



JARVIS

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ARTWORK

Janice Bogstad — p. 42.
Robert Flinchbaugh — p. 22.
Jeanne Gomoll — front cover; pp. 1 (logos), 2,
3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,
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Robert Kallough — pp. 29, 30; back cover.
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You have received Janus Vol 2 No 4 because:

- ☐ you subscribe (only ___ issues left).
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- ☐ it's an exchange for your publication.
- ☐ we'd like you to contribute.
- ☐ we felt like it.



Janice
Bogstad

Much interesting material has come to our attention through the fanzines we have received in trade for the first issue of Janus. The Requiem II from Quebec was absorbing, as usual. It included a bit of good news. That ~~zine~~ *zine* has been awarded a grant to cover printing costs for the next year, as the only fanzine of that quality published in French in North America. Their funding, from the Conseil des Arts du Canada, is good news for all fans of fantasy and science fiction, as another sign of the serious acceptance of the genre.

A surprise of quite a different order came with the reviewzine Fanzine Fanatique (July/August 1976). Apparently, Janus came too late for their first alphabetized list. It was not until I began eagerly going through the appended list, around page eight, that I found Janus listed. I was most pleased to have our zine compared to The Witch and the Chameleon, especially as I have just met Ms. Bankier, the editor. I was pleased with the editor's general praise for Janus. I was startled at the representation of Jeanne's and my relative position in the creation of Janus which was implied by a short statement: "Co-editor Janice Bogstad pops up from time to time." Now, everybody know why we write, illustrate, edit and pay for fanzines. Yes, the old EB. Well, being relegated to a secondary position in my own zine ... It seems as if clarifications are in order. Rather than being again accused of only popping up from time to time, let me outline the "different but equal" duties which Jeanne and I have in relation to Janus.

When I first began Janus, I was overwhelmed by the work involved, especially as it competed with my school work and outside employment. Since I prefer reading, editing and soliciting manuscripts above the other duties involved with producing a fanzine, I was fortunate in finding someone like Jeanne who prefers, indeed enjoys, the other aspects of the business. Now anyone can enjoy doing layout, artwork, and strangest of all, a table of contents, is some-

thing I will never understand. I am merely grateful. Jeanne began as a consultant, also took on typing and organizing duties, became managing editor and just generally became to indispensable to the zine that we decided she should become co-editor. Besides, she and I have such delightfully different ideas about what SF, feminism, art and just about everything else are and should be, that our combined forced in creating Janus provide it with a lively, dialectical impetus, also another basis for our two-headed emblem (See Janus I for some of the others). Let me make this perfectly clear. Of the six issues of Janus produced to date, we have worked closely together in the production of all except Vol. II No. 2, though I did help some on that one also. And besides, damn it all, I paid for the thing! It may seem like I only pop up in the zine infrequently, but that's because I'm usually below the waterline (drowning?!) supporting the leaky craft, Janus.

Now that I have finished giving vent to my wounded pride, I can get on to the local fan news, and there is a lot of it.

This issue of Janus is new and different, as I hope you have noticed by now, but rest assured, we intend to maintain our one and one half year tradition of excellence. (Madison Avenue, here I come.) It's the same old Janus in new feathers. Thanks to the financial and technical assistance of Dick Russell, who is paying over half the printing costs for this issue, as well as doing most of the typing. It's so nice to find people to do all the things I hate most! Like Diane Martin, who is keeping the books for the fanzine, and another brainchild of Dick's which I will tell you about next. Dick works for the Department of Public Instruction in Madison, and thus is well acquainted with the ways of bureaucracy. He has decided that our group and all of the activities in which it is involved could profit from incorporation, so that's what we're doing. Henceforth, Janus will be a division of SF Cubed, or the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction. Our new address is: Janus, c/o SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI, 53701.

Now, about those other activities. One of them is WisCon, Madison's own local science fiction convention. Yes folks, believe it or not, there is going to be a convention in Madison, a year later than planned, but all the better for the wear.

Planning for WisCon got underway in September when MadSTF was granted money for that purpose by the Wisconsin Student Association. They allowed us a little to pay traveling expenses for a guest of honor, and that was all the impetus we needed, especially since Prof. Hartung of University Extension here in Madison agreed to help us with the arrangements. With his help, we have secured the weekend of February 11, 12, and 13, 1977. So, next spring the city will be invaded by those folks we all love best, SF fans. The convention will be held at the Wisconsin Center, at the nexus of both the University community and the main streets of Madison, close to lots of eating places featuring Greek, or Italian, or Mexican, or Jewish, or Chinese, or French, or even Japanese cuisine. We've also reserved a limited number of guest rooms with Lowell Hall, down the block from the Wisconsin Center. We'll be showing our all night movies in the basement of Lowell Hall, in a room near their large, heated, indoor swimming pool!!!

WisCon, being the first Madison SF convention, will have another first to its credit also. It will be feminist oriented, with Katherine MacLean as the GOH, and Amanda Bankier as the Fan GOH. However, since MadSTF's membership is varied in their interests, we will include events which appeal to all SF

and fantasy enthusiasts. There will be panels and discussions on women in SF, but also on fantasy, exotic science, teaching SF, and strictly fannish pursuits. We are planning to have at least two things going on at all times for Saturday and Sunday, and a special, zany program for Friday night. Since Madison is well-known for its campus movies, you may be sure that we will have a good selection at the convention. We already have six major films lined up, including the Darling(!) of this year's WorldCon, Rocky Horror Picture Show. Such a deal! And all for a mere four dollars in advance, and six dollars after January 31, 1977. Send inquiries to WisCon, c/o SF³, PO Box 1624, Madison, WI, 53701.

While I'm on the subject of conventions, I don't want to forget X-Con in Milwaukee, especially since I just got my free membership as a participant. So, if you want to see me, along with Gordon Dickson, the GOH; and Robert Asprin, the Fan GOH, then you should contact Mary Jean Miller, through this address:

X-Con '77

Box 97, Greendale, WI, 53129

Oh yeh, the convention is scheduled for June 17, 18, and 19, and they are organizing brewery and planetarium bus trips from the convention site at the Red Carpet Inn.

As you can see, the fannish activities in Wisconsin have picked up considerably in the last couple of years.

Whew, now that I'm finished with all the local news, I can get back to this issue of Janus.

I am continually surprised at the material which is available for publication in Janus. It seems as if the whole character of the magazine changes with

each issue. We have the same fiction, movie and book review sections, the same sections with articles and letters, but almost outside of my control, the character of their contents changes. This issue is partially devoted to con-reports, a new feature of Janus. In talking over our convention experiences at MadSTF we decided that they should be immortalized in print. Thus you will find a discussion-interview with Jeanne and myself and Amanda Bankier and Suzy Charnas, as well as con-reports from MidAmeriCon and WindyCon III. Our fanzine reviews have bifurcated into an article on current fanzines and an annotated list of what we have received in the mail since the last Janus came out, just before MidAmeriCon. We have new writers and as always, lots of good graphics.

We tried to get something from everyone in MadSTF into this issue of Janus, but we'd sure like to see some submissions from elsewhere in the future. Artwork, articles on SF or fantasy, reviews of current or even older SF, or other fiction — how about it folks? We can be reached through the SF³ address cited above, and I promise prompt and hopefully helpful response to any material you send me.

If Janus is not exactly to your taste, you might be interested in another Madison fan publication, Digressions. It is edited by that master of fictionality, who made his debut in the pages of Janus, John Bartelt. You can get a copy or send submission to: John Bartelt, c/o SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI, 53701.

And, if you happen to be in Madison, check with our friends at the Madison Book Co-op at 254 West Gilman St.

Hope you enjoy our first offset issue of Janus.



Corr (Perri Corrick, ed.) Colorful magazine strong in short articles — both serious and humorous — reviews, fiction, poetry, letters, artwork, etc.

Digressions magazine (John Bartelt, ed.) Fiction, reviews on science fiction, speculative science, and articles. 50¢ per issue.

Janus (Jan Bogstad and Jeanne Gomoll, eds.), containing fiction, letters, articles, artwork, jokes, reviews, and criticism. Janus, the "two-headed" zine, presents much of its material in situations of opposition, comparisons, and support. Feminist oriented. 75¢ per issue or 5 issues annually for \$3.50.

Orcrist (Richard West, ed.) Scholarly journal devoted to the works of Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and other related authors.

Starling (Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell, eds.) A Hugo-nominated personal journal of popular culture: music, STF, comix, movies, mysteries, comics, etc. 50¢ per issue or 5 issues for \$2.00.

MadSTF: The Madison Science Fiction Group. Meets weekly and produces a monthly public "event", usually discussion of an SF author by one or more MadSTF members. Also produces radio plays and radio criticism of SF on WORT-FM.

Book of the Month Circle. Discusses a different novel every month. Meets informally in people's homes and apartments. Pretzels featured.

WisCon '77: the Wisconsin Convention of Science Fiction. Co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension, scheduled for February 11-13 of 1977, and featuring GOH Katherine MacLean and Amanda Bankier. Panels on feminist SF, fannishness, fantasy, science, religion and SF, contemporary SF, education and SF, and more. Video room, movies, and live entertainment.

All these activities are coordinated by an umbrella organization:

SF³

the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction

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Madison, WI, 53701

In accordance with the theme of our magazine embodied in the two-faced god, Janus, and also with Janice's and my long-standing practice of taking turns at punches, it's my turn at the editorial again. This one continues not from the feud concerning the nature of sf (I gave up, remember: and use the term flagrantly throughout this article), but rather, tenuously, from an article two issues ago dealing with the importance of studying theories about the evolution of women that do not degrade women....



"Or failing that, invent"

— editorial by Jeanne Gomoll

There was a time when you were not a slave, remember that. You walked alone, full of laughter, you bathed bare-bellied. You say you have lost all recollection of it, remember.... You say there are no words to describe this time, you say it does not exist. But remember. Make an effort to remember. Or, failing that, invent.

[*Les Guérillères* by Monique Wittig (Avon, 1969), [italics mine]]

In this quotation from a truly extraordinary novel about a future Amazon society, Wittig suggests that women must find an ego-sustaining history before they will be able to funnel energies into the development of an ego-sustaining future. Whether by history she refers to a possible distorted cultural pre-history when women's roles were not degraded, or to a more personal past for individual women when roles had not yet restricted freedom — it does not really matter. She points to a possible way to escape the destructive roles, the slavery in a society that confounds our dreams: that is, through the memory or invention of an autonomous existence. To remember (or dream of) ourselves striding free and self-sustaining in a fresh-smelling world is perhaps enough; it is, at least, a beginning. If we can pretend in detail (recalling Vonnegut's warning/hint that we are what we pretend to be) through our art, we can become. That

to me is the primary value of sf: not so much that it prepares us for the spectacle of change, but that it provides us with opportunities to act out change, exercises our imaginative muscles, so to speak. And for feminist expression through sf, this value is especially valid. No feminist revolution will succeed until we have conceived a few ideas about the kind of world we want to live in: to remember and to invent are important parts of this process.

In this article, I'd like to discuss a certain kind of response by some sf writers to the nature of change and how I react to this response when I find it applied to sf that concerns itself with women's roles in the future.

Arthur C. Clarke's attitude towards change, for instance, is one involving a quantum jump in human development, rather than one of an evolving nature. Clarke obviously does not predict a literal wholesale Assumption of star children as he describes in *Childhood's End*, and certainly very few works of sf are meant as predictions, *per se*: I do not mean to imply any such interpretation in the succeeding paragraphs. Clarke's preference for this attitude towards change in much of his writing however, represents, I think, a definite philosophy regarding the potential future of our species (i.e., that significant change will occur within humanity because the very nature of humanity undergoes change, not because aspects inherent within us evolve or are shaped into a different kind of behavior). The ape/animal is transformed into humankind/toolmaker through the touch of the Monolith, not slow evolu-

tion. And, Clarke implies, we will progress from our present humanness through the next great qualitative level with a similar jump. Humans in Childhood's End join the Overmind, Bowman returns to the earth in 2001 as a Star Child capable of incomprehensibly un-human thought.

No matter that most sf is written of future worlds, the best of it is most revealing of present realities. I don't mean of course that sf portrays our world in mirror images, but rather that it is most often a reaction to our world, in the form of exaggeration, extrapolation, utopian dreaming, warnings, alternatives, or giggles. And so, I have always found it vaguely unsatisfying, even while being thoroughly entertained, to read sf that reacts to various human problems by constructing worlds in which those problems are solved by *changing the rules*. People cannot cope with the awesomeness of the universe in Childhood's End — We thus must become not-human in order to leave the earth and achieve our destiny.

Authors who envision such radical "solutions" have frequently been published lately in sf dealing with women's roles in the future. In order to free future women from the slavery that most of the women of the world presently endure, many sf writers who deal with the subject have identified the source of injustice to be biological and thus write of worlds in which biological differences are somehow eradicated and a brave new world is insured. In *Aurora: Beyond Equality* [V. N. McIntyre and S. J. Anderson, eds. (Fawcett, 1976), reviewed in *Janus*, Vol. 2 No. 3], for instance, two of the eight short stories can be placed in this category.

James Tiptree Jr.'s beautifully written story, "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" gradually reveals an earth that has long ago been decimated by a plague which entirely wiped out all male human beings. The race survives by cloning a stock of 11,000 (female) genotypes: Earth's population is stabilized at 2 million persons. Three men from our world who have accidentally (through a sunspot-time warp) fallen into this world inescapably demonstrate the elements of violence and inhumanity which, even as three lone individuals, make their integration into the new society an impossible event. In this story, it is not female biology which is shown to be the source of irresolvable conflict, but ~~male aggression~~. Lady Blue explains to one of the men, Lorimer, that "... what you protected us from was largely other males, wasn't it? ... But the fighting is long over. It ended when you did, I believe." The men are mercifully done away with since they cannot contribute to the society and are not valuable as clone stock because, presumably, their aggressive natures are not socialized but genetic.

Responding in another way, but with similar opinions about the genetic unfeasibility of a future world based on humans as-they-exist-now, Marge Piercy writes in "Woman on the Edge of Time" of a future earth whose people have achieved an androgynous society. One criticism of Freud's use of the term "androgyny" has been that the word assumes the existence of primal male and female attributes (that when combined in an individual result in health). Marge Piercy shares this notion with many authors of stories written recently dealing with a feminist view of the future. Ursula LeGuin, for example, is most conscious in *The Left Hand of Darkness* of combining "feminine" and "masculine" aspects within Gethenians. ("I was after ... a balance: the driving linearity of the 'male', the pushing forward to the limit, the logicity that admits no boundary — and the circularity of the 'female', the valuing of patience, ripeness, practicality, liveableness.") For Piercy,

a major component of the future society she constructs (among many in her complex creation) is that of the redesigned human reproductive system. Each child has three "mothers", two (at least) of whom breast feed the child regardless of the mother's sex. Actual conception and gestation takes place in a genetics lab/factory. "It was all part of women's long evolution," explains one of the future denizens/travel guides to a woman from now.

When we were breaking all the old hierarchies.

Finally there was that one thing we had to give up too, the only power we ever had, in return for no more power for anyone. The original production: the power to give birth. 'Cause as long as we were biologically enchain'd, we'd never be equal. And males never would be humanized to be loving and tender too. So we all became mothers. Every child has three. To break the nuclear bonding.

Not quite an "evolutionary" change as claimed.

From a rather simplistic viewpoint of going to these stories as possible "roadmaps" for the future, these authors do not offer much. Like Michael's new religion in Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, one must know Martian before any of the new religion can be applied (unless, of course, one is Jubal Harshaw or Heinlein himself). In stories which seek to build non-sexist societies and eradicate the restrictive roles by changing human biology (and change humans into not-humans), the result is more than mere inapplicability, however. The philosophy projected is one that allows for very little hope for real ongoing activism to eliminate destructive roles in our society, for they assume that such "roles" cannot be unlearned since they are not learned in the first place. They are not socialized roles, but *genetically inherent* roles.... Such an idea is dramatically reactionary when spelled out in this naked fashion, and is the aspect of such sf that depresses me when I encounter it.



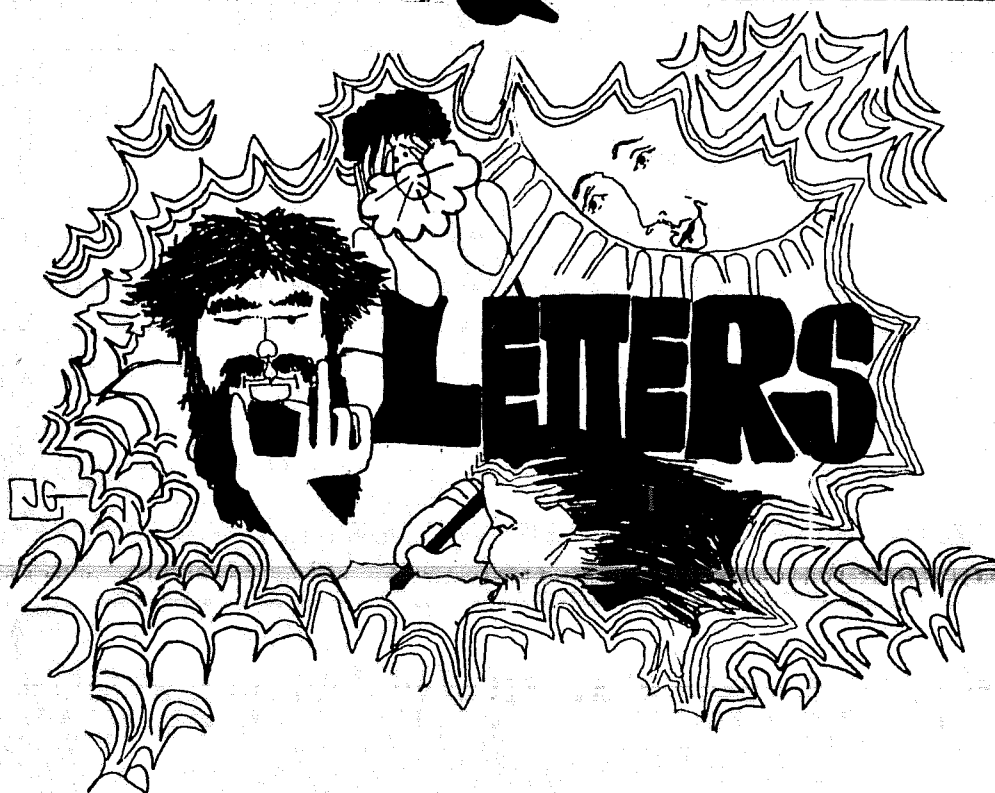
There is dissent to this opinion of course.... (I can hear it already. And so to forestall some of it and display my inherent trait of open-mindedness, I will quote the woman:) About the writing of her novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, and her construction of its strange sexual order in which all persons are neuter-sexed until kemmer, at which time partners temporarily become male and female respectively and randomly; make love; and, after the female has given birth (long after the male has returned to a neuter status), return to neuter; LeGuin says:

Why did I invent these peculiar people?... Not, certainly not, to propose Gethen as a model for humanity. I am not in favor of genetic alteration of the human organism — not at our present level of understanding. I was not recommending the Gethenian sexual set-up: I was using it. It was a heuristic device, a thought-experiment. Physicists often do thought experiments. Einstein shoots a light-ray through a moving elevator; Schrödinger puts a cat in a box. There is no elevator, no cat, no box. The experiment is performed, the question is asked, in the mind. Einstein's elevator, Schrödinger's cat, my Gethenians, are simply a way of thinking. They are questions, not answers; process, not stasis. One of the essential functions of science fiction, I think, is precisely this kind of question-asking: reversals of an habitual way of thinking, metaphors for what our language has no words for as yet, experiments in imagination.

["Is Gender Necessary?", in *Aurora*]

And so we come full circle. LeGuin's conception of the function of sf comes close to Wittig's exhortation to women in *Les Guérillères*. The question that still remains in my mind, however, is that when we construct human (not alien thought-experiments, as in LeGuin's novel, but human) future worlds, do we take two steps backward for every one forward when the worlds are only brilliantly executed fairy tales whose lessons are impossible to exercise in reality? Perhaps criticism that is based on motive is mostly invalid and should remain a personal reaction, but then again, in stories such as appeared in *Aurora* in which the editors plainly stated a motive for collecting the particular stories included in the anthology (they "were looking for stories ... which would explore the future of human potential after equality of the sexes had been achieved"), maybe not. I think that sf has more to offer in its exploration of the "future of human potential" than a denigration of humanity's chances, *as-we-are-now*, to make revolutionizing changes in our society.

"But remember. Make an effort to remember. Or, failing that, invent."

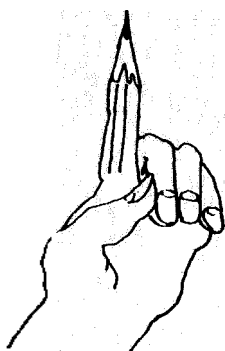


Laurine White
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Mythologies didn't get good coverage in Perri's fanzine reviews. Don's excellent zine with its thought-provoking comments is not adequately described by "Dalzell cover, long lettercol." Also it should be mentioned that ICITM is available only for trade.

I heard that one issue of *The Witch* and the *Chameleon* had some criticism of Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Darkover* series that was also mentioned in *The Darkover Dilemma* by S. Wise, a T-K Graphics publication. Maybe I should keep more informed on the issues involved in women's rights. Working as a hydrologist for the federal government, I'm better off than I would be in private industry. So what do I do in my free time? I've got nothing to do with the position of women in this society. I'm a science fiction fan and associate with local SF fans and read lots of SF books and fanzines. I haven't made the time to get to the library to check out *House of Zeor*, let alone something by Gloria Steinem. *House of Zeor* would be a lot more fun to read. I'd rather read something with a good story than something in which the message is foremost. The impression is in my mind that *The Witch* and the *Chameleon* may be more strident in its purpose than I'd care to read.

Perri Corrick told me at MAC that I misunderstood your last issue. You're probably getting the impression I'm misunderstanding this issue also. In reading a story I'm



not going to consciously examine how women are portrayed. Not unless the author is as blatant in his opinion of women as John Norman. If a story is fascinating, it isn't hard to overlook some female stereotypes. Mark Sharpe dismisses Norman as a "sick cookie" and calls ERB a "turd". What is it about Burroughs's writing that is so offensive? Is it those impossibly chaste women? His heroes are as impossibly pure. (I don't believe Farmer's speculations about the manner in which Tarzan spent that night with La.) I'm romantic and enjoy daydreams about brave heroes rescuing beautiful princesses in distress. It is fantasy, after all, and not reality. Anyway, my favorite Martian heroine was Tavia, who fought with a sword alongside Tan Hadron.

In my humanistic high-school English class, "in medias res" was discussed in connection with early Greek drama. My best grades weren't in essay writing (maybe you can tell by the way this letter rambles) but in grammar. So I notice things like the quaint spelling of "beaurocracies" on Page 20. Sentence fragments used for effect don't distract me, but something as ungrammatical as "we feminists" on Page 34 distracts me completely from whatever point you are making.

Was Geanne's [sic] story "A Room Alone" influenced by E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops"? [Oh, yes. — JEANNE GOMOLL] Generally, I don't like fanzine fiction. It's either badly written or unoriginal. John Bartelt makes it plain that his story is taken from an idea used by Larry Niven. After that story last issue, I was afraid to start "A Room Alone", but it was far better than I expected. That First Person I and Dr. Vonne, both in highly responsible positions, are women is treated naturally and not made glaringly obvious.

I didn't read the anthology Aurora: Beyond Equality and don't plan to. All I can remember after reading Women of Wonder is that it included one of those great ship-who-sang stories by Anne McCaffrey.

I am fascinated by those glittery tinsel shopping malls used in Logan's Run. They are convenient for shopping, but who'd want to live there? Did you notice all the white faces there? That place was a white supremacist's dream. The only black man in the film played a robot. A male reviewing Logan's Run might mention Jenny Agutter's body instead of the "pretty face of Michael York." I haven't heard either of a new movie called Voyage to the Center of the Earth or of any plans to make Star Wars a TV series. Rollerball wouldn't win a Hugo because it doesn't have any special appeal to fans. Dark Star and The Capture were fanzine projects; fans enjoy Monty Python humor; Harlan Ellison was a fan and he previewed Boy and His Dog at a convention. Rollerball uses a future society to make a point about glorification of violence, but what does it communicate to an SF fan? I saw it with Taking of Pelham 1, 2, 3, which made a much stronger immediate impression.

The cover art was very attractive. The girl looks like a daughter of the moon.

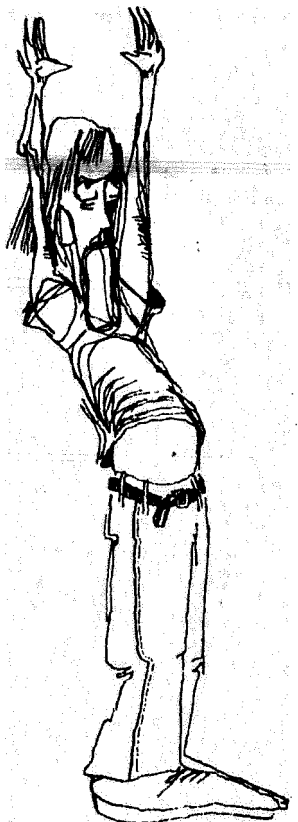
PS: Don't you think that sentencing a Hurley night-club proprietor to four years in prison for sending out prostitutes' laundry is a bit much?

doug f barbour
10808 75th Av.
Edmonton, Alberta, T7B 1R2

i take harlan ellison's correction with humility. he's right, or at least as right as wrong. & certainly 'right' about the world he created for A Boy. i think it would be nice if you could develop yr ideas, ms bogstad, about future histories. there's much more to be said. just noting how le guin began near the beginning of the league of all worlds, worked thru the destruction wrought by the shing to the new ekumin & then returned to beginnings in her last two novels is interesting. her future history is, i think, more complex than most, because it covers so large & diverse a space/time area. cordwainer smith also did this. thomas murn has some interesting things to say about disch, & has read the right delany (tho delan y's first novel was The Jewels of Apter — get the facts right, please!). but, after beginning to make some interesting theoretical points, he fudges everything, gets off into rather irrelevant comments on brunner & zelazny (i think he could find extremely relevant things to say about them, actually & brunner pubd The Jagged Orbit after Stand on Zanzibar — facts! , but he doesn't; it's all too abstract & loosely thought out), & fails to really illuminate that very fine novel, Camp Concentration (& surely 334 is also an exploration of ways of life?). still, i look forward to his 2nd installment.

i've just been marking 1st yr papers so maybe i'm a bit hyper, but i have to admit silly errors get me down. "reference" w/ an 'e'. you don't tell us wotthehell The Gemini Problem is! a book? an article? an intro? i'd like to know. does it really talk about the Darkover books or about something similar? murn's failure to get his facts straight hurts his work: if he makes errors in those areas where i know what he's talking about, how can i trust him not to make errors in those areas where i am ignorant? there's something about too many fanzine articles — a slackness of argument — that sometimes gets me down. i don't want a learned article a la PMLA; that would be unreadable. but, if a writer is really interested in a subject, surely s/he could do sufficient research & careful thinking to present per arguments in a fully coherent manner? no?

well, i'm sorry to attack, attack, but it's meant to be of some possible help. or else i'm just persnickety tonight.





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

Let me exorcise at least part of my smouldering guilt complex by getting a LOC written on Janus. You have been very kind to continue sending it when I've been responding so undependably, and just as patient by refraining from a violent demonstration of your opinion of loccers who don't loc.

The interview with Cliff Simak held my interest particularly well in this issue. I'm happy to see so many fanzines running material about this writer while he is still active and able to appreciate the fact that young fans are interested in his books. That interest must be significant, because some of Cliff's recurring props and characters are alien to the experience of most young people today. The only thing I can find to grumble about in Bill Brohaugh's article is the way he presented it. I've been growing increasingly dissatisfied with the interview format for fanzine material about pros. It keeps reminding me of the transcript of a criminal trial, and the pros who usually are chosen for fanzine interviews aren't as well suited for the role of defendant as certain pros who don't get interviewed. The interview format has a tendency to put all the information on the same level, instead of the emphasis that the most important and most striking statements could be given if the material were written as a normal article. There is also a waste of space in some interviews, in that the answers often imply or summarize the contents of the questions, causing duplication. That isn't as true of this example as it usually is, however. [We tried to do things differently with the interview in this issue. — JEANNE GOMOLL]

I also liked Karen Peterson's little essay on Ellison's three stories. I don't remember reading "Try a Dull Knife", but she made its nature and content quite clear in the limited space. More fans should try their hand at this type of critical article, considering one specific aspect of one writer's output. There's a much better chance of covering the topic thoroughly and effectively than when the fan decides to try to write a fanzine article about all the novels of John Brunner, for example, or all the important novels which deal with overpopulation.

If the question marks in the Goldin quotation were the author's rather than yours, he apparently is skeptical about segregating "escapist" literature, too. But I don't see much difference between the second and third purposes which he assigns to all fiction. What else is the "human condition" in addition to the social framework and moral attitudes? Not much, I believe. I've swung around in recent years to the belief that entertainment is the only important virtue that a story can possess. I admit that a fine story can also teach a lesson, but it seems foolish to spend all the time required to read a story just to undergo a message which could have been absorbed in a few seconds if it had been stated in non-fictional form. Of course, there is a sort of overall lesson that is taught by science fiction in toto, by the productivity of all the good writers: it keeps reminding us that the future won't be the same as the present, there may be extra-terrestrials to get along with, and so on.

"Getting Away From It All" struck me as a successful story. It conveyed something of the nature of real nightmares and vivid dreaming and the awful moments of uncertainty when we begin to wake and can't be sure if those things were really happening or were just the product of the subconscious.

I'm not quite sure if I got the point of "The Midget, the Gorilla, and the Cameraman". I gather that it's meant to cause the reader gradually to realize that these aren't normal humans relaxing out in the woods, but I have the uncomfortable suspicion that I may have missed some clue that was meant to create a different or deeper symbolism. I like the way Peter Werner told the story, and the economy with words.

The cover looks fine, although I suspect that an electrostencil which reproduced blacker would have created an even more vigorous impact on the eye. I liked the interior format and typography, although I'm not sure that you needed to put those copyright notices at the end of most of the items in the issue. The contents page copyright notice should be sufficient to protect everything. I keep thinking that maybe fans should put on their contribution to fanzines a "first serial rights only" notice or some such thing, if the publication will be copyrighted; even though no money changes hands for the right to publish the material for the first time, I assume that this would guarantee the writer's control over future use of his material as completely as the statement in the fanzine about reversion of rights to contributors.

Maybe you'll forgive if I skip altogether any comments on the feminism material and related items. I've just about decided that everything that could possibly be said on the topic has already been said repeatedly, and that someone gets very angry at further repetitions, no matter what the repeater's intentions may be. I've survived this long in fandom without arguing over politics and religion, and maybe abstention from one more important area won't be fatal to me.

I'm sorry for the issue or issues I failed to write about. I've grown increasingly erratic responding to fanzines this year, because of problems involving my job and the new fan history book, among other things.



Don D'Ammassa
19 Angell Dr.
East Providence, RI, 02914

A very thought-provoking and rewarding issue of Janus,
which has been languishing too long unread in my in-box.
Time to stop stalling.

Wollheim is quite correct about Tanith Lee. Although there are some occasional oddities about her writing that she will undoubtedly smooth over as time passes, she is unquestionably one of the most promising new writers to appear recently. Wollheim seems to have exceptionally good success in this regard recently, far better than that of Laser, for example.

I have a lower opinion of Ron Goulart's writing than does Thomas Murn. There are occasionally flashes of brilliance — as in *After Things Fell Apart* and *Wildsmith* — but in general he's become too repetitive, too light.

It appears that Murn is not aware of Disch's early novels, *Echo around His Bones*, *Mankind under the Leash*, and *The Genocides*. He should look them up.

Delany's first novel was *Not The Fall of the Towers*, it was *The Jewels of Apor*.

As a general statement, I think it was a mistake to split this article in half. It's going to be very difficult X months from now to remember what was said in the first half.

I disagree strongly with Janice on "Here Be Dragons" by P. J. Plauger. If I understand her correctly, she is saying that there is no new sexual awareness in the story, so it doesn't meet the criteria of the collection. I found it quite the opposite. In a sexually liberated society, it would be likely that sexual labels would be so absent that a story wouldn't pay particular attention to which sex any particular character was. I think this is what Plauger was attempting.

Janice, on the other hand, says that the captain should have been a female to get the point across. Leaving aside the fact that it is generally easier for a writer to deal with a central character of the same sex in a realistic fashion, there is also the question, why should the captain be female? Isn't that a chauvinistic attitude, rather than a liberated one? A propagandistic rather than a literary concern? I think so.

I also disagree mildly with Jeanne Gomoll on *Let the Fire Fall*, although it has been so long since I've read it that I can't substantiate the point well. It does appear to me though that the opinions expressed by the characters she cites may well not be those of the author.

Embryo is reviewed as the film version of a Louis Charbonneau novel. Not true. Charbonneau novelized the film, from an original script by Anita Doohan and Jack Thomas.

Suzy McKee Charnas
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Albuquerque, NM 87114

... I am still trying to get the new books (the title it's going under, by the way, is *Motherlines*) into print. It's being looked at by a publisher now, but considering that a young editor there — a woman, who was bold and kind enough

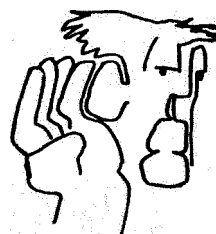
to come out and speak the unspoken rule to my astonished face — told me, "You know, if this book were all about men it would be a terrific story. I'm worried about my market [SF readers, notoriously and probably still correctly mostly male]. The *Female Man* had male characters in it, so men would pick it up and at least open it. But men get very angry ..." You finish it, it's not hard: "to be left out." Anyway, considering that this is one of the great taboos in publishing (Joanna Russ confirms the truth of it, by the way), that books without men in them will not sell, I am not very sanguine about the outcome. Sorry for the involved and messy sentence above, I get carried away a bit about this. The amazement still hasn't worn off. I mean, it hasn't been a crime to teach females to read and write ever in this country that I know of, and women do shell out cash for Gothics and J. Susann, so why not for Charnas' work, which at least will not (I hope) demean them?

Anyway, I'm not worried about getting *Motherlines* published, just annoyed and injured feeling, since I was taught as we all were that a good book sells itself, you don't have to make a sales pitch — which is what I am having to do, to my chagrin.

Mike Glicksohn
141 High Park Av.
Toronto, Ont., M6P 2S3

While I appreciate your sending me *Janus* and while it is flattering to be mentioned in it (I have to confess I don't recall either the incident or the anonymous member in question but looks full of liquor and a head full of hooch isn't

something to threaten me with: I'd welcome such a delightful experience!) I must admit that I'm really not tuned in to what you are doing. I wish I had the time to become part of the many new fanzines around and to read the sercon material even though I'm not qualified to comment on it but I'm afraid I don't so my fanac is seeing a slight cutback lately. I could do one of two things: not reply to *Janus* so that after a while you'd stop sending it to me, or let you know that your copy here isn't really getting the appreciation it deserves so you can send it to a more receptive home. This is no way reflects any animosity and has nothing to do with the unfortunate contretemps over my comments to your first issue. But as a faned myself I know I like to think my creations are being read and enjoyed before being filed away to molder forgotten and unloved in a box in someone's basement. So thank you for sending me the issues that you did, best of luck with future issues and I hope you enjoy yourselves publishing as much as I always have (and occasionally still do!)





Glike Mixon
Address Withheld

Dear Bicephalic People:

I picked up your zine with great anticipation, only to find it was practically a carbon copy of a really great fanzine, John Bartelt's Digressions. How can you get away with it? Same artists, same mimeo, even reprinting some of Bartelt's work. If you really like it that much, maybe you ought to go to work for him (or maybe you are; maybe he just wanted to use a different name in another zine, so he could get more mileage out of his work). Now I don't know which to buy, Janus or Digressions; I suppose it really doesn't matter.

[You're right. So we thought we'd change our image a little bit ... JEANNE GOMOLL]

Jerry H. Stearns
1831 2nd Av. S. #220
Minneapolis, MN 55403

... One thing I feel like saying about the "SF as genre" articles you have written. I agree with Mike Glicksohn's statement (see letter, Janus, March, '76) that it's difficult to find anything new to say about the endless written and spoken arguments on this topic. I find myself feeling frustrated over most of them because they all lose sight of one thing: everything connects with everything else. SF is a branch of Fantasy (in the sense that all fiction is a product of the imagination and mind of the author). Literature, as most everything else, has its own "eco-system", where each story, each idea, must have some connection with the "real" Universe of our human experience. Otherwise there is no basis for understanding among its readers. In this sense all fiction, indeed all writing, is part of the same larger category.

Categories are probably necessary for the human mind to make sense of the Universe it experiences. But these categories only have their existence in the mind. They do not have an inherent existence of their own. (Obviously, since I also am a part of this universe, and not an outside observer, this must be stated as an opinion of my own). Categories serve their purpose as a tool, but are not the final answer.

In a recent discussion of Delany's Dhalgren (just one of so many discussions) I heard someone say that it was not a part of "mainstream SF." Mainstream SF? That's an interesting juxtaposition. It points up the fact that SF is undeniably connected with the larger category of Literature, despite all the walls people have tried to build between the various aspects [of] it.

I see SF as playing a legitimate useful role in literature, and as both a result of and a maker of the personal/social/political atmosphere in our society. It is reaching out tendrils into every facet of our lives, even of those people who are unfamiliar with the "genre". Whatever one can say about it, it fulfills needs in the people who read it, and it affects the lives and futures of every person alive today, and those who will be alive tomorrow.

One other point ... "... one aspect of advanced culture is the freedom it gives its women ..." (Janus, Vol 1, No. 2, p. 39). To this I say, "Bull." Freedom is not something that is given away, like a reward for being good. It is a mental attitude, a personal point of view. It comes from within the person who experiences it. It cannot be given, traded, or bought. Present knowledge of the human mind suggests that it can only be taken away by destruction of the personality (tho that new personality thus created can find freedom of its own). Freedom of the soul? Perhaps. But believe you have it, and it's yours.

Charles Grigsby
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A friend who picked up a copy of your magazine lent this to me and I must say I am impressed with your efforts. At least you attempt to present a scholarly view of speculative fiction, something few other fanzines attempt.

I have to agree with Janice Bogstad. The future history is here to stay. This type of science fiction gives the entire field credibility. Heinlein's series predicted many of our current problems and possibly some of the other authors' work will prove equally prophetic.

From reading a wide variety of Farmer's other material, Cornick's solution just might be possible. "JB vs. JB" was quite interesting. The Dispossessed did change my socio-political outlook, and it is very possibly the best book I have ever read. I think Odyssey will do more to give SF a bad name than anything else. I think the whole project is very fourth-class. As for the Hugos, The Forever War and A Boy and His Dog deserved their awards. I can't judge the other categories because I have not read all the nominees.

Paradox Lost was entertaining but possibly was too short. A Room Alone was interesting but boring (that's probably just because I was tired while reading it). Logan's Run was a pretty film. Lots of nice photography, good special effects, and Peter Ustinov, one of my favorite actors, but it did not communicate anything. The film said nothing. It could just as easily have been a movie about a prison break. Logan's society was never explored or explained. Rollerball, bad as it was, was logical in tracing their society from ours; Logan's Run did not even try. Overall, the film was very disappointing. I hope film makers have learned that it is not just special effects and big names that make a film great; a great film requires a meaningful, fresh plot, something Logan's Run sorely lacked.



Avedon Carol
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Kensington, MD, 20795

I'm a bit baffled by your reviews of Aurora: Beyond Equality, particularly where P. J. Plauger's "Here Be Dragons" is concerned. I am honestly offended that Thomas J. Murn chose to call this one of the two best stories in the anthology. And while I agree with Janice Bogstad's criticisms of "HBD" as far as they went, I feel that she was far too timid in criticizing it, and too liberal with her praise, as well. I can't understand why this story was singled out for so much discussion in the first place. Sure, it's a nice story, but so what? It's a nice story about a battle. It's a nice story in which the nice (male) brain behind the operation sits down to celebrate his victory with a female crew member, and congratulates himself on being a member of a society where women are available to men for such things. Great! Is that what the revolution is for? Are we trying to get "equality" with men so that we can be more available to them? Do we have to promise more and better sex to men in exchange for our rights?

I am reminded of an appearance a few years ago by Gloria Steinem, where a male member of the audience stood up and asked if sex would be better when women were liberated. Gloria said, "Yes," but I would have said something like, "It will be better for us, because we won't have to do it with you when we don't want to anymore," or "No, it will be worse, but who cares?" I'm sick and tired of men interpreting "Women's Lib" as meaning "Sexual Freedom". So far, giving women the right to say "Yes" to sex has not freed us, but only taken away our excuses for saying "No". One of the most important freedoms we seek to gain from "liberation" is the right to say "NO!" No, we won't be intimidated by accusations of lesbianism; no, we won't worry about being told we are frigid, or selfish, and uptight, and full of "middle-class hang-ups"; and no, we will not be available to you. And, most importantly, our freedom has nothing to do with male needs. Our freedom is for us. Our freedom is not so we can be better mothers, or have a nice influence on world politics, or be more interesting to men. Our freedom is certainly not so that men will not have to wait for shore leave to be able to get laid or experience "feminine companionship". Our freedom is just for us, for our own, selfish, bitchy need to be real human beings. Sure, our children will be healthier. Sure the culture will improve for our less anti-human influence. Sure, sex will be better. But all of that is just gravy. We don't have to offer any exchanges, any promises to men in trade for our rights. If men want the "tender, feminine touch" around, they will just have to learn to provide it for themselves. Then will we be free to be our not-so-tender selves. If men want to see beauty, they will just have to learn to be beautiful. We are tired of having to construct pieces of art out of ourselves. Perhaps, when men see what women really are like, without the FDS and Max Factor and Cupid's Quiver and Ultra Ban and Lady Schick and our pretty little understanding smiles, they will choose not to love us at all. Perhaps they will be disgusted by our humanity. That will be too bad. But we will not go back to wearing masks and pretending to be walking, talking dolls who do not have hair growing on our bodies or smells or secretions or anger. We will not be good little girls and forget who we are just so that men can be happy. We are not here for them. We are here for us.

[Avedon Carol raises certain important issues revolving around feminist literature. Carol is upset about my selection of P. J. Plauger's "Here Be Dragons" as one of the best stories in a recent anthology of feminist literature, Aurora: Beyond Equality (Fawcett). Carol seems to resent the fact that the hero of the story is male. I can assure you that it was not the intention of the editors of the anthology to publish a bookful of stories dominated by any one sex to the exclusion (or worse yet villainizing) of the other. There are enough get-back-at-the-piggies themes in feminism. It's time to move beyond that. (cf. title of anthology) to a real exploration of what equality will mean. I'm honestly offended that some women persist in assuming that all men are interested only in a good fuck. Isn't this equivalent to assuming that all women are interested only in raising children or doing housework? Viddy? — TOM MURN]

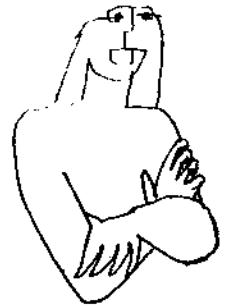
[When I read Carol's letter, I was somewhat perturbed because she seems to suggest that a story could not be well written and sexist in its outlook at the same time. I tend to disagree with her in extreme cases. No degree of artistic excellence vitiates a debased view of humanity, which in my view, includes a view of women as something less than on par with men. Yet I have to admit that "Here Be Dragons" is well written even though I did suggest that the story would be more effective with a female protagonist. Also, as compared with other anthologies of "Women's Fiction", Aurora: Beyond Equality was more inclusive of different, creative stories about women and their possible futures. — JANICE BOGSTAD]

[... In the tradition of opposition fostered under the banner of our two-headed magazine, dissension once more appears. I too was offended by the inclusion of HBD in Aurora. I thought the feminism in that story was as shallow as the gimmick — Surprise! He's a she! — scene that opened the tale. — JEANNE GOMOLL]

John Thiel
30 N 19th St.
Lafayette, IN 47904

[Found wedged in between columns of our trade copy of Pablo Len's #12] That I'd take advantage of this blank space to tell you and Miss Gomoll your zine swings and has a forward look I like. Its excellence was absolutely unmarred by anything. How do you keep to such a high quality? Janus has every literary virtue there is.

The only thing in there that I would object to is your affinity to current fan slang terms (such as Dorsai). Fan slang is to me, at best, imperfect. Why let low style bespeckle your wisdom?





[Thank you, but how else does one refer to that security force but as the Dorsai?? You can't ignore black turtle-necked thugs for the sake of literary decorum, tempting as that may be.

[Now a question for you: We are greatly confused by your duplicity ... e.g., one fanzine review in #13 in which you confess never to have read our zine because you didn't like our style ... and, why don't you want to come to our convention? — JEANNE COMOLLI]

Karen Peterson
Randall Court
Madison, WI 53715

Mr. Ellison:

Having read your recent letter to Janus, and your introduction to Love Ain't Nothing But Sex Misspelled, I feel compelled to reply to your comments.

First, your views on feminism were never called into question here. I stated my thesis as, "It is love, not woman, that is a rigged gamble, a conscious trick," etc. Your dismissal of my analysis of Try a Dull Knife revolves around this misunderstanding. I never claimed that the story is about a love affair; but I don't see how you can say it is not about love. Eddie's need for the crowd, and the crowd's need of a "guru", are certainly real emotions.

You should, however, make an effort to address members of both sexes equally: Doug Barbour and Karen Peterson, or Mr. and Ms.

Second, the major thrust of my article was not to pin down "the" meaning of your work; nor, God forbid, to imply that you are a "mean, pugnacious, constantly depressed or alarmed sonofabitch." My purpose was merely to point out the structural ways in which you have associated love and pain. I feel that my article is useful as a formal study, even though its observation of the two sides of love is not original.

I have read enough to know that there is far more to your vision than the aspects I chose to discuss. After I read about your encounter with high-school kids in Dayton, Ohio, in The Glass Teat, for example, I was filled with admiration for a man who never let pain stop him from caring. So, please don't relegate me to the ranks of Jukes and Kallikaks. I accept the blame for the impression my article made on you, but nothing could be further from the truth.

You wrote in your letter to Janus, "No one but the author can know what the author really meant." True, but that is beside the point. Literature can take on meanings for its readers that are no less "real" for not being intended. Great dramas are possessed of permanent ambiguities. To return to your essay: "All they recall ... are the shrieks of torment coming from my characters." I recall those the most because, as you observed, I brought my own perspective to your words. I know no other way to approach the world.

Buck Coulson
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Hartford City, IN 47348

I'm not sure I agree with Jan's definition of a Future History; she seems to be including every integrated series in the field. Darkover and Dune are simply alien-planet histories; Deryni is more alternate history than future.

A true Future History should concern either the future of this planet, or of the race of humans originating on this planet. I'm certain that I don't agree that it's "the next step in the development" of sf. It isn't a "step" at all, and it's been around longer than has the term "science fiction". Under the Moons of Mars was first published in 1912. I'm not sure the Burroughs series about John Carter qualifies as Future History by my definition, but it does by Jan's. I'm not sure it was the first science-fictional series, either, but it is early enough to prove my point.

This sort of "Future History" series is simply a literary device to amortize the time spent in research over more than one story. The author of any story must know more about the background of his characters than he puts into print. (Or at least, if he wants to get his story published, he'd better. Not doing it that way results in stories too superficial for paying markets.) Putting a second story in the same background saves the author the time required to think up that background. Making the second story about the same characters generally reduces the work still more — to the point where literary critics sneer, though the public may not. But once a basic background is set, any number of stories can be written against it, and get literary plaudits — witness Pangborn's explorations of a future society recovering from catastrophe. The device is "here to stay" — and has been here to stay for almost the entire history of literature — because it's easier than thinking up a different society for each story.

Harlan is absolutely correct about the background of A Boy and His Dog. It doesn't even take a decimating war; almost any reversion to barbarism would lower the status of women. Look at the barbarian societies that existed in actuality. (Look at the statistics on rape in urban "core areas" today, for that matter.) But a decimating war would help.

On the other hand, saying that "love is equatable with pain" is idiotic. Love can be, certainly; it depends on the circumstances and the relationship. But "is", always? Bullshit. Or rather; poetryshit; it's a very poetic attitude, but not necessarily real.

"... an old Kingston Trio tune"? Murn doesn't know much about folkmusic, does he? I assume he's an English professor, so I'll refrain from arguing about his literary criticisms. Besides, anyone who likes Ron Goulart's books can't be all bad.

[Regarding Coulson's accusing me of being an English professor — well, as W. B.



Yeats was known to say, oh my dear, oh my dear. The mentioned song out of Brunner's collection (DAW) is undoubtedly an old Kingston Trio melody. I do admit that I have no idea of the song's original authors. The point is however moot as the Trio was responsible for popularizing the tune on Top 40. — TOM MURN]

George Fergus 1810 Hemlock Pl. #204 and. also to peruse most of the issue before that while conveying a copy to Mary Kenny-Badami. I was particularly interested in your (I think) review of Evelyn Reed's Woman's Evolution. Although Reed is good as an antidote to much of the male chauvinist writing on human evolution, I feel that she has gone overboard in the opposite direction. The "facts" she cites come mostly from 19th Century works that made rather sweeping generalizations from the myths and legends of various "primitive" peoples that may have as little to do with actual history as do vampires and leprechauns. Little reference, really, is made to most of the exhaustive anthropological field work of the 20th Century. Perhaps the most severe lack is the omission of data on the surviving hunter-gatherer cultures that appear to come closest to the prehistoric society about which she is theorizing. Perhaps because they generally do not match her theories about matriarchy, the naturally cannibalistic nature of primitive man, the gathering of vegetable foods by women because they found meat repellent, and so forth.

She exhibits the view that the "biologically advanced" female civilized the male, who was incapable of cooperation, self-restraint, or foresight. I find such a biological reductionist argument as distasteful as those of Robert Ardrey or Lionel Tiger on male superiority. She appears to be even less knowledgeable on animal behavior than they are, with most of her sources almost half a century old. Nearly 90% of our present knowledge of the natural behavior of primates has come in the last decade, yet the most recent reference in Reed's chapter on biological origins is from 1963!

Also, I am not a follower of the Marxist interpretation of the origin of patriarchy. Although I will grant that in many societies private property has operated to intensify male dominance, I don't think it is the fundamental cause, nor that its elimination would automatically restore the sexes to an egalitarian relationship.

You might be interested in an article I wrote that touches on some of these points. If all goes well, it will appear in the next issue of Don D'Amassa's fanzine, Mythologies.

Re your abortive plan to check library records for the number of male vs female readers of SF, John Robinson of the SF club at SUNY checked membership lists for the last three U.S. worldcons and found them roughly 70% male & 30% female. However, he suggests that this is because of the "social" nature of conventions and clubs, suggesting that the poorer representation of women in the more "literary" fanzine field is liable to be a better indicator of their representation among the general SF readership. Another interesting datum is that, although Charlie Brown says he's getting more women subscribers to Locus, their representation in the latest Locus poll is very low — 17%. (It was 20% last year.) It's difficult to figure all this out.

You praise the "genuinely believable humanness" of the characters in Dark Star, and the death by electrocution of the captain due to a short in his seat cushion. I have to disagree. Such exaggerated irrationality, tho sometimes funny, is even less believable than the crew of the Enterprise.

I agree with you that if we are ever going to develop a non-sexist pronoun, it will probably come through corruption of "they" to encompass third person singular as well as third person plural, in a similar manner to the replacement of the second person "thee" and "thou" by the plural "you".

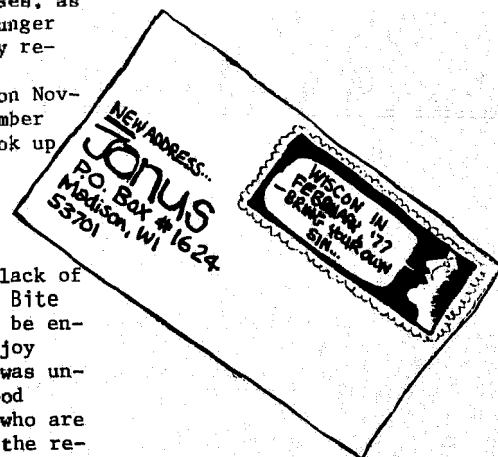
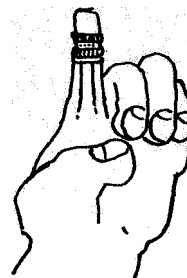
[It is precisely polls which rely on things like worldcon membership rosters or fanzine subscription lists (or prozine lists, or bookclub mailing lists), that I had hoped to counter with a study of library records. I feel that the percentage of boys who read SF increases, while the percentage of girls who are reading SF decreases, as age increases, and none of the studies that have been done really covers the younger readers. I'd still like to find some way to check this theory out with library records ...]

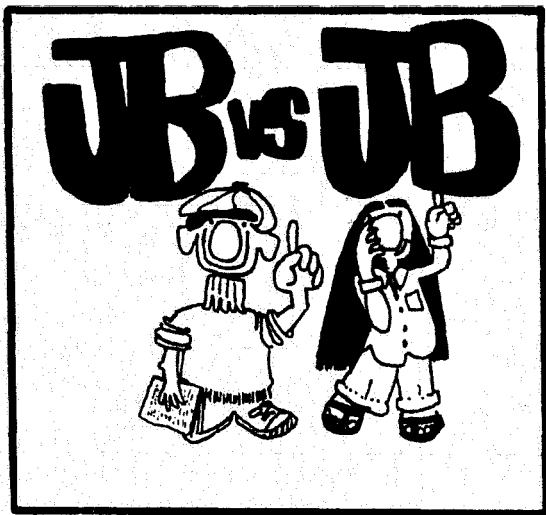
[Janus has received a copy of George Fergus' Bibliography of Science Fiction Novels with Female Protagonists. It will be appearing in a future (probably December issue of) Extrapolations. The list is most interesting — we advise you to look up the issue of Extrapolations when it comes out. — JEANNE GOMOLL]

We also heard from JAMES A. COX, who liked JB vs JB ...

... and a reply to last issue's letter from D. Wollheim —

[A letter from Donald Wollheim appeared in last ish which accused me of a lack of insight regarding a review I wrote of Tanith Lee's stroft. second novel, Don't Bite the Sun. Mr. Wollheim seemed to think that DBTS was a book which would either be enjoyed immensely or disliked immensely. Of course those who would immensely enjoy DBTS would be able to catch things in the text which Mr. Wollheim felt that I was unable to understand. I must reply to my great disappointment that I understood DBTS all too well. If I hadn't I might have been able to join the select few who are somehow able to appreciate the book. For more particulars on Tanith Lee, see the review of her latest book for DAW, elsewhere in this issue. — TOM MURN]





AN EXCHANGE: JOHN BARTELT @ JANICE BOGSTAD

Isaac Asimov likes to start his monthly science column in F&SF with a personal anecdote, so that's what I'm going to do this time. Last spring, I submitted a manuscript to Damon Knight, including the usual SASE. Early in April, I got my manuscript back, but it wasn't in my envelope. A couple of days later, my envelope came, with somebody else's story; Joe Patrouch's story, to be specific. I had never heard of Joe Patrouch before, but apparently Damon Knight had (Joe got a nice letter of rejection, not a slip); also he had an SFWA membership number, indicating previous professional publication. Anyway, after reading his story, I put it in a new envelope, included a letter of my own to explain what I knew about the little mix-up, and sent it off in the mail the next day. A week or two later I got a letter back from Joe thanking me for returning his story, and mentioning that if I was going to be at MidWestCon or MidAmeriCon, to look him up. I couldn't make the former, but made a point of trying to find him at the latter. Eventually, on the last day of the convention, we did find each other, and we talked awhile, before I had to leave (there was a strange coincidence, too: Joe got his PhD in English here at the University of Wisconsin; of all the places his story could have gone...).

That's not quite the end however; on the way to MidAmeriCon, I was telling the story of the wayward

ms., and Rick White asked if he was the same Patrouch who had written the book on Asimov (which brings me back to my opening); I didn't know then, but I found a copy of the book in the huckster's room and bought it (and it was the same Patrouch).

The Science Fiction of Isaac Asimov (Doubleday, \$6.95) is a fascinating book, especially if you're the kind of person who reads every piece of Asimov's work you can get your hands on.

[Not being one of those aforementioned types, I won't have much to add to the column this time.] Joe goes into a fairly detailed analysis and criticism of just about every SF story Asimov had written. There is a chapter on "The Earliest Asimov," one on his Robot series, his novels, and his collections. Joe finishes with a chapter of conclusions, dealing with Asimov's latest SF.

[This Patrouch sounds like an interesting guy — I wonder how tall he is?...]

I found myself concurring with him in almost every case, though I had never analyzed the stories in depth. Here Joe points out (what he feels to be) the weak and strong points of a story, and I generally found myself nodding in agreement (and sometimes wanting to go back and take another look at the story. Occasionally we differed, but then I haven't read some of those stories in a long time (example: which was the best "Lucky Starr" story? Joe thought the fourth and fifth were the best, I had always liked the sixth [last]; a minor point). Probably the point where our analyses diverge the farthest is in dealing with Asimov's latest work; however, even here, they aren't mutually exclusive.

He also talks about Asimov's future histories (there are primarily two); I've always wanted to take the time to sit down and delineate an Asimov future history, but was aware that not everything fit together quite right (it seemed that you might have three groups: "A" stories would fit with "B" stories, and "B" stories fit with "C" stories, but "A" stories wouldn't fit with "C"). Patrouch says Asimov has his crowded-Earth-with-people-stuffed-into-Cities stories, and his underpopulated-and-radioactive-Earth stories (and the Lucky Starr series, which starts in one and ends up in the other).

Joe also says he wants to analyze Asimov's science fiction, so he can improve his own fiction-writing. I think he's a little less successful in this, or at least getting it across to the reader. He does compare and contrast the stories and point out recurring themes, devices, and character-types, but I think they are items too specific to be copied by another writer in most cases (counter-example: the use of descriptive-narrative appealing to the visual sense to imbue a sense of wonder in the reader; describing weird landscapes and spacescapes). Also, since Patrouch corresponded with Asimov, there are some interesting remarks by the Good Doctor included. In all, a very enjoyable book.

[Perhaps the Good Doctor or Joe would help us with a little discussion-argument we've been having. Both John and another close friend of mine pronounce his name (Asimov) with an "f" sound rather than the labial-dental "v" which I associate with the "v" in his name. Does this mispronunciation (as I see it) have some basis in accepted practice or is it just a matter of the preceding "o" coloring the pronunciation of the "v" in those two cases —

Well — no matter — I'll just keep correcting them — it's fun...]

And Joe promised me a beer in his letter, but I didn't get a chance to collect. I guess he'll have to come to WisCon in February and pay up.

1. Hank Luttrell

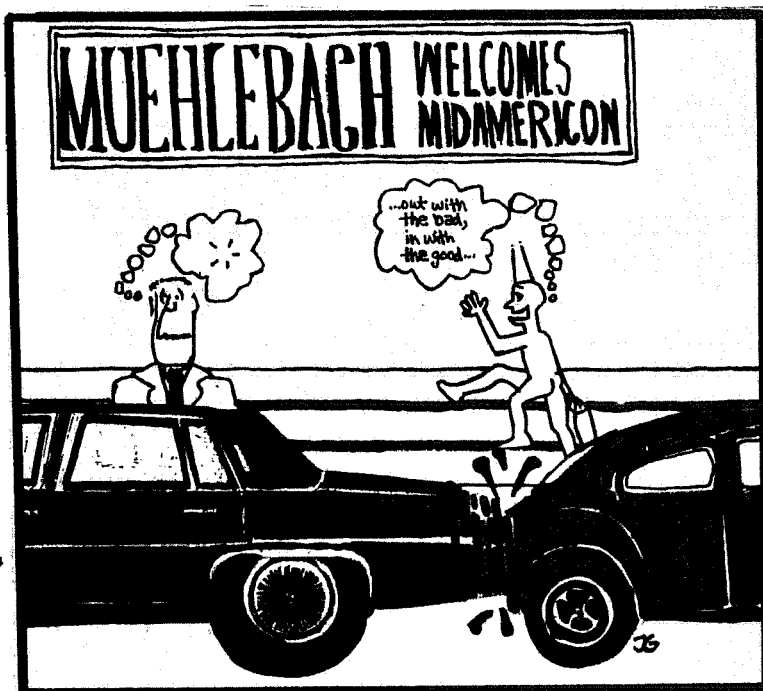
Robert A. Heinlein is one of the best known science fiction writers in the world. Because Heinlein's wonderfully written juvenile novels were available in almost every public and school library in the 50s and 60s, he was practically godfather to a generation of fantasy readers. In 1961 he wrote *Stranger in a Strange Land*, one of those unusual books which acquired a cult following. Heinlein was a favorite son guest of honor at the World Science Fiction Convention held in Kansas City recently. Heinlein was Missouri born and educated.

Science fiction conventions have been growing to almost unmanageable proportions in recent years, so considering Heinlein's popularity, the organizing committee in Kansas City had been preparing for a crush of attendees. The employees of the stately old Muehlebach Hotel had just swept the last of the Republicans, Legionnaires, and Masons out the doors and into their Fleetwoods as the science fiction fans and professionals arrived in their VW buses and sub-compact. It is hard to say just what this convention was like, but it included a beautiful art gallery of science fiction-related drawings, paintings, and sculptures. The film program lasted almost all night every day of the convention, and included the rarely seen *Rocky Horror Picture Show* — a hysterical decadent musical parody of every horror film you can remember. There were two midnight shows, one by a comedy troupe called Duck's Breath and a concert by a rock group called The Spacers. Duck's Breath's longest skit was about "Gonad the Barbarian", a perfect parody of what is most ridiculous about "sword and sorcery" fiction. Duck's Breath started in Iowa, spent some time in San Francisco acquiring a certain amount of success and reputation, and now are doing a midwestern tour.

The Spacers — at least that was their name for this performance — were outfitted as a science fiction glitter rock band, and sounded like an inter-planetary cement mixer. The colorful masquerade featured all sorts of fancy dress and undress, mostly based on science fiction and fantasy stories. There was also a big science fiction flea market, which mostly turned out to be books, magazines, and paperbacks, but also included jewelry, crafts, movie stills, and knickknacks like a "Hugo Gernsback for President" button.

Gernsback, in case you were wondering, was the founder of the first science fiction magazine, *Amazing Stories* (which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary), and the convention's annual awards are named after him. The Hugo Award winners this year were Ben Bova as Best Professional Editor, "Catch That Zeppelin" by Fritz Leiber as Best Short Story, "Home Is the Hangman" by Roger Zelazny as Best Novel, *A Boy and His Dog* written by Harlan Ellison as Best Movie, "Borderland of Sol" by Larry Niven as Best Novelette, and *The Forever War* by Joe Haldeman as Best Novel. Some people were disappointed in the awards because too many of them seem to be going to the same group of people every year while ignoring many other fine stories. In his acceptance, Bova, editor of *Analog*, spoke up for hearing some new names among next year's winners.

Throughout the convention, Heinlein was busy promoting one of his pet projects, the donation of blood to the Red Cross. Heinlein says that it is because of some anonymously donated blood that he is alive today. He held a reception and an autograph-signing session at the convention for certified blood donors only. Heinlein made informal appearances in



WorldCon Reports

the audience of several program events, and spoke at the banquet, but the most important part that Heinlein played in the convention was his guest of honor address, which took place after the Hugo Award presentation.

Heinlein's address is hard to report. He is a terrible public speaker, and some of the address tended to be incoherent. He promoted his home town Kansas City for a while, and told some jokes, and forgot a few punchlines. When Heinlein finally got around to speaking about some of his predictions for humanity and his personal philosophy, it began to become clear just how out of step he is with many of the people concerned with science fiction. Will there be a nuclear war? Of course, says Heinlein. The war will come, he says, because the world is delicately balanced between three main powers: Russia, China, and the USA. Heinlein says that you can't have peace and freedom at the same time, and that the strong and right-minded individuals will prepare for war and will survive. Heinlein also mentioned that it will be a "primary duty of the male to protect and care for the genetically inferior female."

Boos from the back, apparent for some time, became louder. As Heinlein maintained that the young people of the USA will have to prepare to fight a war, a whistle from the second balcony sounded like a dropping bomb.

While Heinlein was this convention's guest of honor, I don't think his militarist, elitist, sexist viewpoint emerged as the keynote of the meetings. For instance, Joe Haldeman's *The Forever War*, which was named the best novel, deals with many of the horrible aspects of war that Heinlein somehow manages to gloss over in *Starship Troopers*. And just as there is an emerging feminist viewpoint in science fiction typified by writers like Ursula K. LeGuin and Joanna Russ, one of the more successful program items was a panel on "Women in Science Fiction".

Probably the main impression left by this year's World Science Fiction Convention was the diversity of

the fantasy field. Some science fiction fans who were communists in the 40s were hounded by other fans with typical red hunting fever. Today some of those same fans from both the right and left are influential editors and writers.

reprinted from:
Milwaukee Bugle American (October 8, 1976)

2. Lesleigh Luttrell

In the past, each WorldCon has had its own definite flavor, built up by the people and events at the convention: no one who was there will ever be able to forget the atmosphere of the BayCon in '68, for example — the rambling haunted old hotel, the drugs, the riots going on in the streets of Berkeley while fans partied unawares. In recent years, WorldCons seem to have gotten too big, too organized for anything so fascinating. Or perhaps not. This year's WorldCon in Kansas City once again had its own peculiar atmosphere, one which I believe most attendees at the convention felt in one way or another. The MidAmeriCon can be described in one word — decadent.



The theme of this year's convention (in the past we didn't really need themes — science fiction and fandom were enough) was science fiction in the arts. That brings to the mundane mind laughable 50's movies, crude covers on pulp magazines, mechanical pieces of art. But that's not the way the WorldCon committee sees it. Today, science fiction in the arts takes on all sorts of odd manifestations: a strip tease performed by a fan in the masquerade interval (strange feeling to watch it on television, sitting in a hotel room surrounded by friends with whom I have debated various aspects of feminism in the past); an incredible midnight performance by "Duck's Breath" who destroyed such things as Sword and Sorcery barbarian tales, art criticism and TV ads with their wit, humor and minimal props; another kind of incredible performance on another evening by the "Spacers", a group that seemed to have cynically made themselves up in a way they thought would appeal to sf fans (they failed; too sexy and kinky for the Trekkies, music too loud and disjointed for most fans, just tried too hard to be strange — most of us are strange without trying); Rocky Horror Picture Show, the hit of the film program, a funny,

sexy, and wonderfully decadent parody of horror movies and rock 'n roll and just about everything else; the numerous scantily clad forms in the masquerade (nothing new in that, but perhaps more tasteful, more awe-inspiring this year than ever) — the costume that summed it up best was a very modest, late 19th century creation, Aubrey Beardsley's "Peacock Skirt" brought to life. Divine decadence, art nouveau, time binding. The atmosphere was disturbing and entertaining and taught me things about fandom I hadn't know before. Most importantly it was a unifying force, something holding the convention together, reminding us that we are all fans — fans of different things perhaps, but still we share an indefinable something (even if it's only the same uncomfortable, "feet of clay" feeling we got when looking at Robert A. Heinlein).

3. John Bartelt



My first WorldCon was a very enjoyable experience. It seemed that, for me, there was always just barely enough programming to keep you busy, but never any time to go to the movies. (With a few exceptions, I saw practically none of the movies I wanted to see; many of the best were on very, very late [or very, very early, depending on how you look at it].) There was also the huckster room and art show to keep you busy (and to take your money). I guess my high points were the neo-pro (stretched a bit in my case) workshop and the art auction (where I got an original Sternbach color painting for a good price, partly because the Hugo awards were starting and the crowd was thinning). The rooms for the art show and auction, however, were poorly arranged. I suppose the low points were the play, Sails of Moonlight, Eyes of Dusk, and Heinlein's speech. I also enjoyed meeting the authors and collecting autographs. Having had this experience, I'm looking forward to my next WorldCon, particularly to seeing and doing some of the things I may have missed this time.

4. Pat Sommers

From the rides hitched with truck-drivers to get to K.C. to the last few minutes before we had to leave on Sunday afternoon, MidAmeriCon was a most enjoyable WorldCon. Some of the best events weren't even listed in the program book.



Muehlebach Staff:
A Final Solution

Late, late one evening, when sensible people had already been to bed for hours, I was witness to one of the greatest paper airplane fights ever to occur on the Mezzanine level of the Muehlebach Hotel. It was the "Mpie. in '73" crazies taking on all comers. Small paper airplanes were quickly assembled and took off for test flights. These quickly became larger and more elaborate as the dogfights grew more intense and vicious. C-133's and B-52's were assembled and launched, while the hotel staff watched in horror. Soon, paper airplanes filled the air, people were running and screaming and hiding under tables, trying to evade the paper Blitzkrieg. As casualties mounted, and the need for more aircraft became urgent, crumbled balls of paper, faintly resembling zeppelins were thrown in the air. Finally, the supply of raw materials ran out, and all remaining survivors were dragged back to their rooms to recuperate before the beginning of another grueling day at the convention.

5. Richard S. Russell

Since I had never before attended a science fiction convention of any kind, let alone a WorldCon, I wasn't quite sure what to expect from MidAmeriCon, the 34th World Science Fiction Convention, held over Labor Day weekend in Kansas City, Missouri. I found out soon enough: good times!

The program was overwhelming, and it was literally impossible for one person to participate in everything, since many events were scheduled simultaneously. Since I was going to have to exercise some selectivity, I decided to concentrate on the movies. Movies, especially science-fiction movies, have long been one of my main interests. I try to catch every SF flick that hits town, including those on the late late late show. Invariably, though, there are a few that always get away. The WorldCon film committee did a remarkable job of catching some of these.

For example, how many people have ever seen Red Planet Mars, starring Peter Graves? It's been out of circulation for years, but MidAmeriCon dug it out. Nobody in this country has seen Once, even though it's an American film, because no distributor would touch it. It won raves when shown at Cannes, but it's pretty esoteric for most people; it has only three actors and no dialog, though it's a full-length feature film. Dark Star, a product of the

UCLA experimental film center (which also gave us THX-1138), was another film which was not distributed commercially, although it's been on the college film-society circuit for a couple of years. It's a black comedy which spoofs Star Trek, 2001, and every SF cliché in the book. Dark Star was nominated for a Hugo but lost to A Boy and His Dog (also shown), which had better distribution.

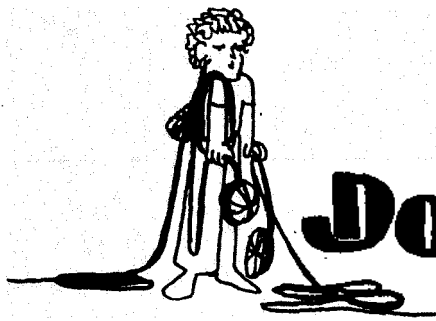
Of course, no WorldCon would be complete without some of the classics: 2001, The Day the Earth Stood Still, Forbidden Planet, etc., although Zardoz was absent. Assorted non-SF cartoons and newsreels were interspersed for variety. A few selected short features were also shown, including "Bambi Meets Godzilla" and "Closed Tuesdays". The most popular feature turned out to be The Rocky Horror Picture Show. The first showing was so packed that an encore was scheduled for the following night. It didn't seem to bother anybody that the film came on at 2:30 AM both times. (The projectors started running every day at 10:00 AM and didn't start cooling off until the following morning at 3:00 or 4:00. This went on for five full days.)



But even if I was capable of enduring the full schedule, I had already seen a number of the films before (some several times), and there were a lot of other activities to keep the neofan (me) occupied. Such as the neofan room, where people helpfully explained that "filksing" means "filthy folksing". That led to a filksing, where Filthy Pierre conducted the lyrics. I myself waxed lyrical over the acres of adorned and unadorned flesh which paraded across the stage in the costume show. Another show, Sails of Moonlight, Eyes of Dusk, an original dramatic presentation based on various works of science fiction, went on for nearly four hours and put many people to sleep. Sleep was the one thing in short supply, as there was so much to do, see, and occasionally eat and drink that I begrudged every minute I had to spend away from the con.

Oh, yes. There were people selling memberships to SunCon (Miami in '77) and IguanaCon (Phoenix in '78). I signed up for both.





Doug Price reviews: "sails of moonlight, eyes of dusk"

Science Fiction and the Theater:
Sails of Moonlight, Eyes of Dusk

A play in two acts by

David Wilson

based upon stories by

Gordon Dickson

George R. R. Martin

Harlan Ellison

C. L. Moore

Robert Silverberg

Thomas Burnett Swann

and based upon characters by

Cordwainer Smith

"Doug, you go and help at the Music Hall, they need theater people there. ... The rehearsal should only take a couple hours or so..." Installed as the sound man for the aforementioned production, I proceeded to sit through a tech rehearsal seemingly eons in length, in preparation for the performance the next day. Our audience, the World Science Fiction Convention in Kansas City, MidAmeriCon, would witness the culmination of months of work and thousands of dollars of investment, I was told.

Surrounded by wire-festooned control systems, I was able to see the performance several times. I'd like to share with you some of my impressions of a very ambitious effort at bringing quality science fiction to the stage.

The play is an anthology tied together by the opening segment, "The Instrumentality", which recurs as a motif throughout the rest of the production. The almost-gods who benevolently rule humanity must decide whether it is time to release it from an eight hundred year old stasis in which it has apparently thrived in peace. The Lord Jestocost argues that man is really degenerating, fading into a general apathy for lack of challenges. Lord Permaiswari (recently returned from the psi wars) takes the opposite view. Man is happy and healthy in the artificial environment they maintain on earth, why bring uncertainty, conflict, and violent death back into the world? Each is asked to present evidence to support his claim. Thus the six playlets (for each is a one-act play in itself) serve as showpieces in a classic game of advocates.

"Twig", the first playlet, is the story of a young girl raised on a colony world by a plant creature called the Grandfather, a sort of vegetable world-mind. Though he controls the planet, the Grandfather has never tried to repel the invaders from space, even though the group called the "croppers" use slash-and-burn farming techniques which destroy his forest. Still, the croppers come to hate and fear the Grandfather when they learn of his existence, despite the fact that he has not hindered them in any way, nor even communicated with them. The croppers treacherously bug Twig, the girl, with a homing transmitter and prepare to destroy the Grandfather. Foreseeing the day of his own destruction, the Grandfather has prepared Twig to take his place and be the voice of the life-system of his world, and even further, to other planets as well. Thus Twig, the only human in millennia, if ever, to be truly one with the natural world, must accept the load of responsibility he has laid upon her and leave her carefree state to become an adult.

"Slideshow" concerns the crushed aspirations of a former starship crewman, reduced to giving slide presentations for little old ladies to raise the funds to keep the already shaky starship program solvent. His anguish is plain as time stops momentarily during his presentation and he rhapsodizes about the worlds he has seen and rages at being tossed aside as not good enough to fly again. Enter the Doctor, who had given another presentation earlier about her kids, the starving millions, lacking proper medical care. She and the Commander are competitors; each is after the same limited amount of money, and each feels demeaned by the way they must go about getting it. They are left alone in the presentation hall and an argument ensues over which cause is more noble, which is better. Eventually they agree to disagree, each locked in his or her own private hell: one, helpless, watching millions die for lack of money, the other forever prevented from doing that which he most loves.

"Deeper than Darkness", a retelling of the Romulus and Remus story, is a bit fuzzy in my memory. This may say something about its performance.

Thus ended the first act, two hours after its beginning. Many left the Music Hall at that time thinking the play had ended, but there was more to come.

Act 2 opened with "No Woman Born", the story of an actress who had been turned into an almost complete cyborg after an accident destroyed her body. She dreamed of returning to the stage triumphantly despite the fact that she had a visored steel plate for a face and metal skin. She comes to dominate those around her even as she had done as a human, and her creator begins to doubt the correctness of saving her. In the end, Dierdre puts forth her power to show that nothing will be allowed to stand in her way.

In "Going", a man who believes he has lived too long opts for voluntary euthanasia in a House of Going, a resort where one may die in peace and dignity. No one hurries him along, yet he lingers beyond the usual month or two. To learn the reason why he seems reluctant, he takes a drug called mind-jolt, which brings his lifetime of memories back to him. He discovers that he has been enjoying the attention his children and grandchildren have suddenly been giving him now that he has opted to die. He does not really want to die. Yet he decides to proceed with his death. He explains to a friend, "What better time to die than while life is still worth living?"

The protagonist in "Where is the Bird of Fire?"

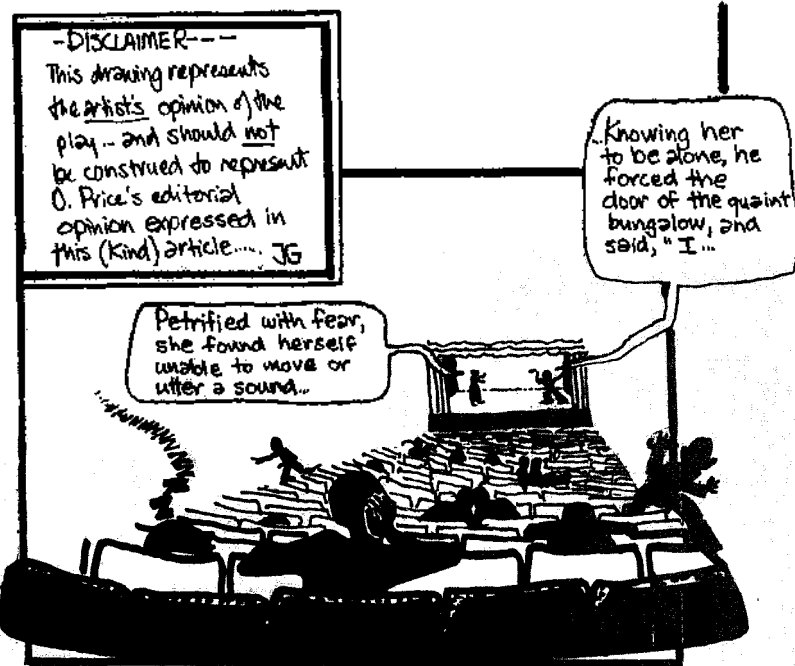
is a psi with a wild talent for starting fires, big fires. The authorities think he could nova a sun, specifically an enemy sun. He need only do the job and he will be a hero, set up for life. Ethically he cannot do it, yet he is told he will do the "patriotic" thing, or else. He manages to hijack the spaceship taking him to the target and finds himself a backwater planet to live on in peace, happy in his insignificance. His superiors rage about the traitor and plan their revenge ... if they can find him.

After four weary hours it ended. Dazed fans straggled back to the Muehlebach. Dazed performers and technicians straggled out of the stage entrance. Everyone was rather overcome by the length of the show, including the playwright/director, David Wilson. Originally planned for a maximum length of 2½ hours, it had grossly overrun even the most pessimistic estimates. This was largely a function of the fact that the show had never been run through in its entirety with technical support until the performance itself. The presence of an audience was a contributing factor. However, the core of the problem was the show itself, as written. It was just too long. The first act was nearly complete in itself, lacking only the "Instrumentality" motif that ended the second act. The show was also too wordy.

Only a portion of the audience's yawns were due to the late hour. In several places the action became bogged down in repetitive conversations of great length. While these discussions illuminated a number of various philosophical points, a good number of them could have been disposed of, leaving the meat of the story behind. Indeed, a number of unnecessary characters appeared. I am thinking specifically of the characters of Berg and Lucy Arodet, who only served to illuminate the distrustful divisions within the ranks of the croppers. These two characters could have been easily condensed into one with an accompanying time saving.

The acting itself, while not as abysmal as I have seen it, lacked for me that magic spark that draws the audience into the character. A believable character must cause the audience to lose consciousness of the four walls of the theater around them. They must become totally involved with the action on the stage. This, unfortunately, happened but rarely. Attention tended to wander during the long and usually rather emotionless conversations. Vitality failed to show through sufficiently to support the great masses of words.

The set consisted of great monoliths set in a Stonehenge pattern. They were grey, harsh, and angular, not at all inviting in appearance. While sufficiently non-descript to represent human habitations, they might have destroyed the feeling of forest in "Twig"; however, an intelligent lighting design managed to pull it off. "Invisibles" dressed in black prepared the sets with furniture for each playlet,



and led the lords and ladies of the Instrumentality in and set them in their places as if even the manipulators wore their own puppet strings. The sound effects were lovingly prepared: I must compliment their producer.

Overall, while I felt the performance left much to be desired, I believe it was a stab in the right direction. I suggest that, first, a major rewrite is in order to reduce the show to a palatable length. Next, more rehearsal on the set is needed. (At times, blocking errors were painfully evident.) Another problem is language. There were moments when I winced at hearing an anachronistic word or phrase like "gee" or "swell". A word like that breaks the audience's concentration; it then takes several minutes to immerse oneself in the character again. All in all, it seems the major problem in this production was time; too little time to rehearse, too long a performance. It was certainly a heroic effort. I look forward to the next attempt to bring science fiction to the stage. It should be interesting....

Windycon reports



"You mean these drunk frat guys came roaring out of their rooms and started manhandling people?"
 "Yep."
 "Why didn't you come and get me?"
 "Good grief — there were about 25 of them!"
 "No matter — give me a lead pipe and I can conquer the world!"

"It floats."
 "What does?"
 "Ivory Soap!"

"Did you hear — there's been a gang of thieves going around and stealing fans' wallets while they're asleep in their hotel rooms!"
 "That's horrible! I'll have to get one of the guys to move his sleeping bag in front of the door tonight!"

"I know the drink machines say 30¢ but you have to put in 50¢ to get them to work."

"Hey, did you know about the nude bathing in the swimming pool last night?"
 "Yeh, I also heard about the Chicago cops standing around talking about 'bush'."

#1 Perri Corrick

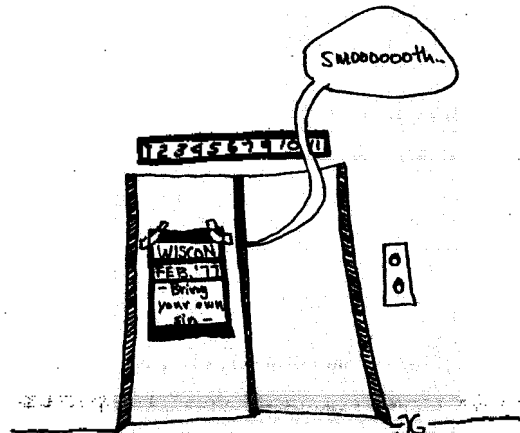
Have you ever noticed that you can get a pretty good idea of what's been going on at a convention by just listening to the fans around you as you wait for and ride in the hotel's elevators? For example, the following are all tidbits that I picked up at Windycon 3 during my vertical travels:

"Who's this Foglio guy anyway? The new Kelly Freas?"

"You're right Perri... if you didn't have your derby on, she would be taller than you."



"Hey, would you like me to motorize your propeller beanie?"
 "No thanks, there's usually enough hot air around to keep it going."



"How do I get to the 8th floor? My room is there, but I haven't been able to find an elevator yet that stops there!"

"My God — you know how the Masquerade rules said that besides a mask, the men had to wear at least a figleaf? Well, one guy wore just a figleaf alright — on his face!"

#2 Philip Kaveny

To me Windycon was a carousel of impressions. My mind darts to the view from the forty-fourth floor of the Sheraton at 3 a.m. Within a single square mile you can see five or six of the tallest buildings in the world. My mind does not stay long with the tall buildings, but moves north, south and west to the pinball machine like expanse of lights

which extends as far as I could see, and then back to the human jungle within a mile of the tall buildings where even a chubby muscular northern boy would have little chance on the street after dark.

From these my mind focuses on the Art Nouveau exhibit at the art institute, and to a single neogrotesque silver and ivory head of a Greek hoplite. The head has this caption under it, "Shortly after the Congo was opened in the early 1890's, King Leopold offered ivory to artists in order to encourage the economic development of the Congo." The phrase "economic development" tied all the images in my mind together. There is a relationship between chewing gum, piano keys, billiard balls, and the human jungle at the foot of the tall buildings proclaiming their separate corporate identities.

You may wonder how all this relates to Windycon; believe me it does. Science fiction can, and has proposed, in the writings of such writers as Ursula

LeGuin, H. G. Wells and many others, alternative types of economic relationships.

A hundred years ago, the Czarist government treated the writings of Marx as something futuristic, incomprehensible and hence harmless. It allowed them to be translated into Russian, the first language which received them from the original German. One can hardly equate the novels of sf writers with the economic works of Karl Marx. One can, however, wonder what economic and political alternatives which are explored in the pages of good science fiction and are thus thought harmless by the Powers-That-Be might have a similar relationship to the future as Marx has had to the present. Where else but at an sf convention could such ideas come together?



Dhalgren was released in January of 1975. Apparently no hardcover book publisher would print Delany's manuscript; it was finally published by Bantam Books in paperback form, as a "Frederik Pohl Selection". Dhalgren was, among many other things, Delany's own answer to his critical essays. It is science fiction meeting and surpassing the boundaries of imagination — though the characters in Dhalgren might be your neighbors. It is a visionary experience.

Dhalgren is 879 pages long. It is set in the city of Bellona; but Delany never positively identifies the exact location of the city, nor the "real" time of the story — though it can reasonably be placed around the end of the Twentieth century, or the beginning of the Twenty-first. The protagonist finds himself on a road leading into Bellona; he has no memory of any reasons for his trip, nor any idea of his real name; the quotation before the beginning of the first chapter states simply, "you have confused the true and the real." Dhalgren is

a mass of ambiguities; few things are made certain; but they are the things which represent the dualities and certainties of humanity. Many sf critics have talked about sf as "species literature"; and Dhalgren is a mirror, albeit slightly warped, of human behavior.

There is a large cast of characters in Dhalgren, each reflecting a diversion or set of diversions which represent various forms of reality, our own reality and the realities of Bellona in its lost space and time. There are the Richards, an American middle-class family which found itself in the middle of chaos with the breakdown of the city's order, and struggled vainly to preserve a way of life rendered obsolete. There is Tak Loufer, who manages to cope with the physical and mental shifting of the city by some inner source of strength. There are the scorpions, gangs who use holographic projectors to present a countenance of fear. Their names reflect their "images" which they cloak themselves with: Nightmare, Copperhead, Lady of Spain. They are young,

mostly black, and relatively content with the environment that they have been given. They are violent, but they reflect a morality and strength of spirit, and a sense of community which makes the wracked, semi-deserted city come alive — with a real sense of vitality. The scorpions could exist in the cities of "our" time just as easily, and lend the same sort of violent but vital air to the urban scene.

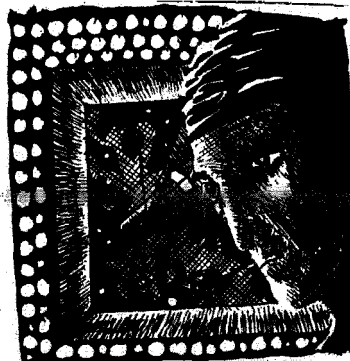
There are other characters in Dhalgren, all lending their own expertise or disorientation to the situation. One, Ernest Newboy, is the city's poet-in-residence; and the protagonist who is keeping a notebook filled with poetry and observations, speaks long with the poet on several occasions. Newboy, in his critique of some of the observations in the notebook, observes: "Historically, it's a very new, not to mention vulgar, idea that the spectator's experience should be identical to, or even have anything to do with, the artist's."¹ This is a central issue in Dhalgren. The reader shares in the characters' lack of orientation, for Delany provides images which may be misleading at worst, or cloudy at best. Captain Kamp, an American astronaut who is out of place in Bellona and knows it, observes, "you've only got an inch-wide strip [but] you'll be amazed at all the information you can get from running your eye along that."² In other words, a glimpse of the swirling vortex called reality may be all that is needed to ascertain the broad spectrum beneath. Or it may be all that is needed to turn you from it. The reality is there; we may be afforded a glimpse, or an overdose. It simply exists — and it is what you see in that strip of reality that is afforded you that makes you the human animal, with a history and a tale to tell. Dhalgren is a strip of the reality that would be Bellona; and you can make of it what you will. You may choose to explore some of the questions that the book poses: the question of a loss of identity in a people- and image-saturated world; in reflections of the environment; in the randomness of nature . . . the certainties of human agglomerations, the hopes of the human animal in his/her perception of morality and being and sense of humor, the desperation of the human condition in disorientation, over-emotionalized or over-rationalized visions. Dhalgren is life in a particular environment with particular and generalized ramifications for the inhabitants of that environment. The notebook found by the protagonist states, "I am interested in the arts of incident only so far as fiction touches life."³ Dhalgren is an alternate universe constructed to reflect upon — comment upon — your universe, in all its similarities and differences. It is a function of speculative fiction that has never been explored as fully or fruitfully.

Delany's novel *Triton* was published, also as a "Frederik Pohl Selection", less than a year after Dhalgren (1/76). It differs from the latter, not only in terms of length, but in the setting. *Triton* is the story of an inhabitant of Triton, one of Neptune's moons, sometime in the Twenty-first century. Several moons in the Solar System have been colonized, as well as the planet Mars, by this time, according to *Triton*. And Earth and Mars are conducting a war with the populated moons (with the sole exception of Triton, as the story begins), over economic issues. As in Dhalgren, Delany is deliberately vague about some concrete aspects of the war, and other things out of the immediate perspective of the protagonist — but the world which protagonist Bron sees is described with painstaking clarity.

On Triton, Bron is confused, lazy, lacking emotion, career-specialized (in a field called "metalogics", which makes his responses to situations over-rational at times), and slightly narrow-minded. Joanna Russ says of Delany's characters, "his people have the rare virtue of fitting the institutions under which they live."⁴ The characters in Dhalgren are all bending to fit the confusion under which they live — and the hero of *Triton* is appropriately metalogical and *ennuyeuse*.

The war between the two worlds and the populated moons eventually reaches Triton. The war is fought entirely by sabotage. "There are no soldiers," is an ironic maxim of the third-generation residents of Triton. Bron's city Tethys is hit once and then twice by induced falterings of the systems which maintain gravity and atmosphere in the city. Bron goes to Earth as a tag-along member of a diplomatic mission — and finds himself literally in Outer Mongolia, with archaeologists and a touring micro-theatre group for company.

The controlling tension in the book is between Bron and the leader of the micro-theatre group, a woman called "the Spike." The Spike has a government grant to present her micro-productions all over the Solar System — and usually to audiences of only one person. A theatre group playing to one person is somewhat reminiscent of life in its more populated moments; Bron says about the Spike, ". . . this fantasy/reality confusion . . . it's just marvelous in her work. I mean, there, it's practically like what we do, the fantasy working as a sort of metalogic, with which she can solve real, aesthetic problems in the most incredible ways . . ."⁵ Just as the fantasy of Triton gives us an aesthetic view of realities to use in our own universe, and just as the Spike's micro-theatre gives its audience a sense-distorted vision to lend meaning to a life going its own direction.



R. Flinchbaugh

Delany's world-construct is a remarkably complete one, especially when viewed against the parameters of other sf. He takes special care to delineate living conditions — the living co-ops of bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual or unspecified preference; children who may be raised by two or six or thirteen parents, of any sex. There exists the technology to enable people to change sex, biologically and psychologically, at will. For physical defects, there is corrective therapy or rings worn around the fingers that help to compensate for some physical malfunction by some advanced (though unspecified) technology. Few authors have been so complete in the delineation of their vision of future worlds, especially in the area of sex-roles, house-keeping and child-raising. The liberation of Triton's so-

-- Continued on page 28 --



Amanda, Susan, Jan, and myself met for lunch on Sunday during the MidAmeriCon at Kansas City last month. We wanted to continue discussion of some of the ideas that had come up in meetings the previous day among people interested in feminism and science fiction. With the assistance of Amanda Bankier, editor of the feminist fanzine, *The Witch and the Chameleon*, Jan and I arranged the luncheon meeting with Suzy McKee Charnas (author of *Walk to the End of the World* [Ballantine, 1974]), trouped across the street from the convention hotel to the Sirloin Room where waitresses were garbed in an incredibly hideous costume (a ribbon-like skirt that did not meet in back and revealed the most charming array of layered ruffles) and where menu items were Bicentennially named after famous Americans (the George Washington BLT, for instance). Aside from these drawbacks, the place seemed as good a place as any to tape a spontaneous exchange, were it not for the factor that became apparent only after we'd returned home with our tape ... i.e., the noise level of your typical restaurant at lunchtime. Transcribing was a horror as a result — but we, your editors, persevered, and after sending copies to the conversants for approval/editing/comment, we present some of our hour's words...

Things started out with a discussion of China and Chinese solutions, Suzy saying that she had been upset by an item in *People's Daily*. "It was about peasants who abandoned their families in floods to save the local chairman. I really don't like that a whole lot; in fact, I think that's revolting. Not that I think the family is sacrosanct, but there's something about the reverence for politics that disturbs me quite a lot."

Conversation turned to the application of communist form in Western nations, Suzy remarking that, "I have the feeling that if this country goes communist it will be on a horrible, Eastern European model because that's what we're like. We love bureaucracy. We love pushing other people around as much as possible. So I'd hate to see it happen here: we'd do it in the worst possible way."

"Now, in Canada," Amanda said, "I could conceive of us becoming communist through the social democratic path, but if we did it would be Chile all over again. This is one reason why there's so much hostility to Americans in Canada. Everyone says, 'Well, Americans like Canadians, as long as we behave!'"

"As long as you're nice, neat capitalists and don't do anything odd," said Suzy.

"... Such as, my God, elect an NDP [New Democratic Party] Premier. I remember when the daughter of the leader of the NDP was falsely accused of aiding terrorists and they reported in US magazines that she was the daughter of the Communist Party leader in Canada," said Amanda. "The NDP used to be socialist. There are some doubts about whether it is anymore."

"Anyway," said Suzy, "you've got a better chance than we do...."

"I don't know ... it's very conservative in Canada. Here they're having trouble passing the Equal Rights Amendment. In Canada there's no way to do that sort of thing. Our constitution is an act of British Parliament which we can't even amend by ourselves." Following an outburst of raucous disbelief from all of us, Amanda continued: "They've been trying to do something about bringing it to Canada for 20 years, and they can't because the provinces get so bloody minded about it."

Jeanne asked, "Can't something be done on the level of the provinces?"

"Well, there are provincial Equal Rights Commissions, but ... I get the impression that it's the same in the States: the local government tends to be more conservative."

"Yep," Suzy agreed, "you get the right impression."

"Although there are exceptions. The government of Saskatchewan is fairly radical, but ..."

Suzy interrupted, "Well, back to science fiction."

Clearing throats, nodding, sitting up straight, we all agreed and began in with some comments on the previous day's panel and discussion afterward on feminist sf.

Jan agreed with Suzy, saying, "The panel was very heartening. It was really exciting to listen to."

With some reservations concerning the panel discussion in which she participated, Suzy noted, "I don't know what it felt like from the audience, but my impression was that there were a lot of people who came out of curiosity and that's the reason that the response in the panel was fairly muted, and that some of those folks couldn't care much about what was going on by the end of things. I didn't get the feeling that it was all that supportive a group."

[Here's a funny thing — I'm sure that's just what I said, and this wasn't long after the panel, so it must have reflected something of my feelings. But now, at a distance of maybe a month, I remember the panel with great fondness. I remember being gratified and surprised to see so many people showing up, about half of them by my estimation male. I also remember enjoying the whole thing very much. The lack of supportiveness I spoke of meant, I think, the fact that not many questions were asked, and the audience seemed almost a little intimidated and very quiet. It also seems to me now that I was very happy and pleased that most people did stay til the end, and seemed interested in what was going on. The fact that the discussion room for the "small group" was so packed afterward bears this out as to factuality, if not in regard to my mood or my feelings about the panel preceding the discussion. I suspect that what I was giving you during lunch was largely conditioned by my furious reaction to the strip tease the night before, an event which had upset me considerably and

soured me on the whole convention for a while.

[Anyway, the point is that in retrospect at least I enjoyed the panel very much. — S. McK. C.]

"How about the meeting afterwards. That's the one I went to and I felt as if there was a lot of energy there. If it can be channeled into the APA [the Women's Amateur Publishing Association, Janet Small, OE], I think it could work out pretty well," Jeanne protested.

"A lot of people came," Suzy said, "but it didn't work out properly. There wasn't enough control of the big mouths that inevitably arrive at such situations and don't shut up unless somebody says shut up. There were too many people all smushed up in that small room anyway."

Changing the subject to the masquerade of the previous evening, Suzy said, "I was very surprised to see you [Amanda] pop up the other night in the masquerade as a Free Amazon."

Explaining her choice of a costume, Amanda said, "It was a deliberate reference to [Marion Zimmer] Bradley, but also, despite Bradley, it was the only thing I could think of to provide any —"

"— relief from the belly dancers?" suggested Suzy.

"Yes. Really, I'd like to have gone as Alyx [of Joanna Russ's Alyx stories], but I'm not a tough little bitch with terrific athletic abilities."

"Yes. Well, not many of us are," Suzy agreed.

Jeanne elbowed Jan and commented that Jan would have made a good Amazon. Jan replied, "Well, when they carry swords, I'll become one, because that's the only weapon I've had training in."

"What do you mean, when they can carry swords?" Suzy asked.

"Free Amazons are not allowed to, according to the novels," Jan explained.

"Well, why not have one anyway, and then you could be a really free Amazon who carried a sword because she likes to protect herself?"

Continuing naturally enough into comments on Marion Zimmer Bradley's novels, Amanda said, "Really, *The Shattered Chain* is surprisingly good considering ..."

"There's just a couple of passages ...", Jan said, noting her reservations.

"The whole end, as far as I'm concerned, was terrible," Suzy stated.

"But you know," Amanda said, "that's not only because of the things she says about women. The other thing is, as Bradley said in that letter in *Witch*, when she came to the point she figured it was correct as the story went to have those two women fall in love, she chickened out."

[The term "chickened out" is Bradley's own, but she adds that she was already dealing with one important theme (i.e. women's position and options in a patriarchal society) and that "to drag in lesbianism, too, might blunt the impact." — A. B.]

"And it's so obvious," said Suzy, "that she chickened out. But I think the real cop-out was that the story was never about the Free Amazons after that first part. There was a whole story there about what it was like to be brought up by those people — I mean, what it felt like to be surrounded by those women. And that was all simply passed over, so the Free Amazons were just gutted, so that they didn't mean anything by the time you got to the end of the book. And I'm damn furious about it because it's such a damn good idea and it was totally sold out. It was lost. She just didn't seem to have the faintest idea how to begin to think about a society made up entirely of women from the inside. Not how people would look at these travelers and say 'How

weird!' — but look at how they really lived. And so of course she made me think she just couldn't imagine it."

"My feeling," said Amanda, "was that it had more to do with fear than not being able to do it."

"I disagree," replied Suzy. "Unless you know something about her editor that I don't know — that she wouldn't be allowed to do it. I think that if you want to write anything you can get it published."

Disagreeing, Amanda countered, "I don't think that had anything to do with it. I meant the inborn fear that you get from being illegal, from being gay."

"Okay, you may be right. That's something I don't know about. Let me back off ..."

"Because it's worse than what you think it is just from how illegal you actually are — it's going around discovering that others think you're worse than a murderer — more — it gets to you," Amanda said.

"And yet," said Suzy, "she came out in *Witch* and said that she was in fact a lesbian. It seems to me that the fact that a woman has a husband and lives with this man and is very attached to him would make it easy to talk about another side to her life. I've been able to do that."

"It [being married] provides an awful lot of protection," agreed Amanda.

"It's a funny thing," continued Suzy. "The new book that I've written is entirely about a women's society."

We asked her its title, and Suzy responded that it hasn't got one yet. [The working title is *Motherlines*, and it's still sitting with the second editor who's seen it. (The first, Judy Lynn del Rey at Ballantine, turned it down flat.) — S. McK. C.]

"It hasn't got a publisher yet. I'm going to eat all my words, by the way, if I can't get it published," Jan said that we would publish it ... in mimeo. Suzy agreed, but alas! we didn't get a contract in writing.

Describing her new novel, Suzy went on: "It is a society of women. They're warrior women and they have herds of horses. The research that I did (I won't say they're modeled after anyone in particular) was centered mainly on Mongolian plains people. There are women who love women, of course, because that's how they live, and there is also a technical and ceremonial sexual attachment to horses ... which is really gonna throw some folks, but ... (it threw my editor ... across the room! She said, 'I'm not doing it', so ... I've got to find a new editor.) But she didn't seem to object to the fact that just about everyone in the story is what we would define as a lesbian."

"I don't define them as lesbians because they have nothing to do with present-day conditions, in the sense that they are not under the stresses that people who call themselves lesbians are. And therefore, when I write about them, I simply write about them as people who happen to love other people. In this book I don't have to deal with the problem of people who happen to love other people in a society that says 'Oh horrible!', but just being able to do it freely and without feeling any kind of weird moral stress about it. And in that way I guess I'm really free to write about it, because my head is not charged up with having had to deal with being that in this world."

"But why," Jan asked, "would Marion Zimmer Bradley have to deal with that? Why would it be a problem for her? She has to deal with someone thinking her a lesbian because she writes about them."

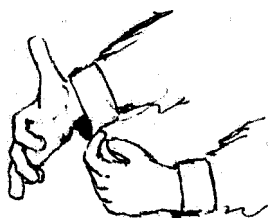
"Well, it isn't what she's dealing with," said Amanda. "I don't think anyone thought her a lesbian until she admitted it in her writing. Well, of course they did if they read her lesbian novels."

"But then they wouldn't have known her name," noted Jan, "since they were published under pseudonyms."

"But she is bisexual," said Amanda. "She is protected by having a husband. People who don't want to think of her as being a lesbian have an out. It's tremendously protective, because anybody who has the least desire to give her the benefit of the doubt can just say, 'Well, she's not really: she's married. She played around a little bit. That's not important. She's not one of these horribly sick, man-hating creeps, which is the real danger.'"

"Joanna [Russ] talked to me once," Suzy said, "about how I'm living with this really nice guy and my father lives in the house next door. She wanted to know how I could keep up my feelings about men, about their being rotten.... I said, 'My God, are you kidding? Look at the rest of the world! It's not very hard! I get my reminders all the time. It's more a matter of keeping up my good feelings for the male people who are close to me and whom I love and who love me.'"

Patia von Sternberg had done a striptease during the intermission of the masquerade the previous night. Talking about that, Suzy said, "When I talked to Susan [Wood] about the masquerade and the striptease, she was saying, 'Well, you know that's where you are, you're in Kansas City', and I got a little annoyed because I know Kansas City is a Republican stronghold. I also know Kansas City is one of the cleanest towns as far as porn goes, because they just won't stand for it. And, thinking about it, I think that you really can't blame Kansas City for the fact that this committee decided that it would be just groovy to have a striptease."



Amanda replied, "That's an odd comment for Susan to make, because she's been involved with the fan thing so long, and I would have thought that she'd see that it's the same bunch of people everywhere."

"Well, she says it's the committee, really, that the committee is responsible. What happened was that Susan was really worried because I was saying I never want anything to do with any of this again, and she was trying to convince me otherwise. However, she did not convince me entirely. She was saying there were about three hundred people at the panel yesterday: what about them?"

About this time, the lunches arrived, confusing things because Suzy and I got mixed up about who had ordered the Ben Franklin and who had ordered the George Washington plates. Finally things were straightened out, Suzy remembering, "yeah, right, I had the one with the stubby turkey", as opposed to my lunch, which was described as "shaved turkey".

"Recently I've been working on an idea for an article for JANUS," Jeanne said. [See this issue's editorial column.] "It started when I read Aurora: Beyond Equality and noticed that three out of the nine stories presented futures in which present sexist problems are solved by changing women's (and/or men's) biology, by changing people into something different, non-human. — The premise being that as-we-are-now, biologically, we aren't going to make it.... Women bearing children will always be treated unfairly."

"We can't have it all, in other words," said Suzy.

"I don't know if it is to you, but it's rather disturbing to me at times that this point is taken: that as-we-are-now, it's hopeless," Jeanne said.

"Well, I'll tell you," Suzy answered. "For one thing the book I've just written offers a solution which is a sort of biological modification, and my feeling about that is that's fine: that's one way to do it, but it's not sufficient. However, all these questions are going to disappear in about 25 years, because the thing they're calling the *manchild* pill is on the way, in the next ten years. And it's going to wipe us out. Really, surveys show that just about everyone in the world wants a boy child first, and if all the first children are men, women are going to be denied all the advantages of being the first born. And this is the end! And then they're going to be outnumbered fantastically and they'll have to go into Purdah. It's weird. I was reading about it the other day, and it's been sneaking up on us all this time and nobody knows."

"Do you think it will be that way all over the world?" Jan asked.

"Bloody right. Worse in most places than here, but just as bad here as in any so-called civilized area. Now it's very strange to be writing for an audience that's going to disappear in the next generation, because there's no way that anyone's going to outlaw something like this pill. It would be made and bought on the black market anyway."

[Imagine us now: sitting there eating Benjamin Franklin and George Washington and discussing the end of the world...]

"Is it that husbands will force their wives to have sons?" someone [impossible to identify] asked. Suzy.

"No, most women want sons the first time."

"But the pill already exists," Jeanne said.

"It's generally known, why ..."

"No, it isn't really ready for commercial sales yet," Suzy disagreed. "It doesn't really matter when it happens if it's before the end of the century, because I think that's at least how long it will take for women to get to like themselves enough to want to have daughters. Most of the women who are reasonably liberated people — many of them are not having children at all. So that leaves all the good folks who are interested in giving papa a son — or two sons or three — and then maybe a daughter as an afterthought. It's going to get pretty rough. One fellow, one scientist, typical moron, said, 'Well, anytime you have a scarce item that's valuable, then things are balanced out and people will start having more girls again because there won't be enough to go around.' He doesn't realize that many men don't like women: women are not a scarce and valuable item. They'll be a scarce item that nobody really wanted anyway. So nobody will be interested in redressing the balance. So — it's a very weird situation."

"As this is beginning to accelerate, someone will invent a method for male parthenogenesis," Jan suggested.

"For sure — and they'll just turn to homosexuality. So it is really kind of strange. I feel as if I am writing at the end of the whole thing. And that pretty soon ... Well, I'm just glad I'm not younger."

"You really feel," Jeanne asked, "that there's no hope for a feminist movement averting such a disaster?"

"I don't think that really has anything to do with it — you keep doing what you're doing — anything worthwhile. But I have a feeling that unless something really strange and totally unforeseen hap-

pens, unless there's a sudden dawning of the light everywhere and a lot of women saying, 'Oh, I want a daughter first', or at least, 'I want a daughter', I don't see any hope for it at all, no."

"I see a certain degree of hopefulness," said Amanda, "in a wide reaction even on the part of women who, at times, spout an incredible amount of viciousness about the feminist movement. In our [university] choir, they were presenting men with little joke gifts and said they would give every woman a book mark so that she could keep her place, and with one voice the women protested. Now choirs are not exactly revolutionary. Still, I'm inclined to despair a lot, too."

Getting back to the subject of the doomsday pill, Suzy commented, "The fact that they call it the man-child pill is pretty predictive."

Amanda replied, "I don't think the people who do the biological modification are thinking of real possibilities, given the influence of society. Society has a tremendous power to change things, and that is what we should work for."

Amanda and Suzy agreed that, however, societies are created in such a way as to maintain themselves rather than to change.

"Changes are not due to moral progress, however," said Amanda. "Slavery was abolished, for example, because it had become inefficient. Perhaps we can manipulate this type of change."

"It's perfectly possible that, by the time this pill comes about, something will have changed. I don't see any possibility of the sort of change we'd need coming about, however. Things do come out of left field — this pill has. Maybe something will come out of right field to counteract it, but I doubt it. I don't think about this very often because it depresses me. I don't want to be around when the world is 70% male; I'm just damn glad I'm 37 and won't be."

"Well," said Jan, "then they'll just have a war to kill off the surplus men."

"Well, they'll have war anyway," agreed Suzy, "because they like war; and women will go back to being prizes."

"You know, I've noticed that, among the women I know, it's the straight women who really hate men. It may be just a kind of blind spot in someone who is concerned only with women that she is not emotionally dependent on men, nor is she physically (that is, financially) dependent on them, and so may feel less immediately threatened by men's anti-women attitudes. The common equation of lesbian with man-hater never seemed realistic to me," said Amanda.

"Well," said Suzy, "it's related to the fact that if you do feel that way you can say so, whereas if a woman says so, she's got to face her husband's wrath."

"It's interesting," Amanda pointed out, "that you don't consider lesbians to be women." Suzy didn't understand Amanda's comment. "Well, that's what you just said."

"Oh, a slip," Suzy said. "Read into it what you like."

[If my response to Amanda sounds defensive and curt, that's because it was. As soon as she pointed out the import of my "slip", I got flustered and accordingly blustered a bit, and the two of us backed hastily off and continued as if nothing had been said. I don't know about Amanda, but I was acutely embarrassed; so much so that later I sent her a note apologizing for my insensitivity, and explaining that the slip meant just what it sounded like because I am, in fact, highly ambivalent about the whole question of lesbianism in reality.]

[I myself live a straight life — according to one of my younger sisters who is something of a

swinger, an excessively straight life. I am convinced that being firmly rooted (I think and hope) in "normality" is what gives me the freedom to wing it as wildly as seems called for in my fictions. In the fantasy of fiction, the whole question poses no threat to me and my way of living. On the one hand, I feel immensely advantaged in writing about lesbianism and homosexuality and bestiality or whatever else comes up because I am not carrying any heavy emotional freight about such styles or modes of action drawn from living them. On the other, I would not dream of claiming that anything I write should be taken as speaking for lesbians, homosexuals, etc., or even as taking up real issues and attitudes of their real lives. When something that I write connects, that's wonderful. When it doesn't, or when it seems to distort what others know better than I do, that's regrettable.]

[What I think I'm doing, you see, is writing from some kind of dream level that's available to all women in one degree or another, a level of imaginary experience that can nourish us all. That's where our visions of a decent future have to come from, I think, tempered with tough and realistic analysis of how to get there and cope with a whole new set of problems when we do.]

[Anyway, to complete the story, such as it is: Amanda received my apology — I wrote I was sorry if I had hurt her feelings — and she called me up. She said that she was sorry to have embarrassed me, and that she wished she had thought of a more tactful way to have made her point. We understood each other, I think, and reasserted our relations with each other in the recognition of the gaps between us. I have a warm memory of that phone call.]

[But I still wish I hadn't said what I'd said in the conversation at lunch. — S. MCK. C.]

And then continued: "Yes, I think that a lot of straight women are hostile to men as Betty Friedan's work shows. I think many women still can't come out and say that there are some men they genuinely loathe. They just say, 'Well, it's just how they were raised. It's not their fault.'"

"That ignores how we were raised," said Jan. "Yes," agreed Amanda, "it just doesn't change the fact that they are worthy of being loathed, especially in the cases where they are consciously trying to be nasty."

"I have problems," said Suzy, "dealing with this aspect of the question. It's like blacks who commit crime. I know that it's usually just because they haven't had the good fortune of some others. But when they rob my house, I can't understand it as well. I react the same way with sexist men."

Coffee was served, and we took up the problem of how to change people's behavior, how to begin to eliminate sexist response.

Amanda remarked that "... most people don't think of themselves as villains."

Suzy replied: "People act rationally ... even crazy people act rationally. You have to change people's experience before you can expect them to change their minds ... because you cannot expect people to accept ideas that run counter to their personal experience. You say to whites who have, say, had a bad time in the ghettos: 'Oh, yes, but black people don't cause the problems.' Well, unless you can make them see it a different way, they'll say, 'Yes, they do. I've seen it', and you're going to waste your time. So it's a real problem: about where you start. Where do you start changing?"

"This is something that Joanna [Russ] brought up," said Amanda. "She was saying that the idea is that to end sexism you must change the mind of the sexist. And she was beginning to think that, no,

you don't change their minds, you change their behavior, and that will eventually change their minds. And, of course, this gets you down to somehow getting the power to change their behavior."

"Well, it's the same theory as the bussing theory," Suzy said, "because that's essentially what's being done in an effort to change things without waiting for the next millenium to go by when people have come around to seeing things differently. I think that's true; I think you can change their experience and that means you have to change what people are doing to each other. When their experience changes, their minds will change. And that's a beaut, when you're talking about a revolution.... I don't think we're very revolutionary in this country, though."

Bringing up a topic that had been discussed following the panel on feminism and sf at the convention, Amanda said, "That whole argument about the use of language yesterday ... Kate Wilhelm was talking about the use of language being an art, and saying that she wasn't going to let her art be interfered with. Other people were talking about whether language changes in literature could help the Movement, whether or not a neuter pronoun would be useful. I tried several times to get in on it, but every time missed the 'gap'. What I wanted to say that the language changes after the society changes. I think it's very important to look at language and see what it's doing to you, because it does a hell of a lot to you. But it's always so far behind — in many ways I'm conservative about language. I think that, since it's so important to communicate, the changes should be as orderly as possible."

"Besides," agreed Suzy, "you cannot make orderly changes unless you do what the French did: have yourself an Academy Francaise, which says, 'OK, everybody, no more *le weekends*. We'll fine you if you use that in your signs. No *le drugstore*. It has to be French words now.' It's the only way. Otherwise you can't police the language — unless you're set up to do it like the French do. And we never have given a damn about language."

"Language always changes from the streets, and from there on up — not from art down — the linguistic changes filter," said Jeanne.

"Sure," agreed Suzy. "Well, look at the experience of Esperanto: they had a rational system and the people didn't want it."

Later, on the topic of technology ...

Amanda said, grinning, "We have the advantage of being a long way behind in Canada!"

"Yes, good for you!" laughed Suzy. "Stay there as long as you can! It gets nothing but worse as you go along."

"The only hope is to put things off until people realize what is happening and take a look at the economic system and say, 'Wait a minute, this thing only works with perpetual growth. We're running out of room!'"

"I was reading recently a book called *Ecotopia*," said Jeanne, "about the northwestern states seceding from the United States, isolating themselves, and building a society of ecological principles, universal recycling, steady-state growth, etc. ..."

"I've heard about that," said Amanda. "It's supposed to be terribly written, but fascinating."

"That's the one. It's set up in an interesting way. It is supposedly written by a New York Times reporter whose weekly columns are interposed with personal diary entries, both presenting different views of the new society."

"Well, everyone always wanted to do that. New York City was trying to do that for a long time: 'Let's just cut loose and float out. They can keep

Jersey!" quipped Suzy.

From there we went into a discussion of New York and then Toronto and through all sorts of twisting paths, but finally got back to reportable conversation when Amanda said, "I've been passionately devoted to English children's books. Of course, what else is there to be passionately devoted to as a child?"

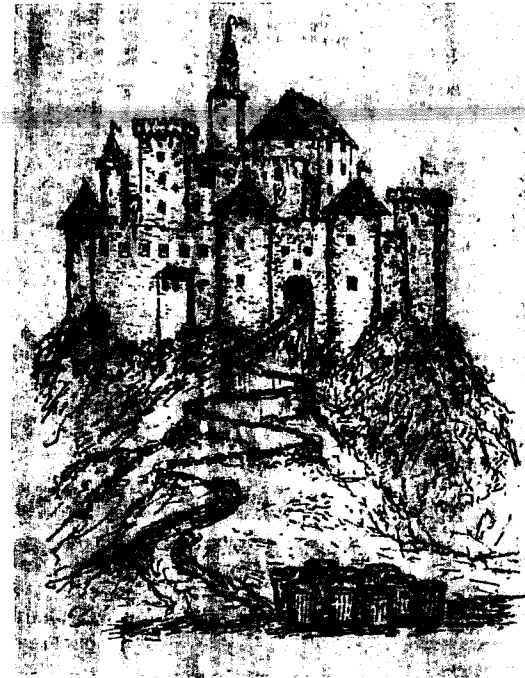
Suzy agreed: "English fantasy-type writing too is so splendid compared to this paltry rubbish we turn out here."

"Almost anyone who's writing fantasy in the United States writes in the English mode," said Amanda.

"Oh, for sure. Who wrote *Eld*?" asked Suzy.

"The *Forgotten Beasts of Eld*? — McKilip," answered Amanda. "I think McKilip is American, and I loathe *The Forgotten Beasts of Eld*! No, I liked it rather moderately well the first time through it, and it's not fair to her to loathe it for the fact that everyone else praised it to the sky. The thing that got me about it was two things. One, that everyone in it speaks modern colloquial American English, and I do not believe in medieval kingdoms where people speak colloquial *anything*! The other thing is that there's absolutely no social structure, and it just sort of sits in a vacuum."

"But you know fantasy's full of that," noted Suzy. "It's one of the reasons I can't read it anymore. I'm an economist by training — long gone from there now. And I'm really interested in who does the work and how things get done. And most fantasy writing is the lords swishing around in the halls, and you never see anybody doing anything except killing their enemies, or wizarding up a genie. You never see anybody scouring the pots. Or anybody taking care of the horses that people gallop around on all the time. And I can't bear it because it just seems to me to be so much cream-puffery.... Although things can be well written. They just have no connection with things that would make them the least bit real."



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"There was a farce," Jeanne said, "written on the Count Dracula myths that tried to account for the fact that the tables were so beautifully set, his castle so magnificently decorated and kept, with no visible servants. The author suggested that the count wasn't really sleeping in his coffin during the day, but that the whole thing was just an elaborate hoax to hide the fact that he spent the whole day doing his own housekeeping."

"Even when things begin to go right on one level, like if you have a good quest story, you get a fair bit of the mechanics of surviving the quest, but there's always Elrond behind providing them with food," Amanda observed.

"— as well as medical supplies," added Suzy.

"And not even magical support but physical support as well: horses, food; Elrond supplies them with all their clothing, and no one ever asks where he gets it all," said Amanda.

Suzy suggested that "it comes out of the sky: he conjures it up out of cellulose or something. That's one of the reasons I can't read most fantasy, not just that it is hideously sexist. But just that it never gets ahold of things."

Amanda suggested an exception. "This is one of the things about the Earthsea Trilogy in that the characters are fishermen and goatherds...."

"Yes, what do people do with their time when they're not magicking around?" asked Suzy.

"... How many places do you find a brilliant wizard who's a goatherd?" asked Amanda.

"Good God!" exclaimed Suzy. "That's more like it! That's one of the reasons I think Susan Cooper's books are so very attractive ... because they are based on real families, on real people, and you see them sitting at the breakfast table and doing the dishes. You get a feeling for some kind of reality. Otherwise, fantasy has no anchor; it floats and it's gone."

"Plus the fact that of course she can take advantage of so much British myth that has a great deal of feeling to it, resonances to it," said Amanda. "But the trouble is that they're mostly sexist resonances; that's the trouble."

"Right," agreed Suzy. "And that's my trouble with fantasy, basically. Aside from the economic end. When people use it, they're using it for those resonances."

At that point we got into some really interesting conversation, but Jan and I had only brought along one tape, one hour's worth of talking. As a result, the really good stuff is lost forever unless it remains in our subconscious and emerges eventually in one or the other's writing....

... *Mura*, continued from page 22...

ciety signifies a liberation of sf; for Triton will enter the "symbolic vocabulary" which sf draws upon for its sources and speculations. But Delany is not self-conscious, and very comfortable in the pretensions that he does carry, towards providing a fictional example of a "new wave" in sf. Perhaps, as a black American, he did not feel the pressures of that same "symbolic vocabulary" which grew to such science-worshipping heights in the Forties and Fifties; at any rate, he has left behind the hang-ups and prejudices of his predecessors and his peers in science fiction. He is writing true sf — the unveiling of alternative universes, not only for "sense-of-wonder", but to compare to our own universe — to understand the differences and begin to comprehend the meanings of all of the other ways of existing.

NOTES

- 1 Samuel R. Delany, *Dhalgren* (New York: Bantam, 1975), p. 183.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 573.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 401
- 4 Joanna Russ, "The Image of Women in Science Fiction" in *The Red Clay Reader*.
- 5 Delany, *Triton*, p. 332.

CONAN WAS A HERO

It was commonly acknowledged
that Conan was a Hero
having slain the evil wizard
3 dragons, 12 demons and
the local werewolf
still
It would have been nice if he'd
returned the rescued princess
her crown jewels, personal steed
and paid his tavern bill
before he disappeared with the
princess, jewels, horse and
what ever else wasn't nailed down.

James A. Cox / 11-30-76

THE TALONS OF HORUS

BY ROBERT KELLOUGH

The following was found among the papers of the late Sir Elliot Hammersley, who died on 26 August 1997. As his literary executor, I felt it important to publish this exactly the way he wrote it. Whether you believe it or not is, of course, up to you, but as I continue to sort out his writings, perhaps we will be provided with further evidence of the events in his remarkable career.

Robert Kellough

It happened when I was racing over Egypt. The sky was clear, the wind swam around me and my machine as I tried to keep pace with that silver glimmering away off to the left. My opponent, whoever he or she was, displayed admirable control of their skycar. Impromptu races across countries such as this were not uncommon in my time. A passing skycar would playfully weave a trail of mischievous pursuit around another flyer, and bursting ahead with great speed would leave challenge and sport in its wake. If the flyer was interested he merely had to increase velocity and the race was on. But I don't need to dwell long on this arcane activity of your ancestors. You've probably studied about the period of Atmospheric Games and Pursuits so I shan't bore you. It happened that I was flying fairly low over the Egyptian desert in hopes of bettering my speed in the lower altitudes and then ascending ahead of my opponent in the upper levels. I realize now it was careless of me to fly so low, but the pleasure of the sport and the incredible speed clouded my thinking. On all sides I was suddenly assaulted by a rapid and terrible drumming and pounding. I turned on my side, peering up through the glass. My God, the sky was filled with feathers of every imaginable color. The car rolled with the impact. What I had fleetingly dreaded had happened. I had collided with a flock of Rainbows, those exquisite winged creatures whose aerial geometry and singular beauty has captivated the attentions of Earthmen for so long. Imagine my dismay to have flown so carelessly into their ranks, breaking that wondrous arch of floating color that stretched off into the horizon. I had little time then to regret the damage I'd wrought, for my machine was swiftly losing altitude. The endless sands of the desert spun dizzily before my frantic gaze. The horizon line acted like the hands of some wildly spastic clock, destroying equilibrium and scattering seeds of mute terror on the screaming wind. The car descended unceasingly, the controls in my hands useless, dead. As my gruesome destiny took shape before me, I suddenly felt the levers grow hot in my hands. I screamed in pain and naked horror as my burning palms sent a razored heat through my shaking frame. Then waves of cold enveloped me. Then an efficient blackness. Then, the finality of nothing.

When I opened my eyes I was gazing at stars. The sun had long ago fallen from the western sky. When my senses assured me I was alive, I lay para-

lyzed with amazement for God knows how long. To have survived such a violent crash was surely a miracle. No one, certainly not an old gent like me, has that kind of luck unaided by some benevolent and mysterious power. Whatever it was that kept me from perishing in that tremendous impact of sand and steel, it had mercifully thrown me clear of the burning shell of my skycar.

Other than a few small rips in my flightsuit, and the throbbing presence of a handful of bruises about my person, I was fairly fit. I slowly stood up to scrutinize the immediate situation. The moonlight fell heavily, like a cloudy frosting on the surfaces of shapes before me. The smoldering ruins of my craft shot orange lakes of pigment onto the stoney tableau that stood directly behind it. I walked toward the structure and as my steps drew ever closer to its shadowy environs, the details emerged to toy with my reason. Why, it was a mastaba!! My skycar had crashed to the desert floor and slid into the side of an ancient burial edifice that predated the pyramids. My curiosity was naturally aroused, for this was the first time I had seen a mastaba at close range.

I suddenly sensed that I was being watched. The feeling of an awesome presence behind me invaded my being. I reacted. I turned to greet the spectre and my senses reeled at the magnitude of the vision. For before my awestruck gaze there stood an enormous edifice of stone — a magnificent pyramid!!

I stood dumb-founded at the grandeur and majestic beauty of the massive monument. My burning skycar and my bruised body no longer existed, there was just the mute presence of the fashioned stone and its black shape soaring before me into the dense night sky.

If I had any ideas about where exactly I was, or what pyramid was standing before me, they seemed to be prevented from filtering down into my conscience by the rapidity of events of the past few minutes ... or was it hours? Surely I had remained unconscious for quite awhile, for it was now dark. But how long was it? My friend in the air must have surely realized my disappearance by now. Would someone come searching for me? I was seemingly alone, far from any town or settlement, for I'd had at least time enough before the crash to see that the dry and empty sands of the expansive desert were all that lay beneath me. But the acute sensation of another being nearby insistently pervaded me. Perhaps it was merely a result of the strangeness of my present surroundings.

As I stood in the moon-shadow of the great pyramid, my thoughts fled unceremoniously from my shaken mind into the soundless void of the Egyptian night-escape. When I was able to recall them, I felt, at the same moment, the sand beneath my toes; the winds of stars against my cheeks; the acrid mists of untold ages raining down behind my eyelids and falling ever so gently upon my inquisitive and open heart.

What was revealed to me pierced my soul with sharp stone blocks placed exactly right. The winds erased the sands of ages past. I stood in shadow, but saw only light: the pyramid before me uncovered by some strange wind's work. A light, a beam shot through with the metallic vibrancy of brass under sun, fell upon me from the apex of the towering edifice. The stars around me fled, the night grew blacker as the beam stood fixed upon my inert form. Before me in a haze I saw my skycar, crumpled and still against the mastaba. Then I saw my own shadow touching the cold metal of my useless vehicle. I had no desire to turn and verify the truth of the vision. It seemed unnecessary.

Suddenly, silently, the light from the pyramid went out. A dull blue blot hung before my sight as my shadow flew back to squat at my side. The stars reappeared in a glorious sweep across the heavens and I exhaled deeply the breath of night.

All was quiet on the plain before me. I turned and gazed back at my skycar. The fires of its demise had long since gone out, and it lay very still and lifeless, like the discarded shell of some ocean creature washed up onto some, alas, far-off shore. It looked very out of place in this setting of awesome antiquity. Its cold metal contrasted strangely with the rough, blocky ruins around it.

borders of my sanity. As in a dream, I found myself climbing the moonlit stones. As in a nightmare, I knew not what compelled me.

I don't mind telling you, whoever you may be, that for a space of time during my ascent of the pyramid I was totally unaware of what was happening. My mind and body were distant shores enclosed by a thick blanket of mist. Then I found myself standing high upon the pyramid at the threshold of a black entrance-way that loomed before me. It beckoned me to be swallowed-up into the inner mysteries of its design.

I stood, uneasily, at the smoky gates of ether-eal Destiny. There did I stand, with my open heart clenched in one hand, and the lights of reason balanced in the other. As I lifted my head to address the chalky orb of night above me, I felt my hands collide in a tremulous wave of rich red light that turned the moon pink in its wake, and presented before me a curtain of thick, sparkling crimson where before only black had been. Slowly, I approached the veil of blood and as I did, I saw it rent in two by a spear of light. Thus I passed through the Gate at earth's edge, at eternity's border.

My journey within the pyramid progressed at a relatively slow pace. I saw before me, descending deeply into the gloom, crimson steps of dusty design beckoning me to disturb their age-long freedom from



I was on the brink of returning to the ruins of the skycar to hopefully salvage a small supply of food which I always carried with me, when I was halted by a strange, unfamiliar odor carried to me on the nocturnal air-currents. Turning toward the pyramid for, perhaps, an answer to this enigmatic scent, I detected a thin wispy column of smoke seemingly issuing from behind the pyramid. The strangeness of this demanded investigation, so I proceeded to walk around the pyramid toward the source of the smoke.

Ages of desert winds had sculpted a varied surface, not entirely meant for the feet of man, around the base of the pyramid. The sand was firm beneath me, but my steps were slowly taken; my eyes were ever searching for a movement or shape that would explain my beld actions toward possible strangeness or danger. The endless pillar of alien smoke drew me toward that which lay beneath it.

As I stood near the corner of the huge mountain of stone, I discovered to my amazement that the source of the pungent column was none other than the pyramid itself. Fifty or sixty feet from its top, there was a small slot between the stones from which this silently surreal vision loomed immense on the

man's curious foot. The need for me to find the source of the smoke and what or who might dwell there, carried me on down into the hall's dark embrace. Soon the red light of the entrance-fissure was overcome by the black breath of the pyramid's inner bowels, and I found myself gingerly striding from darkness into darkness. I was careful to be very quiet as I came ever closer to the unknown presence I was sure I must be near.

The visions of terror the mind conjures up in the dark contain weird and disturbing creatures. I discovered this as I groped along the narrow passages in the great pyramid. The endless curtains of black before me stirred many times, revealing loathsome ectoplasmic beasts always reaching for my vitals. The nightmares of a hundred pharaohs pressed down upon my brain, sending incandescent fantasies screaming past my ears. Upon a knife-edge of sanity I walked. In the wake of my footsteps stood ghostly creatures preparing to pounce. But my fears were momentarily forgotten when I glimpsed ahead a strange green luminosity. It appeared to be coming from another corridor, ahead and to my right. With pounding heart, I walked to the corner and slowly peered around the crumbling wall.

The sight that met my eyes was so bizarre that I was numbed with shock. In the lurid green light of a smoking brazier, I saw two figures leaning over an open sarcophagus. The room was not large and was most assuredly a tomb. The walls were covered with detailed scenes of a heroic and benevolent nature interspersed with row upon row of glyphs. I spent little time, though, scanning the room. I started in terror as I got a better look at the two figures. It was unbelievable but true! I was staring at the ancient Gods! There, facing me, but bent over the mummy, was Anubis, the jackal-headed god. And there, across from him, with the body of a man but the head of a great falcon, was Horus! They were both intent upon some ancient rite concerning the mummy, and obviously did not hear my approach. I nearly swooned at the wonder of this tableau. There was no doubt in my mind that their heads were real and not some kind of elaborate masks conceived in the fires of sorcery. I was witness to a fabulous dream come true. The sheer amazement of the vision made me clench my fists in unforeseen awe.

I stood paralyzed in the doorway of the tomb, scarcely realizing I had discovered the source of the mysterious smoke. Just then the head of Anubis shot up and stared shockingly at me. He uttered a rapid and terrible growl, which alerted Horus, who in turn whirled to face the intruder. At this second, as the two white-robed and much-jeweled Gods detected my presence, I realized two things almost simultaneously. One was that the reflections of the green fire in the silvered surface of my flight suit had probably given me away. The other thing was, that I had best be quickly escaping from my present surroundings! Before I had finished the thought, I found myself racing down the corridor with the sudden heart-stopping appearance of the looming shadows of my adversaries racing before me. The mad scream of Anubis echoed down the passage, and I stopped my ears in fright as I leaped up the stairs toward the waning moonlight and the open sky. The sound of my breathing covered the sounds of pursuit, but I knew they were after me.

The curtain of blood at the entrance was gone, but the ends of moonbeams lay like pools of milk on the crusty blocks of stone. I sprang into the open, and not bothering to look behind, started to run down the side of the mighty tomb. If I had looked

back, I would have seen Anubis standing alone at the entrance, a halo of reddish light pulsating out from his ghastly, twitching head. I finally reached the cooling sands and started sprinting toward my skycar. Perhaps I could reach my pistol in time. But would a laser beam have any effect on a God? As I strained toward my goal, a large, warm shadow from above slowly grew around me. What new terror was assaulting my sanity? I turned to face the vision and saw a giant winged beast, an enormous falcon, descend toward me. I screamed as I frantically searched the ground for some shelter or weapon. My eyes fell on a large sculptured Ankh lying partially covered in the sand. Yanking it out of the sand, I swung it at the winged behemoth with all my strength. The bird arrested the arc of the Ankh with its mighty talons, and firmly holding the stone sculpture, it proceeded to work its great wings and climb up into the night. Before I could release my grip on the Ankh, I found, to my dizzying terror, that I was flying through the air. The warm wind of the falcon's beating wings and the continual rustling of great feathers, proved to me that this was not a dream. Somehow I managed to get a better grip on the Ankh, although I could feel the strength in my arms ebbing. The moonlit landscape rolled beneath me. Far ahead, through squinting eyes, I could make out tall beacons of light and columns of colored smoke piercing the inky clouds. The falcon seemed to be heading for these lights. I renewed my grip on the Ankh as I felt a new wave of terror shudder through my frame. The luminous smokes cast raw, trembling shadows on the pale desert floor.

Here the manuscript somewhat abruptly ends. The original page is only half filled, which would lead one to believe that the tale is over. But perhaps we should not assume the entire manuscript has been found. There are places in Sir Elliot's home that have not been thoroughly searched. As his executor, it is my duty and honor to continue to search for any further adventures that were put to pen, and you, the reader, will again be afforded a glimpse into a most remarkable life.

R. K.

THE WAR TO END ALL WARS

The war was necessary,
They thought different than us
And their gods were not ours
But we won.

The bomb was inevitable
When they refused to surrender
And their customs were not ours
But we won.

Atlantis will never be the same of course
But we won.

James A. Cox/11-30-76

Now, obviously, this is a fictional piece. It is fictional because were it true, you would not be reading it. Only the last man on earth could read his own story, and since he would have written it in the first place and would know how it ended, why would he bother to read it? For that matter, if he had no intention of reading it, why would he bother to write it at all? It is hard to believe that the Last Man on Earth would go to such lengths strictly for his own amusement. (Here the attentive reader will take pause. "But how can this be?" he must inquire. "Do I not hold this thing in my hand? It can be seen and felt, some propose that it can even be smelt, and yet it purports to transcend its own existence! What gives?" A righteous query, dear reader, and soon to be dealt with.) On the other hand, how can anyone presume to know the mind of the last man on earth? Who do I think we are, anyway?

Chapter the 1st

The richest kid in the world rolled over in his bed and turned off his alarm before it could go off and wake him up, as it always did in his dreams. As he crawled back under the covers, he thought, "If I ever write a novel, I would start it by having the hero wake up and remark to himself, 'What a marvelous idea for the beginning of a novel, were I only a writer.'" After hesitating a moment, he rolled over on his side and went back to sleep.

Chapter 2

"Oh Howard how could you!" she whined from the bed. The intrepid space traveler cast a tepid glance at her from his perch on the windowsill and spat out a casual "Fuck off!" He had just finished relating to her his singular experience in a bordello on Disneyworld. On his way to the bar on one occasion, he had been confronted by Luigi, one of his old favorites.

"Hey," (s)he had suggested, "is your name Francis?"

"Why yes, as a matter of fact, it is," he had said, giving the correct reply in a matter-of-fact tone indicative of his frequent exposure to factual matters.

"Well," continued the olive-skinned anchorite, "there's another guy named Francis right here in this room, and he says he can kick shit on you."

"Well, then," came the retort, "let's see." Francis had led the way into the lantern-lit interior. Luigi followed behind and closed the door. He looked at the acne-scarred lout confronting him; then, turning to Luigi, had said, "Believe him, when he tells you that." On the way out, he had thought to himself, "I'm hilarious. I really crack me up sometimes."

Just now, however, Francis was considering detaching himself from the whole sorry mess. "A whole life gone up in smoke before my eyes," he muttered. "Thank shit it isn't mine."

"What did you say, Alex?" whined the creature in the bed.

"Fuck off," he ejaculated.

"Life is a smoky apparition," he reflected.

"Why, it's all bullshit. Just as there is survival of the fittest, there is also death of the fittest. The concept of evolution, I think, is based on the survival instinct found in higher, or perhaps all, living organisms. Creatures strive to survive: the most fit do. When genetic law is combined with this fact, the result is the theory of evolution." He paused to light a cigarette at the end of this paragraph of thought.



the last man on earth by Tom Rogan

Chapter 3

If it were possible to distill clear thought from the matter of its origin, given that such a state of affairs exists, what could it possibly conceive itself to be?

Well, let me put it to you this way: clear and rational-headed thinking is the only possible path to ...? Well, let me put it to you this way: the majority of truly cybernetic organisms, on this plane, anyway, exist at the level of flagellate protozoa. The humanoid form exhibits unhealthy mutations and retarded development of vital portions and processes, and is falling further and further behind the apical meristem of evolution. It is the leaf of a branch. The Trillium line shows an evolutionary trend toward reduction. Or, as God has said, "I was struck by this blinding light, and I've been bumping into my relatives ever since." Ask yourself if you don't believe me. So here goes - - - - - ad infinitum. But wait. Let's put a period right here. Okay now let's go on.

Well starting right now we've got the unveiling of the latest novel from that super new and hot best-selling author, Vincent van Dryden. His novels are gripping and gritty. He's foretold the future with his last three epics, as in each one he predicted a different stage of human social development! Let's see what he's up to this time.

Two men sat on a rock. One shot himself in the head. The other watched. Then the remaining man pushed the dead one and the gun into the water which surrounded the rock and stretched as far as the eye could see in all directions. As the man looked up, he saw a myriad of thoughts suspended over the entire atmosphere and throughout to the orange horizons. And then he saw the rock from far above. And then he saw no more.

Examination of this passage introduces us to the dominant theme of the work. Note the recurring use of the words "man" and "he" in this short excerpt. Obviously van Dryden is on a deliriously blind ego trip. He actually goes so far as to admit to his

belief of the plausibility of a "master of the universe" notion. Such deranged meanderings are counter-productive and apparently van Dryden has lost control of himself and any degree of togetherness he may have once possessed. All we can do is hope for his return to the realms of applicable explanatory solutions to the crises of non-induced states, and a subsequent reappearance of his productions in the mediated mind. This message has been brought to your attention as a public service announcement by Public Service Announcements, Inc., a non-profit-sharing autonomous subsidiary of Preferred Subsidiaries, owned and operated.

Rising fast on the charts this month has been a proposition from the established circles of non-establishment thinking in southern France concerning the emasculation and subsequent delineation of St. Glorius of Thebes. Last week it was number 37, it's moved up to 20th among the top 40 popular beliefs of this subcultural level. Here it is, * Idea #20 *

If not for the idea of regressive traits,
how does one
account for the natural affinity
For vegetables and their way of life
Of many ones, and certain types, such
as the beet, in particular?

Chapter 4

When the mind again motivates itself
to deny for a time the obvious
and nurture the creature to the facsimile
of a meaningful statement,

What energy drives the ego
through mad rushes of the worthiness
of this experience?

In my science it is called
the instinct of self-decimation.

Chapter 5

"What about the death instinct?" mused Francis as he tossed away the spent match which connected him to the end of the second chapter. "Creatures succumbing to this instinct, just as others are dominated by the survival instinct, eliminate themselves. Therefore a tendency toward extinction. Those most fit to die do so. The creature least fit to survive in his environment is the one most fit to die. Is the trend toward confusion? Is there a trend? If there is no trend, is that not confusion? I am confused. To continue, if there is a trend, but it is not toward confusion, what is it toward? Is the present state of affairs the ultimate?

"If we are not the ultimate, then superior, or rather more evolutionarily advanced beings will follow us. Obviously, a creature is incapable of comprehending a higher form of life, and according to this line of thought, creatures more advanced from the viewpoint of evolutionary trends toward something will be higher forms of life. We can't comprehend their 'minds.' Why bother to try? Why not just eliminate yourself and conserve some energy? Clumps of inorganic matter are more important in this universe than you — alive or dead. You were born, you can see you're not the ultimate, so forget it. Either the ultimate already exists, in which case we can't understand it and certainly are unable to transform ourselves into it, just as a tick is unable to become a dog; or else it will exist in the future in which case we won't see it and even if we could so what, we wouldn't understand it and would probably eat it, if it didn't eat us first.

"But what is all this talk about inferior and superior, better and worse? Matter, living or otherwise, merely exists, and cannot be judged. Who is to judge? What are the criteria for judgment? Obviously any such description is merely arbitrary. Therefore we are in reality neither good nor bad nor incomplete nor unimportant, and we might just as well exist as not exist. But if life is worth no more than non-life, there being no basis for the concept of worth, why bother with it? It's just a pain in the ass, and a waste of energy. This universe is heading toward entropy fast enough without your wasteful expenditures.

"Not me tho. I could never kill myself. I've got too much to lose.

faulty logic

"I've got too much common sense?

it does not compute

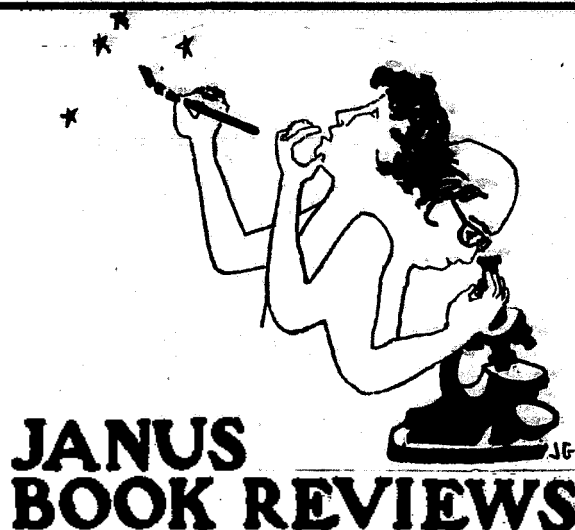
"There has to be an explanation."

Chapter 6

... it's only a novel; it's only a novel ... it is, after all, only a novel ... well, okay, a short story. Unless ... it's a movie ... Holy Christ, yes, I believe it actually is a movie.

Chapter 7

"So fuck you." He took a second drag off his Virginia Gargoyle, and laughed at the inequity of it all. "I can stay here and live on a shoestring, while freezing children in Hungary have to wear shoes with zippers or go without."



The Storm Lord

by Tanith Lee (DAW)

After the churlish letter from Don Wollheim (last ish), I felt a certain compulsion to examine Tanith Lee's new novel, *The Storm Lord*, with a serene and unprejudiced eye. In a few words, I looked forward to hacking the book to teeny bits, until the ancient stones were stained blood-red, as it were. After all, DAW-SF books had already brought us John Norman's sexual fantasies under its garish yellow covers. What next?

REVIEWED BY
THOMAS J. MURN

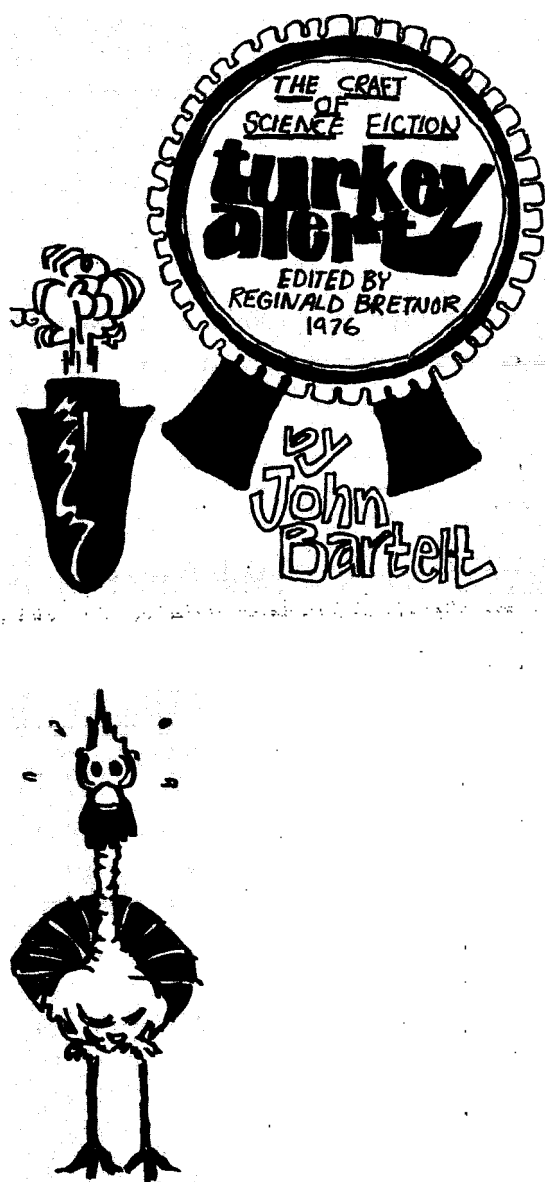
Lee's *Storm Lord* gave me ample ammunition for another literary Little Big Horn. It's sword and sorcery at its most unadulterated, extreme extension. A bastard king fighting to gain back his inheritance, with magic inherited from a sorceress mother. Swords and sorcerers.

But I found after finishing *Storm Lord* I felt more of a deep disappointment than a righteous, avenging spirit. Mainly because Ms. Lee, technically, is a good writer. She knows how to turn a phrase, and she knows how to set up dynamics for maximum impact (i.e., reader enjoyment). If only Ms. Lee were writing real sci-fi, instead of this fantasy dawdle. Instead of Enjoyment or Mass Appeal, try to keep in mind here that ancient trampled absolute of Speculative Fiction: to help man adapt to change by a celebration of possibilities and choices. Lee's *Storm Lord* is only one possibility, and an overexamined one

at that.

If this particular type of narrowness is Lee's bag as an author, so be it. I'm sure that she'll gain some kind of a name for herself — there are plenty of moldy-minded readers out there, bred on Doc Smith, who'll take to Lee's literary treatments. As for myself, I wouldn't want one of the apparent brightest futures of SF to be spending her precious time in print chasing dragons and locating whore-houses. And as for *Storm Lord*, it's appealing in the same fashion as *Medical Center* reruns. Lotsa empty action to distract you from those real headaches out there like Arms Race and Police State. Y'all are gonna be distracted right into 1984, and the bummer is that you're taking all of us there right along with you.

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The Craft of Science Fiction (\$9.95, Harper & Row), edited by Reginald Bretnor, is a book that might be described as "fair to middlin'". It is subtitled, "A Symposium on Writing Science Fiction and Science Fantasy;" What the latter is, and how it differs from the former, I have no idea. It seems Bretnor is the only one who uses it. Bretnor wrote the introduction and first article, and presumably collected the others. He is strongly pro-SF, and strongly, much too strongly, I think, anti- "New Wave". He sounds obtuse in his attack on it:

Yet the arguments for restriction [of SF] are repeated endlessly. They still echo in the remnants of the New Wave, that attempt to inflict on science fiction the hysterical illogic characterizing so much of this century's "intellectual" writing, and the spate of avid academic criticism following the discovery that SF, instead of being untouchable, was an untapped source of ready raw material for the Ph.D. mills.

Some of the following chapters, by some of the biggest names in SF, are fairly good (in fact, I remember feeling at one point that I should be taking notes), but most of them are just a rehash of things said and written many times before. Niven's article, for example, on "The Words in Science Fiction", though well-written, says nothing particularly new. This is supposed to be a book on how science fiction is written, not on how to write science fiction, Bretnor says, and the difference is subtle. Unfortunately, it doesn't work. Since no two writers write alike, hearing how one does is of little help. Oh, I suppose you can glean something from these essays, but not ten bucks worth. The longest essay is by Harlan Ellison, and is on writing for TV and film (with nary a mention of SF). Actually, I haven't been able to muddle through it yet; it's not one of his better articles.

The best article in the collection is the last, by Frederik Pohl, and has nothing to do with writing. It has to do with all the other things a writer must do: submitting stories, getting an agent, negotiating contracts, etc. Here, where the author can deal in concrete facts, there is a lot of information for the would-be SF writer. It contains most of the same information I picked up at the neo-pro workshop at MidAmeriCon, plus answering some of my leftover questions. I suspect, however, that you can get this same information in other, better books (probably Ben Bova's *Notes to a Science Fiction Writer* or the deCamp's *Science Fiction Handbook*). At best, wait for the paperback; at worst, spend your money on some good science fiction. You'll probably learn more.



Though Pamela Sargent believes that SF will restrain itself from becoming "a truly serious literature unless it deals more thoughtfully with women and concerns of women," it is not her avowed task in either anthology, *Women of Wonder*, or its sequel *More Women of Wonder*, to present stories which adequately perform this elevating role. This was perhaps the reason why I did not enjoy the first anthology. I was expecting Sargent to choose stories that were praiseworthy on a number of levels, and did not take seriously her proclaimed purpose to simply present what-has-been-done, good or bad, by women. And so, the earlier anthology covered short stories, while this later anthology, *More Women of Wonder*, covers the novelette form; not however as the back cover blurb promises, to "explore feminist themes in science fiction."

Once you get past that, however, and read the stories from a historical perspective, it is possible to read them enjoyably. I know I liked this collection better than the first.

Also included in *More Women*, as in the earlier collection, is a longish and rather unwieldy introduction in which Sargent outlines the contributions of women writers to SF. Among themes discussed are Brackett's and most other early female authors' use of male protagonists; the exceptions to this generalization and the changes, as Sargent sees them, when 60's SF began emphasizing "inner space" rather than "outer space," and stylistic innovations made the field more receptive to the kinds of things women were writing. There is an interesting section discussing the part assumptions relating to women's role as child-bearers have had in SF, insisting that we consider what these roles might become in a wholly different political/emotional arena or a possible future.

There are, in fact, many interesting topics discussed in this rambling introduction/essay — too superficially for their potential, too extensively for an anthology introduction — but it is perhaps the best part of the collection. Stories chosen range from a Jirel story ("Wirel Meets Magic") by C. L. Moore, and a Leigh Brackett story ("The Lake of Gone Forever"), to more contemporary stories by Russ, Wilhelm and LeGuin. My favorite, though, was "The Power of Time" by Josephine Saxton, a story that once again juxtaposes feminist themes with American Indian mythology (an occurrence which I have noted in other past reviews that is becoming an interesting and perhaps significant choice for women writing SF).

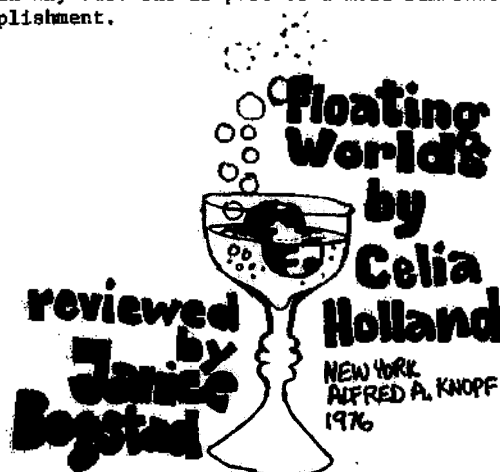
Every once in awhile, in the field of science fiction, one encounters a book that is so fantastic, powerful, gripping and unpredictable that normal standards by which one would criticize fiction just don't seem to apply. Into this category, I would place *Floating Worlds*. In the dust-jacket blurb introducing the book and author, there is no indication that Ms. Holland has written any other science fiction. This may account for some of the unexpected qualities of her novel. Nonetheless, by most definitions, this is a science fiction novel. Integral to the plot are travels on other planets and the introduction of aliens into the story. It is thus like and yet different from all other SF that I have read. I could compare it to *The Female Man* and *And Chaos Died* for oft-complicated structure; to *Dune* for scope and complexity of plot.

Floating Worlds is, in its own fashion, a full-blown saga. Within its pages may be found a multifaceted, jewel-universe which fills 465 pages. The worlds and cultures conceived of are not always in sharp definition. This is where the uniqueness of the book becomes apparent. The lack of definition is an asset as the story is told in the third person but through the eyes of the main character, Paula. All is seen through her eyes, and there is so very much to see. So much happens that one can quite possibly find it impossible to stop reading. Each new page becomes a new experience for the reader as the many experiences and situations of a short period in Paula's life are outlined. One also has the impression that her past held as much color as that portion which makes up the narrative. The novel is SF in fact due to its subject matter. It is SF in spirit because it takes the reader so much outside the realm of common human experience. And it is an exciting projection of the future because people are still people and because it has both male and female heroes and villains. Bravo!

I would like to retreat a little from the purple prose technique used above in order to give you

some idea of the novel's contents. The chief merit of *Floating Worlds* is its continual surprise factor so I don't want to tell you too much about it, just a few tidbits to tantalize the taste ...

Paula is portrayed as a most remarkable person. She is followed through a series of unusual living situations all of which are exploited for their potential as keys to the political structure of hers and other worlds. The author is able to suggest at once that Paula is emotionally and intellectually open to these many situations, on an anarchistic Earth, a highly structured Saturn, a militaristic Mars, and affected by them. Yet she is still somehow above this effect so that each situation becomes her tool in some way. This strength of characterization could also be seen as a weakness. I'm not sure any real person is as psychologically stable as Paula seems to be, but her actions are somehow rendered believable within the context of Ms. Holland's novel. Perhaps Paula is what many of us would like to be if thrust into such an existence. In any case she is part of a most remarkable accomplishment.



Reviews of:

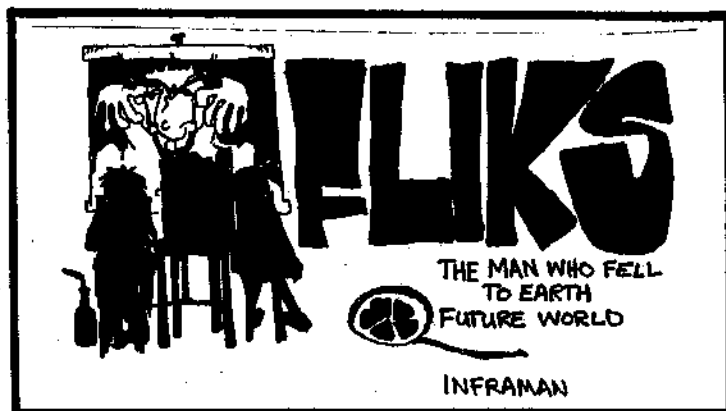


Directed by
Nicholas Røeg
Screenplay by
Paul Mayersby

1. Jeanne Gomoll

... In Brueghel's Icarus, ...: how everything
turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman
may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the
sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into
the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must
have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.
— W. H. Auden
The Musée des Beaux Arts

The painting referred to by Auden's poem and through that poem by the film, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, describes a crowded maritime/port scene in which all manner of frantic activities almost let go unnoticed the extraordinary event of a nude young man falling from the sky into the sea. The "ship that must have seen/Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,... sailed calmly on." The point of Auden's poem as well as of the film is not concerned with the reasons or logistics of the fellow's surprising plunge. His mythic importance (as Icarus) is lost in the clutter. Rather, we are shown the effect of the man's sudden appearance upon the perceptions of witnesses whose senses have become dulled and confused by daily experience, whose turmoil cam-



oufages what is actually extraordinary. The man plunging into the sea in the painting in the *Musée des Beaux Arts* is missed by the painting's fictional witnesses and can be easily missed by a casual museum stroller who does not scrutinize the painting with care. The fantastic detail and incredible crowdedness of the scene tempts us to dismiss this one strange item and include it with the surrounding tableau.

Thus I found Auden's poem (introduced into the film as a reading that the alien who falls to earth encounters) to be of great value in finding a perspective from which to view this confusing film. I understand *The Man Who Fell to Earth* to be concerned with people's perception of the truly extraordinary in the modern world. This theme is a common enough one in SF — and by the film's choice of the device of the alien appearing on earth to explore this theme, one might expect mundane repetitions of the many stock, overused clichés developed for the occasion of alien invasions, e.g., the horrified crowd scenes, countless and possibly tragic misunderstandings of the alien's and/or human motives, an educational tour conducted by the author to satirize society through the innocent alien perspective, etc. Instead, in this film, I found a complex and fascinatingly fresh approach to the idea.

David Bowie as the alien being, develops his role superbly, but the credit for the film's thematic content goes most probably to the screenwriter (Paul Mayersby), who developed the film along lines that I am told diverge dramatically from the source novel of the same title. Images of perception — the alien's, his acquaintances', the world's — are abundant throughout the film and together unite to form a satisfying interpretation of the whole.

The alien arrives. He is able to remain anonymous through familiarity with our world gained by his world's reception of earth's television and radio signals. He uses his superior knowledge of optical sciences to build an enormous financial empire in order to subsequently build a ship to return to his homeworld, a place disastrously drought-stricken. But he is foiled by powerful international corporate forces whose interests in the status quo compel them to be very nasty people.

The arrival of the alien, Newton, his reason for traveling to the earth, and his actual place of origin, are all handled in an extremely ambiguous manner in the film. That his planet is drought-stricken, his family possibly near death, we know. But we do not understand whether his reasons for traveling to earth (the watery paradise viewed on TVs in his world) have anything to do with rescuing his world and/or his family. When asked, Newton describes himself as a tourist. His mode of travel as well as the location of his world are only vaguely hinted at and not revealed. He may come from another planet — which is one's first assumption upon viewing the film's initial scene (the rocket's fiery entry into

earth's atmosphere, its plunge into a mountain lake). Yet the mode of transportation in which he leaves his world resembles a train more than anything else, and he points across the horizon ("down there") when asked where he comes from. Most significantly, Newton says that others of his world have visited earth before and that he has often seen signs of their visits, which is, perhaps, a reference to a unique aspect of his senses of perception. At one point, he "sees" and is "seen" by a strange group of mountain people from the previous century. No one else with him is aware of Newton's vision into the past. A possibility that may explain these contradictions is that Newton comes not from another planet but from another time, a future earth depleted of its resources and water. To arrive at earth "now" would entail travel through space as well as time, but would still allow Newton to point down the road to his home; and as his world has developed the ability to pick up television signals from the past, so too could Newton occasionally "see" into the past and future. This would explain the frequent flash-forwards as Newton (and the viewer) watches how his family fares without him.

Once he has arrived on earth, however, no matter how or why, the concern of the film turns to the problem of extraordinary perception. In a unique twist, we are invited to consider this theme not from the point of view of the world (us) dealing with the new idea/entity, but from the point of view of the alien struggling to retain his extraordinary identity. For Newton is more than simply a literal alien, he is also a spiritual alien: in a sense, he is an artist. His inventions (9 major patents) revolutionize the optical technology; he offers the world new ways to see reality, new perspectives, which is certainly the role of the artist (artist as innovator). Mary Lou, a hotel maid who befriends him and stays with him for many years, muses at the beginning of their friendship that a traveler such as he, or an artist, must live exciting lives. Furthermore, the proofs of Newton's alienness are both optical in nature and continue this motif of perception. One of the scientists (Bryce) who works under him discovers Newton's secret by developing an X-ray picture of him. Newton reveals himself to Mary Lou by removing special contact lenses that cover his yellow, haunting eyes; the only real physical difference he can exhibit beyond an exotic pallidity, thinness, and peculiar lovemaking behavior. Finally, his failure to prove his essential differentness, his extraordinariness, to doctors and a bureaucracy attempting to control him culminates in the fusion of his artificial lenses with his real eyes so that he can never again "see" in his unique way, never again prove/exercise his alienness. Without a point of view that separates the artist from others, the artist cannot produce a genuinely extraordinary vision. David Bowie, artist/singer in this role as

alien/artist (who even produces an album, *The Visitor*), was perhaps chosen for this role to ironically further the theme; if not, it was a delightful coincidence.

The world in which the man who fell to earth is lost, resembling the world in the painting in which Icarus becomes lost, is the frantic world of media and bureaucracy in America. Primarily, the film focuses in upon the world of media, specifically television. Newton watches television, or rather a number of televisions, incessantly. He seems fascinated, hungry for, obsessed by the images as he jerks his head from one TV to the next, letting the sound from all of the programs jangle incomprehensibly together. And yet he hates this addiction, too. TV doesn't tell you anything, he says. It just shows. Later, with fear and terror in his eyes as he sits crazed before 10 television sets, he screams: "Leave my head alone!" Although it is the agents of a nebulous financial organization that kidnap Newton seemingly because America can take only so much innovation (and so Newton, the source of the innovations, must be restrained), it is television that seduces him, "normalizes" him, drugs him and fuses his eyes to blinding artificial lenses. Newton's fall to earth results in an encounter with a world that enforces mediocrity and conformity and will not admit to the existence of the truly extraordinary. Newton, as artist, falls prey to the idiotic images of a blind world, and is then restrained from any further innovation by those who suspect his differences and wish to protect things as they are.

Life goes unheedingly on around the drowning Icarus in the painting in the *Musée des Beaux Arts*:
 About suffering they were never wrong,
 The Old Masters: how well they understood
 Its human position; how it takes place
 While someone else is eating or opening a window
 or just walking dully along;
 ... They never forget
 That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its
 course
 Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
 Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and
 the torturer's horse
 Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.
 And once captured and captivated by the complacent, homogenized, TV-ized world around him, Newton, restrained and defeated, sits back and submerges beneath the wide black rim of a hat. He bows out, the music is an out-of-date tune: the extraordinary has been safely ignored and submerges beneath the surface of things.

The *Man Who Fell to Earth* is a rich and complex film. I suspect that there are many other levels of interpretation with which to view it, and recommend it to anyone who enjoys a thoughtful film.

2. Richard S. Russell & Diane Marti

Walter Tevis wrote *The Hustler*, a novel about Fast Eddie Felson, an excellent pool player who made his living by playing below his abilities until the stakes were high enough to make a big killing. The three movies we will look at in this issue also deal one way or another, with hustling. The first, interestingly, is also based on a book by Walter Tevis:

The Man Who Fell to Earth

D: Nicolas Roeg
 W: Paul Mayersby from the 1963 Novel by Walter Tevis
 S: David Bowie as Thomas Jerome Newton
 Buck Henry as Oliver V. Farnsworth
 Candy Clark as Mary Lou
 Rip Torn as Prof. Nathan Bryce

Thomas Jerome Newton has come from another planet with blueprints for some unique consumer products based on the advanced technology of his homeworld. If he is revealed for what he is, of course, the game will be over: he will not be allowed the free rein he needs to make a billion dollars and build a space-

ship. Consequently, he works through Patent Attorney Farnsworth to amass his fortune, but he is abducted just as he prepares to launch his ship. He announces that he is giving up his attempt. We finally see him as the world's richest alcoholic.

This summary of both the book and the movie does little justice to either, but is about all they have in common. The film makes a fairly sincere effort to follow the book in the early going, and this is where it is the strongest. As it gets progressively farther removed from the book, it becomes progressively less intelligible.

These are a few of the questions the movie raises: Where did Newton come from? What was he trying to do? What was the mysterious organization that kidnapped him? Did they finally discover who he was? What happened to the spaceship he was building?

The film does not answer these questions, but the book does. He is from Anthea, a world described in terms pointing to Mars. Anthea is dying, the result of nuclear warfare and a water and energy shortage. Newton was transported to Earth in a spaceship's lifeboat, using almost all the energy Anthea had to spare. His mission is to ship enough uranium back to Anthea so that the 300 surviving members of his race can fuel a larger spaceship and escape to Earth. The group that arrests him is the FBI, but they are really working for the CIA. (In the film, there is a hint that it is some kind of "enforcer" organization of the big multi-national corporations.) The CIA discovers he is biologically non-human; Newton claims to be a freak, but the head of the CIA knows the truth. Political pressures (in the book, not the film) force Newton's release, but first the FBI X-rays his retinas "for identification." Newton protests violently, but is forced to submit. In the film, the result is that the contact lenses which conceal his cat-like eyes are permanently bonded to his corneas, hardly a consequence commensurate with his protestations. The book is more believable: His eyes are unusually sensitive to X-rays and he is blinded.

More numerous are the questions raised by the film which cannot be answered by the book because they have no counterpart in the book: How did Newton withstand the landing of his ship? (It crashed into a lake, but a fast elevator ride gives him a nosebleed.) Who was the man on top of the hill who watched him leave the scene of his landing? What was the significance of his seeing a group of pioneers (and their seeing him) as if through a sepia time warp? What is the whirling body he sees in flashbacks? What were the strange

lights that emanated from the lake where he landed when he revisited it, and what frightened all the birds away from it? Why, if he was to be abducted, did his kidnappers wait until the very occasion of his spaceflight, when the glare of publicity would be upon them? These questions are not answered by the film, either.

Indeed, the film as a whole makes very little sense beyond the basic plot outline at the beginning of this review. There is hardly any dialog. Stanley Kubrick also uses little dialog in 2001, but what there is serves to tie his visual presentation together and give it meaning; Roeg, on the other hand, seems to think that visuals are a substitute for exposition. Furthermore, Kubrick's scenes fall into a logical sequence, whereas Roeg's seem to be grafted onto the main plotline almost at random.

Even the dialog in TMMFTE conveys little sense. What, for example is the purpose of the characters Mary Lou and Bryce? They merely wander through the film mouthing commonplaces. (Roeg makes Mary Lou younger and more voluptuous than Tevis did, probably as an excuse for taking her clothes off.)

The film's strong points include an unexpectedly good performance by David Bowie. Roeg carefully abstains from capitalizing on his image as a rock star (except in the advertising). Makeup was also well done. The characters (except Newton) appeared to age very realistically. (Why they should do so, since the film only covered about five years, is another question, but let's give credit where it's due.)

It is a shame that Roeg chose to deviate to such an extent from the book, because Tevis's work is a very sensitive one. It portrays a sympathetic being who is faced with an overwhelming burden. The future of his entire race (and ours as well, he states) hangs on his actions. He is a hundred million miles from his home and facing a society a million times larger and more complex than the one he left behind. Most of its members would unthinkingly kill him if they suspected his true nature. To compensate for this situation, he is armed with some amazing and powerful knowledge. Yet, ultimately, that knowledge proves insufficient for his task. Newton succumbs to the feeling of increasing futility the book has been building; he surrenders. It is a story of poignant loneliness.

The film, instead, is a story of increasing unintelligibility. For both T. J. Newton and Roeg's film, the words of Whittier are most appropriate:

For of all sad words of tongue or pen
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Futureworld

P: Paul N. Lazarus III and James T. Aubrey
D: Richard T. Heffron
W: Mayo Simon and George Schenk
S: Peter Fonda, Blythe Danner, Arthur Hill, Stuart Margolin, and John Ryan

The hustle in this film is the one being perpetrated on the wealthy and influential customers of Futureworld. If you saw Westworld, you know the premise: a luxury resort peopled by robots who look like human beings — robots who will do anything to keep the customers satisfied, including losing gunfights, romping in the sack, etc. In Westworld, the robots ran amuck and did in the customers. Tch, tch. This bad publicity has caused business on the Isle of Talos to drop off considerably, so the management of the renovated resort invites Reporters Fonda and Danner to return and see how nicely everything runs now.



And, on the surface, everything is indeed very pleasant. But All Is Not As It Should Be. In fact, the entire island is now run by robots, and they are busily replacing influential visitors with robot simulacra, so that some day the robots can Rule The World. Ho hum.

Some of the gimmicks are neat (especially a holographic chess set where the knight appears to be a real horse and rider) and there is a bit of suspense at the end when you wonder whether that's the real Fonda and Danner walking out of Futureworld (they can kill off the lead characters in the movies — one of the advantages over series television), but the plot is predictable and the acting mediocre. It's movies like this that make science fiction seem like mere gimmickry.

However, to find a film that gives science fiction a really bad name, we must turn to:

Infra-Man
P: Runme Shaw
D: Hua Shan
S: Li Hsiu Hsien as Infra-Man
Peng Cheng as Princess Dragon Mom

This Japanese import starts off in standard Japanese monster-movie tradition: an exploding volcano reveals a flock of foam-rubber and papier-mache "abominations" (some of which were kind of cute) who cacklingly proceed to dismantle Tokyo. The brave scientists set out to stop them. About halfway through the show, the gestalt changes. Now we have a typical Japanese karate movie, as Infra-Man and the creatures kick, chop, whack, and bat away at each other about the rate of ten minutes per monster. As expected, Infra-Man finally does in the evil princess and rescues the professor's beautiful daughter.

There are so many utterly preposterous aspects to this film that it would take three columns the length of this one to list them all. If you believe the blurbs about this film being "Beyond Bionics", you've fallen victim to the ultimate hustle: the one Infra-Man perpetrates on the suckers who buy tickets to see it.



Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell—



TWILTONE RAG (views on fanzines)

Once before we attempted to do a fanzine review column, for early issues of Terry Hugh's Mota. Those columns were called "The Basement Tapes" — hard to say just why, except that we lived in a basement apartment, and news about tape recordings, in this case previously unreleased Bob Dylan cuts, was very big in those days. Perhaps the title of this column needs a short illumination: certainly not all fanzines are published on twiltone, but that cheap, fuzzy, recycled paper is part of the roots of any real fanzine, and still an important part of our fanzine. Part of our justification for once again try-

ing to review other peoples' fanzines is because we believe that fanzine fandom is so large these days that it needs the occasional review column, to remind us of the things that all fanzines have in common. Thus, this column will not attempt to be a buyer's guide, or an in-depth look at a few fanzines, but will try to look at some of the trends and influences we see working in fanzine fandom today, and to talk about the fanzines we've been reading and enjoying lately.

To say that each year's World Science Fiction convention has a tremendous impact on fandom is an understatement. After all the packing and traveling and program and party-hopping is done and the dust, or twiltone lint, has settled, one thing remains: a big pile of new fanzines that are in one way or another inspired by the convention. For instance, some fanzine editors, tired of turning their pay checks over to the Post Office, decide to distribute copies of their latest issue in person at the world-con. One fanzine so distributed this year in Kansas City was *Simulacrum* 2B, a special "Twiltone Issue". This really shows an unusual devotion, because twiltone is unavailable in Canada where Victoria Wayne lives, and she had to make special arrangements to get it. This issue is all letters of comment and Victoria's responses; reaction to earlier articles on topics like love and sex, and whether or not nice clothes and make up are phoney, continue to pour in ... obviously sensitive topics for self-conscious fans. We tend to agree with the letter-writer who thought that letter columns work better in the context of a fanzine with a variety of contents. But what can you do when the letter column gets too big for the fanzine? Edit unmercifully, or start a letter column/discussion fanzine. This issue of *Simulacrum* does seem more like an ongoing discussion than a collection of odds and ends that didn't fit elsewhere, but how long can an editor keep publishing two types of fanzines with the same title?

Scintillations #10 is printed offset on newsprint — but newsprint is a distant relative of twiltone. The editor, Carl Bennett, is a multi-threat man: a good writer and artist. Scintillations could become a major fanzine, one of the semi-professional efforts, if Bennett continues to pour so much of his energy into it. This issue features an interview with the editors of the new SF magazine, *Galileo*. Starting a new science fiction magazine to-

day is a project not unlike trying to run a stage coach service — it is an idea whose time has passed. The Galileo editors have enthusiasm and different ideas about distribution and marketing, and we wish them luck. Also in this issue is an interview with Frank Herbert, letters, book reviews, and good graphics.

Also seen at this year's worldcon was the fantastic Rune #48. What can we say? This is Fred Haskell's last issue as editor of this Minn-stff sponsored fanzine, and it should be stated that during his tenure Rune was interesting, witty, beautiful, stimulating, constantly experimenting, and altogether one of the finest fanzines of the 70's. The Minneapolis fan group is lucky to have a David Emerson waiting in the wings to take over, since Emerson has been a valuable contributor and creative force in Fred's Rune.

Checkpoint #74 comes all the way from England with news of science fiction fans, including in this issue, some notes on the goings-on at the worldcon. Editor Peter Roberts managed to beat some US newszines to press with this news, even from England. This fanzine is recommended for fans interested in maintaining an international viewpoint, assuming that it is to be published regularly now. News of the worldcon was provided while the convention was still going on in the daily Bullshead, edited by Linda Bushyager and Jeff May. Such printed communications seem to be becoming a permanent part of large worldcons, though both editors of this were ready to swear off this type of fanpublishing by the last day of MidAmeriCon. When conventions are so big that they require closed-circuit television coverage, and it's possible to never run into friends who are also at the con, a daily communication sheet becomes a necessity, if only because the notes on the bulletin board get covered up so fast these days. Anyway, printed communication is such an important part of fandom that convention publications seem a natural development.

Linda Bushyager also edits Karass, a fannish newszine, normally delivered by the PO instead of being left around at conventions. She did a special issue just for the MidAmeriCon, a False Karass, featuring news of the "Sci-Fi Sickness" which nearly wiped out fandom. Linda is also responsible for keeping The NeoFan's Guide, one of Bob Tucker's many contributions to fandom, up to date and in print. The fourth edition was published for this year's worldcon and distributed there in the Neo-Fan's room. Although this issue doesn't feature the legendary Dan Steffan covers, experienced fans will want it for the interesting variety of illustrations, and anyone who feels somewhat confused by the traditions and jargon of science fiction fandom should rush 50¢ to Linda Bushyager. (Besides, all profits will go to DUFF, a worthy fan charity.)

We've come to think of Convention Program Books as types of fanzines, though we must admit it is difficult to see the twiltone roots in a publication like the gorgeous, hardcover, dust-jacketed MidAmeriCon Program Book. A nice package, but since we science fiction fans are a picky sort, some objections to this volume were heard. For instance, several women wondered why the adolescent listening to Heinlein-the-storyteller in the George Barr cover was male ... but in the light of Heinlein's weird, sexist Guest of Honor address, perhaps he wanted it that way. This book may have been a little fancier and more expensive than was really needed. One effect on the convention was what might be called the high school yearbook syndrome: there was much more autograph seeking than usual — the Program Book was such a perfect place to collect them! Some of the

artwork wasn't really top-notch, but most of the material was interesting and useful. Good job, Tom Reamy and Ken Keller.

Some fanzines made their initial appearance in our mailbox around the time of the conventions. SWOON #5 comes from Joyce and Arnie Katz who couldn't come to the worldcon this year, but instead sent their Bicentennial issue (with a fantastic, faaanish, patriotic Ross Chamberlain cover — Arnie and Joyce enjoy one of those advantages fan editors dream of, a captive artist) along for our preconvention reading.

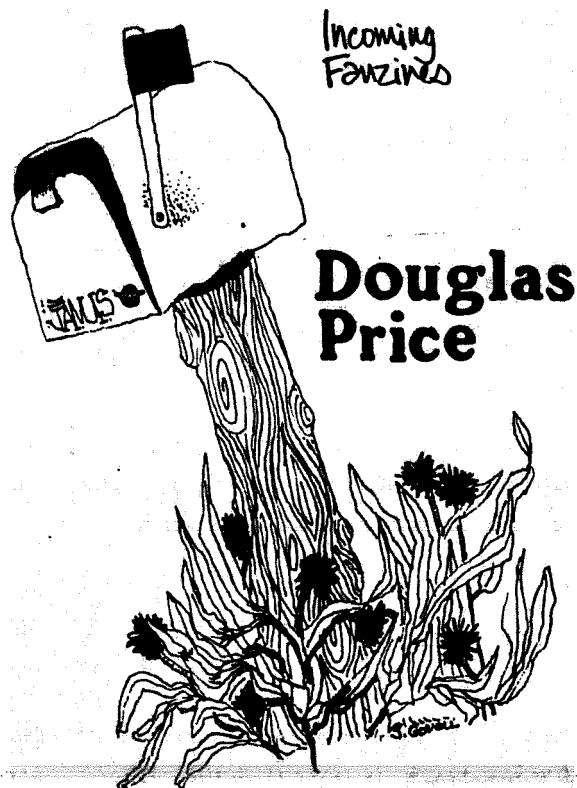
Joyce's continuation of the series of articles on her youth, spent in Poplar Bluff, MO (also home of that legendary fan figure, Claude Deglar, whose horoscope is revealed in this issue by Eric Mayer), contrasts sharply with her description of a free hair cut at a hair stylists' school in NYC. But the strangest thing in this issue is Jim Meadows III writing on how he probably won't be able to write an article for our fanzine, Starling. Where else but in fandom can you open up a magazine and find an article with a personal message for you? (In a Phillip K. Dick novel, of course.)

Another fanzine with a self-proclaimed Bicentennial issue, written just before the worldcon, is Vandro. Number 237 is the latest of this long-lived, always enjoyable, publication from Buck, Juanita and Bruce Coulson. As always, this issue includes editorials by all three Coulsons (this time with an additional contribution from visiting fan, Kay Anderson), book reviews by Buck, and an extensive letter column. Vandro can be depended on to be always enjoyable and comfortable. In contrast to this is Alvega from Alyson Abramowitz. This is a fanzine which is still evolving a characteristic style, format and tone. The editor is still learning some of the finer aspects of the art of layout and editing, like how to keep a letter column under control. (But fanzine editors in general are always learning more about their chosen medium of communication. Certainly we have yet to publish the perfect issue of our fanzine, which has been around for 12 years now.) This third issue of Alvega includes some good material; a piece from Doug Barbour that manages to tell us a lot about Doug while seeming to be a long excerpt from a recent novel by a Canadian author; some interesting artwork, including a beautiful Harry Bell heading, a Terry Jeeves cartoon (which is something too rarely seen in US fanzines), and many of Alexis Gilliland's cartoons, which often work better in the context of a fanzine page than one might expect from their simple style; and something we always enjoy, a first convention report from a neo-fan, radiating enthusiasm, the new kind of enthusiasm that keeps us old and tired fans from lapsing into gaffiation.

Speaking of renewed enthusiasm, the fan currently most successful at this almost magic practice is Terry Hughes. Yes, he's continued to publish even without the benefit of our fanzine reviews and #19 appeared in time for the MidAmeriCon (printed on beautiful, blue twiltone.) This is a special issue of Mota. Now some fan editors (not to mention any names) publish special issues at the drop of a beanle, but not Terry. A special issue of Mota, like this special "British Flavour" issue, most appropriately introduced by a delightful Dan Steffan cover, is really special. Each of the recent issues of Mota has been notable for the appearance of an excellent article by a fan, such as Lee Hoffman, Bob Shaw, or Grant Canfield, who just doesn't write much for fanzines. Terry has a unique ability to get contributions from fans who are well known to be gaffiated, or too busy for fanzines. This issue's

coup is a convention report by Tom Perry, a well-known fan editor of the past who has once again gotten involved in the strange world of fan publishing. His piece here, "Mein Con" is not only a report on the recent British Mancon, but also an eloquent picture of the pain and delight of re-entering fandom after a long absence; this is quite possible the best piece to see print in any fanzine this year. But Mota is also a fanzine devoted to fanish humor, which Bob Shaw and Dave Piper provide here, with the promised British Flavour.

The fanzines stopped coming in a week or two after the worldcon, and we are currently in the midst of the fanzine drought that marks the beginning of most fanish years (one worldcon to the next marking the fanish calendar). Hopefully by the time this issue of Janus appears, fanzine fandom will have come out of its post-worldcon hiatus. Once again each day's mail will be bringing in more paper communication from around the world. Next issue we'll continue to explore this twilight world which is such an important part of our lives.



Boowatt 9, 10 (June/July, August 76) Garth Danielson, 616-415 Edison AV, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. 25c/ish or \$2/year. A personalzine containing the general meander. 10 contains several art plates in blue and black glued to the white pages, neat!

Fanzine Fanatique (July/August 76) Keith and Rosemary Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quermore RD, Lancaster Lancs. England. Fourth Annish. Almost entirely a fanzine reviewzine. Less of a simple listing than other fanzine reviews, it contains much more opinion. For the usual, preferably in trade, or 10p plus postage.

Mota 19 (August/September 76) Fifth Annish. Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22205. Available for trades of old fanish fanzines or the usual. This special British issue contains plenty of humorous fan articles from British fans. All of it good fun. Recommended.

Orca 1, Jennifer Bankier, 485 Huron ST, #406, Toronto, Canada M5R 2R5. "... a combination of sercon commentary, personalzine, and newsletter ..." Contains book reviews, personal commentary, and SCA news. Available for \$1 or the usual.

Pablo Lennis 7, 12 (bi-weekly) John Thiel, 30 N 19th ST, Lafayette, IN 47904. 25c or the usual. "The 'Inconsistent' zine." I agree. 8 1/2 by 14, stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Has a lettercol, fanzine reviews, and some really ghodawful fanfic.

Photron 15 (February 76) Steve Beatty, 1662 College Terrace DR, Murray, KY 42071. 50c/ish or the usual. Very sercon genzine covering SF, fantasy, TV, movies, you name it. Contains a continuing discussion of "Women's Lib" and lists of the obscure SF favorites of the regular contributors. Beatty's defense of Roger Elwood and the opinionated lettercol are interesting. Recommended.

* Requiem 11 (Summer 1976) Norbert Spehner, 1085 Saint-Jean, Longueuil P.Q., Canada J4H 2Z3. Available for \$1 or the usual. The only magazine of fantasy and science fiction, in French, in North America. Fiction, articles, book reviews. Very classy, though I could disagree about their choice of subject matter. The Gor series has been getting a lot of press from them lately. The fiction in this issue is pretty kinky. If you read French, it's a real treat.

* Rune 48 (Vol. 7, No. 10, May? July? August? 1976) This ish commemorates the passing of Fred Haskell out of the editorship of Rune. Contains editorial and many letters to that effect (for those of you who don't know, Rune is the clubzine of Minn-stf, and Fred Haskell is that cute, talented, guitar player who mesmerizes us at conventions.) This Rune is 79 pages of various sense and nonsense. Good for what ails you.

Science Fiction Review 18 (August 1976) Richard E. Geis, 1525 NE Ainsworth, Portland OR 97211. What can I say? Without doubt one of the finest fanzines printed today. It contains plenty of book reviews, columns by various BNF's and a lettercol that has been the scene of many a battle in the past. This issue has interviews with Lester del Rey and Alan Burt Akers. \$1.25/ish, \$4/year, or \$7/2 years.

Scottishe 71 (June 76) Ethel Lindsey, 6 Langley AV, Surbiton, Surrey, England KT6 6QL. U.S. agent: Andrew Porter, Box 4175, New York, NY 10017. Twice yearly, 50p or \$1, also trades. Pleasant little semi-personal-zine. Lots of book and fanzine reviews, letters.

Sdny 4 (June 76) Ed John Robinson 1-101st ST, Troy, NY 12180. An APA consisting of Pat Byrnes, Steve Beatty, Pat Hayden, Lynne Holdom, Charles Korbas, Jim Lang, George Laskowski, Cathy McGuire, Randy Reichardt, Tom Walsh, and the ed. \$1 to join, bi-monthly.

Sensawunder 1 (Fall 76) MSU Science Fiction Society, ed. Renee Sieber, 267 W. Holmes Hall, MSU, E. Lansing MI 48824. For the usual. Formerly known as the Cosmic Trashcanner, it contains a long MAC report, some fanfic (not bad), some book reviews, lettercol, and a science article. Liked it.

South of the Moon 13 (August 76) quarterly. Andrew Siegel, SU Box 198, Windham College, Putney, VT 05346. Formerly published by Tim Marion. An index of most of the APA's now in existence.

Starsongs 2 (summer 76) Watsfic (University of Waterloo Science Fiction Club), M&C 3038, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1. Very thin offset gazette with an article on a local Star Trek group and some con reports. 35¢

Strange Dystopias 2 (July 76) Bill Brummer, 11 Strath Humber CT, Islington, Ontario, Canada M9A 4C7. 75¢ or the usual. A personalzine telling the classic fan-nish story of the 15-year-old fan faced with uncomprehending parents. I wince in sympathy.

Women & Men 6 (midsummer 76) Denys Howard, Box 8975, Portland OR 97208. Available for 50¢ or the usual. Strongly feminist and Gay Lib gazette, has a very lively lettercol including one from Ursula LeGuin discussing the sexual references in Dispossessed. The articles are on sexism in comics. Recommended.

*reviewed by Janice Bogstad

We also received.....

AlVega 3 (Alyson L. Abramowitz, 4921 Forbes Av. #205E, Pittsburgh, PA, 15213) 75¢ or the usual. Checkpoint 74 (Peter Roberts, 18 Westwood, Cofon, Starcross, Nr. Dawlish, Devon, UK) 6 issues for \$1.00 airmail.

Karass (Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Av., Prospect Park, PA, 19076) 3 issues for \$1.00 or the usual.

Mota 19 (Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA, 22205) available in exchange for letters of comment, trades, or old fannish fanzines.

The NeoFan's Guide to Science Fiction Fandom (Linda Bushyager, see Karass above) 50¢.

Rune 48 (David Emerson, 343 E. 19th St. #1B, Minneapolis, MN, 55404) sample for 50¢, one year for \$2.00.

Scintillation 10 (Carl Eugene Bennett, Box 8502, Portland, OR, 97507) sample for \$1.25, one year for \$3.50.

Simulacrum 2B (Victoria Wayne, Box 156, Station D, Toronto, Ontario, M6P 3J8) available for selected trades, substantial letters of comment, accepted contributions and art, and editor's whim. This issue not available for money.

Swoon 5 (Arnie and Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St. #6B, Brooklyn, NY, 11201) sample for \$1.00, 6 issues for \$5.00, or the usual.

Yandro 237 (Robert and Juanita Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, IN, 47348) sample for 75¢, 5 issues for \$3.00.

BUT NOW

the ring of a cash register echoes within
the hollow chambers of his soul, and
his love involves painstaking calculations
—he's afraid he might be cheated, you know.

BUT NOW

I refuse the leaching role of supporting
men, who cringe convinced of failure
—at 25.
who would consume all my energy through
the hungry drain of their need,
who would make me raft and mother, and
destroy me when they're through.
my energy is my own!
I will squander it no longer.

Jeanne Gomoll / 1-76

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DAGMAR-LEADON
BEFORE THE
HOUSE OF FADRUH