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No. 16

The JDM Bibliophile No. 16

Edited and published twice a year by Len and June Moffatt, Box 4456, Downey, CA 90241.
Associate Editors: Bill Clark and Ed Cox

This is a non-profit amateur journal devoted to the works--and to the readers--of John D. MacDonald. Price: 50¢ per copy. A publishable letter of comment will bring you the issue in which your letter appears. If there is an "X" on your mailing label, you must do something to receive the next issue.

Deadline for Next Issue: December 4, 1971.

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PLUS:

A Special Supplement: THE JOHN D. MacDONALD QUOTEBOOK

Compiled & Illustrated by William Rotsler

James Sandoe says: "If you have librarians or library patrons willing to help, I'd like to know what a sampling of public and college libraries have of JDM."

Please send your listings to us and we'll forward them to Mr. Sandoe. Perhaps if enough information is received we can get Mr. Sandoe to report the results of this survey in a future issue of JDMB.

- ljm & jmm

AUGUST 1971

News...Reviews...and Previews

John D. MacDonald was awarded a George Arents Pioneer Medal by Syracuse University, Saturday, June 5, 1971. The Arents Medal is the University's highest award to its alumni.

* * *

THE HUMAN EQUATION, edited by William F. Nolan (Sherbourne Press Inc., Los Angeles, CA, 254 pp \$7.50). Four short science-fiction novels by five authors, each prefaced with well-done biographical notices by the editor. The stories and authors are: THE FLOWERED THUNDERMUG by Alfred Bester, LORELEI OF THE RED MIST by Leigh Brackett and Ray Bradbury, NOVELTY ACT by Philip K. Dick, and HALF-PAST ETERNITY by John D. MacDonald.

HALF-PAST ETERNITY first appeared in Super Science Stories, July 1950, and to the best of our knowledge this is the first time it has been reprinted. It is a forerunner of THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH & EVERYTHING in that it uses the "human accelerator" idea, though in a less pleasant way. The writing and characterization hold up well, even after 20 years, and is not out of place in this anthology of high-powered s-f writers.

LORELEI OF THE RED PLANET may seem out of place because of its purple prose, but that's what Planet Stories bought, and it was nostalgic fun to re-read, and to learn from the biographical notice how the established Leigh Brackett and the beginning Ray Bradbury collaborated on the story.

Both Bester's THE FLOWERED THUNDERMUG and Dick's NOVELTY ACT are wild and wooly takeoffs on possible futures--which is to say they are biting satires on the present. I suspect that the "hard-core s-f reader" would prefer these two stories to the other two. The style of writing in LORELEI may turn off modern readers (s-f fans or otherwise), and JDM's use of an "old" s-f theme, excellent as it is, may not be sufficiently "hard-core" to satisfy the more ardent aficionados of s-f.

However, each of the stories fits Bill Nolan's theme for the anthology: "Stories in which the human equation outweighs the scientific equation, stories in which characterization dominates no matter how wild the premise".

Especially HALF-PAST ETERNITY.

* * *

S*E*V*E*N, by John D. MacDonald (Fawcett Gold Medal, 160pp. 75¢). Four of the seven short stories originally appeared in Playboy (DEAR OLD FRIEND, QUARREL, DOUBLE HANNENFRAMMIS and THE ANNEX.) THE ANNEX has been reprinted at least 3 times previous to this collection--quite a popular little fantasy. (Harry Harrison called it "science fiction" when picking it for inclusion in his BEST SF: 1968, but I'm a semi-hardcore s-f fan and I say it's fantasy. Well, we could argue all night on that one.)

Of the four reprints I liked THE ANNEX and DEAR OLD FRIEND the best. Of the three new stories, I preferred THE RANDOM NOISES OF LOVE and THE WILLOW POOL over WOODCHUCK, perhaps because in the first two JDM used his technique of telling the stories from various characters' viewpoints. Few writers can do this well, and JDM's mastery of the technique is second to none.

There is probably something for everyone in this collection.

* * *

A TAN AND SANDY SILENCE, the latest McGee novel, is about financial shenanigans in Canada and the United States, with much of the action on the British West Indies island of Grenada, where JDM recently spent a couple of months.

(continued on page 10)

-ljm

JOHN D. MACDONALD: A SONNET

by Dave Stewart

I thank you for swift motorcycle plots--

Compressed mesh, fast roars of races down

Familiar side streets. Summer evening thoughts

And older brother thrills, glee-wheeled through town.

My plaudits to your heroes. Giants?--no!

That trust abused--but rose-like, rain-bedewed,

In human worth stand cleansed this brave, bright row,

Each bloom with "d-stressed" Dignity imbued.

I love, awe-held, your salt-warm, sun-pierced style,

Inviting, "Come and swim, relaxed and free."

Lagoon-wet mornings--breezy sovereign isle

Where keen perception plays the major key.

Praise, Sir, for you've increased slim sight ten-fold;

And draped this lonely-windowed life with gold.

SECRETS

from the

CBI

The Editor
Sarasota Herald Tribune
801 S. Tamiami Trail
Sarasota, Florida

Dear Sir:

As a result of the Ellsberg Episode, I too would like to make public some secret military information.

Several wars ago I was assigned to the China-Burma-India Theatre Headquarters at the time when a high-level decision was made to supply U.S. combat equipment to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sufficient to equip 30 Chinese divisions in order to drive the Japanese from mainland China.

Because the Burma Road (also known as the Stilwell Road, the Ledo Road, Pick's Pike, etc.) was not finished at that time, it was decided that the equipment to be given to the Chinese divisions would have to be based upon the U.S. Tables of Organization and Equipment prior to vehicular mechanization, and so a 1921 T.O. & E. was selected, and the various branches at Theatre Headquarters in New Delhi were ordered to each prepared their portion of the requisition, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Signal Corps, etc.

The Quartermaster General of the CBI Theatre was a Colonel Sapia-Bosch, and he gave a lieutenant I knew the responsibility of preparing the requisition, which involved going through the T.O. & E., isolating each Quartermaster item and multiplying by the number required per 1921 U.S. division and then by thirty.

My friend went back to the Colonel and started to raise the question as to whether every QM item should be typed on the requisition form, but he was unable to complete the question before the Colonel was roaring truisms about simple orders and following them and not bothering him with pointless questions.

So my friend performed his chore in mechanical fashion. The HQ staff commanders signed their portion of the requisition. It was assembled in the Theatre Adjutant's offices, stamped S E C R E T on every page, and relayed to the Services of Supply in Washington.

SECRETS from the CBI

As incidental information, I might add at this point that this concept originated in Washington, not in the CBI Theatre. Those of us in the Theatre acquainted with the Chinese military establishment knew that each Chinese General commanding a division actually owned his division, owned the personnel and all the equipment, and went into Chinese villages and grabbed young men and put them in chains and herded them off into military slavery when he needed new troops. This was known as Chinese Selective Service.

A man who owns his troops and owns their weapons, uniforms, rifles and ammunition is not likely to commit his troops to battle, and they seldom if ever did. So we were not exactly all heated up over donating millions of dollars worth of stuff to thirty private businessmen, and assumed--correctly, as it turned out--that the requisitions they had requested from us would never be filled.

Back in Washington, a West Point officer eventually examined the requisitions. He was a friend of the West Point officer who was the Theatre Adjutant General. A coded, eyes-only message came from Washington to the Theatre A. G. from his friend, with the indication that it was Top Secret (British: Most Secret, later to become known as a Q message).

The Theatre A. G. was a friend of mine, and he showed it to me, and I am now violating the rules in regard to classification of documents by repeating it in print. I am quite sure that it has never been declassified. My recall is not perfect, but I believe it is close enough.

REFERENCE QUARTERMASTER PORTION OF YOUR REQUISITION OF 11 DEC 43, STATISTICAL SECTION COMPLETED PRELIMINARY STUDY OF EQUINE REQUIREMENTS 30 CHINESE DIVISIONS. NOT ONLY WILL ALL PRESENT TROOP SHIPS REQUIRE CONVERSION FROM TROOP CARRIERS TO HORSE CARRIERS, BUT WHEN DELIVERY TO CHINA OF ALL ITEMS COMPLETE, BURMA ROAD WILL BE PAVED TO A DEPTH OF 11 FEET 4 INCHES WITH HORSESHIT.

GUNDERSON, S.O.S.

I release this information at this time only because I believe the American people have a right to know.

Sincerely,

/s/ John D. MacDonald

Sarasota

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter was published in the Tuesday, July 6, 1971 issue of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. Only, they spelled it horse----. Tsk.
-ljm

HARD TOUCH

by
Bill Wilson

On several occasions, JDM, in his stories, comments about "cop's eyes", or the hard, flat look in the eyes of a policeman. Often this look masks the fact that the officer is venal and/or sadistic and is sizing up everyone with whom he comes in contact. However, more often this look is brought about by a defense mechanism on the part of the officer to conceal the fact that a number of things irk him, and he is mentally trying to see just what angle or gimmick is going to evolve from a given situation. Thus, when a "McGee" shows up, the officer wonders if he is a crook, a hustler, a front man, or if he actually is "for real".

In order to better understand the cop's point of view, we are going to examine some of the things that bug policemen in general, and the attitude of the policeman toward these things. These subjects are not in order of importance since what is most important in the mind of one officer may be relatively unimportant to another. However, most of these things annoy all policemen to one degree or another.

STEREOTYPES

In this day and age when various groups and organizations object to type characters in either books or visual presentations, far too often the policeman is portrayed as an Irishman with a broad brogue, or as a beefy, uncouth bully with a Southern drawl, or as a slim, trim, thin-lipped individual with a fetish for highly polished leather; or, on the opposite side, as a suave, clean-cut, always-correct and proper "by the book" cop. Now, all of these types do exist, but they are by no means typical.

One of the most sadistic officers I ever knew was a handsome, well-spoken man, and one of the most kindly cops I ever worked with was a big beefy etc. Furthermore, often the policeman is typed as either a borderline moron or a super brain. In fact, the average officer is neither. He is probably a bit higher than average IQ, and is trained in a particular field and therefore knows more about it than the average man. However, he is probably second-guessed about as much as the average baseball manager. Finally, most police officers on large, well-run departments resent being identified with "Hickville" sheriffs. There are some excellent, well-run sheriff's departments--however, in many instances, the only criterion for being a sheriff is to get the most votes.

NEWSPAPERMEN

Far too many newspapermen will put the officer in a bad light whenever they can, because "it makes a good story". Let a policeman raise a club in the air and the resultant picture will probably be shown coast to coast, yet I know of a case in August, Georgia, where a Caucasian policeman gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to a Negro man who had been injured in an auto accident. The picture of this incident was printed on the same page as the stock market news by the local news chain. I personally have given a carefully-worded factual account of an incident under investigation, only to see the case completely distorted in the news account. When I reproved the reporter concerned, he told me that the news story was written with "reader interest" in mind. Reporters, naturally, have sources of information which they protect zealously--however, they persist in referring to practically all police sources as stool pigeons.

OSTENTATIOUS LAWYERS

Many practitioners of the law are fine gentlemen who perform their role as either prosecutor or defense with vigor and dignity. However, there are far too many prosecutors who have one eye on "bigger things" and will, in effect, suppress (by ignoring or

HARD TOUCH

downgrading) evidence which might otherwise weaken a "good case". Then there are the defense types who, while they bemoan any press coverage which will put their client in a bad light, will readily make all sorts of statements to the press and TV in an attempt to sway public opinion. This type of defense counsel invariably (when his client is guilty) will go all out to attack the police witnesses by all manner of slur and innuendo in an attempt to influence the opinion of the jury. I remember one character who openly slandered me and stated before the court that he was going to insure that I was kicked out of police work. Out of court I approached him and demanded that he prove or retract his allegation (which I knew was false). He smiled, put out his hand and said, "No hard feelings--I was just putting on a little act for the benefit of the court". He was offended because I turned away from him. On the other side of the coin, I have had an attorney approach me and ask if I were convinced that his client was guilty. I told him that I was. Since the main point of my testimony was concerned with a search, this lawyer said that he would stipulate my testimony and plead extenuating circumstances.

SUPREME COURT DECISIONS

Most police officers are upset by some of the decisions of the U. S. Supreme Court (and other appellate courts), but not in the manner or frame of reference that most people would assume. To begin with, most of the critical decisions were not the unanimous decision of nine men, but rather were the split decision of five against four. In other words, the point is that the decision is what five men say the law is on a given day. For example, the much-discussed Miranda decision was made by five members of the High Court. Knowing the social philosophy of the members of the court, the outcome of this case was known before the official decision was announced.

However, were the same case to be reviewed today, it would most likely go in the opposite direction by a vote of five to four (possibly six to three). What was upsetting about this case was the fact that the decision, as with so many others, was made retroactive. The Constitution of the USA provides that Congress shall make no Ex Post Facto law, however, the courts, by edict, in effect do just that. For many years the legal stand of Stare Decisus was upheld. In other words, once a point of law had been tested, the decision stood as a precedent. With the attitude of the so-called "Warren Court" and others who followed suit, precedents were upset right and left. The result was that the policeman at the working level honestly didn't know what to do. When a policeman goes to the scene of a crime, often he is confronted with a violent situation. He must do something at once, and so he makes an on-the-spot decision without benefit of counsel, legal or otherwise.

Months later, a group of judges with the aid of research assistants and with ample time to contemplate all of the aspects of the incident insofar as the law goes, decide that the policeman committed a procedural error, so the accused goes free. Now a court heard the evidence against the accused and decided that he was guilty, but now he isn't! What many officers believe is this--that if a policeman makes an honest mistake in procedure and the appellate courts so rule, that the sentence should be mitigated rather than set aside.

POLICE BRUTALITY

There is no doubt that some sadistic men do commit brutal acts using the cloak of authority as a shield, however in most cases the charge is not true or revolves around a situation. An officer effects an arrest and the offender resists violently--just how much force does the officer use? The law says, rather nebulously, "The amount of force necessary to overcome resistance". But who is the judge as to the degree of force? Policemen are human beings and as such have breaking points and lose their tempers. It is at times of stress that policemen often wish that some of the sociologists who are so quick to criticize were in uniform and along with them. How would they react on the spot to a violent situation? How kindly do you react to a man who has just tried to kill or cripple you?

HARD TOUCH

HYPOCRITES

Every community has its share of "Good Citizens" who firmly believe that the law should be rigidly enforced except where they are concerned. Often, when the cops enforce the law impartially, they find themselves under attack. I remember in one community the police were under terrific pressure due to a series of hypercritical editorials. The whole thing was motivated over a traffic ticket given to the editor of the paper.

Further on, today we have the so-called student and youth groups who profess to abhor war and violence, so they engage in violence and lawbreaking all in the name of peace. They will physically assault policemen and then scream "brutality" if the police react with force.

CROOKED COPS

The crooked cop is an anathema to the average policeman. It may seem odd, but it is usually difficult to prove that a cop is crooked or on the take. He has the same Constitutional rights as other citizens and, therefore, while his associates will know or sense he is no good, they can't prove it. Often, the bum cop will, by his obsequious manner to the "right" people so ingratiate himself that any accusation made without concrete proof would place the accuser in jeopardy. Yet the ultimate disclosure of the crook tarnishes the badge of everyone.

Add all the wariness and disillusion that the foregoing will in time produce, and you have--among other things--"cop's eyes".

- Bill Wilson

News...Reviews...and Previews, continued

TOMORROW 1, edited by Robert Hoskins (NAL Signet, NY, 192 pp. 75¢). This pb science fiction anthology contains THE CIVILIZATION GAME by Clifford D. Simak, THE END OF THE LINE by James H. Schmitz, TERRITORY by Poul Anderson, THE SICKNESS by William Tenn, and TROJAN HORSE LAUGH by John D. MacDonald.

We are currently smack-dab in the middle of editing and stenciling this issue of JDMB, and having just found TOMORROW 1 on the local stands, we have taken time only to read the JDM story. However, the other four writers are--as the blurb says--"masters" in the field of science-fiction, so you can hardly go wrong in buying the book even if it didn't contain a previously-unreprinted story by MacDonald.

TROJAN HORSE LAUGH is reprinted from the August 1949 issue of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION. It is a fast-paced novelette (approximately 18,000 words) about what could happen if everyone could be given exactly the same emotional cycle. Charting each individual's emotional cycle and then adjusting it with injections and booster shots so that all are the same is what the nasties do to people. High-pressure TV, radio, etc. advertising is used to sell the public on the idea. But that's only the beginning...

Naturally these "benefactors of mankind", these sellers of total Happiness at cut-rate prices have a motive for dispensing their goodies all over the country. Joe Morgan, the hero of the story, isn't quite a T. McGee, but he is cut from the same independent piece of cloth. He refuses to be "adjusted" and winds up as one of the major leaders in a truly astounding war against...whom? Read the story and decide for yourself.

- ljm

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"The critics must live, so they say.
A statement important, if true.
But why can't they draw down their pay
By peddling the bootlegger's brew,
Or robbing a blind man or two,
Or marking the cards in the deck?
I don't mind admitting to you,
They give me a pain in the neck."

- Berton Braley, c. 1927

JDMB has run some serious essays on JDM books, analyzing what was considered good and what less good, and why the essayist thought so. I want to suggest that maybe this is out of place.

A legitimate literary critic is a sort of Consumer's Union. He offers reports to the public on the quality of certain books being offered for sale, for the simple reason that it is impractical for the public to try them all. He isn't always competent or fair, but he does fill a sort of economic demand.

But Hell's Bells, the JDMB is not a wide-circulation periodical. Nothing in it is going to inform the public-at-large of anything. To inform each other is great. But I have a sneaky feeling that we fans have this urge somehow to communicate with JDM himself, and don't keep it properly in check. Opinions offered to an author are, I believe, OK up to a certain point, whether by direct letter or through a fanzine; but there are limits of etiquette. As one with no credentials, I would like to offer a no-charge analysis of the spot that a novelist is in with respect to his readers and critics.

No novelist is likely to get any enjoyment out of reading critical essays on his work, whether written by John O'Hara or Dorothy B. Hughes or Joe Doakes. Nor any help, either. To be sure, a good review in the N. Y. Times will make an author happy, but only because it boosts sales. How could the writer relish reading somebody's second guesses about his work? He already worked his tail off writing it, he did the best he could, and it is too late to change it. Maybe it was not fair to include Dorothy B. Hughes up there. There is a certain professional courtesy among mystery writers in reviewing the books of their colleagues, unlike the practice among mainstream novelists. Mystery writers are smarter and better people.

A pro writer, like many other pros, is stuck with a single critic: himself. The opinions of all others who are not writers are good for only this much: approval enough to buy the book, or disapproval enough not to buy it. We laymen are statistics, whether we like it or not: not by the writer's choice or anyone's choice, but by the nature of things. I fear that etiquette allows only one kind of direct message from reader to author: to tell him that you liked his book. Don't even say that you are waiting eagerly for his next one. He may be worrying himself sick over the plot for the next one, and not want to be reminded.

Generally, nobody is qualified to write serious criticism of a professional writer except another professional writer (editors mostly just say yes and no). And a writer cannot solicit the opinion of another writer on his work, nor can he offer one. It isn't done, because they are competitors. Ford does not ask Chrysler what it thinks of the Pinto. JDM has a lonesome job. The lonesomeness is built-in and there is nothing anybody can do about that. After all, he chose the trade, and what the fans can do is let him know that they are glad he did.

- Lawrence Fleming

EARLY JDM:

WOOLRICH TOUCHES

By the time this issue of JDMB goes to the printer, Harper & Row will have issued NIGHTWEBS, a mammoth volume of uncollected stories by Cornell Woolrich, edited by some hack called Blevins or Drevins or something. So the time seems appropriate to look into some of the ways in which Woolrich may have influenced JDM.

Woolrich every so often took great delight in creating a bizarre Rube Goldberg-ish murder or alibi device, like the chain of cigarettes in PHANTOM LADY and the costume that makes one ballroom dancer appear to be two in THE MYSTERY OF THE BLUE SPOT. JDM concocted devices no less bizarre in the pulp story WHEN YOU GOT A PIGEON (which I discussed in JDMB #13) and, very recently, in THE GIRL IN THE PLAIN BROWN WRAPPER.

Woolrich was among the very few pulp writers who made a substantial number of attempts at first-person narration from the viewpoint of a woman, ranging in time from the 1935 Dime Detective story MURDER IN WAX, through such novels as THE BLACK ANGEL and parts of NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES, to the late pulp novelet DEATH ESCAPES THE EYE (Shadow Mystery, 4-5/47) and beyond. JDM also appropriated the female viewpoint in BEDSIDE MURDER (discussed in JDMB #15) but unconvincingly, to say the least.

However, in an earlier story--one of his most Woolrichian stories ever--he fared much better with this point of view. COME DIE WITH ME! (New Detective, 1/48) deals with and is narrated by a vengeance-driven young widow who assumes a new identity to track down and execute the persons who murdered her husband. But JDM, even when influenced by a master like Woolrich, still remains JDM, and except for the basic storyline there are no further traces here of THE BRIDE WORE BLACK.

Carol Ann Morten travels 1400 miles to the small, corrupt city of Crown Palms, Florida, and maneuvers herself into a job as a B-girl at the plush Tarana Club, the last known place visited by her Johnny before his gruesome "accidental" death. The repulsive Tarana and his hoods on the one side of the fence are matched on what is nominally the other side by a sadistic and venal cop named Shane Kander--one of the earliest in JDM's long gallery of corrupt Florida law enforcers. Only with the help of a convenient undercover Federal agent does Carol evade several messy deaths in this hard, fast, vivid novelet of legitimate violence and credible evil.

NIGHTWEBS has been issued by a major publisher, runs over 500 pages, includes a long essay on Woolrich's work and what I hope is a complete checklist of all his writings. If such tribute can be paid to one great master who worked long and hard and well in the pulps, why not to another? Let us all bow reverently in the direction of Publishers' Row and hope that a similarly large-scale volume will some day come forth, paying equal tribute to the pulp stories of JDM.

- Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

The House Guests

A Review by Gail Van Achten

John D. MacDonald has written a fine book here ..partly, I suspect, to immortalize his two cat friends in the only way he could. Since we share quarters with nine cats ourselves, I feel quite competent to pass judgment, remarks and sentence on THE HOUSE GUESTS with wild abandon. Which I shall proceed to do.

The Foreword begins: "This is not a luvums-duvums-itsyboo book about pootytats." Well, he's right...it isn't. But why do people expect, as JDM knows they will, a book about pet animals to drip with cuteness? What's cute about having cats, anyway? Why is the cliché about the little old lady and her cats as common as the one about the stingy Scot...and just about as true? James Mason has swarms of cats, I've heard, and he's no lady. So does Sandy Dennis, who is neither little nor old. Ditto Paul Gallico. There's a long list of non-LOL's who keep cats. (For that matter, I've often wondered why LOL's are universally supposed to be foolishly sentimental anyway. I mean, consider Winnie Ruth Judd...Marlene Dietrich...Golda Meir...)

But JDM begins with a disclaimer, because he knows what will be expected. He goes on to examine the fondness of man for his pet beasts, pulling out every reason he can think of why it is all right to love animals. But why does he feel he has to?

I heard the writer, Jack Douglas, on a TV talk show the other night talking with host Tony Randall. Douglas had written in his most recent book that he prayed for the souls of the dead animals he saw littering the highways, and Randall was amazed to read this. "Do you really believe animals should be prayed for?" Or, if I interpreted Randall's tone and inference correctly, what he was asking was: "Do you really believe non-human life is worth caring about? Do you think God cares about it?"

And there's the attitude I argue with...the attitude that JDM displays in his apologia for writing his book about his pets. Man, from his lofty perch at the top of the food chain, on the throne of the animal kingdom, looks down his nose at those below him, and believes them lacking in intelligence or even the worthiness to be loved. Thus we must apologize for loving animals.

Well, maybe we should apologize, after all. Otherwise, how could we eat them... hunt them...exploit them? If we admit that they have any recognizable intelligence, sensitivity, capacity for love, then we have to see something of our own God-mirroring selves in them, and if we see that, then our own images might cloud a little.

JDM says: "When any higher order of animal is given security, attention, affection, and treated in a consistent and predictable manner, that animal will respond with a continuing revelation of those factors of intelligence and personality which differentiate it from the norm of the breed." I question whether this is simply because the dispensers of said security, attention, affection, etc. are watching so that the intelligence and personality are noted, or whether, perhaps, the animal is already intelligent enough to acquire ingratiating ways to gain more of the desired attention and affection. Anyway, as JDM points out, this same statement is true of humans. Men who must strive to satisfy their basic needs can't display characteristics of self-actualization until those basic needs are satisfied. Primitive man apparently didn't become an artist or artisan until he planted seeds for crops to ensure a constant food supply.

I've really only criticized the foreword of THE HOUSE GUESTS. I was much too busy enjoying the rest of it to carp about it. I hope JDM has acquired more house guests, and that he'll write another book about THEM.

BOOK REVIEW

A CATALOGUE OF CRIME, by Jacques Barzun & Wendell Hertig Taylor, Harper & Row, 722 pp.
plus index, \$18.95

If I were asked to give a one-word description of the above book, I would have to say "Disappointing". But, like Ordean Hagen's "Who Done It" people will probably buy it despite its faults.

The book is divided into six parts. The last two deal with special limbs on the tree of crime, and the fourth deals with "factual crime". All three of these could have been left out without detracting from the book. Since they take up only 100 pages of the book, however, this is very minor.

Of the remaining three parts, the first deals with fiction novels, the second with short stories and anthologies, and the third with books about authors, studies and histories of the genre, etc. In the second part, the authors have given the impression that Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine is the only magazine to publish good short stories.

However, it is with the first part that I am mainly concerned. It is not an easy matter to find a particular author in whom you are interested, despite the fact that they are in alphabetical order. Within each author, each of his books is assigned a number. All references to the book give this number, so page numbers are not used in the index. This makes it necessary to use the index to find a particular book or author.

Any book of this type, unless it is complete, will reflect the tastes of the author or authors. This book is no exception. Any comment on their selections is going to reflect my tastes. However, I can find no excuse for listing a book and then saying nothing but "Very Poor!" after it. Devoting eight pages to the works of Agatha Christie (42 books annotated) and not listing some authors at all merely indicates a fondness for Christie.

I could be wrong, but the biographical information on authors seems to have been lifted from some other source. The error that Jack Vance was a pen-name of Henry Kuttner has been perpetuated. A quick count of those authors whose names begin with either an A or B indicates that seven of them are in either their eighties or nineties. Maybe the secret to a long life is to become an author!

- Bill Clark

The JDM MASTER CHECKLIST

\$1.00 per copy

A bibliography of the works of John D. MacDonald, covering stories and articles in magazines, paperbacks and hardcovers. Cross-indexed.

It also features a photo and a brief biography of Mr. MacDonald.

Len & June Moffatt
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Please Write For Details

ROY SQUIRES, Glendale, CA: I read completely through my copy of The JDMB 15 in time to get to the note about X's on mailing labels while my envelope was yet accessible to archaeological recovery techniques. (Read from back to front, of course--more or less, in the sense that Nel Ttaffom is L.M. backward.) Wherefore herewith will be a buck to carry me through issue 17 March 1972, a fine combination of number and month, eh, O'Moffatt?

Almost wholly since reading JDMB 14--or mayhap 13--I have greedily read about 90% of the canon. Time now, I'd say, to reread all the issues I have, for the first time through I didn't know wotinell it was all about. I've some slight reluctance to doing that for fear of being prompted to reread some of the works of which my memory will be deficient...and I'm annoyed enough already by my undisciplined gluttony in indulging this newest of my vices.

If ever I should reread the majority of the books, I would want to do so with notepad at hand, with intent to produce a couple of articles for submission to you...and which would bring me full membership with the Loyal Opposition. One area in which I'd be seeking examples--and this would be the least fruitful--is that of JDM's infrequent references to science fiction. Taking those in juxtaposition to his own s.f. works would demonstrate that, by my lights, our man fails to comprehend what hard core s.f. really is. The other listing would be references to automobiles and motoring. Excepting only references to Miss Agnes--which in the main display a fondness for the lady, but at the same time do so with a condescension that I disapprove--in this regard, I recall only instances which reflect a viewpoint I find surprising in a writer whose taste in so many other matters is revealed as being exemplary.

((JDMB 17 hopefully will be published some time during the first half of 1972, but whether or not it will bear the March date remains to be seen. Besides, we are only half-Irish. Meantime, how about at least one of those "couple of articles"? - ljm))

PETE JARRETT, Norman, OK: Regarding Fleming & Grennell in JDMB 15, Colt Firearms Co. still makes the Police Positive with few but few minor changes, and while it may be obsolete it is not defunct. See GUN DIGEST, 1971, p. 359.

I'm in agreement with Grennell on his logical gun choices; those are the ones to pack and use. Or until law enforcement reaches such a fine degree of perfection we will not have to worry about our own protection.

The Movie finally reached my town and I thought it was fair entertainment, not much more. Cape Fear seemed to be better done. I don't believe that anyone is ever going to translate good JDM to the screen. John D. MacDonald's strong characterizations and descriptions are in one medium, and motion pictures are something else. And they rarely, rarely ever meet. I like movies, but prefer almost any JDM.

I was amused at JDM's way of dealing with crank mail. Effective, to say the least. ((Mr. Grennell should have a letter to us before we go to press with some "additions and corrections" to his "Footnote". - ljm))

ANDREW ZERBE, Montgomery, Ala: Had some real luck recently. Was going through the bin at the library where it sells used library books and unwanted books that are given to it. Had looked over nearly all the books there and decided that there was nothing I wanted today when picked up an old book with no spine. Turned to the title page out of curiosity and there it was, THE GIFT 1845. Realized right away what I had, but checked the table of contents just to be certain. It was the right issue, for it listed THE PURLOINED LETTER by Edgar A. Poe. Aside from lack of spine, the book is in good condition, all pages and illustrations present, and the pages still white with few traces of speckling and no yellowing.

It's sad, but in 125 years, while there is a good chance this book will still be in existence, the JDM fan will be unlikely to find JDM firsts considering how perishable paperbacks are after only 10-20 years.

POUL ANDERSON, Orinda, CA: Many thanks for the mention in JDMB. But other items in the issue are what invite comment.

Has anybody remarked on MacDonald's extraordinary ability to evoke and explore evil? (This is meant as a compliment, of course. After all, good is in much less urgent need of examination.) ((That's a moot point, Poul. And perhaps it ought to be mooted about a bit--or why are villains almost always more interesting than heroes? - jmm)) In part he does it the same way as the sf writers Robert Heinlein and James Blish, of whom the latter is quite notable for his treatment. The technique is "simply" to show evil in action--which turns out to be not so simple, since the object is to produce something more than melodrama. In other words, JDM's crooks, corrupters and psychopaths are frightening because they are convincing, and convincing because their minds and their behavior are shown in realistic detail.

However, there is more to it than that. JDM also manages to create an atmosphere; in many stories there is a virtually physical miasma of horror. The method of achieving that is a great deal harder to analyze than is the cataloguing of traits and events mentioned above. I suspect an inborn gift is required.

Is this gift, so evident in books like THE LAST ONE LEFT, identical with the talent needed to write THE GIRL, THE GOLD WATCH & EVERYTHING or PLEASE WRITE FOR DETAILS? I don't know, and wonder if anybody does. Even JDM himself.

Turning to another subject, the marijuana controversy--though I don't care for the stuff myself, I have a number of friends who use it, and for the most part they are perfectly sane, competent, well-balanced and socially useful people. Isn't it likeliest that the "degeneration" observed in a minority of smokers is something that was bound to happen anyway?

Personally, I'd favor legalizing everything for adults, right on through the hardest of hard drugs. This might help get the weak sisters out of the gene pool; it would quite certainly strike a heavy blow at organized crime. And as for the overall effect on society, well, in the Victorian period everything was legal, and it is not generally thought of as decadent. ((If it isn't, it should be. -jmm))

Re Bouchercon II, I wonder if four days may not be too ambitious at this stage. The sf conventions took many years to reach their present length. Does mystery fandom yet have enough tradition, potential program, etc.? I expect to be there in all events, and to enjoy myself; it's the neophytes and the out-of-towners who don't know anybody that may suffer disappointment. Well, we shall see.

((We agree that the "degeneration" observed in some smokers of marijuana was probably bound to happen anyway. We also agree with JDM's idea that some people are more prone to become addicts than others. If they don't get hooked on marijuana, they are just as likely to get hooked on something else, be it tobacco, alcohol, milk or tutti-frutti ice cream. (Or French onion soup with melted Parmesan on top--yum!) And once they become an addict (not just an occasional user with some control over the amounts they use) it tends to deplete their abilities or performances in whatever they do or try to do other than smoking, drinking or eating, as the case may be. // Bouchercon II will prob'ly be only 3 days and 1 night. October 8 is a Friday, and I assume that the committee will open with a party in the evening, and not plan a program for the daytime hours of the 8th. // Neophytes and out-of-towners should be able to get in on things, make friends more readily at the Bouchercon than they might at the larger s-f cons. Hopefully the Bouchercons will grow in popularity and consequently in attendance but, like you, I'm sure, I hope it doesn't grow too big too fast and reach the sometimes overcrowded situation one finds at s-f cons these days. // Perhaps the time will come when there will be more than one mystery convention including a national or "world" convention, but I'd prefer to see at least one of them stay manageable in size. Manageable, not only from the committee's viewpoint, but from the viewpoint of attendees who want to meet everybody and have only 3 or 4 days to do it in. - ljm & jmm))

BILL WILSON, Atlanta, GA: Footsienote to Mr. Fleming and Mr. Grennell-- (A) a few years ago, at the CID School we made a little experiment with the sounds of gunshots--we had one of the instructors get on the roof of the one-story class

room, and while the class was in session, he fired a single shot, paused, fired two shots rapidly from the same gun, and then fired one more from a different gun.

The class of some forty investigators was then asked the following questions: What were the noises, shots or backfires? How many reports did you hear? From what direction did the sound come? If these were gunshots, what kind of weapon? Was there more than one weapon involved? The answers were many and varied and no one estimated that the shots came from the roof area. The guns used were a .38 cal revolver (Detective Special) and a 12-gauge shotgun. No one got both types of guns correctly in their answers or guesses.

(B) the lethal effects of guns are extremely inconsistent--I have investigated cases of people being hit at point-blank range (e.g. two feet) with a .45 slug and no real damage was done. In one instance the victim was hit in the abdomen and didn't even fall down. In another instance, a man was hit in the neck with a nearly-spent .22 long rifle cartridge, however the projectile had enough push to sever the nerve from the spine which controls the automatic breathing response (Cheyne-Stokes if you want to be technical) and the poor guy dropped dead. However, anyone who gets a load of 00 buckshot in the tummy at close range has had the course.

(C) as to types of guns, this, as with automobiles, is largely a matter of personal choice based upon the specific needs of the user plus his likes and dislikes. End of Footsienote.

JON L. BREEN, Gardena, CA: Thank you for the plug of "Green Gravy For The Blush". It was good to finally see it in print. As Southern California readers will note, I lampooned two local television personalities (Joe Pyne and Tom Duggan) in the story, and unfortunately, between the time it was sold and the time it was printed, both men had passed away. The character called "Alvin Turke" in the published version was known as "Joe Spyne" in the original.

BRUCE ROBBINS, Montreal, Canada: I don't know if the subject has been mentioned in your publications yet, but here's another nut for the completists to crack: Canadian editions of John D. MacDonald. As an SF reader and collector, I've long been aware of Canadian editions, and I collect both American and Canadian editions of certain select authors: Clark Ashton Smith, H. P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard and other fantasy authors. Canadian and American editions are virtually identical--including price--the only difference in print is a "Printed in Canada" notice--but bookmaking freaks such as myself find the Canadian paper superior to the American, and the Canadian binding inferior.

The vast majority of Canadian editions of paperbacks have covers imported from the States, with only the insides printed in Canada. MacDonald Canadian editions, however, are printed completely in Canada--I would guess the superior sales make it worthwhile to manufacture the complete product there. On run-of-the-mill books, the American, Canadian, British and French editions are all available in Canada, which can be Heaven or Hell for completists such as myself.

For certain well-known writers, the Canadian market is well-defined. For example, only the British editions of Ian Fleming are distributed here (for English readers) and a certain Paris edition for French readers. In the case of John D. MacDonald, both the American and Canadian editions are available (I have never seen a French edition.). I have not been moved to collect both the American and Canadian editions (although I'll freely admit JDM's superiority to the fantasy writers mentioned above), but this information should prove of interest to true completists and to those desiring a complete picture of JDM's influence and sales.

The girl on the cover of INDIGO is blown up and shown in more detail, as on the cover of a Spanish paperback edition of Mickey Spillane. This practice, both legally and illegally, is quite common on both sides of the Atlantic.

I've seen both DARKER THAN AMBER and TONY ROME, and I must admit that the latter is more entertaining than the former. Sinatra seemed more like McGee to me (and yes, I've read all the McGee books). I liked TONY ROME so much, I watched it twice on the tube. (American shows are shown first on Canadian TV as a general rule--I'd say 90% of those

"World Premiere" movies on American TV are not.) Seeing the American showing second was an object lesson in the silliness of censorship--the two most important cuts were (1) closeups of the hoods' faces after Sinatra escapes a fatal bath--they were deservedly bloody; and (2) that delicious scene with the prostitute which not only brought out Rome's character, but explained Sinatra's visit to the dope peddler. When TV is censored in Canada it is more aboveboard; for example, the two-part Ironside dealing with Quebec terrorists was simply not shown, but anyone with a half-way decent antenna could pick up the American showing, as I did.

REV. ROBERT WASHER, Oneida Castle, NY: It was, as always, a pleasure to receive the JDMB; as all true fans everywhere, we were sorry to learn of JDM's illness...

Yes, The Queen Canon Bibliophile is behind...way behind. We're just beginning to catch up with some of our correspondence. One sad irony developed with our publishing venture. TQCB was finally finished and ready for mimeographing on the evening prior to Palm Sunday. As the whole world knows by now, that is the evening Manfred B. Lee died. On Tuesday we made the sorrowful journey to Roxbury, Conn., to attend the services. And the great ones--the truly great ones--keep going...

As always, am glad to see our contributing editor, Mike Nevins, write in your pages. Mike's an awesomely fascinating young man--he knows something about Everything in the mystery genre. More power to him! We can hardly wait for his THE MYSTERY WRITER'S ART, which he edits, along with his book on Woolrich. The ghostly presence of the beloved Boucher must be pleased, indeed...

Keep up the splendid work. As you know, we "stole" the BIBLIOPHILE tag from you two; you were more than gracious victims. Our name may be changing in the near future to THE ELLERY QUEEN REVIEW. It'll clear up some confusion in the public's mind. Again, thanks to Mike, we fly to Michigan State on Good Friday afternoon to participate on a mystery panel on Saturday morning--the panel dedicated to the memory of Manfred B. Lee. Then, wearily, back here Saturday evening to get ready for East Sunday. (I wonder if Someone Somewhere is trying to tell us something?

CLAY KIMBALL, Eden NC: Dean Grennell, though a bit technical in spots, contributes the most interesting discussion of the month.

The "AKA Art Wesley" seemed to set off some sort of reverberation in my brain--wasn't that a Grennell alias of many years ago, appearing in a fanzine--something or other about trapshooter? That was many years ago.

The McGee movie has not as yet appeared anywhere in this area. God knows when or if it will. Movie distribution sometimes seems even worse than paperback.

((We believe that DAG has used the "Art Wesley" pseudonym in more than one mag. -ljm))

GAIL VAN ACHTOVEN, Sierra Madre, CA: Your JDMB 15 is a beautiful issue, with that classy cover and all! Does it strike you, as it did me, that McDermott's drawing of Travis McGee resembles Terry or "Terry & the Pirates"? By the way, is that comic strip still going? ((In answer to your first question: No. As for your second, I believe I have seen the strip in recent years, maldrawn by George Wunder. -jmm))

I'm enclosing a letter I wrote in response to Bill Wilson's invitation, and trust you'll forward it to him, for which favor I tender most grateful thanks. I couldn't find a thing to carp about in his latest column, but I told him that at the mention of all those cats he harbors, his fangs and horns were instantly excised, so maybe that colored my judgment.

After mulling over Elijah Stern's "A Stern Look At McGee", however, I revised my first tendency to agree with him. I don't think changing McGee would do a thing for anybody...either improve the books or add to the readers' enjoyment.

I think one reason for the popularity of series characters is that, unlike the rest of us, they do not change. In fact, I think we count on them not to change. No matter if friends turn from warm to cool; no matter if the boss smiles today and frowns tomorrow; no matter if slim young spouse grows into portly, grey-haired familiar...Travis

McGee can be depended upon. He won't let us down by becoming somebody we don't recognize and have to get to know all over again. I think the popularity of the series characters on television proves my point. "I Love Lucy" reruns are rampant, even though we all know Lucy and Desi have long been divorced and their children have grown up. Would this series be as popular if the characters went through a divorce and the children matured? Maybe it would, but I doubt it. ((But the children DID mature--as child actors in ANY long-running series will do until somebody develops a growth-stopper. As for divorce--have you noticed that even in her new series, Lucy is a WIDOW--not a divorcee? Makes me wonder if--in this enlightened age--whether divorcees are quite respectable? -jmm))

And if Nero Wolfe went on a diet and Archie outgrew his sense of humor, would we approach the next Wolfe story with the same gusto? ((I don't think Archie's sense of humor is something that he could "outgrow"--being such an integral part of his personality. - jmm)) If Perry Mason married Della Street, or somebody else, would the Gardner books have been better loved? How about if Sherlock Holmes finally realized that he was only a fourth-rate violinist and his opium habit hooked him? Or, for that matter, suppose Dr. Watson got tired of bumbling and took lessons in Logic from Mycroft Holmes? All of these things are done by real live people, but could we tolerate series characters doing them? ((Come now, Gail, leave us be logical! -jmm))

I guess I'm objecting, once again, to the current propensity to "tell it like it is". We all know what it's like. But we enjoy picturing, or having pictured for us, what it should be like... could be like...might be like. Well, don't we? Or do I stand alone in preferring fiction to be as fictitious as it wants to be, as long as it can make me suspend disbelief while I enjoy it?

So all right...maybe I have escapist tendencies. I get tired of hard facts...cold logic...irreversible truths. I face them every day of my life, as don't we all. So I thank whatever gods may be for books that turn off the world-as-it-is and turn on the world as it should/could/might be. If they didn't exist, I'd probably turn off the world-as-it-is with alcohol, drugs or insanity, because I think that to keep sane in a world that is not too sane, leaving facts behind for a period of time is a necessity.

Watch an aging, balding, sagging, souring Travis McGee? Not me!

BILL CRIDER, Brownwood, TX: I was sorry to see the letter from Mr. Hubin saying that his column will no longer be in the Times. I had read about two paragraphs of the new column by "Newgate Callendar" before I started asking myself, "What's going on here?" Then I looked up and saw the new name; I was hoping it was only a temporary thing, but it looks as if it isn't.

What's going on over at Gold Medal Books? There's no gold medal on the covers any more. Maybe, as I have been telling everyone I meet these days, it's time for a nostalgic look at the beginnings of pb original novels in the mid-20th century. An article could answer such trivial questions as: What were the first four novel titles announced by Gold Medal? And if you can answer that one offhand, then what were Dell's first four original titles? My thinking has gotten started on such questions because now that Richard Stark and Lawrence Sanders have started writing for hardcovers, it seems to me that the only really good writers of pb originals started in the 1950's (or earlier). It's like the end of another era.

I don't know, offhand, the answers to the trivial questions I asked above. But, as they teach us in graduate school, I know where to look for the answers. Anyway, one of GM's first titles was STRETCH DAWSON by W. R. Burnett, and one of Dell's was MADBALL by Frederic Brown. ((Now THERE's a story! - jmm))

J. PRINCE, New York, NY: Readers of the JDMB may be interested to know that articles about JDM were printed in the National Review issue of April 20, 1971 (p. 436), this was a review of the book DRESS HER IN INDIGO, also an article in NEWSWEEK for March 22, 1971.

The day I received the latest issue of JDMB was the day I read about the death of Manfred B. Lee, half of the team of E. Queen. I'm enclosing 2 copies of his obituary, which may be of interest to you and fans of JDM. Also other information about him can

be read on p. 131 of Newsweek (April 19) and p. 62 of Time (April 19).

Jack Cuthbert and F. Blosser may be interested in knowing that R. Stark's books about Parker are going to be published by Random House. I just got finished reading his latest book about Parker. It's called "Deadly Edge" and is pub. by Random House, the first of his Parker series to be put into hardcover. It's only fair, and perhaps E. Stern is right in believing that series characters tend to get sort of stale and flat.

Mr. Grennell will be happy to know that one of his favorite guns, namely the S&W mod .39 (9mm) was used by Parker in "Deadly Edge".

JOHN DWYER, Claremont, CA: Here is 50¢ for JDMB 16. Are we still allowed to pay for only one at a time?

((We prefer it that way--makes our record keeping easier. However, we realize that 50¢ is an awkward amount to send, and some readers insist on sending more. Would sending a buck (for 2 issues) be easier? Of course, we still prefer publishable letters to money in exchange for JDMB. -- ljm))

DAVE LOCKE, Duarte, CA: I imagine that you've read that Manfred Lee, $\frac{1}{2}$ of Ellery Queen, died April 3rd at the age of 65, and presume that many of your readers will be sad to hear of it--or were sad to hear of it. When I read the notice, it reminded me that I've been meaning to read an Ellery Queen story for about 15 years and never gotten around to it.

Lately all I've been dabbling in, with regard to reading matter, (you saw me dabbling in the bourbon at the last Petard meeting, so I can't fool you) are mysteries. A bit of Raymond Chandler, some old Frederic Brown stuff I'd stashed away in a holy place, and some Ross MacDonald. If Ross's novel THE CHILL is any indication of his ability, then it looks like I've got quite a few more MacDonald novels to look forward to (I've read all of John's).

Probably John isn't the first person to answer some of his mail with a rubber stamp. For a couple of years I've been idly thinking of getting one myself. Mine would read "Horseshit", though. "Bullshit" doesn't have quite the same ring to it. However, it's likely just as satisfying.

I disagree with Elijah Stern that Death and Marriage are about the two most important things that can happen to anybody once he's got himself born. Once he's got himself born? What's the matter, Elijah, can't you write no better English than that? Marriage, perhaps, but Death has no importance to the person who incurs it. Ask anybody who has died. And why has Elijah got me capitalizing death and marriage?

Dean's article was interesting, of course, but he didn't mention anything about the handgun that's only effective at long range. You must know the one I'm talking about. It's the one the western heroes use to pot a desperado at 300 yards with one shot, but requires five or fifteen or thirty shots to hit anybody in a saloon shootout. Of course, in the older westerns they had six-guns that fired eight or ten times without reloading, but these movies come across much better when they show them on television--you can presume that everyone is reloading during the commercials.

Bill's column made a number of good points, as usual. I'm curious about the pay scales for patrolmen; Bill notes that they should be raised. What are they these days?

I imagine John (may I call you that? I've read all 500 of your novels. I only cheated once, and that's when I gave up on I COULD GO ON SINGING. Brilliant garbage is still garbage, and I kept seeing soap ads out of the corners of my eyes as I was reading it) where was I--I imagine John has somewhat mixed feelings about McGee. He'll be balancing the money against the drudgery and disappointments of the series, and I'll read them even if I would prefer a general novel better. Sub-par MacDonald is still MacDonald.

((I COULD GO ON SINGING was John's first--and last--try at writing a novel based on a screenplay. He has said--in a previous issue of JDMB--that he will never do it again. Apparently it is a good seller, as Fawcett keeps reprinting it. That doesn't mean that you and I should like it, but it does mean that somebody likes it, and of course no writer expects to please every reader with every book he does.

((Perhaps some readers are tiring of the McGee series, but whether or not John is remains to be seen. We could get a letter from him tomorrow saying "no more McGees" or it could say "I'm working on a new McGee novel". In short, at this writing, he hasn't said one way or t'other. A few persons--yourself included--have mentioned that they thought the series was losing its "spark" or whatever, but I haven't noticed it. Some are better than others, but none have been what I would call "sub-par" MacDonald. But what is par? John himself might say that I COULD GO ON SINGING and WEEP FOR ME are sub-par. I might agree with him on one but not on the other. He was surprised that June and I liked INDIGO so much--he didn't think it was one of his better ones. That didn't stop him from writing two more... // As I said before, John will stop writing McGee novels when he feels like stopping. He may be influenced by sales, but not, I think, so much from the money angle as to whether or not he is reaching as many readers--people--as he wants to reach through his books. Nevertheless--even with continuing good sales--he might stop, or at least take a breather from writing about McGee if it got to be a bloody bore for him. And write something just as marketable. // June and I aren't tired of McGee--obviously. On the other hand, we are confident that we are going to enjoy almost anything John turns out. Unless he suddenly decides to write more adaptations from screenplays or decides to join the "how-to sex" parade and write in that over-written area. Neither event ain't very likely, as he has promised not to do the one, and has also said he plans to steer clear of the "non-fiction" field. Of course, some of those sex manuals read like fiction or are written as much for porno purposes as for enlightenment. // Well, it seems old Dave Locke, with his tongue in his cheek, elicited more editorial comment than usual. He's just as funny in person, too, with or without the bourbon. - ljm))

HARRY WARNER, Jr., Hagerstown, MD: The 15th JDMB was a delight to read. I delayed this loc in the hope that I could report in it the near-completion of my JDM collection through the bi-annual AAUW used book sale last week. But either people in Hagerstown have stopped donating mystery and suspense books to the AAUW, or a lot of mystery fans whom I don't know got there before I did. I had to content myself as reward for getting up in time for the opening in the morning with a few science fiction hardcovers. I even went back the second day, thinking I might spot something I'd missed, but didn't have much more luck. On the third day it was obvious that everything would be picked over, but I was going past on my way to pay someone a visit, stopped by, and wham, someone had unloaded on the AAUW a collection of virtually every respectable science fiction and fantasy book published in the past two or three years. I now have enough science fiction to keep me busy reading until the Noreascon, where I should be able to talk with more confidence to some famous pros through having finally read one of their books.

Elijah Stern's article is applicable to series characters in general, I feel, not just to McGee. But I wonder how the great mass of the reading public would react to Elijah's proposal for McGee to evidence some change as he ages and for outsiders to throw some occasional new light on things already seen through McGee's narrations. The most successful series characters in the past have been those who never surprised their reading public, and the great mass of readers may be childlike in their preference for finding just what they expected to find in the new volume in the series, just as the child will be unhappy if a single detail is omitted or added in the fairy tale told him every night before he goes to sleep. Perry Mason, the Bobbsey Twins, Tom Swift, Captain Future, and how many others conform to the exact pattern in book after book, no matter how much the world in which they move may alter in conformity with changes in the real world down through the years.

We've been having an epidemic of arrest resistance around Hagerstown, and I imagine that the police officer's question about the rarity of nice, reasonable people which Bill Wilson quotes has been buzzing through a lot of dark blue-clad heads in this area. I covered three court cases in a single week that were relevant. One was a small businessman who had never been in any kind of trouble with the law until the night a policeman saw a girl running away from him, went to investigate, had a great deal of trouble

getting him under control, and gave him some nasty bruises before he could get him handcuffed. The man claimed that the girl had tried to lift his pocketbook and he'd tried to catch her so he could call police, the girl denied any such thing, and the man's only explanation for resisting arrest was that he didn't get a good look at the person who interrupted his pursuit. He got a suspended sentence.

Then a soldier just back from Vietnam. He'd sideswiped a parked car, causing a crowd to congregate, the crowd had attracted a policeman's attention, the soldier and his mother started to abuse the officer verbally, the officer told them to go home and he'd complete investigating the accident later, they refused to go, the officer put him under arrest, the veteran exploded out of the car, knocking the policeman to the ground and breaking his arm when he landed atop him, the mother egged him on to start kicking the officer, and someone else in the car finally pulled the soldier off. The officer lost four months' work and still doesn't have full use of his arm. The veteran's only explanation was that he'd had a few drinks and he got two years with a promise of reconsideration of sentence after ninety days if his conduct in prison is good.

The third case was a local student at the University of Maryland. He'd been drinking beer in a local tavern, started to abuse a waitress so severely that the manager gave him back his money and told him to leave, he wouldn't go, they called a policeman, there was a struggle before he got outside, then at headquarters he became so excited they put him in a cell for cooling-off purposes, and he flooded the cell block with commode water. It was his first involvement with the law in any form. He claimed it all resulted from plunging out of Hagerstown's small-town atmosphere into the radical and intellectual atmosphere of university classrooms and dorms. ((Sounds like a bad case of culture shock! - jmm)) Since the episode, he said, he's decided that the world should be changed gradually and not violently. ((Bloody damned nice of him-- since that's the way it's going to happen anyway--although in what directions nobody knows--especially me. -jmm)) He got probation without verdict on conditions of making good marks in school and not drinking inordinately.

All three cases were similar: the defendants made no charges of police brutality, none of the defendants was a criminal type, some beer but no hard liquor had affected their conduct. "People don't like each other any more," one local man keeps contending. He may be right. ((Poppycock! - jmm))

I can't agree with Mrs. Stevenson that GONE WITH THE WIND is the only movie adequate to the book on which it was based. I think a case could be made for The Maltese Falcon as another example (the Bogart film version from the early 40's; I think there were a couple of previous filmings of the same novel.) As far as it went and could go under the commercial theater conditions of its day, I felt that the Grapes of Wrath was quite faithful to the spirit if not the letter of the Steinbeck novel. 2001: A Space Odyssey is a film which most fans seem to consider superior to the book. ((The book was written after the movie was made, and was Clarke's idea of what the movie should have been like. It was also a good deal more logical--that is, if you can accept a "mad" computer, which I can't. - jmm))

In many ways, I think that I'd rather see a movie that derives from a novel than one made from a play. When it's the former situation, I know in advance that there will be the changes necessitated by the vastly different media. When it's a film from a play, I'm constantly bothered by the stuff the script writers will have inserted to make it seem less like the filmed play that no producer ever has the courage to make. Long Day's Journey Into Night is the only film I can recall at the moment which didn't irritate me by insertion of irrelevant action and pointless changes of scene.

Maybe someday the number of mystery fans at a science-fiction worldcon will give both fandoms an inspiration. What would prevent mystery fandom from scheduling a day or two of con activities just before or just after the science-fiction clambake, at the same hotel? It would be the ideal way for people active in both fandoms to attend a pair of conventions on one trip, and wouldn't frustrate those who want to spend a lot of time with people in both fandoms during one science-fiction worldcon. Until mystery fandom grows much larger, it shouldn't be hard for a worldcon hotel to find the necessary lodgings and meeting rooms for such a preliminary or postlude to the science-fiction event.

CHRIS MOBLEY & VIRGINIA STONE, Bishop, CA: When we ordered S*E*V*E*N from Pickwick Bookshop in Hollywood, we asked them if--by any chance--they still could get us a copy of THE HOUSE GUESTS. Behold! Today, we received SEVEN and HOUSE GUESTS from them--and would you believe--the cost of HOUSE GUESTS new was 99¢?? It had a tag on the dust jacket showing .99 - or 3 for \$2.50, so we think it was on an "overage" table. Thought you might be interested in this in case others want to find it. We hadn't been able to find SEVEN either up here, and Pickwick said they had waited until they got it to fill our order. Order placed 5/14 and received today, 6/1.

Naturally, we haven't read the book yet, but have looked at the photographs. His black cat looks like ours.

MRS. J. L. POTTER, Greenville, GA: I am curious to see the general reaction to SEVEN; the stories seemed more moralistic to us than we would have expected--particularly for "Playboy". But what a magnificent piece of writing that "Willow Pool" is!

ED COX, Arleta, CA: I hope this doesn't come as too great a shock, but in my current project of writing letters to all the nice people who keep sending me fanzines, I felt a special kinship to the JDMB. Especially for two reasons: 1. I noticed that "x" on the mailing label and though I'd like that in relation to movies, I don't think I like it on the mailing label of a JDMB envelope. I suspect it appears but once... 2. Since I am, somehow, still listed as an Associate Editor, it'd be a hellova-note to be 86'd off the mailing list...

Besides which thereunto, I just finished The Last One Left (oh, yeh, I'm reading all the late hot novels from everywhere...) and said to myself, out loud in the solitudeness of the den, Christ but he's a hellova good writer! Once again, that ol' MacDonald Magic wove its enthralling spell and I hung on every word til the end of the book, enjoying the hell out of it.

Which brings me, in a roundabout way, to the matter of the guy on the cover of JDMB 15. I read the various and downbeat complaints in prose and pomery form in aforesaid issue. And y'know, in a way Stern was right and Stewart strayed. Admittedly, a series has its built-in limits. And JDM hisownself was reluctant to launch a series in the first place for this very reason (and others best known to a writer). Is this not so? But he went ahead. And I will have to admit that while the first McGees thrilled the living pants off me (I lived in a hot apartment in those days and couldn't afford air-conditioning...), the latter ones still bring me to the newsstand at a gallop at news of their release. Yeh. Hell, the man still writes a damn good story.

He does not suffer from attacks of the "cutes" (a phrase I learned, and love, from the Man) and is not carried away by the fact that he's writing a novel of the type he writes. I've tried to read some efforts by other writers concerning hard-guy heroes working in gray areas of the Law, etc., and came away repulsed by the self-conscious attitude of the writers inspired by the fact that they were writing this type of novel, no matter how many they had already written... If necessary, I'll go dig up the ones I still have, for some reason or other...

Leave us not get too critical and profound in the analysis of the McGee series, folk. It may be aging a bit but it is still a healthy number of cuts above similar efforts by most other writers in the field. As for change? Has anybody noticed that McGee, for instance, does not seem to engage in the battles, physically, as often as he did in the first novels? Ever notice how he almost gets killed now and then? Ever figure that a guy in his business, in it as long as he's been, might be able to evade a lot of such situations? Come on, leave us not get jaded. The McGee series stands up thru the passage of time and novels as do few others in the genre, or others. Be thankful that we're still getting them, as frayed about the edges as some of us among the Faithful may think...

I'll have to admit that the first two items I read were Lawrence Fleming's and Dean A. Grennell's articles. I found both of them interesting. And with all due respect to Fleming, the one by Dean A. Grennell (widely known for his series "Little-Known Game Animals of the World") struck me as most knowledgeable and acutely accurate. In my day,

I've fired and used a variety of handguns, among others, and can concur and agree inasmuch as my experience allows. Like, for instance, having fond memories of burns and splatter from revolvers whose tolerances were not up to high caliber (pardon the expression) manufacture and allowed an excess of such between cylinder and commencement of barrel...no fun.

And, another, the "dum-dum" furore stereotype hoohawraw. Ever dig a .45 slug out of anything you fired it into? Note the big blob of copper jacket-lead. Imagine it passing through, as Mr. Grennell puts it, the "corporeal real estate" of somebody. It does not pass cleanly through... Any more than a .22 hollow-point, designed to put the kibosh on little rodents and other pests about the farmland. And I Remember the .38 Police Positive and all that. With the long silvery cartridge (about the time I was faithfully listening to the Lone Ranger on radio...there was an immediate feeling of kinship) and the near flat nose wad-cutter slug. Gawd, it made clean holes in the target paper...

If you can somehow persuade Mr. Grennell to write more for JDMB, I would be willing to contribute many bottles of Van Merritt's to the Cause... ((Don't you think Dos Equis would be better? - jmm))

Bill Wilson's "Hard Touch" ought to be reprinted in the editorial pages of the newspapers throughout the land, as well as in the "Speaks Out" sections of the major magazines and so on. A real hard look at the situation and I heartily agree with what he has to say. It makes a hell of a lot of sense and I'd certainly vote for it!

Once more, I sure feel that if Fawcett can publish a book like S*E*V*E*N, they would do well to get away from PLAYBOY and go back to such stories as Francis Nevins, Jr. reviews in "Early JDM" (has a strangely familiar ring to it...). There's lots of gold in them thar pulps... And it is highly unlikely that most of us will see any of them otherwise.

The Haiku were beautiful and in some instances, foretelling the ills that have come to rest upon Florida and many other parts of the nation and the world. Note how man's greed (the land developers) has just about ruined, destroyed the Florida Everglades. But will anybody learn from this? Not the ones who have money to make from it...

The lettercolumn was long and interesting, definitely a major factor in the continuance of the JDMB. Very healthy. Other than that, no comment at the moment. I want to be sure to get this into the mail so that the "x" can be removed from wherever it now resides in the mailing-address files for JDMB. ((But Ed--now you've earned a copy of JDMB 16, but the "x" will refer to whether you get 17 or not. In other words, you can't win. -jmm))

Best wishes and a long life to the JDMB. And, as somebody or other once said, frequently, "Keep Smiling!" (It makes people wonder what you've been up to...)

STAN WOOLSTON, 12832 Westlake Street, Garden Grove, CA 92640: Since reading the last JDMB, I've acquired a few old zines--Dec-Jan 1971 HOLIDAY Magazine--which has an illustrated article on Fort Lauderdale and other locations. I've heard of authors who use the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE to get good descriptions of an area where they've never been--both for fiction and nonfiction purposes. Of course it pays to travel widely and observe--both locations and people--if you write. But I imagine every author has his own methods, and shortcuts, of adding authenticity to his backgrounds as well as characters.

The writer probably has built up a sort of cross-reference system of thought that aids writing--as well as books and zines used for specific purposes. If all pros--who write any sort of prose, including articles and fiction--do not have their own techniques and aids of this nature, they would probably have to specialize in wild humor or something of that nature. Detective or similar fiction writers would have to have orderly minds--and maybe that is a part of being a pro in any field. While I enjoy reading such fiction it might be a permanent barrier between me ever being a writer in the genre, or at least if it would be necessary to have an orderly house. Mine's a mess.

Somehow the lock on the front door has a chair under it, after I worked for about an hour to peel wood from the top of the door to help counter the sag in it. Maybe that quake caused a twist in this frame house, but in any case the space for the night-latch

mechanism is just not fitting the other part (meaning the wedge) and the key section has been broken for some time. I wonder how many house-burglars find such places one reason they follow their trade. ((Calling house-burglary a "trade" is a wee bit mind-croggling--brings up mind-pictures of apprentices and medieval guilds, etc. - jmm)) It might appeal to the people who believe the world owes them a living, but who aren't basically violent enough to want to use gun or knife--or a club in the head, as a mugger. As many people who "work" in illegal professions stick to one type of thing (housebreaking, etc.) it may be more than just being a certain type of "thinker" or feeler--but as far as crooks go, I wonder if police have put all such data on tapes for "electric brains" to find similarities in case of crimes. (I can imagine a detective who secretly has his own private "Hal" to help combine material--but I doubt it would prevent a need for mental coordination or absorption of factors and the human element to solve many crimes.) (("Modus operandi" has been a factor in identifying whodunit and in catching him, too, for a long, long, time now. - jmm))

But I was thinking of "characters" when I decided to write this. John D. MacDonald continues to produce people you love--or love to hate. In THE LONG LAVENDER LOOK he produces another girl-of-distinction in a supergal with her own hobbies and approaches to life--but doesn't let that prevent him from including other elements to make a well-rounded story. I read the latest book of Donald Hamilton's Helm series before getting to the latest MacDonald--and both have some elements in common as far as approach and fullness of writing techniques go. Still, some who like authors in the mystery field do not like what they think of as the "hard-boiled" school (or the violent or maybe adventure type?). Some may like both schools, and some may differentiate within a school or approach.

It may be that some readers have a preconceived notion that they would not like a certain author, and so never discover authors they would find very worth reading. Even though it has been said "the most significant thing in life is death itself", some will not read any murder mystery; others may read a modern "Gothic" novel, or maybe a case centered in a court of law, or perhaps a locked-room mystery but avoid many other types. I fit the category of not reading all types--I am not sure if I've read even one "modern Gothic", though the older type of Gothic have filtered through my eye-sockets to get imbedded in my brain, and other types too.

My own reading touches on historical and mystery fiction as well as detective, weird, science fiction and fantasy types, and nonfiction of a wide variety. Because of my varied interests, I've read the SF of MacDonald, Anthony Boucher, Poul Anderson and others--and got their mysteries out of curiosity too. The same goes with Fred Brown and others--and it seems a certain approach of questioning what others might take as true, or perhaps as "mysteries" that may explain why so many authors write well in both of these genres. It seems Frederic Brown, Donald ~~MacDonald~~ Hamilton and John D. MacDonald are the ones I prefer--and if it is possible to diagnose my psychological outlook or how I'm a nut, perhaps this will be clue for anyone. I think John Dickson Carr and a few others are also very excellent authors in the field, including Agatha Christie in the field of ladies who write. I wonder if I should assume that I'm a little more inclined to violence than the readers of some less bloody fiction--or if one type of reader of mysteries is more calm than I, or what. Is there any information or suggestion to relate the type of reading with the type of mind in this regard?

On occasion I buy issues of magazines because of a particular author in it. Not long ago I bought an issue of SAINT Magazine--which I believe is extinct, along with MANHUNT and others. I have it sitting open to a John D. MacDonald story. And I have at least 3 issues of PLAYBOY I got from second-hand sources opened to MacDonald shorts. ((Really, Stan? - jmm)) Of course the paper backs from PLAYBOY had some of his stories republished therein, too...some read, some waiting to be consumed. (THE ANNEX is ~~about~~ the only story of his I didn't feel I enjoyed.)

Because both SF and mystery fiction has a certain "idea appeal", I wonder if there could be a successful zine combining the two. I don't mean a SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE Magazine, especially, though some stories might combine elements of both...but some fiction of about all schools of mystery and suspense, plus SF and fantasy too. I have no objection to many magazines of a special nature, or those combining all sorts of stories

(even as widely varied as love stories, he-man adventure, war stories and mysteries) but to me the combination of mystery and SF would be worth a special zine.

I always look forward to JDMB, and as you include full addresses if okayed, I'll just say I'd like my address on any part of this you choose to use. If anyone wants to write me directly, I'll reply, unless the letter contains a bomb or something of a clever nature to stop me.

Mrs. HARRIET N. STEVENSON, West Linn, OR: I couldn't believe JDM wrote HAIKU. But I counted the syllables. He is right. Charming, too. I have tried but can't achieve it.

PWFD--p 5--IWAN HEDMAN, Sweden. Why is it that in translation nobody keeps the colors in the titles? I thought that was a very fascinating thing in the Travis McGee books. ((But some of them do--The Deep Blue Goodbye is "A Thousand Blue Tears" in the German, and "The Deep Blue Farewell" in some other language which I don't remember right now. - jmm)) In Sweden, DARKER THAN AMBER is: "The Witness is Cold". Why?

Then ljm says "mails do get fouled up once in a while". I hope "fouled up" is a colloquial expression in the Swedish dictionary.

I never get accustomed to seeing my name in print so I'm surprised to see it in JDMB. (June: you do a marvelous job of editing.) ((Blush! - jmm)) I am not a member of Women's Lib, but why oh why do I get lower-case letters for my first name? I checked back and forward and I'm the only lower case. Perhaps I should consider that an honor. Who wants to be what everyone else is: UPPER CASE. I couldn't care less...or more. ((Mea culpa! I had been typing a long time that day, and I must have been too tired to hit the shift key, and also too tired to go back and correct it. HARRIET HARRIET HARRIET HARRIET -- does that help make up for it? - jmm))

I was amazed to see Ross MacDonald on the cover of NEWSWEEK. I read the article and then the book, THE GOODBYE LOOK. Ross MacDonald is a hashish of Perry Mason and Agatha Christie (don't criticize, June). ((Who, me? Besides, Perry Mason wasn't an author. - jmm)) The guy that wrote that article has never read good mystery stories. He needs to study books by Howard Haycraft and Ellery Queen about the mystery of mastery of detective stories. Did that man ever read:

Freeling, Nicolas: Question of Loyalty
Crofts, Freeman Wills: The Sea Mystery

and thousands of others, including JDM???

Certainly there are hundreds more, but since Tony Boucher died I don't know which ones to read.

I've decided now that I'll go to Bouchercon II as THE LONG LAVENDER LOOK with the BRASS CUPCAKES underneath. Wouldn't that be a sensation?

~~~~~

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Bill Crider, 4296 Ninth Street, Brownwood, Texas 76801 has a copy of YOU KILL ME (Popular Library's 2nd printing of YOU LIVE ONCE) available. "First letter gets it."

Jack Irwin, 16 Gloucester Lane, Trenton, NJ 08625 has detective books for sale. No JDM titles on the list he sent, but one can ask.

Pete Jarrett, PO Box 1072, Norman, OK 73069 needs copies of JDMB #2 thru 8, and a copy of #10.

Charles M. Radford, 3818 Candlish Harbor Lane, Oshkosh, WI 54901 needs a copy of WEEP FOR ME to complete his collection. Will buy.

Phyrne Bacon, 3101 NW 2nd Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601, will send a copy of the picture for JDM's SHADOW ON THE SAND by Virgil Finlay which appeared in WONDER STORIES 1957 and 1963 to anyone who requests a copy.

# RECOMMENDED READING

THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE (\$1 a copy)

Allen J. Hubin, 3656 Midland, White Bear Lake, MN 55110

DAST MAGAZINE (Detective - Agents - Science fiction - Thriller) (in Swedish)

8 Iwan Hedman, Flodins vag 5, S 152 00, Strangnas, SWEDEN

THE FAUST COLLECTOR (50¢ a copy, 5 for \$2)

William J. Clark, 11744½ Gateway Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064

THE FRANK GRUBER INDEX

William J. Clark (see above)

THE MYSTERY READER'S NEWSLETTER (6 for \$3, U.S. & Canada, \$3.50 overseas, surface mail)

Lianne Carlin, PO Box 113, Melrose, MA 02176

THE QUEEN CANON BIBLIOPHILE (4 for \$2)

Rev. Robert E. Washer, 82 E. 8th Street, Oneida Castle, NY 13421

THE ROHMER REVIEW (\$2 for issues 5-7; back issues #-4 @ 50¢ each)

Robert E. Briney, 245 Lafayette Street, Apt. 3F, Salem, MA 01970

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