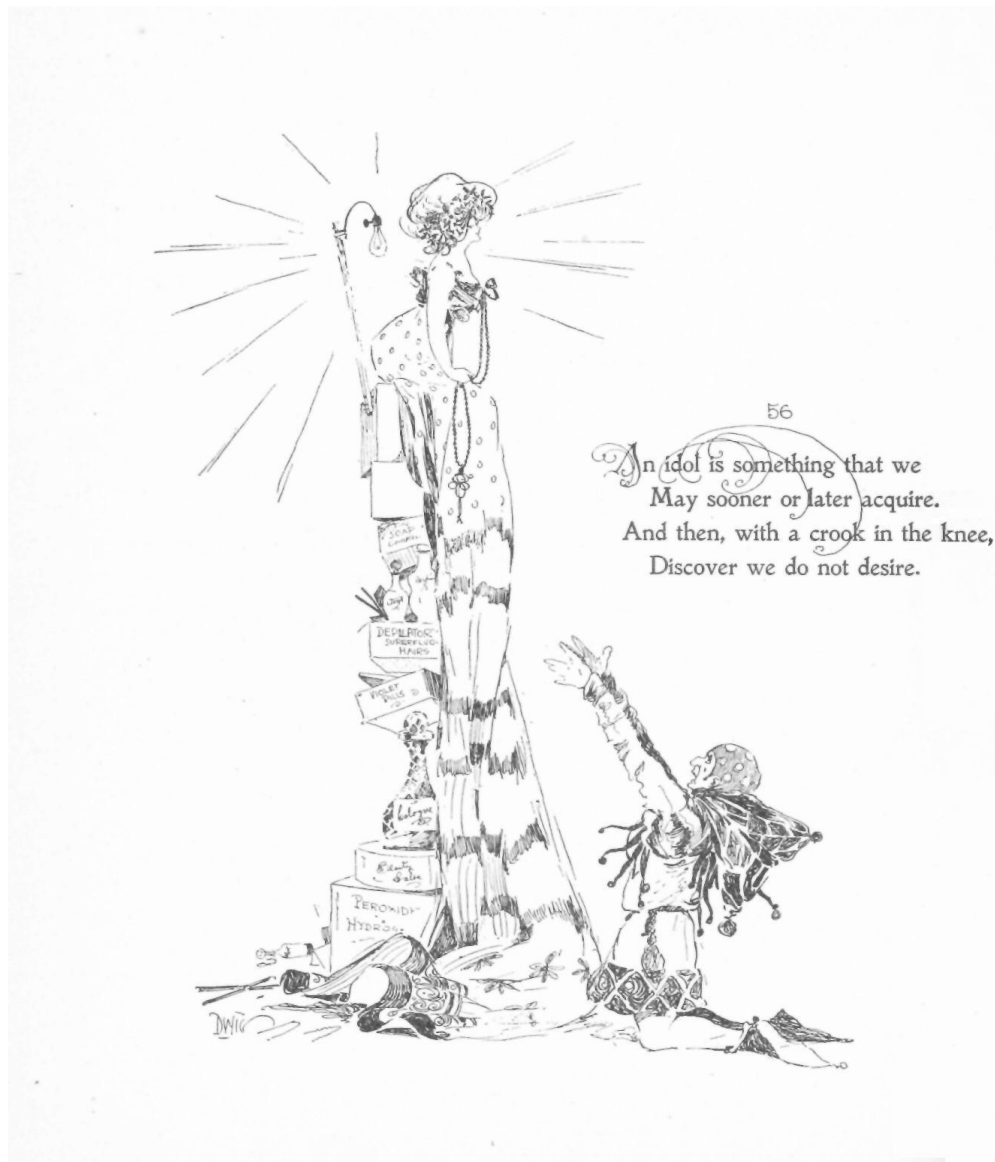
The frontispiece artwork illustrates the first story, "The Man on the Bottle" by Gustav Meyrink, most noted for the novel **The Golem**. A very silly story alas, all atmosphere and mystification - and several other stories in the volume are much better.

The Way to Happiness by L. Ron Hubbard, The-Way-to-Happiness Foundation 2007, 248pp, illustrated
The text is copyright to ol' Elron 1981, 2005, 2007; and the art is copyright to the same 2006. Utter psychobabble, but oddly enough with no mention of Bridge Publications, the Church of Scientology publishing house. The art is pretty good for a dead guy. In several places the claim is made that this is "the first nonreligious moral code based wholly on common sense" - and explicitly stated that this is so that government departments can distribute it. There is a website:

<http://www.thewaytohappiness.org>

and the usual smirking photo of the author as being "among the most acclaimed humanitarians of this or any age". The website comes up, but may be a scam - it seems to be very slow and may be trying something nasty.

Whimlets by S. Scott Stinson, Henry T Coates & Co. 1902, 100pp, illustrated by Clare Victor Dwiggins
Dwiggins, who signed his work "Dwig" was a famous illustrator and book designer of the time. This little book was found in excellent condition at a flea market for \$10. There is no dust jacket - there may never have been one, or perhaps just translucent paper with no printing. Each page has a cynical quatrain with the rest of the space taken up with the corresponding drawing.



According to the dust jacket of his SF novel **Millennium I** (Knopf 1945), the artist and font designer William Addison Dwiggins *also* used the nickname "Dwig"! Both men were born in Ohio within a few years of each other and their careers overlapped the same period, the first half of the 20th century. Were they related? The WWW does not reveal anything that I can find nor do any of my own reference books.

Ophemera, ed. Robert M. Stewart, 1977, 68pp, photos, divers illustrators, wraps

This was in the 15 boxes of fanzines given me by Frank Dietz. Is it a fanzine, a prozine, an anthology, or what? In tiny print at the bottom of the inside back cover there's the copyright date and an instruction that dealers should not sell it to minors; and another instruction on how to view the anamorphic part of the front cover art. It was apparently meant to be sold through dealers, but there is no price on it. Nor is

So how am I to file the thing? With the Roy Krenkel books I suppose - there are 18 of his illos in a section labeled "Krenkel Cuts". The opening section is on Al Feldstein, apparently a 1940s comic artist. Then there's a section on the film noir with numerous photos, then a large photo of Wally Wood and 11 pages of a comic strip. A full-page photo of Carl Barks and Harry Reeves in front of a wall full of small sketches, with 7 more pages of Barks art (including "Lil Gaga Among the Jerky People") and a double-page photo. Five pages on Billie Holiday with photos. More strips, including one based on Harrison's **The Stainless Steel Rat**.

Someone - Janie Lamb I think - gave me the older edition long ago, and I think I found this later in a thrift store. They are not the same at all, the older one was translated by Seiichi Shiojiri and the latter by Geoffrey Bownas. A short novel, about 100 pages in translation, written the same year that the author took his own life. The "Kappa" is a traditional Japanese water imp, but the novel has little to do with the imagined nature of an imaginary creature - it is very much like Swift's **Gulliver's Travels** in that the author uses the account of a visit to Kappaland to make satirical comments about his own culture and human culture in general. And, as with Swift's much longer epic, it is entertaining and reads quite smoothly in either translation - it seems likely to me that Bownas worked from the earlier translation.

A mad book by a local boy - Dr. Evans was an English professor at Georgia State University when this was published, and lived in Loganville, about 30 miles east of here. A modern man mystically gets into the Mayan past and pens a description of that culture - as a thousand sonnets. The content is long on description and short on action - I would be curious to know how long it took to write - and if anyone ever read the whole thing. In general Evans seem to ignore the rhyme scheme of the classic sonnet, except that he does make the last two lines rhyme. The book is typescript rather than typeset.

I suppose this is horror (though there is little grue) or fantasy, though it has trappings of SF in that it is set in the modern world and there are scientists studying the problem. The problem is that the dead are coming back to life - but only teenagers in the USA. They do not eat brains (or anything else) or even breathe, but they do go to high-school, drive cars, and date. The plot consists of the social angst of the typical middle-class TV high-school, and the discrimination against the undead (PC terms "living impaired", "differently biotic") that is presented as analogous to racism. If this were science-fiction, it would have to occur to someone to ask what energy source could be in use by people who neither eat nor

I was surprised to learn that this book was popular enough that sequels appeared in 2009 and 2010!

There is an old man, and he is in love - or at least has affairs with a series of younger women. But the real interest of the book is his attempt to write about ancient history and his commentary on Scots history and society. I like his artwork too.

The Art of the Gipsy Cimbalon by Kálmán Balogh, ARC EUCD 1433 1998

Translated from the French by Robert Norton, and with a foreword by Edith Wharton. Set in a castle and the narrator is dead - I have yet to read it all. The style is a little florid but pleasant, and it is spooky. Whether actually fantasy I have yet to discover. There's a lot of detail about long-forgotten customs such as importing bergamot oranges from Spain to use as organic air-fresheners - there is a great deal more about those than the reader really needs to know. The action takes place through sometime in the mid-19th century, after the restoration of the French monarchy. Apparently the US edition appeared because the novel was very popular in France. But the castle called Campard seems to be almost as isolated from the rest of the world as Gormenghast, and the narrator is old enough to remember the French revolution. All objects in the castle seem to be haunted. I suspect the church library this came from was deceived by the title - there is little mention of religion. Half-way through, Uncle Horace has come back from China with a strange woman....

The subtitle "How the British saw their Empire" and dust-jacket cover photo seem to hint that the main purpose of British imperialism was to have an excuse to go about in ridiculously ornate costumes. The lines some previous owner has underlined in red confirm this suspicion.... I suspect however that this is all window-dressing for the real motivation - financial gain.

The dust-jacket shows a nice photo view of the forest primeval - said to be the painting "Sacred Grove" by Greg Olsen. But then the subtitle consists of the remarkable claim "A guided tour through six billion years of Mormonism". Just how this figure is arrived at is never explained - the text quotes 4.5 billion years as the guesstimate given by science for the age of the Earth. It's all downhill from there, through the plural marriage revelation to the current religious tyranny in Salt Lake City and the holy underwear - I think I see where Elron Hubbard got some of his ideas for Dianetics/Scientology.

The Jew in the Lotus by Rodger Kamenetz, HarperCollins 1994, 304pp, notes, glossary, dust-jacket.

More weird religion.... The dust-jacket is very attractive, but bears no price. I noticed the comical title first, it's in large letters on the spine. The text is a memoir of the author's exploration of Tibetan Buddhism. Apparently there was a "historic" meeting of eight rabbis and the Dalai Lama; and there are enough Jewish Buddhists for them to be called "JUBUs". Ram Dass and Richard Gere get into the act....

The Voidoid by Richard Hell, CodeX 1996, wraps 79pp, £5.95

This novella is said to have first appeared in 1973. I could not resist the title for 99¢ but it seems to be unreadable surreal rubbish. An afterword by the author explains that the smudge on the cover is his thumbprint in blood, and that the book is "all balled up with **Maldoror**" - doesn't help much....

Hell! Said the Duchess by Michael Arlen, Doubleday Doran 1934, 241pp

There was an interesting discussion of this on the Net, so I had to get a copy - not a very good copy, but then I just wanted to read it. One corner of the binding appears to have been gnawed.... Arlen's manner here is tediously over-cute, but the action does move on, and the plot reminds me a bit of Stevenson's **New Arabian Nights** or Machen's **The Three Impostors**. I suppose it could be considered a sort of science fiction, in that the action is set in the future year 1938. Everyone, including prominent people, seems to have an unlikely name - it may be that the target audience of the time knew who he was talking about. I suppose *Wingless*, *Snee*, *Crust*, and *Axaloe* are possible, but "Count *Musselsareoffsir*"? Place names however all seem authentic. A few historical figures of the time are mentioned - Churchill, Mussolini, Oswald Mosley, Lord Beaverbrook. The shadow of WWII seems to loom over the side remarks, but the central plot is not political. The resolution of the murder mystery can only be called Lovecraftian. I see that I have the same author's **Man's Mortality** from a year earlier, I will have to see what that is like.

Man's Mortality by Michael Arlen, Doubleday Doran 1933, 307pp

"Michael Arlen" was a pseudonym, but apparently there was no secret about it, as this book is dedicated to his father, Sarkis Kouyoumdjian. This really is science fiction - set in a future where the world is ruled by airline companies! The airliners in use all seem to be something like the zeppelin lighter-than-air design, but larger and carrying their own small scout planes like the USS Akron and USS Macon. This is a future we were not destined to see - the Akron was in service for only about 18 months when it crashed. The largest passenger ship, the Graf Zeppelin, burned. WWII was fought with large bombers and the technology then used for large heavier-than-air passenger liners, which became capable of much greater speeds than the zeppelin - Arlen gives a figure of 320 miles-per-hour for his best fictional ship.

As fiction however this book does not work nearly as well for me as **Hell! Said the Duchess** - the plot is murky and churns needlessly, and in spite of a lot of description the characters just don't come to life.

The Silent Stars Go By by James White, Ballantine 37110 1991, wraps, 441pp, \$5.99

James White was a fan in Northern Ireland with Walt Willis, and the author of the popular "Sector General" series of medical SF novels. I remember those as being in a simple pleasant style. I somehow missed this when it came out - but now find it unreadable. The byzantine plot is decorated with endless unlikely descriptions of buildings and costumes and churns on without revealing either a historical basis

for an Irish galactic empire or a character I could care anything about. I did not get far enough with it to discover whether there is any excuse for using a title from the old Christmas carol "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem". It does not appear to be a pun - though the back cover blurb is titled "When Irish Spies Are Smiling".

The Book of Embraces by Eduardo Galeano, Norton 1991, 281pp, d/w \$19.95

The decorations are credited to Galeano, and Cedric Belfrage is credited as translator. Belfrage died before the book was published. This a collection of short philosophical essays, very well done and interesting to read. I'm not sure why Galeano needed a translator - he now writes perfectly good English prose for magazines like *The Progressive* and has for some time. He's from Uruguay and spoke Spanish first - he explains that he was forbidden to speak the local native language Quecha. He was born in 1940, so he's just two years younger than I am.

Cedric Belfrage was an excellent writer in his own right - years ago I enjoyed his *Away From It All, An Escapist's Notebook*. (Simon & Schuster 1937).

It comes in the mail - from:

Janet Alvarez, who sent a card and many e-mails.

Doug Anderson, who was also interested in the Sime/Hess art plagiarism (I only published one of several examples I have), and the new Lilith Lorraine book.

George Beahm, who PhotoShopped a 32x8-inch 1929 photo for me, and sent (twice - I lost them in my own collection) copies of his books about the *Twilight* vampire show, **Bedazzled** and **Twilight Tours**.

Ruth Berman, who sends her zine *Dunkiton* with a beautiful reproduction of a 1904 John R. Neill newspaper supplement cover.

Sheryl Birkhead, who sends a card. And later a handrot letter - imagine people still being able to do that - I never could. She's looking for a book on feline dentistry - Addall.com offers some, but they are pricey. I wonder if they warn against the hazard of contracting *Toxoplasmosis gondii* from the patient. Sheryl also asks about a fan Mah Jong set planned by Bruce Pelz but apparently never produced - I'd never heard of that.

Dainis Bisenieks, who writes often about book finds.

Jeremy Brett, the archivist for special collections at the University of Iowa, e-mails to thank me for #31 - they have the Horvat collection, and solicit current fanzines. He says that my fanzine will be added to the "Floating Zine Collection" - I'm not sure just what that means. It may be full of hot air, but I doubt it would float for long!

Damien Broderick, whose copy came back all the way from the Antipodes. He had moved. The copies of #31 for Australia were kindly remailed for me by Phillip Ellis.

G(arry) W(ayne) Brown, who sent an envelope with 4 pages from the October 1997 issue of *Pulp Fandom*, a tabloid published in Tennessee and 3 xeroxed pages of *Cosmic Cupid* (v.2#3, a dating service) dated March 2010. When I looked in the archive I found that I had the May 1998 issue of pulp fandom - but that was all I could discover about this faned. All of these papers have numerous ads, and the *Cosmic Cupid* has one page of a gruesome novel by Brown called **The Youngest Immortal**, apparently something in the vampire line. The bulk of the text in the 1997 tabloid pages is repetitive descriptions of his battles with the management of nuclear power plants and the local Goodwill. I wonder if he has heard about the problem with men whose middle initial W stands for "Wayne".... My middle initial is W - but for "Warnell".

Robert W. Chambers (of Coos Bay OR) - but not directly, as his copy of #31 was returned by the Postal gremlin as undeliverable - perhaps he has followed his namesake to Carcosa by the Lake of Hali, whose towers rise behind the moon.

Rich Coad, who sends his *Sense of Wonder Stories* #4. When people ask me what I retired from doing for NASA, the only job I ever had, I say that I was a "wind-tunnel engineer" - Rich asked me to explain that, and the result appears in this very elegant fanzine with an amazing variety of more interesting articles.

Melissa Conway, who sends a card from the haunted halls of the Pelz collection. And in July, a letter acknowledging the receipt of 65 lbs of duplicate fanzines selected from the list on my website. She counted them - there were 428. And later, I received a similar letter from the Librarian, Dr. Ruth M. Jackson.

Kevin Cook, who is also still sending fanzines to Tom Cockcroft.

Margaret Cubberly, one of the Sagacious Seven founders of HaRoSFA, the Hampton Roads Science Fiction Association in Tidewater VA where I lived for 39 years, who sends a card and a clipping of an anti-high-tech ad - showing a picture of a decrepit green pre-WWII Royal portable typewriter in the surf. The photographer, a Canadian named Madelyn Mulvaney, seems to have a thing for green and the edge of the ocean. Margaret also sent a card in honor of Bastille Day - showing a drawing of the Oglala Lakota warrior Man-Who-Carries-the-Sword. Not in fact carrying a sword.... Did any Indian ever carry a sword into battle? They had numerous opportunities to collect a few from palefaces who had no further use for them.... Later Margaret sent a clipping about rereading a childhood book I helped her find.

James Dawson, who sent his fanzines.

Brad Day III, son of the famous SF index-maker, whose copy of #31 was returned as undeliverable.

Frank Denton, who sends a long loc - we are founding members of Slanapa, now past its 480th monthly mailing - that's 40 years!

Frank Dietz, who sends a beautiful Hannes Bok Christmas card.

Phillip Ellis, who kindly remailed the copies of #31 for Australian addresses.

Al Fitzpatrick, who sent a photo-card and many e-mails.

Brad Foster, who kindly sent another cover for this issue, and a long e-loc. Brad seems to be the only one to have commented on the Jaro Hess theft of Sidney Sime *Bogey Beast* images. He's also a *Courage the Cowardly Dog* fan; and says I was right about the typewriter cover on #30 - it's meant to represent divine inspiration, not the attack of the typewriter monster!

Alexis Gilliland, who sent his annual Christmas letter - mostly about cons attended, but he also apparently survived a bout of the H1N1 flu.

Jim Goldfrank, who sent a photo-card of himself as Santa holding his two lapdogs.

Mary Gray, who sends a card with the traditional horned dog, and says she has downloaded Richard Harland's **The Vicar of Morbing Vyle**.

Thomas Hall, who says in handrot that I should send him a typewriter.... I have portable typewriters I could spare - there are too many here! He says that Arthur's Guinevere was a fairy rather than a witch as Machen has it in *Guinevere and Lancelot*.

Richard Harland, who liked the flyer about that free download of his **The Vicar of Morbing Vyle**, and offers to send me his latest, **Worldshaker**. But I already have that, and have now read about half of it - it's longer than his previous two novels put together!

John Howard, who sends e-mail greetings from across the Pond.

Binker Hughes, who sent a card from the middle of Kentucky. And later a large old newspaper

ad for the "New Underwood" with the "Rhythm Touch" - not a photo but an artist's conception signed "MK". I can't find an exact date for when this typewriter was "new" - but it was over 60 years ago.

Steve & Suzanne Hughes, who sent a card from the dim recesses of Ellijay Georgia.

Elaine Koogler, my SCA cousin, who sent a card and is working on a video of the Brooks Cousins reunion.

Brant Kresovich, who sent a card and his *For the Clerisy*.

Dave Langford, who asks about the font used for the title and motto - it is indeed a TTF font based on the hand-lettering of the late lamented Edward Gorey. Dave says that he had also published a piece noting Lovecraftian horror in H G Wells' **The Croquet Player**, in *Fortean Times* - I got that 2005 issue, #199, before I got tired of fighting with FT's US distributor.

Fred Lerner, who notes that the "telephone newspaper" described in the old *Pearson's Magazine* is also appears in the utopian novel **Altneuland** by Theodor Herzl - with advertising.

Eric Lindsay, who liked Brad Foster's *book wyrms*. Eric apparently cannot get actual paper mail - he's too far out in the boonies and can't even get a PO Box. But he's online, and read IGOTS there. He says he acquires new books mostly at convention book launches!

Joe Major, who notes that in Agatha Christie's **Postern of Fate** everyone in a small town knows just the same passage from Flecker's *Road to Samarkand* - but not whether it was the one I quoted.... Joe also remembered the Fibonacci Series joke in the cartoon strip *Fox Trot* - that strip has occasionally included more math than the average reader would get.

Ed Meskys, who says that his PC read #31 to him very smoothly, and that he has surplus Selectric "golfballs" - I offered to trade him Selectric III (96 character) elements for the older 88-character elements. Ed also wants to give away the famous IBM Executive with micro-elite type used to type the long letter columns in his fanzine *Niekas* - shipping may be an obstacle!

Murray Moore, who complains that Brad Foster's "Casting Out the Book Wyrms" cover art lacks lettering on the book spines. The wyrms were being cast out for having licked all the gold leaf of the spines....

Dale Nelson, who recommends **Out of My Bone**, *the Letters of Joy Davidman* (the wife of C. S. Lewis) - talked me into it, you silver-tongued devil! In trying to clear away clutter to make space

for more clutter, I found, at the bottom of a stack of surplus apazines, a 1992 letter from Dale and a printout (on 11x17 paper) of his story *The Mandrakes*. Did I read it at the time? I don't remember. Was it ever published? Yes, in *Ghosts & Scholars* #19 in 1995! It's pretty good too, though it seems to stop rather than end. I don't have the published version.

Christopher O'Brien, who sent a card (and numerous e-mail queries).

Gavin O'Keefe, who sent a brief e-loc on Facebook and says he is working too hard. And kindly send me a copy of his new "Alice" book - see above.

Steven & Vicki Ogden, who sent issues 8 and 9 of their *Edgar's Journal*, a tribute to Edgar Allan Poe - see above.

Scott Patton, the only neighbor on this street that gets IGOTS - and I don't remember why.

Anne Held, in Hawaii, who saw a review of this zine in *Xerography Debt*, a webzine named for a threat by Xerox to sue for trademark violation, and sent some elusive spondulix of the green folding variety for a copy.

Lloyd Penney, who sent an e-loc and wonders what will happen to the collective memory of book characters and authors as the magazines that publish articles about them continue to shut down. Is it quite the same that Google provides a million hits on a name, many false or useless?

Gary Roberts, a collector who was able to restore an upstrike Caligraph - over 100 years old - to actually function, This typewriter has wooden lever-bars!

Andy Robertson, who kindly remailed the copies of #31 for UK addresses.

James Rubino, who traded me his fancy comic books - *Tales from the Seventh Galaxy* features a villainous Cactor, who indeed looks like a cactus, a sort of vegetable analog of Godzilla. *Ancient Tales from the Future* is a collection. These are very well-drawn and energetic strips - the art is credited to Larry Blake.

Tom Sadler, the Reluctant Famulus, who sent a card and his fanzine.

Alice Searles, who sent a card with a note that she is trying to inventory the late Langley Searles' book and fanzine collections.

David Shea, who sent a card and letter.

Jad Smith, a John Brunner collector at Eastern Illinois University.

Steve Sneyd, who also writes often in handrot - good thing I don't do that, no one could read it!

Mark Sonnenfeld, of Marymark Press, who sent a folder of what appears to be experimental poetry - that is, incoherence nicely printed any which way of various types and sizes of paper.

Milt Stevens, who thought the **Primer of Higher Space** was the most peculiar book mentioned in #31. The philosophy is certainly doubtful, but the Magic Tesseract is ingenious.

Steve Stiles, who sent a cartoon!

Dave Szurek, who sent a card and letters (in handrot!) and imagined that I had actually read all of every book mentioned here.

Joey Torrey, who wanted me to help promote his book **Bamboozled!** (see Amazon.com) about what he says was an unjust conviction in an FBI sting operation in boxing - alas, several other writers liked the word "bamboozled" as a title at the same time. I can easily believe that the conviction was unjust - but I suspect the book might as well be in Greek for all I could get out of it - I am not a lawyer or familiar with the boxing world. I see that the spell-checker here in OpenOffice recognizes the word - and it has been traced back to 1700 with the same sense, yet there is no agreement on its origin. There is speculation that it might be Gypsy cant but nothing like it appears in George Borrow's **Romano Lavo-Lil**.

Mark Valentine, who sent a wonderful spoof from Merrie Olde England about Queen Victoria's "Master of the Queen's Mysteries".

Juan Carlos Verrecchia, who sent a Christmas card from down in Argentina.

Toni Weisskopf, ex-SFPAn who sent a Christmas Bear card.

Henry "Knarley" Welch of the *Knarley Knews*, who after a year-long hiatus caused by a move from Wisconsin to California (15290 Upper Ellen Rd.; Los Gatos, CA 95033) and dying PCs and car, has published issue #136. I was amazed to learn that we had met in Virginia when we were both in the Hampton Roads SF Association.

G. Peter Winnington, who noticed the reference to the old *Pearson's Magazine* and says that in an issue he looked at in the Bodleian, he found a "Captain Kettle" story illustrated by Stanley

Wood (a favorite artist of Mervyn Peake's youth) that seemed to include sentences from Conrad's **Heart of Darkness**. He attached a PDF of an article about this.

Three people who seem to be from what Dale Speirs calls the PaperNet read a review of this annual effort in some publication and sent folding money! As IGOTS is priceless and has no subscription rate and in any case is accessible on the WWW, I just sent off back issues in an envelope at postage roughly equivalent to the cash sent.

It occurs to me, as we drift further into the 21st century, that perhaps I should not expend so much on paper and postage. The cyber-version of this zine is now a PDF that looks to the PDF reader exactly like what I can have printed, except for the paper color. There will always be paper copies for archives and two apas I am in, but if you are not keeping the paper copy and could just as well read the PDF (which is retained at fanac.org and always available), or could print your own copy a lot cheaper than I can mail you one, you might let me know and I will just annotate the file to e-mail you when the next one appears. Anyone on Bill Burns' efanazines list will get a notification anyway.

* * * * *

Barack Obama, like George Bush before him, has claimed the authority to order American citizens murdered based solely on the unverified, uncharged, unchecked claim that they are associated with Terrorism and pose "a continuing and imminent threat to U.S. persons and interests." They're entitled to no charges, no trial, no ability to contest the accusations. Amazingly, the Bush administration's policy of merely imprisoning foreign nationals (along with a couple of American citizens) without charges -- based solely on the President's claim that they were Terrorists -- produced intense controversy for years. That, one will recall, was a grave assault on the Constitution. Shouldn't Obama's policy of ordering American citizens assassinated without any due process or checks of any kind -- not imprisoned, but killed -- produce at least as much controversy?

Ancient quotations relevant to the November 2010 mid-term elections here in the US:

"The majority never has right on its side. Never, I say! That is one of the social lies that a free, thinking man is bound to rebel against. Who makes up the majority in any given country? Is it the wise men or the fools? I think we must agree that the fools are in a terrible overwhelming majority, all the wide world over. But, damn it, it can surely never be right that the stupid should rule over the clever!"

Henrik Ibsen in *An Enemy of the People* (*En Folkefiende*)

"As for the Republicans—how can one regard seriously a frightened, greedy, nostalgic huddle of tradesmen and lucky idlers who shut their eyes to history and science, steel their emotions against decent human sympathy, cling to sordid and provincial ideals exalting sheer acquisitiveness and condoning artificial hardship for the non-materially-shrewd, dwell smugly and sentimentally in a distorted dream-cosmos of outmoded phrases and principles and attitudes

based on the bygone agricultural-handicraft world, and revel in (consciously or unconsciously) mendacious assumptions (such as the notion that real liberty is synonymous with the single detail of unrestricted economic license or that a rational planning of resource-distribution would contravene some vague and mystical 'American heritage'...) utterly contrary to fact and without the slightest foundation in human experience? Intellectually, the Republican idea deserves the tolerance and respect one gives to the dead."

"Democracy ~ as distinguished from universal opportunity and good treatment ~ is today a fallacy and impossibility so great that any serious attempt to apply it cannot be considered as other than a mockery and a jest . . . Government "by popular vote" merely means the nomination of doubtfully qualified men by doubtfully authorised and seldom competent cliques of professional politicians representing hidden interests, followed by a sardonic farce of emotional persuasion in which the orators with the glibbest tongues and flashiest catch-words herd on their side a numerical majority of blindly impressionable dolts and gulls who have for the most part no idea of what the whole circus is about."

- *both from* H.P. Lovecraft, in letters

And so closes another issue, in the second Obama year. I hope that all of you had a **Happy Halloween**, and will have

A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year!

