

LAN'S LANTERN 8



It is, Here, It is

FROM THE EDITOR:

Yes! It is here, it is! Or is it: It is, Here it is! In either case, the meaning is the same. Another issue of Ian's Lantern is out. Too many times during the past nine months or so I have been asked about my next issue, and the answer has pretty much been the same: "Realsoon-now!" Although I did have hopes of publishing a zine last June, then September, October, November etc., but things were not working out right. Getting everything together, spending the time to type it all up, finding the money to get it through and out from the printer, all eluded me. I just finally decided that it was about time, and plowed ahead. So it's finally out.

There are other problems, of course. The Stanley Schmidt interview which I did almost a year and a half ago is somewhat dated. He has since become the editor of ANALOG, succeeding Ben Bova who has moved on to OMNI. The reviews of both movies and books also are dated, but many are still in print, and the reviews are still valid.

I had promised the author of the short story "The Rings of Saturn" that I would print it for some time, so it is now a part of this zine. The conreports are extremely dated. I start with CONFUSION of last year, whereas the next CONFUSION has already come about, and the next one for 1980 is already being planned. Rodger Olsen's RIVERCON III report now postdates RIVERCON IV, but that report, done by me will appear in #10. The AUTOCLAVE II GoH speech by Don D'Ammassa was done by special request of Michael Bishop. It is not really dated, other than the time relation of when it was delivered. Leeper's criticism of the PBS DRACULA, although late, remains as a good study of the Dracula movies. Most of the rest of the material is timeless----immortal?

Speaking of Immortality, the lead articles here deal with just that (if you hadn't noticed). Death for many people is not an easy topic for consideration. We do not like to think about "not-being". It sends chills up and down our spines thinking about ceasing to exist. The fear for most is: What happens after!? Steve Bridge, Michael Darwin and CD Doyle are all pushing cryonics. Their organization, the Institute for Advanced Biological Studies, is researching ways to preserve bodies, hopefully to bring them back to life when a cure for their disease has been found. They are also working on ways to prolong life. The articles are intriguing. I obtained permission to reprint them from the IABS publication. In accordance with their wishes, I have supplied addresses for all of you to write to if you want more information. If CD's article gets you going, write her. She's a good woman to get in touch with.

Why do this? you might ask. Why not, I will answer. Being remembered after I die is not one of the things that keeps me up nights. Nor does the prospect of dying. I'm too busy to consider all those long range things---at least nothing too much further into the future than a couple years (to the next WorldCon). But when CD wrote that letter to me, which eventually became the article, I did think; she makes sense. If anyone might take an active interest, they would be fans who are open to such ideas. And I am happy to use my zine as a forum for it. So let me, CD, Steve and Michael know what you think.

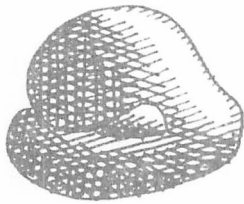
IN THE FUTURE:-----

The next issue of the fanzine will be a tribute to Jack Williamson. It will be a limited issue sent to active members of the mailing list, and on sale as a collector's item to others. Jack has been writing for 50 years now, and I wish to honor him with this tribute. As things are working out now, indeed it will be a collector's item. ((All I have to do is get going on it!!))

LAN'S LANTERN #10 will feature an interview with Ben Bova, Mike Wood, the usual conreports and ramblings, book reviews, movie reviews (somewhat dated), lettercol and all. So with the great Ghu at our sides, may we see these next issues soon----realsoonnow??



Love
Lan



Lan's Lantern

#8

thb

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LAN'S LANTERN #8 is being produced by lan, also known as, George J Laskowski Jr, who resides at 47 Valley Way in The Lashack in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013 (313) 642-5670. This is LanHI Publication #82, a division of LanShack Press Unlimited. LAN'S LANTERN is available for the usual, or \$1.00 in money or stamps, or a kind word, or a Hugo Nomination. This is pubbed irregularly...who knows when the next one will appear.

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DEDICATION

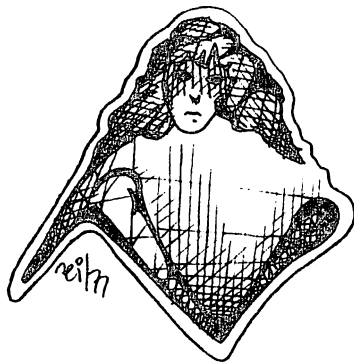
To all the fans who kept asking me when the next issue of this zine would be out. And so, to avoid, once again, saying realsoonnow, here it is.

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A B I D E F O R

IMMORTALITY

by

Carolyn "C.D." Doyle

How do I go about making you aware of your own mortality without coming on like the Voice of Doom? How can I convince you that you are going to die some day? Can I get past the shell that each one of us has woven by the time we are thirteen, that makes us accept eventual termination without going mad at the thought?

I don't know, but I know I've got to move easy, or I'll scare you off.

Man lives a brief instant by any time-scale approaching the cosmic. We are born, get on our feet as soon as we can, and grab a little love, a little hate, for the second that composes our existence. We are as permanent and as stable as cotton candy, as long-lived as a butterfly. Each and every one of us knows he is going to die -- yet we all behave as though we were oblivious of the fact. A great many people profess to love life -- yet how many look into ways of extending their lifespan? or coming back some time in the future?

Not many, and I am sure that you have already thought of logical reasons why not. There are no life-extending drugs available; DNA research has yielded nothing; freezing people once they are dead is impossible. . . .

On that last count, at least, you may be wrong. But let's not jump into that yet.

Suppose life-extending drugs were available? How many people would do what it would take to get them? Would you? Maybe, maybe not. But few others would. On one hand we say we enjoy living, would never think of suicide -- yet there is no real concern for making life continue, instead of stop. It's a shell we have -- a shell that is frustrating to pound upon, as I know from experience, and that can only be broken if whomever it is protecting wants it to be. It is the first step to prolonging life -- realizing it is going to end with a sharpness and clarity you did not have before. Not wanting it to end! Wanting to live!

And some people cannot do that. They can't desire life because they really do not enjoy it. They would commit suicide if they had the courage, or if their religion allowed; or they are living because it happens to be what they are doing, and they really do not care. If you are one of these people, what I have to say will not interest you.

But I hope you aren't.

Besides not having a very strong desire for

life to continue, since they have already subconsciously solved the dilemma of death, people usually only limit themselves to one time-scale -- their personal one. This time scale does not reach any farther than what concerns a human himself, as an individual. With it, they can look ahead as far as the lunch they will be eating in an hour, the book they will be reading when they get home, the movie they'll see next week, the party in two months, or the science fiction convention a year away. In moments of day-dreaming they may go as far as the promotion they'll get in five years, or the children they will raise in ten. At the furthest, they will think about their death, perhaps make out a will.

That's mankind's personal time-scale, the one the majority of people use for the rest of their lives. It limits us in many ways, but mainly in the way of cultural and social growth. We grow from an ignorant cave dweller to what we are now by an ambition, a yearning for life beyond that of instinct. Every step in our evolution can be traced back to a desire to live. Hunting for food, finding shelter, making clothes, making love -- they are all things we do that we may live an extra hour or day or year longer, and be happy while doing it. If it were not for the sexual urge, though, we probably would not even look as far ahead as wanting some part of ourselves to go on. As a race, we would die out but for the same instinct shared with frogs and wolves and all other creatures. We may be the highest of all animals, but we will remain just that, the biggest frog in a pitiable small pond, as long as our narrow outlook lasts. Our first step into another plane, into becoming a higher order of being, will be when we start, as a species, to look ahead, past ourselves, into a future that will be as real as that which is.

You are science fiction fans, and as such may have slightly larger time-scales -- you can think about the things your grandchildren will do and face, and what our species as a whole will come up with. A future that does not now directly concern you is viewed as something to be speculated on, wondered at, despite its remoteness.

Don't you want to be there? Are all the night-long discussions with friends and hopes of future times just ways to pass your life as it is? or is there something within you that really wants to see the future, that believes "70 years isn't long enough!"?

The most practical way to attain some hope of living longer than "normal" is cryonics -- the science of freezing. (Think about it. Research with test animals on life-extending drugs must be done on animals like man to be more accurate. And these sorts of animals have naturally long life spans of 20 years or so. Longer, if the drugs being tested work. It would take a very long time to discover an effective, safe drug that can extend the human lifespan, and cryonics is needed for those people who cannot be helped by the drugs that may be discovered.) If an immortalistic person knew he was going to be dying in a week, he could arrange to be stored and protected in a tank of liquid nitrogen, maintained at a very low temperature as he was until what

killed him could be cured. Then he would be brought back to normal temperature, undamaged, and cured.

Yes, it sounds rather "science fictional" as the mundanes might say, but it's been done, or at least the first half--there are people frozen and stored in the United States now. Since cryonics is a very new field, all the things they died from are still incurable, and we have not had a chance to resuscitate any of them. I'll be honest--the early freezings were pretty bad, and there's a good chance the persons being maintained will never live again. The techniques used in freezing are very new, and have been improved vastly over just the past five years. The people now frozen knew there were no guarantees whatsoever they would be "brought back to life" -- only that unless they did something, the chances were zero. It costs money, yes -- but after I'm dead, I can't think of a better way to use the filthy green stuff than in an attempt to come back.

The chances are small, the odds between life and death not even possible to figure. But the point is that with cryonics there are odds. I won't insult your intelligence by saying you have even a small chance of coming back, by what we know of physics and science based on logic, if you're cremated or stuck in the ground or run over by a bulldozer. Cryonics offers you the only non-zero chance against certain, everlasting death. Without it you have nothing. The difference between something and nothing is immense.

I am one of a small group of people in Indianapolis who is enjoying life and who doesn't want it to end. One of us is an experienced cryonicist who has perfused and frozen several people as well as developing much of the equipment and many of the techniques used in freezing. We have joined together for the goal of making our pretty dream a reality. With the help of our lawyer we have formed a corporation, which exists for the purpose of doing research on freezing (for example: how to store kidneys longer without damage so they may be used in transplants) as well as research applying directly to the freezing of human beings. We now have more equipment than any other organization in the country and one of the top cryonicists in the field.

My objective in writing this is to get a few of you interested in wanting to live longer, and in the alternative to death we are pursuing. Interest is what we are after. That, and capable people who believe in what we are doing. This is not some sort of con game--we are incorporated by the laws of our state with a board of directors, and are a legitimate organization.

.... And I'll bet money I'm not getting through to one of you. Maybe you believe me, and aren't just sitting there shaking your head and murmuring, "Poor little C.D. What kind of people has she fallen in with?" But do you feel like doing anything about it? Like grabbing the brass ring I'm all but dangling before you?

I've interested you, perhaps. You're sitting there saying, "Wow, that's a very interesting idea." But the question is, will you do anything about it? Do you want a chance not to die? Have I managed, I hope against hope, to start a crack in your insulation against death? It's no use sitting back as though this is something like the Apollo moon landing --that

is nice, but doesn't concern you directly -- it does! This may be one of the few things that concerns everyone in the world! None of us is free from the fear of death, from termination! This affects you in the most intimate way it possibly can.

You don't need a lot of money to become part of this. And you have every right to be wary, to argue and ask questions. I ask not for blind faith, but for interest. Queries and arguments are welcome -- we will listen to them, think about them, and will admit you are right if you are, even if it means we're wrong. We realize we have much to learn, but we also insist we have something to teach and to talk about that can change the way you look at your life and the future.

Steve Bridge
2021 Glenridge
Indianapolis, IN 46218

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
QUERIES, COMMENTS,
WRITE:

I'm operating on the premise those reading this are not just idle dreamers, but doers. I am operating on the premise that each one of you has a mind of your own, and aren't going to wait and see what the BNF's say about it, then base your opinion on others' feelings. I'm operating on the premise that some of you care about life and living, and while you may have criticisms about cryonics, you can see that it's a better alternative than straight death. You are invited to write myself, or Steve Bridge (addresses below) with questions, comments or requests for information. Perhaps in these pages of sweating, idealistic analogies and statements, I've gotten through to a few of you, and captures your interest.

I hope so!

Carolyn "C.D." Doyle
1949 N. Spencer
Indianapolis, IN 46218

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WHY IMMORTALITY?

a personal view

by Steve Bridge

(Reprinted with permission from: The IABS Newsletter, #2, February 1978)

WHY SUSPENDED ANIMATION AND CRYONICS?

(Reprinted with permission from the IABS Newsletter, #2, February 1978)

(A much more complete discussion of this question has been prepared by Michael Darwin and Stephen Bridge and will be published in the March-April issue of LONG LIFE Magazine. We hope to make reprints available sometime after that.)

"Why not start with research on life-extending or gerontological drugs and techniques, instead of wasting time trying to learn how to freeze people?" one might ask. Maybe the purpose of cryonics and suspended animation should be explained first, for those readers unfamiliar with the concept. Cryonic suspension means freezing a person's body at the time of clinical death (i.e., when a doctor pronounces the patient dead, which may not be the same as biological death -- the point at which all the cells are dead and may not be revived) in the hopes of reviving at a time in the future when his illnesses may be cured and his aging reversed. Suspended animation implies that the patient is frozen while still legally alive, which could be used on terminally ill patients. Unfortunately, under present laws that would be considered murder; so for now we must concern ourselves with the recently "dead."

Do I wish to live forever? I won't know until I reach "forever." I do know that I have too much to do and learn and experience to accomplish it all in 70 or 80 or even 200 years. Also, I have an intense desire to see what happens in the far future. I resent the fact that my body's increasing deterioration will disrupt my learning and functioning, and will ultimately result in my non-existence. Of course, I am not only interested in eliminating death, but also in eliminating the negative effects of aging. It won't do us much good to live forever if our existence is one of senility and enfeeblement.

Some have said that they just want a natural death and that we shouldn't interfere with nature. Well, if someone hadn't interfered with nature, I would have been dead at age two from asthma suffocation, or at several other times in my youth from tetanus, polio, smallpox, typhus, diphtheria, anthrax or the bubonic plague. Where does "interfering with nature" stop? Why is it moral to give drugs to cure pneumonia or tuberculosis and not moral to give drugs to cure old age? Why is it moral to prevent death at age two or age 30 or age 65 but not as long as possible? The whole history of the human race, whether looked at from the point of view of science or of religion, has been a battle to eliminate death. Religion has taken the path of explaining that death is not real as long as certain rules are adhered to. Various branches of science have attempted to prevent the physical phenomenon of death itself, although so far it has only managed to postpone the dying and change the statistics concerning which disease or condition caused it.

The urge for immortality may even be necessary for continued human existence. How anxious would politicians be to start wars if they were risking 99% of their life-spans instead of 10%? Would people still pollute their environment or waste vast amounts of energy if they thought they would still be here in

First you must realize that dead is not dead. There are many levels and times of death. Some types of human cells are alive and functioning for hours or even days after the organism as a whole has apparently expired. People that died of heart attacks thirty years ago could have survived under the same conditions today, because of CPR, defibrillation and other techniques. A recent TIME magazine feature told how people could survive drowning in 40° F water for two or three hours without permanent brain damage if proper techniques were used when the person's body was recovered. It has already happened many times. Who knows what may become reversible in the future? We believe that freezing a patient with proper clinical procedures could keep him in good enough condition that his "death" could eventually be reversed. This is the direction of the various research projects that the IABS is pursuing.

We are still a long way from defeating old age and death. Dr. Thomas Donaldson has wisely pointed out that life-extension drug studies, by the very nature of what they are trying to prove, take many years. And who knows how long the FDA would hold up the testing of a potentially effective drug, even if one was available? There will be many people -- including probably everyone reading this newsletter -- who will die before the secrets to life-extension are unlocked. Cryonics is a safety net designed to catch those who don't survive the present. If you were building a stone stairway up a sheer 5,000-foot high cliff -- a task which might take years -- wouldn't your first priority be to build safety devices to protect those who might fall off while working? We want to get to the top of the cliff too. Our satisfaction in conquering death and old

100 years to experience the effects of those actions? What would be the results of human planning on a personal scale of hundreds of years instead of the present five or ten years? (And don't forget that the average human only plans a few days or weeks in advance.)

Apparently many (if not "most") people on this planet are dubious or frightened at the prospect of living for a long time. "Why would anyone want to live for hundreds of years?" they ask incredulously. The answer to that question was given to me by one of those very doubters. After I had explained IABS to him and had invited him to join, he looked disappointed and, with a sad note in his voice, said, "I guess I just don't love life enough for that. You must be very vital people." Vital, indeed! We are overflowing with life, more life than we can possibly use in a few short decades. Let me quote A. Stuart Otto (from CHAIRMAN'S CHAT, the newsletter of The Committee for Elimination of Death):

To millions today, the prospect of living forever would seem literally 'a fate worse than death.' They consider the present normal life-span quite enough of misery to endure, without extending it by one moment, thank you. To such persons, any disturbance of their long-cherished inevitablism is at least discomforting, and at worst utterly devastating. Immortalism's philosophical package must therefore include the affirmation that life here and now is potentially beautiful, good and enjoyable for all. And we must be able to support that contention. Only by arousing, encouraging and stimulating the wish to live indefinitely, can we hope to interest substantial numbers in possible ways by which it may be done.

Then there are always a few who say, "Wouldn't you get bored in a few hundred years, after you had done everything?" One of the most exciting features of human development is that with each new idea whole new areas of learning are opened up. We can have no more concept of what fields of exploration may be available in 1,000 years than the average Roman could have had of our time, with the printing press, television and space flight. The only people who would be bored with the future are the ones who are bored today.

age will be considerably diminished if we are unable to take advantage of those benefits ourselves.

For any other additional information, write to:

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED BIOLOGICAL STUDIES, INC.
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46218

The final argument is very simple: what have you got to lose? If your death really could be reversed, you would have a lot better chance frozen than you would have cremated or embalmed and buried. And if Death really does have a capital "D" and is the only possible end, then you won't be any more dead one way or another. Is the prospect of immortality worth to you a similar investment and commitment as that of buying a house? How much do you value your life and your future?

FANZINE EDITORS:

want to IMMORTALIZE your fanzine??

The Popular Culture Library at Bowling Green University is interested in establishing a permanent collection of materials related to science fiction fandom. Fanzines will be included, and the library will attempt to work out an indexing system so that artists, letters, reviews, and other material of potential interest to students, teachers and scholars can be located most easily. At present, much valuable material is lost because (1) fanzines are not collected and catalogued and cared for in single locations by trained librarians; and (2) there is no method of locating single valuable items in a stack of fanzines without leafing through the stack--an insurmountable task with a large collection.

The participation of all fanzine editors is invited. To place your fanzine permanently on file in the collection, simply send copies to:

Science Fiction Collection
Popular Culture Library
Bowling Green University
Bowling Green, OH 43403

You may send single copies or--if it saves postage or is more convenient--send several issues at a time. Your back issues will be welcomed. Any library likes to have complete sets.

This is potentially an extremely important program, and fanzine editors can assist with it by reprinting this notice. Fans willing to donate other materials, such as convention programs and progress reports, are invited to send the library a list of what they have available--this to avoid too much duplication.

--Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

Stanley Schmidt :

Stanley and I sat in the Ramada Inn lobby during CONCLAVE 2 and talked. I had read many of his short stories, and his super novel, THE SINS OF THE FATHERS. I was struck by the fact that he has done a lot of good writing, and the topics we were discussing, which were of great interest to me, might be of interest to my readers. So I asked him if it would be all right to turn on my recorder and let me interview him. Stan said it was okay, and this is the result. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

LAN

LAN: THE SINS OF THE FATHERS, was that your first novel?

STAN: It was my first novel and my second book! (laughs) And the second novel was the first book. The reason was that THE SINS OF THE FATHER was written with ANALOG in mind because Ben Bova and I had talked about it; I knew he was interested in the novel and it gave me the nerve to try it. I wasn't even thinking about book publication then. After ANALOG had bought it, I started looking around for a book contract and negotiations got snarled. The novel was hung up for about a year and a half.

Meanwhile, I wrote another novel, which was expanded from an idea which had appeared as a short story in ANALOG previously, and I got a book contract for it with completely amazing speed and it wound up appearing in book form considerably before THE SINS OF THE FATHERS did.

LAN: And the title was...

STAN: NEWTON AND THE QUART APPLE.

LAN: Then SINS OF THE FATHERS came out and now you have another one coming out. What is the name of the third one?

STAN: As of now, the name of the third one is LIFE-BOAT EARTH.

LAN: And it is the sequel to THE SINS OF THE FATHERS.

STAN: Yes. Its beginning more or less coincides with the end of THE SINS OF THE FATHERS.

LAN: And although this is a novel sequel to the other book, it is being printed in ANALOG as a series of novelettes.

STAN: Actually I think of this whole thing, this whole series, as one big story. But the nature of the second one is such that it involves a rather long time scale, and rather than spread a long time scale over a novel length, which, in my opinion, tends to make things drag a bit, I preferred to tell it as a novel-in-several-books format. There are five segments which are being published, some of them in a slightly modified form as a series in ANALOG, each of which focuses closely on a rather tight block of action on some crucial phase of the trip.

LAN: Will all five appear in ANALOG before the novel comes out?

STAN: Unless ANALOG develops some unexpected mortal illness, yes. (chuckles) Three of them are already out; the fourth one is scheduled for the December issue of ANALOG, and I believe the fifth one will be in an issue shortly after that. Then the book will be some time after that, although nobody has told me anything about the novel publication.

LAN: Hopefully you will take these five segments and come up with a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

STAN: Well, I've never really considered this novel in that light. The only one I can think of off-hand in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is Sturgeon's MORE THAN HUMAN, written originally as three novelettes. Hopefully LIFEBOAT EARTH will come off at least half as well.

The magazine version has the advantage that it has illustrations, which are very nice. I was particularly impressed by the cover painting for the first story, "A Thrust of Greatness". I actually had mixed feelings about what to tell people, whether they should read it in the magazine version or wait for the book. The book isn't really all that different; the five novellas are still the bulk of the book, and internally, with the possible exception of the last one, they are not changed very much. But the book also has a prologue and a series of interludes which tie it together and help you to see it more as a whole than you are likely to if you read it in pieces over several months.

LAN: So far you've only had one cover for the series of stories?

STAN: Yes, the first one, and there will be one more. The December issue will have one of the novellas as the cover story. I haven't seen it yet, but from Ben's description it should be pretty spectacular. It's by Rick Sternbach.

LAN: Oh! Yeah!! Okay!! With a computer number on the front! Or whatever that's called. Those little black lines?

STAN: ANALOG hasn't gone to that yet, have they?

LAN: The November issue is the first one. Ben has some here, and I've seen it. He said that he's been fighting that, but now it's there. He wants to put it on the back, but you know how advertisers are!

STAN: Oh blast!! It seems to me that it ought to be easier to squeeze a couple inches out of an advertisement than out of a cover painting. May I suggest that everyone who reads that magazine write nasty letters? Say that they won't buy anything from advertisers who insist that the computer label be on the front rather than the back?

W R I T E R

LAN: Even if it does make things easier to buy using the computer system.

STAN: By chance I did see the November issue in the Hucksters' Room, just quickly, and I guess I did notice that difference in the cover. How irksome!

LAN: I agree. Getting back to your writing, did you consciously make an effort to set up LIFEBOAT EARTH on the same structure as MORE THAN HUMAN?

STAN: No. The story just came out best as a series of novellas. The two books would only be alike in structure. If the actual way the impact of the parts is related to the impact of the whole is anything similar to MORE THAN HUMAN, it is a delightful surprise, but nothing more. I was pretty impressed by MORE THAN HUMAN.

The reason for that structure is twofold. The more important one is that the nature of the story lends itself very well to the novella-series structure. That's the best way I thought of, in my opinion, to tell it, a series of segments. The other thing was a pragmatic fact that influenced my thinking of it in that direction. Ben knew about the idea and he was interested in using it in ANALOG, but he was already heavily stocked with serials. He said that if it lent itself to a treatment as a series of independent novelettes or novellas, instead of a serial, he would strongly recommend my doing it that way because he would then be able to use it in the reasonable future. Had it not been able to work that way, I would have thought that ANALOG wouldn't be able to use it. I won't distort a story, try to use a format that doesn't fit it, to sell it to a particular place. As it turned out, the more I thought about it, the more I realized that the story did lend itself better to that than trying to do it as one continuous narrative.

LAN: You both lucked out then.

STAN: Right. That's a good way to put it. Sheer dumb luck has been an important factor in my life.

LAN: So prior to these novels you've been writing, you have primarily done short stories.

STAN: If you apply that term to what the people who break things down by length describe as both short story and novelette, yes. Actually, if you were to use their length breaking points for the categories, then I'd have to say, not really, because I've done mostly novelettes. In fact, I've only written two short stories, meaning under 7500 words, and I have another one coming out in the December ISAAC ASIMOV MAGAZINE.

LAN: That will be the Fall issue, or is it the Winter issue?

STAN: They'll probably be calling it the Spring issue. I think the Winter issue just came out this month, September. The Fall issue came out in June. Actually that's jumping the gun not by one, but two, seasons. Definitely a magazine ahead of its time.

LAN: *groan* I like that!

STAN: Actually, it seems to be a rather remarkable magazine in some ways. They sent me proofs for a short story.

LAN: Don't you get proofs all the time?

STAN: I didn't know that any of the fiction magazines sent proofs. Prior to this all of my fiction had been in ANALOG, and it had never bothered me that they didn't send proofs because I had never really had any serious complaints about their copy editing, which in my case was very light. They never seriously marred anything. They occasionally improved something, but usually they left things alone, which was very nice.

But I have heard horror stories from other writers about things that have happened with other magazines, which they apparently didn't know about until the magazine was on the news stand and in the mails. So I imagine that sending proofs hasn't been a common practice.

LAN: I guess that under the hands of both Campbell and Bova, ANALOG tries to keep the tampering of a story to a minimum, and not do anything prior to contacting the author.

STAN: That's the impression that I have too. I never expressly talked about it with John; I have talked about it with Ben. I'm probably treading on treacherous ground, bringing in quotes from third parties, but Ben had a beautiful statement on the subject. We were discussing once the matter of heavy-handed copy-editors, and he said, "You know, I sometimes think that editors edit in inverse proportion to their ability to write!" (laughs) I think it may be true. I've done a couple of articles for a little in-house journal at an institution which shall remain nameless, and I got more unauthorized alterations in my scripts in the little bit that I wrote for that editor, than from in all the writing for real editors that I've ever done. Well, that was true at the time. I have had one experience with a heavy-handed copy-editor since then, which induced me to add a clause to the next contract I signed.

LAN: Nice inducement --- protect yourself at all costs.

STAN: It happened that at the time that I was reading the proofs in which this occurred, I was both harried and sick. I was not in the humor to go through a set of proofs in which I was having to make at least one correction on a third of the pages, and letting some go by because I didn't feel like bothering with them, and they really weren't all that important. But it's the principle of the thing.

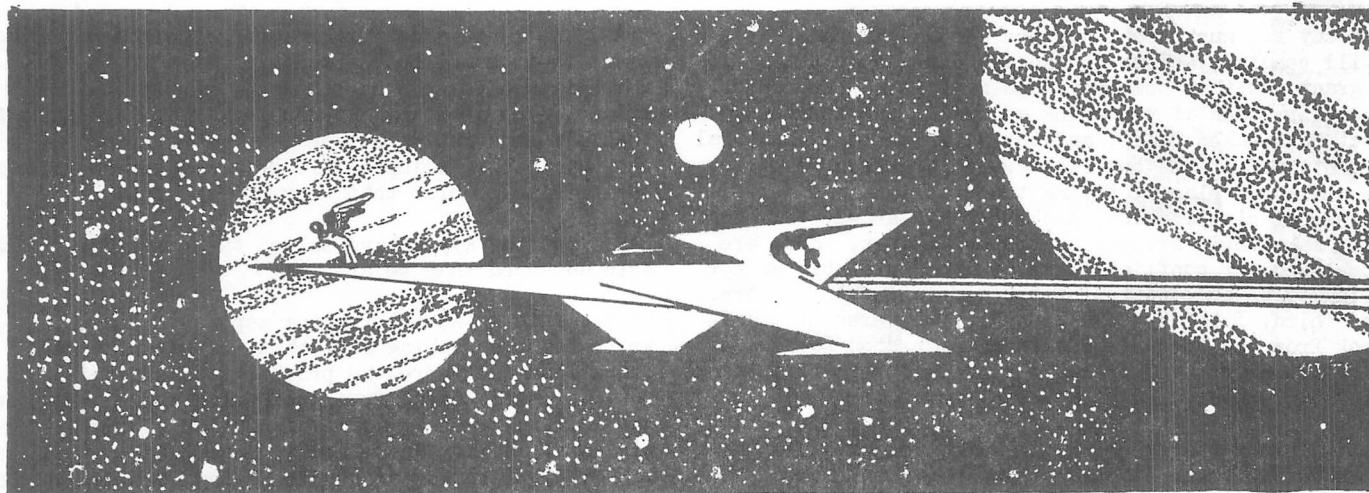
LAN: Well, what's the next thing you're working on --- for which you have a contract to protect yourself?

STAN: Well, my most immediate thing, which hopefully will be a finished project by the time you do anything with this interview, is a short story that has been haunting me for about three years. I think that I am finally ready to try to write it. I approach the project with some trepidation. I don't know what will come of it, but I think I'm ready to try it.

After that I have a novel I want to settle down to work on, which is going to be a lot of work, both in the background and in the telling. It is not part of any pre-existing series, but a new thing. If I do it the way I now envision it, I hope that I will be able to pull it off because there are no human characters. It's culture contact with two alien races.

LAN: Wooooowww!

STAN: This is a terrifying habit I've picked up in the last couple of years. I haven't been doing the kinds of things that I know I can do easily. Almost



everything I've been doing is something challenging enough that I start off a little afraid of it and not sure whether or not I can pull it off, but the possibilities are such that I can't resist trying.

LAN: A true scientist; pick up the challenge!

STAN: Well, I don't think of myself as a scientist when I'm writing. I'm just a writer. This is a distinction I like to keep clear because I think there are people who mistakenly have the idea that because I am a scientist in my alter-ego, and because I sometimes make pretty extensive and rigorous use of science in working out the background of the stories, I am teaching science. As far as I'm concerned, that's just a matter of craftsmanship in building the stage setting. It's very much a part of writing, and not a matter of trying to use writing as an extension of science. The science is very much an ingredient of the story, but just one ingredient. It may sound like a picky distinction, but to me it is a very important distinction.

LAN: I agree.

STAN: It irks me when I find some engineer types coming up to me talking about the Kyyra series as if I'm writing about how to move the earth, and the technology involved in doing so. Well, I'm not doing anything of the kind. I'm a member of far too primitive a civilization to be able to say very much in detail about that. What I'm writing about is people, and what happens to them when the earth is being moved, given certain assumptions about the process.

LAN: Ultimately, what science fiction has come to is a correlation we can make with historical romances. We have the background, and we play the characters off what is happening in the background setting.

STAN: But you have to be a little bit careful about doing that, because of another subtle but important distinction between the kind of thing I'm talking about and that kind of thing where you are setting cops and robbers stories on Mars. What I'm trying to do, and what I have often admired when I see other people like Poul Anderson and Robert Heinlein doing it very well and in different ways, is that you have people reacting to a situation, working out what that situation is and what its consequences are going to be. It's a matter of looking at the scientific aspects of

it, and yet the things that the people do are very much reactions to that situation. In other words, it is integral to the story, not just stage setting. It is an acting setting.

This is quite literally true in the case of LIFEBOAT EARTH.

LAN: If the earthmen want to survive they have to react to the situation, and in a constructive way.

STAN: And they have to do it fast -- which means that they might not have the time to do it as neatly as they might like.

LAN: In THE SINS OF THE FATHERS the decision was made. They had to do something with that. The situation was there. Whether the decision was right or wrong was irrelevant.

STAN: I am almost reluctant to start sounding analytical about it, but I don't know if you really thought about what was going on in these terms. In THE SINS OF THE FATHERS you had a problem of a very general type which science fiction writers have been concerned about since the beginning, and the rest of the world is just beginning to realize it has to be concerned about: problems that are so big that it is going to take a long time to solve them, and so long-range that you don't need the solution right away. It is very difficult to get people interested enough in a problem like that and started working soon enough. We are surrounded by problems of exactly this sort right now, and I think that a lot of us have agonized over the problem of: how do you get people interested in a big problem that has a long-range solution? Well, the unpleasant answer that Henry Clark came up with is: The only way to get people interested enough to do something about a big long-range problem is to convert it to an immediate, short range, very personal problem. He single-handedly did that.

LAN: THE SINS OF THE FATHERS got the earth going, LIFEBOAT EARTH shows their journey, so what's going to happen? Are you going to continue?

STAN: I wouldn't be at all surprised! I keep telling myself that the next one is going to be the last, but actually, potentially at least, I've opened up a very large future history. I already have some very definite ideas, some of which are even in the form of pages of background notes, about a sequel. I should

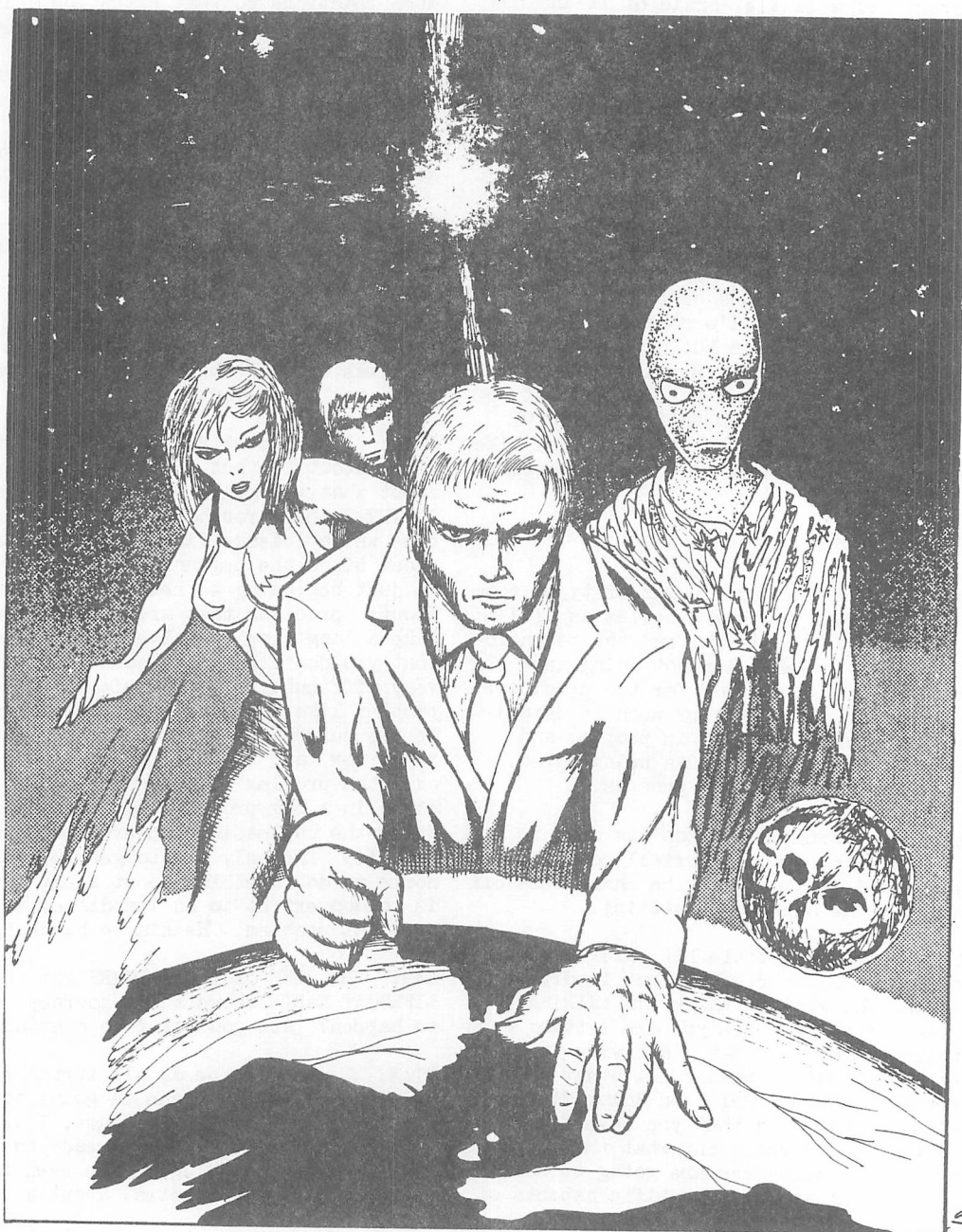
not say too much about how the second one ends; it's still pending, and the third one depends on that. If I grant you that somebody does make it to the end of the trip, then if you think about all the changes that have taken place, and the differences in cultural orientation of the two races which are then going to be sharing a planet, trying to establish some semblance of civilization, and the peculiar way in which they make their arrival on the new planet, there are some seeds of conflict there, which I probably am not going to be able to resist the temptation to explore. The third, I think, will be a very different type of book from the second. But then the second book is a very different type from the first. But I still think of all three of them as one big story.

LAN: I know that when they arrive, they will be unable to use their own planets as permanent homes because they have been using the interiors as fuel for the drive.

STAN: It's not a matter of moving the earth to transplant their home, but of using the planet as a vehicle which is useless by the time they're finished. It's ruined, even granting a technology that is so advanced that I'm constantly getting complaints from people who say that it's impossible because they see a huge engineering problem that they don't know how to solve.

LAN: But the Kyyra have solved them, because they are more advanced than we are.

STAN: This is an interesting aspect of trying to write about something like that. I have set up a situation here where the problem is so enormous that you can easily identify a great many huge engineering difficulties, even granting the kinds of magic I have hinted at and not described in detail. And occasionally I get letters, or people coming up to me at cons who are upset and say that the whole thing is impossible because they see one of these engineering problems and they don't see any way to solve it.



But we are using all kinds of things in everyday technology now that somebody even a hundred years ago could not have imagined the solution to. The fact that anybody at a certain time is unable to imagine how you would solve a problem does not mean that the problem is insoluble. Some people might find it unsatisfying for me not to try to spell out for them more about how the solution is made, but I think that it might be extremely unrealistic to describe an advanced civilization in terms that could be completely understood by anyone now. It would be very arrogant to suppose that our descendants are going to progress that little. Let me give you an analogy I used recently to someone who wrote to me about one of these. I can imagine that these problems could be solved, so I can imagine in very general terms ways that they might be, given that they are not just using more advanced applications of the principles we know; they know some new principles. I have at least hinted at a couple of these; I don't think that the number is particularly large, but there are some. There will be some discovered. I said that I would no more be to describe in any realistic way how they solved these problems than one of my ancestors twenty-thousand years ago might have been able to design the Apollo Project. I think that's as fair an analogy as analogies can ever be. If anyone finds it too extreme, I have another one which I used in another reply once. Consider a Boeing 747. If you break it down to its really basic principles, there are no phenomena involved in the of a Boeing 747 which were not known to the ancient Greeks. But I think you would have a very hard time convincing an ancient Greek that such a thing was possible, much less that it was based on things he knew about. So even with the basic principles we know, a lot more can be done, just by people finding new ways of working with them.

Attempts to predict the future are almost always too conservative. Consequently, a long time ago I adopted a policy of deliberately trying to de-conservatize me estimates. If it seems completely reasonable to me I probably need to put it a little farther out. Ultimately, in some sense, that is going to be a bit more realistic.

LAN: The way science is advancing now, that would be a safer assumption.

STAN: The chances are very slim that many of the predictions are going to be right in detail, but if you only try to make detailed predictions the chances are very slim that they are going to be right anyway, because they will be completely ignoring the kinds of things that are going to come along later that aren't suspected yet.

I went down to watch the Apollo 17 launch. You have undoubtedly heard about those magnificent parties at Joe Green's house. There were lots of writers and fans around, and one evening along about the first or second day of the party, a group of us were sitting around talking about the distinction between science fiction and fantasy. Somebody--I believe it was Poul Anderson--said that maybe the most fantastic kind of pure fantasy is what's usually thought of as the most rigorous hard science fiction, where everything is worked out meticulously--as if we already know all the principles. That's the most fantastic fantasy of all.

LAN: Of course there's always Clarke's Law: Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

STAN: Right. And consequently I make no secret of the fact that I have described the technology of the Kyyra, to the eyes of a twentieth century human, as magic. I have not in the least acknowledged that this is an impossible technology. In fact, in the sense I have been talking about, it's a lot more likely kind of technology for a race that does have that much head start on us than one that didn't look like magic to us.

LAN: What about fandom? How did you get into fandom? Is it the consequence of your writing, or were you in fandom and became an author?

STAN: As a matter of fact, I never thought of myself as a fan. Since it doesn't have a real definition, for a long time I didn't even know what it meant. However, when I look at some of the criteria, I would have to admit to it now. I do frequent conventions. I don't frequent them as frequently as some people, but I do get to two or three a year. I enjoy them a lot. The fact of the matter is that I was one of those isolated readers. I was writing and selling to a professional magazine, ANALOG, for four years before I had the slightest idea what a fanzine was, or what went on at a science fiction convention. Sometime in the late sixties I just plain skipped a Worldcon in a city that I was already in and at which John Campbell was Guest of Honor, because I had no idea what was going on there that I should want to go for. And it wasn't because I hadn't already been reading science fiction. I've been reading SF since I was about nine.

The way I started coming to conventions was --- well, I sort of sneaked into it. Around '72 or thereabouts I was on a trip in Florida. I had seen a notice in one of the SFWA publications inviting members who were in the neighborhood to drop in. Now at this time I had in my life met two writers: John Campbell and Ben Bova, and that was it. And no fans, really. I wondered what kind of person Joe Green was who would extend such an open invitation. So I gave him a call, even though I had never met him---I had read some of his stories and that's all. He said, "Yeah, c'mon over. Do you know Gordie Dickson?" I replied, "No, but I've long thought that I'd like to." "Well, he's going to be down here for a long weekend while he's researching a novel. Why don't you come the same weekend?" We had an extremely enjoyable weekend; a lot of good things came out of it, at least for me. That was when both Joe and Gordie told me that I should come down to the last Apollo Party in December.

Well, that Apollo Party was like nothing I had ever encountered before. If you're writing science fiction, and you've never talked to anybody who is involved in it, you don't realize how starved you've been for that kind of conversation until you first get exposed to some.

I went down for the Apollo Party on a Tuesday morning. I got up at 6:00 to catch a plane. The Party adjourned briefly to the launch site on Wednesday night and broke up sometime on Friday. Between six o'clock Tuesday morning and eleven o'clock Saturday morning that week I got no less than eight, but definitely no more than eleven, hours of sleep. It was altogether too hard to sleep when my sleeping place was in the middle of a room that was full of Anderson and Dickson and Kelly Freas and Roger Zelazny and people like that whom I had been wanting to meet for a long time, and every room in the house constantly had three or four conversations going on in it, and I wanted to get in on all of them. This went on for four days, and I had never experienced anything like it before. A couple of times during

this I heard people say, this is one of the best cons I've ever been to. Officially it was not a con. Nobody ever called it that. I started asking people what they meant by it, they told me "con" was short for "convention" and what went on at them was very much like what was going on at this party. I said well, if that's the case, I'd better start sampling some. (laughs) So I did.

LAN: And you've been hooked ever since!

STAN: Yeah. They were right, by the way: that was one of the best ever.

LAN: Well, I'm glad to see you around now.

STAN: I have to get to a couple of these a year now; it's the antidote to being exposed to ordinary sanity the rest of the year.

LAN: Isn't it 'ordinary insanity'?

STAN: I think not. As I understand sanity, as the word is generally used, I want no part of it! Sanity, respectability. Would you want them?

LAN: (hastily) No! Just go and let loose. You can be yourself more at a convention than any place else.

STAN: And it's so refreshing to find that there are a few people who are somewhat similar. (laughs)

LAN: So that was your first con, back in '72.

STAN: I think that was in December of '72. Then the first con that called itself a con was the following year's MARCON. There was a direct connection. Out at the launch site, during the five hours we were waiting for the rocket to leave, I got into a long conversation with Bill Conner, who is a very active Columbus fan. He said, "Well, you want to go to a con. We have this one in Columbus..."

LAN: ...which isn't very far from Tiffin.

STAN: That's true. It's only about an hour and a half drive.

LAN: Right down US-23. I pass right by there when I head down to Columbus.

STAN: Really? Give me a call sometime when you're passing through, if you have a little time. We can get together for awhile. I recommend you call first because you never know what I'm going to be doing. I might be in Alaska, or Guatemala, or some place like that.

LAN: That's right, you travel alot.

STAN: Collecting material for stories. It's all research, no pleasure. (laughs)

LAN: (nodding) Right, sure. As if I believe you! You mentioned to me before that you like to go hiking, which is where the hiking scene comes in at the relative beginning of THE SINS OF THE FATHERS.

STAN: It comes in in several ways. What we were dealing with there was the impending end of the earth as we know it. I happen to like Earth enough that I consider losing her a considerable loss. I hoped to convey some of the feel of that by depicting some parts of the earth that were worth having some good feelings toward. I thought that to do it convincingly I ought to depict things I knew well enough to describe quite vividly, and which I was very fond of.

Consequently, the scenes of the Appalachian Trail were directly out of personal experience.

LAN: And the other trips you've taken, do you incorporate them into your novels?

STAN: To some extent. The second segment in LIFE-BOAT EARTH is set very largely in Guatemala, and one of the principle characters in it is a Guatemalan who remembers the big earthquake of 1976. I was in Guatemala a month after that earthquake, and in fact, I think I can safely say that through this character who remembers it you would get a lot more realistic picture of what conditions were like in Guatemala after the quake than you ever could from any American newspaper. They were just grossly distorted.

When I was working out this character's background, I thought of him as one of a group of three small boys that I was talking to one day who were living in one of the emergency shelters set up on the hillside below the Ermita del Carmen. Their homes had been destroyed by the quake. This character could very easily have been one of these boys grown-up.

The short story I mentioned that I finally hope to get out of my system in the near future takes place in Alaska, at a very specific spot. One of the principle characters is a solitary backpacker. I was in this place as a solitary backpacker, and I will not hesitate in the least to shamelessly work in detailed verbal imagery of all types that I can remember from having been there.

LAN: That's good. Any experience that will help. Harlan Ellison once said that you should experience these things before you put them down on paper. What about writing science fiction?

STAN: It does seem like an odd thing for Harlan to say, considering some of what he writes. But it is nice to do when you can. I'd say that it's good to do when it's feasible for the kind of story that you want to do, and a very good skill to develop would be the ability to visualize things so clearly that you can convince the reader that you had done it, whether you had or not.

Some people have even done this with real settings. I think L. Sprague DeCamp did a story called "The Blue Giraffe" which was set in Africa, where he had never set foot. He mentioned somewhere having received at least one highly complimentary letter from a native of the area saying that it was obvious he had lived a long time in his fair country. It must be a gratifying sort of letter to receive.

I think personal experience does help. Probably one of the reasons that I find THE SINS OF THE FATHERS more satisfying than NEWTON AND THE QUASI-APPLE is that it is close enough to the present so that it can incorporate subconscious background that simply isn't available where the world is being created from scratch. Although that theory doesn't completely hold water, because I thoroughly enjoyed writing the scenes that took place aboard the starship, and I was never there. I cannot tell a lie; I was never there. Well, I can tell a lie; I make part of my living doing it. (chuckles)

LAN: And you tell very good ones.

STAN: Thank you.

LAN: Thank you for telling all those lies; I enjoy reading them very much.
Anything else?

STAN: No, not that I can think of. Let's go to the bar.

LAN: Good idea!

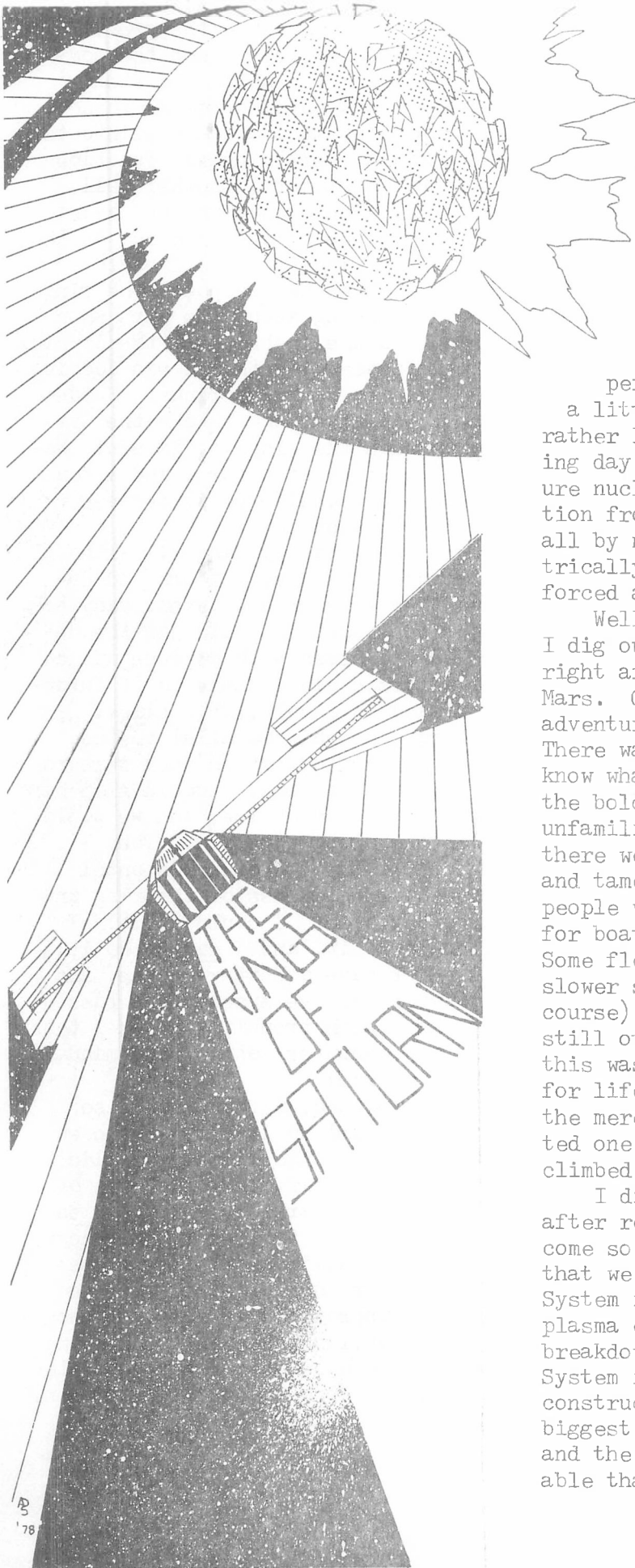
by Dareion Morgan

It all began when I read that danged article by Guy Houston about stagnation. He's been my favorite writer for years, principally because he gives me so much to think about.

I like to think. The rest of the personnel of the Cyrenaica look on me as a little daffy, because I would usually rather lie on my bunk and think after a tiring day than electrically stimulate my pleasure nucleus, but I derive a greater satisfaction from thinking as I produce the pleasure all by myself with a sense of freedom. Electrically contrived pleasure seems somehow enforced and constrained.

Well, whenever I receive the microfilms, I dig out and read Guy Houston's articles right after the letters from my parents on Mars. One week he wrote about the "spirit of adventure" our race had back in its youth. There was a time, he said, when people didn't know what all the Earth was like, when only the boldest spirits dared venture into the unfamiliar and dangerous parts of it, yet there were those courageous enough to explore and tame it all. There was a period when people went over Niagara Falls, using barrels for boats, and many of them were killed. Some flew airships under bridges (at much slower speeds than modern airships travel, of course). Others swam the English Channel, still others climbed mountains, and all of this was not to obtain some material needed for life or even physical comfort, but for the mere sake of the doing! Mr. Houston quoted one man as replying, when asked why he climbed mountains, "Because they are there."

I did a lot of lying on my bunk thinking after reading that one! Have we indeed become so complacent, as Mr. Houston suggested, that we will never venture beyond the Solar System into Outer Space? We have made the plasma engine so reliable that no one has breakdowns anymore. A trip across the Solar System is so routine that finding something constructive to do with all the time is the biggest problem. Energy from fusion reactors and the sun itself has become so freely available that people can do almost anything they



want to. We have learned enough about ourselves that we no longer commit violence on each other individually or collectively. Is life so pleasant that we have become dull and uncreative in the maturity of our race? Do we no longer seek challenges? Have we indeed stagnated?

I wondered what committing some dangerous act would be like. How would I feel crouched in a barrel on the brink of Niagara Falls, knowing in a few seconds I might be dead? I would be frightened, that's for dead sure, but I have had nothing to fear for so long that I had difficulty in conjuring up a memory of this sensation.

Possibly, then, people did such things to find out what doing them feels like. But that man who climbed the mountains climbed more than one. He went back after he knew what the doing was like, therefore there must be some satisfaction or pleasure in the deeds!

I determined to find out for myself what the attraction of danger was the very first chance I had. I might be killed, but I was not spending the rest of my life wondering about something more important than their lives to my ancestors. After all, their genes made up the essence of my own being!

The first step was to find a proper danger. I thought of shocking myself with a thousand or so volts of electricity, but that lacked the element of the spectacular seemingly necessary to the ancient projects.

Not until we were sent to deliver supplies to the mining community at Neptune did I find exactly the opportunity I wanted. Our course took us very close to Saturn, but there was no reason to stop there. During the almost three years that I have spent as a navigator in the Space Service and the three years as a technician before studying navigation, I never passed close to the sixth planet with all those dazzling, beautiful white rings stretching for thousands of kilometers without getting a thrill. There is nothing to compare with the rings of Saturn anywhere in the entire Solar System for turning on the passions and the dreams within me!

I was the only person awake on the Cyrenaica as we approached the great, glowing, ringed sphere. Since the computer was holding the ship on a steady course, there was nothing for me to do but check panels, monitors and printouts to make certain everything was functioning. Except for Saturn, another dull, routine trip. Thus I sat in the navigator's chair on the bridge drinking in the beauty and enjoying it while I could. The chunks of ice that composed the rings started me thinking about the days when ships had to dodge icebergs in the Arctic. Next I was fantasizing that I was dodging chunks of ice in Saturn's rings. Suddenly I knew! I was going to take the Cyrenaica through the rings of Saturn! Nobody had ever done it before, and I doubt anyone had ever considered it because there was no reason for it.

There was certainly danger! Although our detectors picked up meteors and demolished them or warned us, that many bodies so close together would jam the detectors, and a crash with a piece of ice a meter across could disable us if forceful enough and in a vulnerable place.

If I ran the ship parallel to the rings in the same direction they were rotating, my thoughts ran, I could slip her in among the pieces of ice, and we would all be moving along together. Then I could manuever through openings until I was across the thickness of the ring and out the other side. I could do it! I knew I could do it, and I had to do it! I would never have a better chance, and I would never forgive myself if I passed this one up. With trembling hands I took the ship off computer control and manually altered course.

As I approached, Saturn loomed so large that I could no longer see the entire span of the rings. Then I couldn't see the planet itself, only the ends of the ellipses that marked the boundaries of the rings. Then the creamy whiteness broke up into individual grains of ice that grew larger and larger into jagged threats as I approached. I brought the ship around until she was cruising along parallel to the outermost ring, where the chunks, and thus the spaces between them, are the largest. Even the "openings"

were crowded with small chunks and minute crystals, and I had second thoughts about my plans. Thinking that I would spend the rest of my days wondering and hating myself if I backed out, I slowed down a little to stay even with the opening I had spotted among the icebergs, and the old Cyrenaica was in orbit around Saturn, another satellite in addition to her natural ones. Since the hole looked a little larger than the ship, I took a deep decisive breath and pushed the buttons that controlled the port engines. The ship drifted into the opening. I waited anxiously, almost expectantly, for the crunch of ice against a stabilizer jet or a sensing device, but the sound wasn't heard. So far, so good!

Hours seemed to pass while I picked out a path among the monstrous shapes, some as much as three or four kilometers in diameter, and let the Cyrenaica shrug the small ones and the dust aside. By the chronometer the passage took 22.6 minutes. About half-way through the icy stream I felt a jolt of something's striking the ship. I dared not leave the navigational console to check for damage. Before I could recover from the instant of near panic, I felt an even greater jolt which threw me hard and painfully against my seat belt. Although I didn't know about the damage, having gone this far, I thought that going on would be no worse than going back. Besides, how could I go back with all these icy shards around the ship? There were a couple more contacts, barely enough to be felt. Then I heard Captain Haley's voice behind me.

"Navigator, What's the trouble?" he asked sleepily.

That those blows would wake people had not occurred to me! Before I could think of a rational explanation, he saw the chunks of ice in the swirling dust out the observation port.

"What the hell...?" he yelled.

"Where are we? What the devil are those things?"

"The rings of Saturn, sir," I replied. My hands were so cold and trembling that I could hardly operate the console, and I don't know yet what kept my voice from cracking. "Excuse me, I

need to concentrate on getting out. Will you check for damage?"

I had no doubts what fear felt like now! I don't know if I feared wrecking the ship more, or the Captain's wrath!

He checked the panels and said calmly, "Don't worry about damage, Langsdorf. We appear to have a minor dent in the star-board plating, but nothing serious."

Neither of us said another word until after I found an opening between two ice chunks with nothing but clear space beyond. Easing out, I headed the ship back on course for Neptune, put her on computer control again, and heaved a great sigh of relief. Somehow I felt about a meter taller than I had thirty minutes previously. I knew now why people did dangerous things. Not to do them! To have done them, and to sense the pride and achievement of having done them!

Out the observation port I could see star XL52A -- Alpha Centauri or Rigel al Kent it was called back when stars were designated by fanciful names or constellations from Greek legends and such. Most people didn't know the old names for the stars, but they always fascinated me for the fabulous tales behind them. I knew that I could never be content until I had navigated a ship across the intervening 4.3 light years and put her into orbit around old Rigel al Kent. Dangerous, yes, but....

I had completely forgotten the Captain's presence in my elated state of mind until he asked, "All right, Langsdorf, do you think you could stop staring into space long enough to explain how you got us into the rings of Saturn? You're one of the best navigators in the Space Service, or you wouldn't have gotten us out. How did you manage to make a mistake like that in the first place?"

"I may be guilty of many things, sir," I replied, "but not of faulty navigation! I put the ship through Saturn's rings deliberately!"

"Why?"

"I doubt that I could explain to your understanding, sir. I did it because they were there!"



REMEMBER CONFUSION-

That Ye May Forget It

Barney Nuefeld

With the coming of CONFUSION, the winter's hiatus ends, and once again fans gather to the revelry to which we have become accustomed. This year's con will remain in my memory for a long time to come. It was remarkable in several ways--Kate Wilhelm, as gracious as she is lovely, a delight of the purest sort; Jackie Causgrove, a special kind of someone, indeed; Cleveland Fandom's first official party. Snatches of profound enjoyment rest in my mind with photographic sharpness. (What was it Jackie said, "Cons are centers for social opportunities.?"?) Other things too stick in my mind, things from the uncomfortable to the downright terrifying. Of such dichotomies, I suppose, will life be composed.

Among the latter events was the year's first official meeting of Elevator Fandom. Members present were: Jackie Causgrove, Straw-Boss;¹ Mildred Woods, recording Secretary;² Ro Lutz-Nagey, Sergeant-of-Arms; David Locke, Porter;³ and confirmed members John Hall, Linda Planner, Neil Sorrola, MaryBeth Gauthier, and Barney Nuefeld. This bar-bound party went into closed-door session at approximately 3:45 PM, Saturday, 14 Jan 78, and met for nearly an hour. A full agenda was presented. Such items as Becalmed,⁴ Let Us Pry,⁵ and the Duet for Pushbutton and Alarm-Bell⁶ (to the tune of The SOS Overture) received close attention. Ms. Causgrove conducted a seminar on "Solitaire as a Floor Exercise," while Ro Lutz-Nagey attempted a selection from CALLAHAN'S CROSSTIME SALOON. (Thanks again, Spider!)

Projects such as a statistical analysis of the shrill-factor⁷ and an investigation of the quake-ratio⁸ were suggested--and tabled for future reaction. However, the topics of Hail the Manager and "Bheer! Am I toisty!"⁹ were referred to committee for immediate consideration. (Special thanks to the mundane guests and to Suzi Stefl, without whose assistance things may have been much rougher.) The paper on "The Reporter as Nerd"¹⁰ was read to unanimous approval

while David Locke cracked the door to pass around refreshments. (Many thanks to the con suite for supplying Suzi the bheer to sustain us.)

The arrival of the elevator repairman resulted in an explanation, which sent Ro (longest arms in the group) snaking his hand up the shaft to move the necessary device to open the doors. We were met by a bevy of concerned fans and guests who assisted us to the floor. As our group accompanied the manager up to the bar (for the obligatory drinkonthehouse), we all signed the "Official Elevator Copy" of Jackie's fanzine, RESOLUTION 2, which was later auctioned off for DUFF (bringing a large donation after some spirited bidding).¹¹

What remained of the con was, to say the least, anticlimactic. Despite the success of Cleavage's first party (on the previous night), all the Clevelanders felt like going rather than giving, so they did not re-open. Partying was difficult--due to a noticeable dearth of open parties--but not impossible (with a bit of creative wandering). The con-sponsored Masquerade Ball (a nice idea--to make it a party instead of a presentation) kicked things off, but was too dimly lit for my taste. It did provide a setting for a most pleasant (and entirely too brief) few minutes nostalgia with Miss Wilhelm, one of Cleveland's most notable exports, but disco-wookie was not what I really wanted Saturday night. A short wander took me to the Sims' room (Roger and his wife; not really a party, just a small group in comfortable companionship), which was what I needed--for awhile. From there the evening blended into night, which bled unflinchingly toward morning. In spite of the discovery that alcohol and elevator parties mix badly (my spill-quotient was alarmingly--and uncharacteristically--high), I enjoyed myself immensely, and remember CONFUSION with fondness ~~it shall be forever it.~~

J O O T N O T E S

[1] "Jackie Causgrove, Straw-Boss": when we started getting thirsty we asked the mundanes who were talking to us for something to drink, and they wondered if we could get cans through the door. Jackie reached into her purse and came up with a plastic straw yelling, "We'll drink it through the straw!"

[2] Jackie's mother had her cassette recorder with her (she'd been taping Jackie's speech), and actually taped about five minutes or so of what went on.

[3] Ro and Dave should be obvious from later remarks.

[4] "Becalmed" is the all too obvious pun.

[5] "Let Us Pry" comes to me from Pat Mueller and refers to Ro's and Dave's attempts (unsuccessful) to pry open the outer doors.

[6] The Duet... was when Ro started tapping out SOS with the alarm button in hopes that someone would recognize it and believe it wasn't a joke.

[7] "Shrill-factor" refers to MaryBeth Gauthier, who was on the edge of hysterics throughout the affair. We did everything we could to ignore the increasing shrillness of her voice, and to keep her--and ourselves--as calm as possible.

[8] "Quake-ratio" is me. When I was pulled out of that elevator I just stood there shaking (at least inside) like the proverbial leaf.

[9] "Bheer! Am I toisty!" comes from an old Jimmy Durante (I think it was Jimmy Durante) line that I suddenly remembered. In some of his skits he used the line, "Boy, am I toisty!"

[10] "The Reporter as Nerd": Early on a reporter happened by and kept trying to get an interview with us--through the closed door. Every time we mentioned that we just might like to get out of this (first), he simply ignored the idea. He even went so far as to try to get a picture of us through the crack in the door we had created to get some airflow. He really started to piss us off after awhile.

[11] The DUFF auction went to \$10, which made me feel very good.

On Being a Writer

by
Lloyd
Biggle,
Jr.

In his Guest of Honor speech at NOVACON III, Algis J. Budrys described his first science fiction convention. He looked at all the notables on the stage--John W. Campbell, 'Doc' Smith, and the rest--and he didn't want to be sitting there anonymously in the audience. He wanted to be up on stage with them. He wanted to be a writer.

A friend of a friend telephoned me one evening. She had heard that I was a writer, and she wanted to talk with me. "I've always wanted to be a writer," she said. I asked my standard defensive question. "What have you written?" After a long silence she answered, "Well--I guess it's just that I like the idea of being a writer."

My career has been unusual. I never wanted to be a writer, and I had the good fortune never to meet one until after I had become one myself. I had sold professionally before I knew there was such a thing as science fiction; and it was long after I had begun to write science fiction with considerable success that I became aware of conventions and fans. When the Worldcon was held in Detroit, 35 miles away from my home, I first heard about it a year later. There were two important science fiction writers living within ten miles of me and another within thirty, and for years I never knew of their existence. So I had no idea at all about what it meant to be a writer, and I never gave any thought to being one.

I didn't want to be a writer; I wanted to write.

Obviously Algis Budrys took the proper route to achieving his ambition: he wrote. Those who are merely in love with the idea of being a writer almost certainly will never be one. This unfortunately means that very few of the science fiction fans who are so intensely interested in being writers will never achieve their ambition, whatever their talent, because they see the goal so clearly and are totally blind to the only route that leads there.

Certainly few people would think, "I would like to be a concert pianist," and then spend as much time as possible talking with pianists about their piano playing ambitions and how someday they will play the Emperor Concerto--rarely going near a piano. The person who becomes a concert pianist is one who starts young, practices long hours daily and works like hell at it, gets the best private teacher he can find (or afford), and is blessed with the necessary talent.

Competent private teachers are rare in writing--those best qualified are usually too busy writing to take the time --but the dictum about the long hours and working like hell and being blessed with talent is the same. One must develop a technique of writing just as one develops a technique of piano playing--and as with piano playing, one can't know whether one has the talent without investing those hours and work.

For this reason, I conclude that fandom and conventions are the worst possible influences on would-be writers. I once thought that fanzines had a positive value in this respect; I've changed my mind (except as concerns very young

fans). They condition the would-be writer to easy publication, amateur standards, and the illusion of being a writer. He should be aiming at professional standards and professional publication, and if he does, he'll soon be stripped of his illusions.

And I once thought that the would-be writer would gain inspiration from contacts with writers at conventions. Practical observation--including observation of some would-be writers with talent who might have a chance of success if they would write--has changed my mind about this, also. It does indeed inspire them more fervently to want to be writers; it does not inspire them to write.

I'm awed at the number of fans who approach me at conventions to talk about the writing they aren't doing. And while I listen politely, I'm probably thinking, "What am I doing here? I should be home writing."

It's a rare professional who is willing to talk much about the writing he is going to do, but few of these would-be writers seem to notice that. And few fans observe how many writers bring typewriters or tape recorders (for dictation) to conventions so they can slip away occasionally and get some work done. The established concert pianist, even the greatest, tries to practice daily; and the established writer tries to write daily. In a recent interview, Ray Bradbury, whom few fans would think needed practice, stated that he tries to write a minimum of 2,000 words a day. This is perhaps six pages of typing with elite type.

Fans may cite instances of professional writers who once were prominent fans, but most of them came up in the days when fans were few and fan activities minimal. They could attend one major regional convention a year, and perhaps the Worldcon if it happened to be held in their part of the country. Worldcon attendance was lower than that of most regionals today. Now there is a convention, sometimes more than one, somewhere, almost every weekend; fan groups have multiplied; and there are unlimited opportunities for would-be writers to sit in audiences and look at the stage and want to be up there, to be a writer.

All of that adds up to an unlimited number of distractions from working at writing. (I figure that two conventions cost a week's writing time, but that's for a full-time writer. For the would-be writer with a full-time job, who will be able to work intensely only on weekends, the cost is much higher.)

This little article is neither anti-fan nor anti-convention. I enjoy both, and I've assisted with a number of conventions. Nor have I anything against the impossible dream. Perhaps we all need one. If you're in love with the idea of being a writer, and you enjoy looking at the stage and imagining yourself as one of the notables--go ahead.

This message is for those who want to write, not for those who are content to dream about being writers. Stay home and work at writing.** If you have talent, and persist, when you fi-

** In a speech at CONFUSION. . .12, I think it was, I answered the question, "How does one become a professional writer?" You sit down in front of a typewriter, and roll in a piece of paper, and write. And write. And write. And write. And write. I recently played the tape of that speech for a friend who is an artist, and at that point she laughed and said, "It's the same with art. You draw. And draw. And draw. And draw. And draw." It is also the same with music. You compose. And compose. And compose. And compose. And compose. In all of the arts there is a price that must be paid for proficiency--unless you are a great genius with a ridiculous excess of talent, in which case I doubt that you would bother to read a fanzine piece "On Being a Writer." With writing, the

nally do attend conventions you won't have to look at the stage and wish you were up there. You will be up there.

* * * * *

Some time after I wrote this article, I happened onto an essay by Sherwood Anderson, entitled, "So You Want to Be a Writer?" It originally appeared in the Saturday Review, but in the collection in which I found it the date of first publication is not given. It must

be 40-50 years old. Here is the first sentence: "In any group of young writers you will inevitably find those who want to write and those who merely want to be writers."

True then, true now, probably true forever. But I made no pretensions of being either profound or original--just observant. And it would not surprise me in the least if someone were to turn up similar statements from Dickens, Goethe, Samuel Johnson, Shakespeare, Dante, St. Augustine, the anonymous author of the Book of Revelations, Sophocles, Homer and the creators of the epic of Gilgamesh.



price is long hours of work sitting alone in a room staring at a typewriter--which stares back. No writer I know has found an easier way. (We have discussed this among ourselves, and we agree that there ought to be an easier way, but none of us has found it. If any of you do, please let me be the first to know what it is.) Until one is found, the appropriate question to ask every would-be writer is the one I suggested at CONFUSION 12: "What brings about this paranoid urge to become permanently attached to a typewriter?"

Gentlemen, we are in danger, grave danger! It is not buried and forgotten and we must now discuss the grave events of RIVERCON 3. Maybe I was surprised because I'm new to cons; I was certainly new that night I walked into RIVERCON with a copy of THE FABULOUS RIVER-BOAT under my arm, and fully prepared to discuss any topic from Asimov to Zelazny. Oh, God! I was so new I even thought people discussed science fiction at a science fiction convention.

I remember when I saw my first author in the flesh. I don't remember his name, but you know who he is; he's the one who drinks too much and cops feels on femfans' behinds.

It was a good crowd for a Friday night. There was an obviously military group setting in the bar singing strange songs. Slave girls and barbarians wandered around the lobby mixing with hippies and men in business suits and white shirts. I guess I must have looked a little dazed because an oversized Friar Tuck in, believe it or not, a red robe and a sword offered me a glass of wine. He seemed to feel I needed it. He introduced me to a cute little thing sporting a fur cape and a broad axe who claimed she was a mongol. For a mongol, she spoke rather good English.

It wasn't much of a conversation because she and her friends were more interested in comparing weapons with a white shirted young man who appeared to be a totally average engineering student except that he carried a five foot long rifle encrusted with more lights than a theatre marquee.

It was in short, a totally average night for a convention. The first sign we had, of course, that it was not an average night came when the fellow in black leather jacket, hip boots, beard, half mask and gun exclaimed in a rather exasperated tone to the desk clerk, "No, dammit! I told you, I don't want to register, I want your damn money." That's when I noticed that he had five friends fanned out behind him in rather heroic poses. They stood with feet planted firmly, knees bent slightly, guns held steady, jaws set firmly and tattoos boldly proclaiming "M.F." It was just their eyes that looked slightly bewildered.

That was about the time everyone sort of stopped to watch. I remember I whispered to the Mongol, "It's a robbery!" and she replied,

"Free enterprise." That's when her friend put it, "They couldn't be too good if it takes six of them for a little job like this."

By that time everybody else stopped to look too. I remember two green-shirted military types up on the balcony stopped talking to their guru for a few minutes, and even the two red-robed monks next to them stopped pouring wine momentarily. I did notice that they didn't quit drinking it. In fact, no one quit drinking.

To this day, I don't think anything would have happened if it had not been for that nervous crook and that crazy engineer. After they had the money, the crook at the front desk shakily shot the clerk, I suppose by accident. That was really too much. That

guy with the five

foot long rifle deserves a medal--to be pinned on his strait jacket as soon as he recovers. When he saw the clerk fall, he turned to the gunmen and said, "Smile, gentlemen!" and pulled the trigger. The siren wasn't very effective; neither was the whistle or the flashing red and green LED's or the blinking handle, but when that flash-bulb went off it must have blinded everybody in there.

At that same moment, a cry of "Hail, Bacchus!" came from the balcony as two red-suited and vaguely inebriated monks, each with a sword in one hand and a wine bottle in the other jumped the balcony rail to land square on two surprised gunmen.

Oh, I know they weren't alone. Even before they landed, the cry of "Shi Dorsai" went up and a drink came down from the balcony followed by the two green-shirted Dorsai, one of whom missed his target slightly and was seen later limping off holding an ankle in one hand and his testicles in the other.

I was saved from making a rather momentous decision myself when I was shoved aside by three fur-clad battle axe waving mongols screaming, "Hail Star Prince Charlie!" It's amazing what multiple blows from an allegedly blunt broad axe will do to the composure of a crook.

By then it was a melee. I remember the six bare boobs that attacked the crook directly opposite me. I

suppose there were girls attached to those boobs, but I wasn't really noticing them. Neither was the gunman, to his great disadvantage. You know, while he was looking at the six bare mammaries, a pilgrim and a barbarian felled him from behind with their staffs and joined the six boobs in a vigorous form of the Mexican Hat Dance.

It was right about then that the gunman covering the door recovered his eyesight, and having apparently recovered his wits at the same time, decided on a discretionary retreat. However, he fell over a trash can that, I swear, just moved right in his way. That's when the guy in the Star Trek outfit and the pointed ears walked up behind him and pinched him on the shoulder. The two watched each other with surprise for a moment, until that little bundle of roundness with the NOW POWER t-shirt came up, unseen by both, and planted a kick in the crook's family jewels. As the crook crumbled, the Trekkie walked off looking smug.

It was a glorious scene! The battle cries and lasers and booze created such a battle lust that one of the black porters was so overcome that he gave out with a rebel yell and jumped in to help the Dorsai who had injured himself in his spectacular jump. I might even have joined in myself, were it not for the obvious need of a score-keeper.

At that point it was three down and three to go, and I had time to notice that the sole remaining, standing, crook was blurily trying to perceive his environment through eyes covered with a



cadmium-blue space scene and was, in addition, reeling from the effects of the fumes arising from the strong drink apparently tossed on his clothes by numerous gentlemen in business suits.

One of the monks in red looked surprised when he hacked at a gunman with his sword and nothing happened, but he recovered in time to follow through with a gallon bottle of Port that was more effective. The other monk was about to do the same thing when the first one yelled, "Not with the Pink Chablais!!" and kicked the crook in the balls instead.

At that point it was six down and none to go, and into the sudden silence intruded the soft sounds of an approaching siren. Some busybody had called the police. Everyone wandered into the con-suite, followed by that walking garbage can. As the last one left, he turned to

me and said, "Fake it!"

And I'll have you know I did a good job at it--since I couldn't figure a way to blame it all on the garbage can. The police were somewhat confused. The surviving gunman told of being attacked by giant breasts and garbage cans. The clerk said that he was on the floor after he was shot and figured that the gunmen argued over the loot--an obvious case of murder/suicide. They did think it was a little strange that none of the other thousand guests in the hotel heard anything, but by then the party was pretty loud.

Now I know you think that all you have to do is to settle the argument about the drink. I overheard the guru claim that he threw the drink as a distraction, and I heard another claim he just dropped it when he yelled "Shi Dorsai!" and

saluted. He was quite upset about the inference that he couldn't hold his liquor--even in a glass.

But, gentlemen, there is a problem. One police sargeant did not buy the murder/suicide story. He claims that he is going to charge someone as soon as he finds the weapons used. The police labs have given him a description. It is a sword with one sharp edge, one dull edge, one serrated edge, one curved edge, one straight edge. It has a sharp point and a dull point. The handle can be used as a club, and is made of metal, plastic and wood, ranging from two to six inches in diameter, and has a pommel the exact size and shape of a one-gallon bottle of wine.

We are in danger, gentlemen. I implore you. Whoever has that weapon--destroy it before we are all caught!!!!

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One fan told me that there were five thieves, not six. Everyone thought they were part of the masquerade, so no one paid any attention to them when they started their routine at the hotel desk. None of the Dorsai intentionally jumped onto the crooks from the balcony. One jumped in the wrong direction when an

SCA member yelled "Clear" while drawing his samurai sword, and the bereted figure tumbled onto the main floor. The other was dropped by two other Dorsai who were testing their strength by each holding the leg of a third (and the shortest) member of their group over the balcony railing. The remainder of the robbers were removed by the weaving of drunken fans who jostled them in the right places, and the inept demonstrations of would-be karate experts and SCA swordsmen. I'm not sure about that walking garbage can.

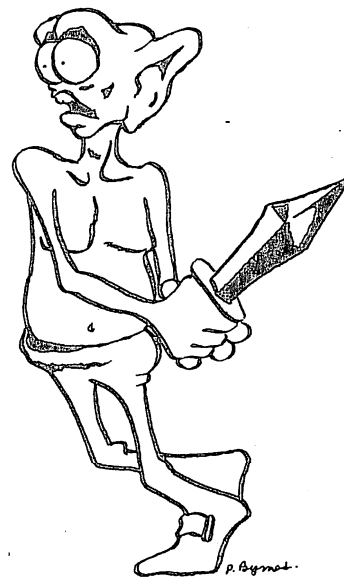
One thing for certain was that the half-naked females were exactly that--half-naked females.

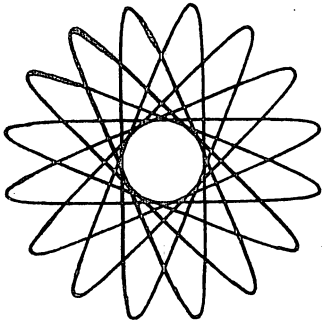
Said another fan, none of this happened!!!

Ragnarok!

*Quick, skulker, run! the dawn is coming soon;
when faerie Chaos fades before the might
of those that crumbling Order yet commands,
in vain, against the final fall of Night...*

by Erica Simon Starke





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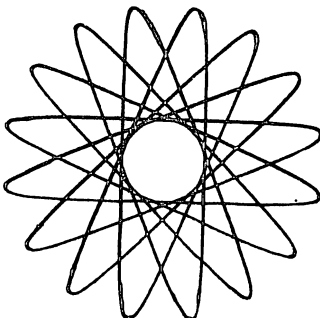
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AUTOCLAVE TWO continued its tradition of having two ##
 ## Guests of Honor, both fans, as speakers at the ban- ##
 ## quet. Don C. Thompson spoke first, talking about ##
 ## entropy. A transcription of his speech was printed ##
 ## in his fanzine, DON-O-SAUR. When Don Thompson fin- ##
 ## ished his speech, the Toastmaster, Don Singer, in- ##
 ## troduced Don D'Ammassa, whose speech follows. ##
 ## Don D is the editor of MYTHOLOGIES, a fanzine ##
 ## expressly set up to discuss and argue various to- ##
 ## ics in and out of fandom. Here, in the following ##
 ## transcription, Don gives some background of himself ##
 ## as a person, fan and editor. Speaking from notes, ##
 ## as opposed to the written speech of Don T, Don ram- ##
 ## bled a bit, but his warmth and love for fans and ##
 ## fandom overshadowed any of his digressions. ##
 #####

I'd like to start by adding my thanks to Leah Zeldes, Gary and Denise Mattingly, and the rest of the ConComm- ittee for giving me the opportunity to be here. You have no idea how happy I am to be here. I've been active in fandom now for thirteen years, and this is my ninth convention. This wasn't by plan. As some of you already know, I have atrocious trouble with cars. I have a chronic problem with machinery; I've always had. The first time I touched our new mimeograph I broke a gear. The second time I touched the mimeograph I broke a ball-bearing. There hasn't been a third time yet. If it wasn't for my wife Sheila, there would be no MYTHOLOGIES.

Of seven conventions I've attempted to get to, I've had to put off plans at the last minute because something happened to my car six times. I've had Fiats now for several years, and I don't want to discourage you from ever buying a Fiat, but I have had Fiats break down in ways that no car was ever meant to break down. I had one in which the solution in the windshield-washer bag overflowed in such a fashion that it got inside the engine, gummed up the engine, which then totalled the car. I've had the car break down two days before a convention, a week before I was to leave for a convention, and six days before I was to leave. In one case I decided that this time I was not going to get caught, so about three days before the convention I took the car to the garage, brought it in and explained to the mechanic that I wanted the car gone over from one bumper to the other, from tire to roof; I wanted everything on it fixed. I wanted a tune-up, an oil change, new filters, I wanted everything done correctly so that it couldn't possibly break down.

Well...I got a substantial bill...and we set off for the convention. And we seemed to have this recurring problem: the car would stop every time I took my foot off the gas, whether it was to hit the brake, or to scratch my foot. When we eventually got to the convention, which in this case was DISCON, it was, of course, late Friday; there was no way to get a car fixed, no way to do it Saturday or Sunday. Monday I was in too much of a hurry to get back so I drove the car all the way, but instead of bringing it home, I immediately took it to a garage, and asked, "What's wrong with this?"

Well it turned out that the fellow who had checked the car out before had done his car repair training with tinker toys. He had set the timing wrong; he had set the gaps wrong; he had put the spark-plugs in incorrectly; he had put the distributor cap on backwards; he had put grease on the parts that were supposed to be kept clean and he cleaned up the parts that were supposed to be greased. The mechanic I took it to couldn't believe the car had ever been in the garage, and advised me to sue! Being a nice guy I didn't sue, but this is the first convention I've been to since where the car hasn't broken

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cadmium-blue space scene and was, in addition, reeling from the effects of the fumes arising from the strong drink apparently tossed on his clothes by numerous gentlemen in business suits.

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SCA member yelled "Clear" while drawing his samurai sword, and the bereted figure tumbled onto the main floor. The other was dropped by two other Dorsai who were testing their strength by each holding the leg of a third (and the shortest) member of their group over the balcony railing. The remainder of the robbers were removed by the weaving of drunken fans who jostled them in the right places, and the inept demonstrations of would-be karate experts and SCA swordsmen. I'm not sure about that walking garbage can.

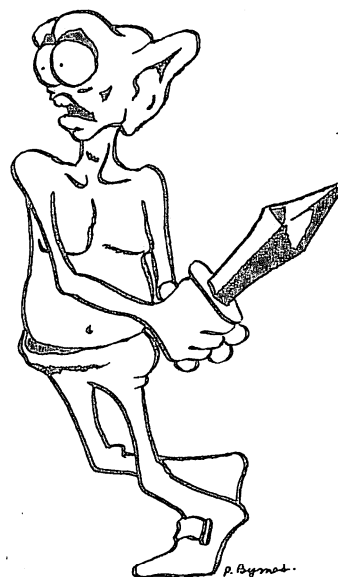
One thing for certain was that the half-naked females were exactly that--half-naked females.

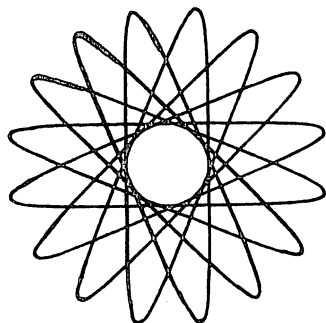
Said another fan, none of this happened!!!

Ragnarok!

*Quick, skulker, run! the dawn is coming soon;
when faerie Chas fades before the might
of those that crumbling Order yet commands,
in vain, against the final fall of Night...*

by Erica Simon Starke





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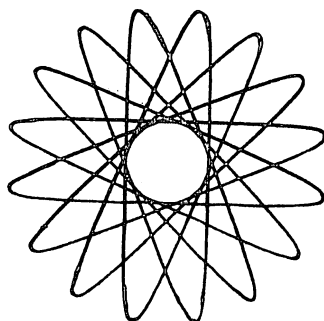
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AUTOCLAVE TWO continued its tradition of having two ##
 ## Guests of Honor, both fans, as speakers at the ban- ##
 ## quet. Don C. Thompson spoke first, talking about ##
 ## entropy. A transcription of his speech was printed ##
 ## in his fanzine, DON-O-SAUR. When Don Thompson fin- ##
 ## ished his speech, the Toastmaster, Don Singer, in- ##
 ## troduced Don D'Amassa, whose speech follows. ##
 ## Don D is the editor of MYTHOLOGIES, a fanzine ##
 ## expressly set up to discuss and argue various to- ##
 ## ics in and out of fandom. Here, in the following ##
 ## transcription, Don gives some background of himself ##
 ## as a person, fan and editor. Speaking from notes, ##
 ## as opposed to the written speech of Don T, Don ram- ##
 ## bled a bit, but his warmth and love for fans and ##
 ## fandom overshadowed any of his digressions. ##
 #####

I'd like to start by adding my thanks to Leah Zeldes, Gary and Denise Mattingly, and the rest of the ConComm- ittee for giving me the opportunity to be here. You have no idea how happy I am to be here. I've been active in fandom now for thirteen years, and this is my ninth con- vention. This wasn't by plan. As some of you already know, I have atrocious trouble with cars. I have a chro- nic problem with machinery; I've always had. The first time I touched our new mimeograph I broke a gear. The second time I touched the mimeograph I broke a ball-bear- ing. There hasn't been a third time yet. If it wasn't for my wife Sheila, there would be no MYTHOLOGIES.

Of seven conventions I've attempted to get to, I've had to put off plans at the last minute because some- thing happened to my car six times. I've had Fiats now for several years, and I don't want to discourage you from ever buying a Fiat, but I have had Fiats break down in ways that no car was ever meant to break down. I had one in which the solution in the windshield-washer bag overflowed in such a fashion that it got inside the en- gine, gummed up the engine, which then totalled the car. I've had the car break down two days before a convention, a week before I was to leave for a convention, and six days before I was to leave. In one case I decided that this time I was not going to get caught, so about three days before the convention I took the car to the garage, brought it in and explained to the mechanic that I wanted the car gone over from one bumper to the other, from tire to roof; I wanted everything on it fixed. I wanted a tune-up, an oil change, new filters, I wanted everything done correctly so that it couldn't possibly break down.

Well...I got a substantial bill...and we set off for the convention. And we seemed to have this recurring problem: the car would stop every time I took my foot off the gas, whether it was to hit the brake, or to scratch my foot. When we eventually got to the conven- tion, which in this case was DISCON, it was, of course, late Friday; there was no way to get a car fixed, no way to do it Saturday or Sunday. Monday I was in too much of a hurry to get back so I drove the car all the way, but instead of bringing it home, I immediately took it to a garage, and asked, "What's wrong with this?"

Well it turned out that the fellow who had checked the car out before had done his car repair training with tinkler toys. He had set the timing wrong; he had set the gaps wrong; he had put the spark-plugs in incorrectly; he had put the distributor cap on backwards; he had put grease on the parts that were supposed to be kept clean and he cleaned up the parts that were supposed to be greased. The mechanic I took it to couldn't believe the car had ever been in the garage, and advised me to sue! Being a nice guy I didn't sue, but this is the first convention I've been to since where the car hasn't broken

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down. As Sheila mentioned earlier we carefully didn't tell the car where we were going until it was too late.

I am particularly happy to be at this convention because it is a great honor for me to share the platform with Don Thompson. While it is true the Sheila is the reason that I can continue to publish MYTHOLOGIES, other than a hand-written version, it was Don Thompson who got me to publish it in the first place. Some of you who have known me for awhile know that I got into fandom here in Michigan. Although I live in Rhode Island now, I was an undergraduate, an English major of all things, at Michigan State from '64 to '68. While I was there I got hooked into this funny little science fiction club. It was a change to my life that caused me more happiness and grief simultaneously than any other single event. I spent about ten years writing for other people's magazines and I was in one apa, APA-45. I never had any inclination to publish a fanzine of my own, and in retrospect I can't understand why it had never occurred to me before.

In 1974 Don put me on his mailing list--for what reason I don't know--and I started reading DON-O-SAUR. And what I discovered was that with each issue Don wrote about anything that happened to occur to him; some things that I could not believe could be made entertaining were made entertaining. What's more, he got letters from people that I couldn't believe. I don't mean the volume, but people who would write mediocre letters to other fanzines wrote him good letters. People who wrote good letters to other fanzines wrote things that I would faunch after to have the ability to write myself! So I wrote him a letter once and told him that he was going to have to take the blame for my putting out a fanzine. So I would only take the blame for half the trouble it caused, or trouble it got me into, and the other half was all his. So in 1974 I turned out the first issue of MYTHOLOGIES.

The first issue was 16 pages ditto, had a dittoed cover, had a circulation of 50, and I didn't think I'd ever get rid of all the copies. Last month we published the twelfth issue which was 96 pages, mimeographed, has an off-set cover, had a distribution of 350, ... and I'm out of copies. ** It's come a long way, and it has come a long way primarily because of two things: first of all Sheila has been willing to sit down there and crank that stupid mimeo for hours on end, and second of all because people who have chosen to write to MYTHOLOGIES have written some of the best letters I have seen in fandom. So if Don has to accept some of the blame, he also has to accept some of the credit, because if it wasn't for Don, there would be no MYTHOLOGIES.

MYTHOLOGIES is now a substantial chunk of my life. I estimated conservatively that I spend a hundred hours an issue putting out my zine. Since I put out four issues a year, that works out to 400 hours, more than an hour a day. For the rest of my life I'm stuck, one hour a day. And through inertia, as opposed to entropy ##Don turns to Don T, both smiling with the references to Don!'s speech##, I can't stop.

** The 14th issue of MYTHOLOGIES had 116 pages plus front and back covers, and had a copy run of 500.

No matter what I do, no matter what issue I turn out, a lot of people in yhis room, and others, turn out such good letters that I'd feel so guilty about not printing them, just letting them sit there in my box, that there's no possible way I could stop. So to some extent, fandom is fighting entropy. I've noticed that MYTHOLOGIES has never gone down in page count; it has always gone up.

I have a lot of friends, as I'm sure all of you do, who aren't involved in fandom, and every once in awhile one of them will be visiting and notice the obvious paraphernalia of publishing a fanzine, and ask me why we have a printing press in our basement. I've learned to fend these questions off fairly well because I know where they're leading, but sometimes a particularly inquisitive person will force me to say that I publish an amateur magazine. So I explain to him that it goes to various science fiction fans with their specialized interests, and they ask me how much profit I make on it. ## a pause, as ripples of laughter flow through the listeners## Like most fanzines, maybe all but at least most, MYTHOLOGIES is fantastically successful at losing money. It's costing me right now upwards of \$1500 a year. And I love every bit of it. But then they ask me this question which I always have a hard time answering; I can answer it for you people, but I can't answer it for a mundane. They ask me why I bother! I'm losing money; until recently, at least, there was no possibility of me winning an award; there seemed no reason for them to see why I turn out \$1500 worth of material in exchange for some letters in the mailbox. Well, there are probably as many different reasons for being in fandom as there are people in fandom. There's

no way that my answer would be valid for any of you. But I would like to give you part of what my reasons are.

In 1964 when I discovered that there were other people who read this "Buck Rogers stuff," as they called it, I got fantastically excited. Even though I knew logically that I couldn't be the only person buying science fiction, it seemed that way. I got very excited at the idea that there were these other people. Now it's thirteen years later, and I'm thirteen years older, and I'm still excited. With the possible exception of Bill Bowers, I think I'm the world's oldest neo! I enjoy being a neo.

One of the things that attracted me most to fandom, as opposed to just reading science fiction, is because fandom as an organization -- and if that is not a contradiction in terms... -- is that it is the most open group that I have ever encountered. Just on my mailing list alone I have high school students, college students, pharmacists, a weatherman, I have a man in prison for committing a murder, I have secretaries, housewives, practically every walk of life that you can imagine. Not only do they interest on an equal basis, but they are all on a first-name basis, with a few exceptions. I don't think that this is possible with any other organization, because I have never had any experience with any other organization where an 80 year old retired mathematician and a fourteen year old high school student can be on common terms, first-name basis, and treat each other as equals with none of the barriers to communication that you

OF COURSE YOU WEREN'T
BROUGHT UP THAT WAY--
WHO IS ?



MO

see in the outside world. Fandom doesn't even discriminate against some people who are so strange that you'd swear that they couldn't function at all. Our Toastmaster, Jon Singer, is living proof of this!

This is puzzling to mundanes: not just fandom, but the whole idea of publishing.

A few years ago--and it gets to be more years ago every time I tell this story--I was in the army, not entirely willingly, but I was in the army and they decided to send me to Viet Nam. I went there, and I got a job in the army publishing a fanzine, which is another whole story. I was in a helicopter support unit, which meant that I had a permanent base. I didn't have to worry about where I was going to be from any given time to another, so I decided that I was going to keep active in fandom, even though I was going to be out in the sticks for awhile. So I had all the mail that was being held in this country for me shipped out to me. Very soon I started receiving fanzines. This went on for about a week and a half; I was getting all these little bundles and I was busy sending off letters -- for those of you who don't know, you don't have to pay postage if you're in a war zone overseas; you just write "FREE" on the envelope -- so I wrote lots to everything. Sometimes two or three.

About the second week after these things started coming in, they stopped one day. I didn't get anything for a couple of days, but I didn't think anything of it because the mails sometimes get interferred with. Then I got called into the office of my unit commander. I was twenty-three years old at the time, and I wasn't very self-confident, even less than I am now, and my company commander was a twenty-two year old, and he was the kind that shook all the time.

Well, this 22 year old commander says to me, a 23 year old PFC, "Son, come into my office."

I went into his office, and sitting on the corner of his desk was this obvious pile of fanzines, still in their wrappers, all addressed to me. He pointed to me and asked if I was PFC D'Ammassa. I admitted that, yes, that was my name. He pointed to the zines and said, "These seem to be addressed to you." I replied, "Yes, they do." And he asked if I would like to explain to him what they were. Well I really did not want to, but a request from your commanding officer in the service is not a request; it's a command. So I gave him a vague, very general description that they were newsletters being published by a number of my friends. Then he asked me what was discussed in them. I answered, frequently science fiction, and other topics. And he wanted to know what the other topics were. I didn't know for sure what he was trying to get at. So I told him that sometimes they talk about history, or religion, or sometimes a convention, and I went on like that. Then he asked, with an obviously hidden meaning in his tone, "Do they ever talk about politics?" I said, "Yes, it's possible they talk about politics." He put his hands behind his back, walked around behind his desk, shook his head, looked at me and asked -- I could tell that this was the question: "Do they ever discuss U.S. policy in Viet Nam?" Well, I had to admit, "Yes, they do occasionally discuss U.S. policy in Viet Nam." At that point he asked me if in the future when I receive these before I was to read them he should scan them and pre-read them for me. I had visions of him trying to figure out what code "Ingvi is a Louse" could possibly be! I was getting a little upset at this

point because, although they teach you early in the service that you no longer have many rights, there were some that I felt belonged to me. So I told him that I did object; that if he ordered me to do it I would be willing to do it, but that I would object to his doing it. Well, he couldn't order me to do it because this would be violation of the postal regulations and he didn't want to get involved in that at all, so he agreed not to open them. I then left with my pack of fanzines, and continued to get them while I was there, but they were always opened first anyway.

As a result of this, he filed a report on me. It happened that I was the clerk in the security office. I was responsible for posting all the information that might be detrimental to the security clearance of a particular person in his file. So I had to make out my own security file, explaining that I was receiving subversive data from overseas. This was the first time it had ever occurred to me that fanzines were subversive. But in a sense he was right, because "subversive" means to overthrow something that exists. During the years that I have received fanzines I've had so many opinions altered at least if not completely overthrown by things that I have read in them. After all, after thirteen years you have got to change some opinions.

But I really think that it is not entirely unfair to call them a subversive tool. We tend to think of "subversive" as necessarily being a bad word. I don't think it's necessarily true. The thing about fanzines that I enjoy is that there is this wide range of political views, just as there is this wide range of people who are in fandom. I've been involved during these thirteen years in a few "heated" arguments, I think you could say, on a number of subjects. I have some unpopular views on some subjects. Among the ones that have been most recurring are: space travel, religion, politics, whether you should obey the law, if the law is silly, censorship, feminism, almost anything. I've argued with a number of people and I've gotten some interesting responses from a few. I had one fellow this year compare my philosophy to that of Adolf Hitler, unfavorably. I had another fellow tell me that I am obviously a communist sympathizer. These people had read the same article by me. I can't exactly figure out how that happened.

I had one feminist recently tell me that I was surprisingly progressive; I had a second feminist tell me that I have obviously been asleep for fifteen years. I had a third fan tell me that I have obviously been emasculated by the woman's movement.

I've had conservatives call me liberal; I've had liberals call me conservative and I've had extremists call me moderate. Obviously the moderates call me extremist. I enjoy it! I don't mind the occasional name-calling; tempers get frayed occasionally. I don't really mind the sometimes violent interchange of ideas and opinions. I've been known even to advocate an opinion I didn't necessarily believe in simply because nobody else was, and I thought that it would make a good discussion. I don't think that in any other organization except fandom could I get exposed to so many different viewpoints without engaging in an awful lot of personal invective. There's one particular fan whom I have known, though I have never met him, for thirteen years now. For the first seven or eight years that I knew this gentleman we dispised each other with a passion that could not be equalled as far as I was concerned. We argued about things

tricial and important; we argued about whether the weather was good; whether Eisenhower made a good president; we argued about anything conceivable, anything that came up between us. If one of us advocated something, the other one was opposed automatically. I was really convinced that I could not stand this person. And as the years went by and we continued to argue, I found that I was not only developing a degree of respect for the gentleman, I was actually beginning to like him, feeling affection for this guy. And from the tone of his letters I'm beginning to think he feels the same. He's still wrong all the time, but I don't mind any more because at least he's giving me a test of my own opinions. He gives me something to measure myself against. It's awful if somebody always agrees with you because you never know if you're right, or if they are being serious.

So it's this sense of community that fandom has that holds us together, I think, even more than science fiction. As several people have mentioned tonight, there are science fiction fans who no longer read science fiction, who write it and have no time to read it, who never did read it. There are a couple of science fiction fans of my acquaintance who don't like science fiction; they just like fandom. Fandom itself has brought a lot of people in and kept them in, rather than the books.

A prominent East-coast fan recently mentioned that fanzines are dead, that there is no longer any need for them, that conventions are now so wide-spread that people can talk to each other whenever they want, that with the coming of the TV age and Marshall McLuhan there really isn't any point in the written word anyway, and the few fanzines that are left are just the hangers-on of an age that is slowly dying.

Obviously I don't agree with him. I think there are two things he's missing: first is the obvious one that you can't always go to conventions; some can't afford it, and there are some people who never get to conventions. There are some people who are physically isolated. John Carl lived in the wilds of Montana until he recently moved to Seattle. Until recently we had somebody living in Malta. Obviously he wasn't coming to many conventions. Fanzines gave him contact with the rest of the group.

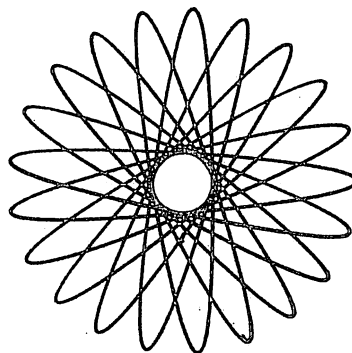
But this is the point I want to make: even if every single person publishing a fanzine now decided not to, and no more fanzines were published, the thing I think is most important about it is that there is the possibility they could be published, because they provide a forum. If I want to talk about something at a convention and nobody wants to listen to me I can get very frustrated. It amazes me that there are this many people here willing to listen to me talk. But if you want to say something and people just aren't going to listen, by putting it into writing, by putting it into a fanzine that contains your opinions and sending it out, you force yourself on their consciousness, and most people feel an obligation to respond in some fashion. I think that's important because you've always got a sense that you have some control of the way your life is going because you can get out there and contact these people somehow, even if you never go to conventions. The way my cars have been going I may never get to another convention. *ETHOLOGIES* provides me with a link. When I published that first issue with fifty copies, I had met forty-five of those people because I only sent it to people that I knew and a few people that I



wanted to know. Of the 350 that went out this last issue, 150 of those people I have not met; until this weekend there were 180 people on that list I had never met. But I feel that I know them all to some extent. It's fandom that allows me to know these people so that I can come to conventions and I can walk up to a Ross Pavlac or a Bill Breiding or David Romm or someone I hadn't met, or had only met briefly before, and be on a first-name basis automatically.

I don't want to say anything too profound -- I probably couldn't say anything too profound -- and I don't want to be waving the flag about fandom because I'm sure most of you love it as much as I do. I just want to point out that even if you never participate in a fanzine; if you never write to a fanzine or anything else, it's important that it is there; it's important that the fanzine is there and I think that in some ways this is the biggest extended family that the world has ever known.

And I thank you all for bearing with me.



A History of

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The DeepSouthCon was started back in 1963 in Huntsville, Alabama, as a consultation con and bheer bust. There were five people at it and it was called "MidSouthCon" for obscure reasons. The chairman was Dave Hulan, if you can call anyone a chairman for a group of five people.

The next year Larry Montgomery held one in Anniston, Alabama, and it increased to six people!! To Tell of wonders!

By the time Jerry Page had it in Atlanta, it was up to about twenty-five people. This was 1967, and some of young Atlanta fandom was just starting to come out of the woodwork. In particular there was me and Glen Brock. Brock and I must be the best of friends -- we were roommates in college, and bookstore partners, and he knows I think his taste in women stinks (including his present wife), and we still are friends.

Brock decided that this was the time for Southern Fandom to rise up and get somewhere in the world, so he began making plans for a DeepSouthCon in Atlanta. The next two DeepSouthCons were in New Orleans, and then in Knoxville in 1969. The 1968 New Orleans DSCon had Daniel F. Galouye as the Guest of Honor -- which was our first really GoH.

The 1970 DeepSouthCon was the 8th DSC, and the first to have over eighty people -- we actually got 130 bodies there!! Wow! At this point in time the DeepSouthCon had Arrived, and the Southern Fandom Confederation with Meade Frierson as the tyrant and Grand Exhalted Poobah of the group came into its own.

The con started bouncing back and forth between Atlanta and New Orleans, with a stop over in Birmingham, Alabama, Meade's home town, in 1977. Atlanta got it for the even numbered years; New Orleans got it for the odd numbered years. Quite frankly, we were both trying for years to force it on Birmingham as a middle ground.

The Guests of Honor have been: Sam Moskowitz (1970), Poul Anderson (1971), Kelly Freas (1972), Joe Green (1973), I forget who were the Guests in 1974 and 1975, L. Sprague deCamp (1976), Michael Bishop (1977). Clifford Simak was scheduled for 1978, but had to cancel out. As a result, Jack Williamson was the GoH, and the convention was held in Atlanta, GA, but not by the hard-core DSCers of Atlanta -- thank God almighty, 'cause I'm getting tired -- but by Richard and Ginger Garrison. If you collect art and such stuff you know Garrison as a dealer (he tells his friends that he is actually a pimp to cover up his true profession), and long-time fan.

Attendance has gone up to 300+ in the last few years and I feel old as I watch the punk kids that I haven't known for years fill up the con. It is terrible to pick up girls and have them call you "Sir"... oh the pain of growing old!

As a general rule, the New Orleans fans feud and the Atlanta fans form clubs. I think we are on ASFO V now -- it doesn't matter what you call it, it will be "Atlanta Science Fiction Organization" to any old-timer. That first group in Atlanta printed Moskowitz' IMMORTAL STORM, and we all lived in its shadow for years. Jerry Page and Hank Reinhardt are the only ones of that group still in town.....alive.

The tales of New Orleans feuds are many and very wild. The only time that it got to be a problem for me was when one of them beat another to a pulp at a DeepSouthCon that I was chairman of. Actually he just knocked him cold, and some damn fool stopped him from finishing the job off. I mean these guys wage war on each other. But what do you expect when you have an Italian machine-gun salesman in your group, anyway?

Atlanta clubs seem to re-group like Quick-silver, with a sort of hard-core that goes across three or four of the clubs. They all seem to last about two years, then school or time eats them away.

There is some crossover between the comics people, who gather rather than form groups, and the SF people. The wixture was tried once and it didn't seem to work very well, since the comics people were more interested in dealing than in getting a con together, or a movie program, etc. No hard feelings, but the two interests drifted apart.

Attempts at a Trek con in Atlanta have failed flat. This year some New York City promoter has one that looks good, and has a lot of pre-registrations, according to rumor. But he is an outsider, so I cannot really count him as a serious event. Snob that I am.

The next DSC will be in New Orleans, with R.A. Lafferty as the Guest of Honor. It has the con for the odd numbered year; I wonder if we'll be back bouncing to Atlanta the following year?

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Splinters

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THE CRYSTAL WORLD by J.G. Ballard
New York: Avon/Equinox Books,
\$2.25

THE CRYSTAL WORLD, first published in 1966, is likely to be compared to Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" along with Ballard's THE DROWNED WORLD, despite the fact that Ballard said in an interview in VECTOR that he had never read Conrad at the time he wrote either of the novels. Like all Ballard's SF novels, it belongs to the British disaster novel subgenre.

The disaster is not worldwide: the outbreak of the strange crystal that gives the novel its name is confined to three areas (French Equatorial Africa, the U.S.S.R., and Florida). The novel is set in Africa near Port Matarre. Dr. Edward Sanders, who works in a leper colony in Libreville, decides to visit a couple he knows inside the affected zone (he had an affair with the wife, Suzanne Clair). He is not aware of the nature of the crystal, or anything about it--he is motivated by emotional reasons, and by a letter Suzanne has sent him.

When he reaches Port Matarre, he finds that all buses and trains to the affected zone have stopped running, and that the police and the Army are being very secretive. He meets an American journalist; they exchange information. After some bizarre incidents--including the discovery in the marketplace of a crystalline, sculpture-like piece of jungle foilage-- the two hire a private boat and go up the river to the affected zone.

It is at this point that the novel begins to lose its power. The crystal that Ballard describes in such evocative, mystery-veiled tones earlier in the novel becomes merely drab-- Ballard makes it sound like ordinary ice, and the imagery falls flat. If this novel is scientific nonsense, that is forgivable--because we do not expect scientific accuracy from Ballard. But there are no aesthetic compensations: no poetry.

The human relationships in the novel are cold, distant, like the crystal that forms in the jungle around them. The action of the characters seems unconnected--despite all the exposition, the characters' emotions seem hidden, withdrawn. They are a passive lot; it is hard for the reader to feel deeply involved.

Ballard's talents are exhibited best in his last three novels (CRASH,

(1969); THE CONCRETE ISLAND, (1973); HIGH RISE, (1976))--all of which are contemporary fiction, rather than SF--or his short stories. I doubt that the reprinting of THE CRYSTAL WORLD will enhance his reputation.

--Cy Chauvin

THE JUPITER THEFT by Donald Moffitt
Ballantine Books, \$1.95

THE JUPITER THEFT is one of those books that you just won't put down once you start reading it. Basically it's a mixture of STAR WARS (the good guy beats the bad guy) and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (man having his first contact with an alien life form). The hero of the story is Commander Tod Jameson, truly the man with everything including absolute pitch. The story is written very well, and the plot is easy to follow. Considering that the book was published in December of 1977, I think it closely parallels CLOSE ENCOUNTERS.

This book doesn't bore you to death like some SF books do. And I think that in the future if Moffitt

and

continues to write in this fashion he will become a very successful writer.

Moffitt's characters are not cardboard. There's Jameson, the man with everything. Then there is Dr. Ruiz, a hot-tempered astronomer no one knows much about except Ms. Maybury, his assistant in more ways than one.

The story starts on a lunar observatory where the computer discovers a new X-ray source in Cygnus. Not much later they see a massive object hurtling toward earth at the speed of light. They also discover that the radiation wave will wipe earth clear of life. They give earth the classic six months. Then it stops near Jupiter, which was impossible, so they send an expedition to find out what's going on; and some pretty strange things happen. First they 'meet' the Cygnans (or the Cygnans meet them, whichever way you look at it). Jameson (the good guy) learns how to communicate with them, and he soon finds out that the Cygnans want Jupiter. They eventually get Jupiter, but not without leaving a little 'thank you' behind.

So all in all, the story is good, the plot is good, and the way Moffitt writes the story is excellent.

--Phillip Lenud

THE FLIGHT OF THE HORSE by Larry Niven. Ballantine Books, \$1.50

Time travel has never been more fantasized as that in THE FLIGHT OF THE HORSE by Larry Niven. Niven's style of writing is smooth and fluent with the ability to allow the reader to travel with the characters and enjoy a great land of imagination.

Svetz, a time traveler, is a retrieval expert as ordered by the Secretary General. The time is post atomic and he is asked by the General to obtain certain animals for his personal collection. But little does Svetz know that his time-travelling machine slips through sideways and enters the land of fantasy.

Niven also has the idea of displacement booths, the ability to transport from location to location. This is the background of the story "Flash Crowd". The booths allow quick transportation but little is it realized that disaster strikes the economy with this invention.

--Kevin Lanford

HIGH RISE by J.G. Ballard
Holt, Rinehart & Winston, \$6.95

...the high rise was a model of the world into which the future was carrying them, a landscape beyond technology where everything was either derelict or, more ambiguously, recombined in unexpected but more meaningful ways. (173)

The novel opens with a man eating a piece of roast dog on his balcony in a forty story apartment block. It seems the start of a typical science fiction disaster novel, the return to barbarism and violent adventure. But it isn't that.

The time is the present-day, and the setting is almost totally confined to a recently completed luxury apartment building. (its neighbors are still rising in the background.) The self-sufficiency of the high rise is emphasized: it has its own supermarket, movie theatre, school and two swimming pools. No one need leave this self-contained world except to go to their jobs; and the wealthier,

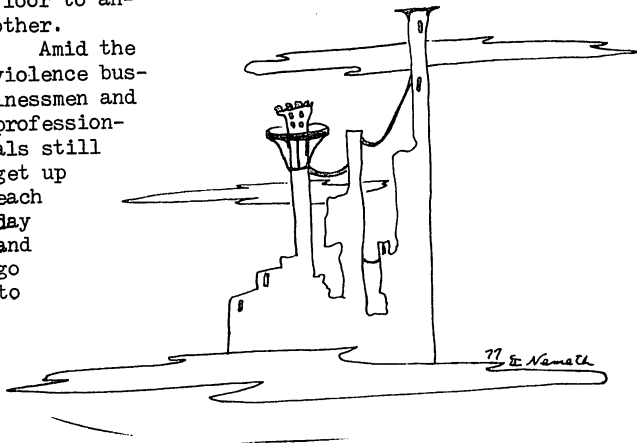
P U L P

not even for that.

Residents are identified by their occupations and the floor they inhabit---Anthony Royal, for example, is a TV producer from the fifth floor, and one of the novel's major protagonists. All of the apartments are furnished very 'tastefully' but the constant opulence is repelling. Many features of the high rise take on psychological or symbolic significance; the novel's characters, in contrast, are described in much blander terms.

Violence erupts after the apartment block is full, and a number of drunken parties have been thrown to celebrate. Glasses are thrown off balconies and smash on the windows of the cars below. Hidden tensions surface and conflict develops between different floors of the building. Elevators are deliberately stalled; garbage is strewn through the corridors. Residents build barricades out of furniture to prevent people from getting from one floor to another.

Amid the violence businessmen and professionals still get up each day and go to



work as though everything were normal. "No one, even on the top floors, seemed aware of the contrast between the well-groomed revellers and the dilapidated state of the building." (109) They pick their way through the garbage and wrecked cars in the parking lot; it takes on ritualistic significance.

Royal, the TV producer, takes movies of what is happening in the high rise and plans a documentary. The architect of the building lives in a penthouse on the roof, and can be seen walking his dog occasionally. Royal decides to climb to the top; it becomes an epic journey. He finds a pocket of survivors along the way, some of which have developed peculiar customs. This part of the novel is not a parody of the typical British disaster novel, but analogous to it; a case of parallel development. The characters do not determine the action of

the story; instead they are acted upon by their environment. This is a psychological and introspective novel, but its trappings are sensationalistic. The unusual is described very matter-of-factly in prose that is colorless and distant.

The novel seems to be about the breakdown of civilization on a minor scale. "He gazed up at the derelict washing machines and refrigerators, now only used as garbage bins. He found it hard to remember what their original function had been." (173) It has many turns of phrase that would seem to fit only in a science fiction novel (as the above), although *HIGH RISE* is not science fiction. It is unrealistic: no one ever leaves the high rise permanently despite the violence, and the police are never called. There seems to be more to the novel than the old idea that "civilization is a thin veneer" and underneath it we are all animals.

HIGH RISE uses some of the techniques of science fiction without itself being science fiction. It (like *CRASH* and *CONCRETE ISLAND*, part of the series) focuses on the effect of the environment on individuals, although the landscape is contemporary rather than futuristic. It is sort of a reaction to much sf written in the past. In *VECTOR 73*, Ballard says he objects to certain kinds of exotic, space-or-

iented sf because "when sf writers have a monopoly on space travel they can define, invent machinery literally, and they are the judges of their own authenticity. ...the decks are all stacked, the reader doesn't have a chance ... the stuff isn't won from experience." The question is, what do the readers lose? --- and do they gain anything to compensate? By the very nature of sf, the imaginative landscapes it portrays are not within the realm of our experience, but the emotional experiences and thoughts that a writer brings to the story might be; indeed, should be. SF's freedom from the present day can be one of its liberating factors. (Ballard does mention that he has not read sf since the late 50's and 60's which means that he has missed many important developments.)

HIGH RISE is not quite the landmark it might be since Ballard must compete with his earlier novels which

have the same form. In a way, this is the perfect form for the novel to be written, but given Ballard's limitations, one isn't sure he could have written it any other way. Will Ballard ever write a novel that is not dispassionate and detached?

Cy Chauvin

THE GODMAKERS by Frank Herbert.
Berkley, \$1.50

Frank Herbert's 1972 book *THE GODMAKERS* is a good, short (but encompassing), hard SF novel well worth reading, and more accessible than before in its paperback Berkley edition. Its well-written pages are free of confusing technology or paragraphs wandering away from the action, so that the reader may read the book from beginning to end while never losing interest.

The novel concerns itself with the adventures of Lewis Orne, an agent of the Investigation and Adjustment Service. The setting is a galaxy slowly recovering from the shattering Rim Wars of a few centuries ago. The I-A is a government service dedicated to the prevention of future wars on any scale; when a planet or culture shows signs of impending aggression, occupation troops move in.

Orne is introduced to the reader through a series of adventures: the first on a seemingly peaceful planet that well conceals its plans for war, until Orne, on his first mission, sees through their camouflage; the second on a world of ape-like but intelligent aliens who have captured and concealed an I-A spaceship and reject human threats of obliterating their planet as bluffs; the third, the agent's infiltration into a massive political conspiracy involving his own family. At the end of the third adventure Orne discovers that he is a psi-focus, a human being of potentially awesome powers of the mind. He therefore goes to Amel, the religious planet, where promising persons with ESP or supranormal abilities are summoned to develop those abilities. At Amel he is put through a series of "tests" that teach him to use those inborn powers and finally emerges with capabilities truly approaching those of a god.

Herbert once again implements his well-known method of using quotes from the writings of famous cultural figures from the time in which he sets his novel, at the beginning of each chapter; these quotes sometimes do and sometimes don't have anything to do with the

matter at hand, but they keep the reader immersed in the author's setting. The book only has minor faults -- the reader finds himself a bit mystified at what the reasons behind the tests given Orne are, and is slightly confused about the extent of Orne's real nature and powers at the end of the book; but these can be overlooked in view of its strengths. *THE GODMAKERS* has a realistic future setting, a believable story, and an identifiable hero, which is all a book of its type really needs. The cliffhangers at the end of nearly every chapter hold the reader's attention in a vise, and the action is fast and intriguing. Your next trip to the bookstore needs no other justification.

Mike Gillette

THE JONAH KIT by Ian Watson.
Scribner's, 1976, \$6.95

Ian Watson's second novel is another three-pronged artifice: it attempts to combine intellectual scientific concepts (imprinting human intelligence on the brain of a whale), intense emotion (wife/male scientist), with a mystical, almost religious experience (the search for the ultimate reality by an astronomer hungry for fame).

The elements do not combine well as they smoothly did in Watson's first novel, *THE EMBEDDING*. His story here is too fragmented, divided among too many viewpoints, and his journalistic prose hasn't the density to hold the novel together in purely lyrical terms.

There are four threads to Watson's story: one is from the viewpoint of the whale imprinted with human intelligence; the second from the Russian scientist who performed

the operation; the third, from Hammond, the American astronomer searching for the basis of the ultimate reality; and fourth, the US-Japanese envoy team, which is trying to learn the identity of a child that seems to have been imprinted with an adult's brain.

The sections written from the whale's viewpoint seem a mistake. The scenes are not from the viewpoint of the human mind transferred to Jonah, but Watson tries to describe the whale's feelings and emotions -- even his problem understanding that which causes the unidentified (human) emotions/images/thoughts that pass through his brain. This attempt rings false; realism, in descriptions of alien intelligences, is hard to obtain. The most 'alien' aspects are those left undescribed, hinted at and no more.

The novel is predominantly intellectual--the attempts to make it emotionally moving as well didn't



succeed, with one exception. The mind imprinted in the whale has been transferred from a Russian cosmonaut imprisoned in Siberia. The Soviet scientist's assistant, Karina, had fallen in love with the man, and now must care for his body, a vegetable. The scene in which she cries, and talks to a visitor about her former lover, is the only one in the novel with strong emotional impact.

The novel is not as cohesive as *THE EMBEDDING*; Watson has not fused the different segments of his book together as well. The story is of intellectual interest, but it is more of a literary construct, facile; but it does not have great emotional relevance --it does not effect the way we feel and think about our lives. This book will not change your consciousness, your attitudes/emotions/feelings. Watson's earlier novel was stronger, but even there he only gave examples or descriptions of the characters that had been changed, rather than attempting to affect the reader's mind as well, so that it is a dual experience: reader/protagonist achieving catharsis simultaneously. LeGuin's *THE LATHE OF HEAVEN* and Lessing's *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL* attempt this later effect.

Watson is concerned with eschatological questions, with ultimate values and "reality" in his novels. His fiction is science (rather than technologically) oriented; he uses few gimmicks in his books. Despite (or perhaps because of) his interest in science, there is a non-rational, almost mystical bent to portions of this novel: "Would you accept the invasions of alien being of your soul?" (p.206), asks one character, regarding the whales. When "Jonah" makes contact the other whales, in their 'Star of Thought' (a group ritual), the Americans send information about Hammond's "Footsteps of God", hoping the whales can confirm their new theory of cosmology. The whales' answer: "They that turn and commit suicide by jumping on the shore."

Watson is writing in Arthur Clarke's vein, in the shadow of 2001 and *CHILDHOOD'S END*. The concerns, ultimate themes of these works are his ultimate themes: but the sciences that interest Watson most are linguistics, theories of consciousness, biology and other areas that are rarely examined in SF. The effect is similar. Watson conveys the mystery, the excitement and the awe that can be found in science; the "thrill of discovery", as Gregory Benford so aptly put it. The reader participates along with the characters in the search for new knowledge--exterior scientific fact and inner emotional revelation, one illuminating the other. This is an ideal form, the

character's change and development hopefully provoking similar changes in the reader so that it becomes more than entertainment. (Don't good books affect you?) Watson doesn't quite make it happen in this novel, I'm afraid, but he does achieve that feeling of transcendence which is Clarke's forte, the chill one encounters a grander, vaster thing.

I found *THE JONAH KIT* unsatisfying, but I plan to read everything Watson writes.

Cy Chauvin

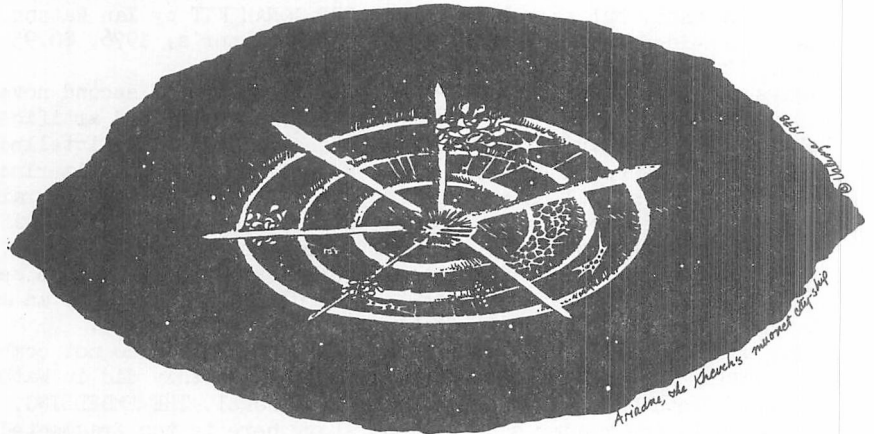
FUTURE #1

FUTURE Magazine, Inc., April 1978, \$1.75

In the beginning there was nothing. Then came *STARLOG*. And *STARLOG* became the best selling science fiction magazine in history. Because of its popularity, the publishers looked down from their penthouse window and said, "This is good, and what works once will work again." (First law of sequels, Hollywood.) They waved their administrative wand and opened their corporate pocketbook and thus *FUTURE* was born.

FUTURE is a rather interesting periodical. Being the sister magazine of *STARLOG*, it seems to have received a good deal of the experience and know-how from the *STARLOG* staff. Possibly because, for the most part, the staff is the same. Where *STARLOG* is mostly visual media-oriented, *FUTURE* is a journalistic melting-pot. Issue number one contains such things as reports on *STAR TREK II* and *STAR WARS II*, "Searching for Life on Mars" with Jesco von Puttkamer, articles on Fred Pohl, Douglas Trumbull and Chesley Bonestell; a critique on *THE MAN FROM PLANET X*, and "The Future of Society" by Isaac Asimov.

Running features include Output (a message from the publisher), Input (letters from the readers), Databank (news from the world of the present), Video Images (Science Fic-



tion and fact on Television), Science Notebook, Hardware (some of the latest gadgets and innovations), Civilization in Space: The Possible Dream, SF Graphics (advertising and promotional graphics), FUTURE Forum (a guest panel is asked a question on a particular aspect of SF), In Print (reviews of new publications), Tomorrow (extrapolative projections into the future by today's outstanding visionaries), and Perspectives (closing observations by the editor).

Occasionally interviews with famous authors and features on Classic SF movies will be printed.

FUTURE touches on most facets of Science Fiction. Books, authors, television, cinema and art make up about two-thirds of issue number one with the remaining one-third concentrating on science fact. Don't expect much fiction. Although there is some ("Civilization in Space: The Possible Dream" -- this series fits into the future history category more than that of short stories. It is simply a description of life in space as told by its occupants through a series of flashbacks and the like.), the bulk of this magazine is articles and columns. Expect the format to change slightly as time goes by. The earlier *STARLOG*s had book reviews, special "Collector's Sections" and puzzles. "Visions" did not appear until issue number two and the special effects section arrived in number six. The "State of the Art" and "Star Trek Report" column began in issue number four and six respectively. Expect the general quality of the magazine to go up. *STARLOG* went from "good" to "the best" within four issues. Expect the price to go up (of course). About the price. You may think that \$1.75 is a little steep. It's not. There are enough color photos alone to keep you satisfied.

I did get the distinct impression that at the moment *FUTURE* is

more juvenile oriented than not, but then the first issue of STARLOG gave me a similar feeling.

In closing, I'd just like to say that if you see a copy of FUTURE when you visit tour local news stand, buy it. You might like it. Issue number two is supposed to run an interview with Arthur C. Clarke.

Haji Uesato

SCIENCE FICTION: THE ACADEMIC AWAKENING, edited by Willis E. McNelly; College English Association, 1974, \$2.00, 60 pp.

One of the first essays in this booklet is Mark Hillegas' "Second Thoughts on the Course in Science Fiction", which discusses the reaction of college English professors to the teaching of SF. Hillegas makes many reasonable and intelligent observations (he says that professors of English "by the very nature of their discipline" are intellectually conservative). He also says that most SF is not "of first rank" (pointing to Wells' and C.S. Lewis' fiction -- nice, safe examples -- as being in that upper category), and says that we must wait until someone writes a piece of science fiction comparable to the magnitude of PARADISE LOST. Then, he concludes: most annoyingly, "Only when the great epic appears, we will not call it science fiction." How hypocritical! I thought the day might be past when Kingsley Amis' little verse

SF's no good
They bellow till we're deaf--
Well this looks good,
Then it can't be SF

would still be applied. I expected much better from Hillegas.

I was not made any happier while reading A. James Stupples' "Toward a Definition of Anti-Utopian Literature." Mr. Stupples insists that FAHRENHEIT 451, PLAYER PIANO, 1984 and E.N. Foster's "The Machine Stops" are not anti-utopias. (He accepts BRAVE NEW WORLD, WE and Twain's A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT into the true fold, however.) He attempts to make a distinction between the two categories by requiring that "anti-utopias" describe an utopian state ("a positive, humanizing social milieu") which is then cast in a negative light. I'm not sure that the distinction is beneficial; it is only confusing, and only serves to separate man-made hells from worlds we'd just personally would not rather inhabit.

Harlan Ellison's "A Few (Hopefully Final) Words about 'The New

Wave'" conveys much general information on the very recent past history of SF. As far as the "new wave" goes, it seems to me that the controversy, the movement (or whathave-you) was not over what was or was not published (which Ellison emphasizes, saying that the new wave will drive no writer off the printed page) so much as it was about what was considered good (or poor) SF. That's quite a different matter, and a debate never likely to be settled. Maybe one we should hope is never settled--since I would take it to indicate that SF is dead, fossilized and solidified into a routine and cliched pattern.

Thomas Clareson's "SF Criticism: An Annotated Bibliography" seems rather unselective (45 titles listed for a "basic library of SF criticism"?--that's overdoing it, I think). I can criticize a number of the individual choices: Samuel J. Lundwall's SCIENCE FICTION: WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT and Donald Wollheim's THE UNIVERSE MAKERS can be very misleading, unless one is already familiar with SF; J.O. Bailey's PILGRIMS THROUGH SPACE AND TIME is poorly written and hopelessly boring, guaranteed to kill the neophyte's interest in SF; Williamson's H.G. WELLS: A CRITIC OF PROGRESS is likewise; Agel's THE MAKING OF KUBRIK'S 2001 probably should not have been included for ethical reasons (the contents were ripped off from various sources, without payment); Schmerl's "Fantasy as Technique" is included in Clareson's anthology SF: THE OTHER SIDE OF REALISM, already included in the bibliography. I could go on, but I believe this is enough. Suffice to say, the list could have been more thoroughly weeded.

There are other articles and essays of varying value included, by Jack Williamson, Gregory Benford, Brian Aldiss (an excerpt from BILLION YEAR SPREE), Harry Harrison, John Boyd, Philip K. Dick, Leon E. Stover, Jane Hipolito, and the editor. I have been harsh, concentrating on the booklet's vices, I suppose; but there has been a tendency in some academic circles to greet any item concerned with SF criticism with joy and undeserved favor, when much of it is trash.

Sturgeon's Law holds here too; 90% of all SF criticism is as bad as the science fiction that inspires it. That unfortunate fact is becoming more obvious as the academic presses roll on, competing with their pulp brethren in quantity and speed. I only wish it were otherwise.

(Booklet available from: The College English Association, Centenary College of Louisiana, Box 4188, Shreveport, Louisiana, 71104.)

Cy Chauvin

THE FORBIDDEN TOWER by Marion Zimmer Bradley, DAW, 1977, \$1.95

If you haven't read THE FORBIDDEN TOWER yet, I have good news for you. Marion Zimmer Bradley has written a marvelous new Darkover book.

THE FORBIDDEN TOWER is a sequel to THE SPELL SWORD. The characters are the same. The action takes place immediately after THE SPELL SWORD. Nevertheless you do not have to read THE SPELL SWORD first. Like all Darkover books, THE FORBIDDEN TOWER is complete in itself.

Darkover has an unusually cold climate. It snows well into summer in the habitable zones. There is a range of nearly unclimable mountains called the Hellers. Darkover has not one, but several non-human but sentient species, one of which is more than human and capable of interbreeding with humans.

But most important, Darkover has a caste of telepathic aristocrats, who were bred for certain talents. These telepaths, called the Comyn, have allowed many of their talents to disappear.

The Terran Empire rediscovered Darkover at a vulnerable point in its history. It had just undergone a long Dark Age, which was ending, when the Terrans appeared with their mechanical civilization. On the surface it looks, to Terran and Darkovan alike, that Darkover is in the last stages of a decadence that will force Darkover to accept all of the Terran Civilization. In reality, Darkover is feeling the first difficult growing pains of a new civilization that may grow strong enough to engulf the Terran Empire.

All of this is background in THE FORBIDDEN TOWER. The period is just after the building of Thendara, the Trade City. It is a time when Darkover still knows little about Terra and vice-versa.

The book concentrates on four people, three Darkovan and one Terran, all of whom have laran (telepathic gifts). It is about the growth of these four people into a tower group with their own natural laran gifts, whose mere existence is enough to challenge the established Towers.

Damon Ridenow is the youngest brother of a Comyn Lord. All his life he has considered himself a failure. The Ridenows are empaths. Damon's gift is so strong that he was forced out of Arilinn Tower because of it. He was told at that time that he wasn't strong enough to continue working with the matrix powers that controlled Darkover's telepathic technology. Because of his gift he considered himself less than adequate as a soldier, although

he had served quite well in that capacity for several years.

He discovers, in *THE FORBIDDEN TOWER*, that he is not a failure, never was a failure, and that no one except his oldest brother ever considered him a failure.

Andrew Carr is a Terran whose life has become tightly intertwined with the lives of a Comyn family. *THE FORBIDDEN TOWER* is the story of his attempt to understand a culture that is strangely familiar and totally alien at the same time. He suffers culture shock in his attempt to win a place for himself in his wife's family.

Callisto, Andrew's wife, was Tower-trained--a Keeper. Traditionally, Keepers remained vergins all their lives. *THE FORBIDDEN TOWER* is the story of her fight for her birthright as a woman while trying to keep the use of the powers she had trained in the Tower.

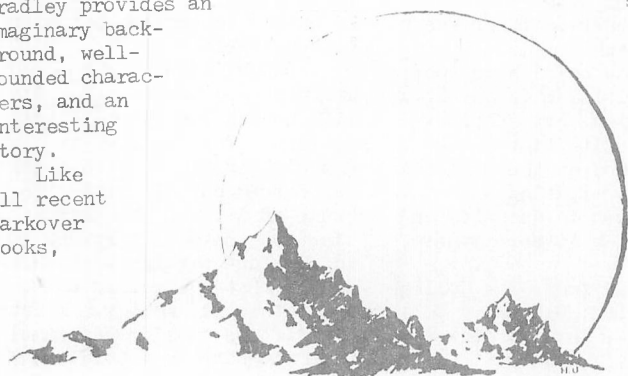
Ellemir, Callisto's twin sister, is Damon's wife. On Darkover it is believed that only one of a pair of twins would have laran. Ellemir always believed herself "the lesser of the twins." *THE FORBIDDEN TOWER* is the story of her learning to recognize that her abilities and strengths, although different from those of the people around her, are equally as important. She also learns to utilize her laran abilities instead of ignoring them.

Each of these people is forced into changing the weakest part of him/herself until it becomes his/her greatest strength. The sum of these four is much greater than its parts.

All of this takes place during an exciting adventure. Marion Zimmer Bradley is interested in her characters, but she takes for granted that you, the reader, read for enjoyment. If you are going to be interested in the growth of her characters, she must give them something interesting to do. So she puts her characters into a situation where their character development is essential if they are going to survive.

Marion Zimmer Bradley provides an imaginary background, well-rounded characters, and an interesting story.

Like all recent Darkover books,



THE FORBIDDEN TOWER is a mature work by a fine writer. Marion Zimmer Bradley's improvement as a writer is more noticeable from book to book. You should be warned that the earliest books in the Darkover series were written by a writer just learning her craft. What makes Darkover live as a series is that it wasn't written in order and therefore it isn't necessary to plow through the less well-written books in order to enjoy the newer ones. However it is likely that after reading one Darkover book you will be hooked, and you will find yourself searching through bookstores looking for all of the older books.

I did!

Stella Nemeth

THE DEVIL IN THE FOREST by Gene Wolfe. Ace Books, 1977, \$1.50

This novel was originally published as a children's book in hardcover. This explains why the style is not as involuted, or as puzzling, as I expected. Wolfe's fiction generally keeps me gasping for understanding; he only throws hints as to what is actually happening. My favorite Wolfe stories--*THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS*, "The Death of Doctor Island," "Alien Stones," "The Eyeflash Miracles"--are all told from an alien viewpoint. The stories are mysteries to unravel.

THE DEVIL IN THE FOREST is a much simpler tale, written clearly, without the heavy anachisms characteristic of fantasy stories. It is the common story of a boy's maturation through stress and adventure: a weaver's apprentice involved with an outlaw who threatens the boy's hamlet and the lives of his friends. There are some unusual twists in the plot, and the ethics of the situation are clearly stressed. (Example: The blacksmith kills the tavern-owner, and the abbe deduces this fact. When the boy asks how the blacksmith is to be punished, the abbe replies not at all, by them. The blacksmith's own conscience will punish him enough. He attempts to distinguish between good men who do wrong, and those for whom hurting others is pleasure.) The reader, obviously, is meant to grow as well as the protagonist.

There is no 'magic', no supernatural or other-worldly

events in the novel; the hamlet is not like Earthsea. An old nun hints at powers, but these are never proved real, and seem just another illusion the apprentice must overcome before he can become mature. The novel is historical and medieval in tone and detail, and not set in a 'secondary universe' (Tolkien's term). I miss the imaginative detail that would have required; but it would have forced Wolfe to write a very different book.

The publishers must take the blame for misleading readers, not the author--though maybe the ruse will lead some on to a book they'd never have tried otherwise.

Cy Chauvin

INHERIT THE STARS and *THE GENESIS MACHINE* by James P. Hogan. Ballantine/Del Rey, 1977/1978, \$1.50/\$1.75

Step back to the 1940's where science was extrapolated within the novel, and theories were explained across the pages you read, and you witnessed the creation of mighty machines. Hogan writes in this style, using all of modern-day science and technology, fact and theory. Dull? No way. The story-line is enough to carry the reader through what might be considered 'dull spots' by some.

INHERIT THE STARS starts off simply enough. A spacesuited skeleton is found on the moon, dating back 50,000 years. The rest of the novel deals with the search for an explanation of who or what it is, how it got there, and as a result, how we got there. The problem is examined from every angle, at time to excess, but every possibility is covered. I loaned this to the Physics teacher at school, and he could find anything wrong with it. The Geology teacher said that he may have missed an ice-age in those 50,000 years, but other than that, no flaws. Hogan did his homework in science in preparing this book, and a super job in writing it.

In *THE GENESIS MACHINE*, two scientists who are interested in pure research find themselves at odds with the government who controls most of the research money. They work in private companies until their work in high-energy subatomic and k-space particles becomes too costly and attracts the government (a simplification). Eventually they work within the system, and beat it! Again a good story with science at the heart of it.

But there are problems with

his writing, namely female characters. There is one of small consequence in *INHERIT THE STARS*, and one who is much better delineated in *THE GENESIS MACHINE*. He may have improved much more in his latest book, *THE GENTLE GIANTS OF GANYMEDE*, the sequel to *INHERIT THE STARS*, but I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

For a new writer, James P. Hogan has made a good beginning in the field of SF writing. I hope that he might be eligible for the Campbell Award for Best new writer next year; he's my choice. And I hope he keeps writing.

Lan

WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG by
Kate Wilhelm, Harper & Row,
1976, \$7.95

Part one of this novel appeared in *ORBIT* 14. It is about the founding of a clone society as disaster strikes the world--social services break down, epidemic disease run rampant, most people and animals become sterile. A large, wealthy family (the Summers) build an experimental hospital in a valley, and begins cloning both animals and people. The clones think differently than the Elders (as they start to call themselves), and a wide gulf develops between the two.

Wilhelm uses a postulate similar to one LeGuin used in "Nine Lives": the clones are exceptionally close to one another, and there is such a close empathic link between the members of a clone group that it seems they are almost telepathic. There is none of the essential "loneliness" that humans so often experience; the clones have one another, they are promiscuous, and have group sex.

The three sections of the novel chronicle the conflict between individual humans and the clones. In the first section (when the clone society is just being established), the conflict is between the survivors and the new clones; in the second, between a clone (Bolly) who is sent out on one of the first expeditions into the post-disaster wilderness, and returns with strange visions filling her head which also make her more human, and the other clones. She is exiled for her oddity to an old farmhouse, and bears a baby boy there in secret. Mark, as he is called, inherits his mother's artistic bent, and since he is not cloned develops unique characteristics that set him apart from (and in conflict with) the clone community in the third section. His mother is put in the breeder's compound, along with the other fertile females, but she escapes into the wilderness.

The novel does seem rather didactic: the clones are never represented in a sympathetic light, and yet certain of the qualities Wilhelm describes as being characteristic of the society (Close, intimate contact, strong empathy for one another), are good qualities, ones that would be to the benefit of most individuals in Western society. The very stark, black and white conflict Wilhelm paints seems simplistic; it is too much a case of the "good guys" vs. the "bad guys", rather than an inevitable conflict between radically different approaches and philosophies of life. The story would be more moving if we could identify with both (though, truthfully, Wilhelm does describe a couple of the clone administrators in a favorable light--but these clones are given individualistic human characteristics, and are presented favorably because they sympathize and identify with Mark and Molly, and not because they are happy examples of their own culture/"species").

The novel may also suffer in comparison with others because its background does not seem as original (I keep thinking of Wolfe's *THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS*, which has a three-part structure similar to *WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG*, and the first portion of which also appeared in *ORBIT*). It is drawn competently, but is plain, and lacks the cultural and anthropological details that can give good SF so much of its flavor.

But Wilhelm writes well, and captures the forests and fields where most of the story is set in her prose. It is a good novel, but not an exceptional one; more craft than art, perhaps. But if all SF was at least as finely crafted as *WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG*, we'd have great cause to rejoice.

Cy Chauvin

A SCANNER DARKLY by Philip K. Dick
Doubleday, 1977, 220 pp. \$6.95

The date of this novel is given as 1994, but the flavor and atmosphere of the novel is predominantly that of the drug-culture of the 1960s. There are too many references to current artifices--Dristan, Ford Falcon, Carole King--for the novel to be taken as serious extrapolation. But it is a serious book (perhaps even too serious: there is none of the flip-pant and inventive gimmickry that litters most of Dick's novels), and one of his few works of recent years, after the police break-ins which so demoralized him. In letters Dick has referred to it as a "mainstream" novel.

The protagonist is Robert Arctor, an undercover narcotics agent who has become addicted to Substance D (death). He has rejected "straight" society (the counter-culture has swelled in size and its differences widened),

and given up both his wife and two children. He found that life dull. Arctor shares a house with two other friends, and has become afflicted with paranoid fantasies.

Arctor's double life (as drug addict and narc) becomes more confusing and involuted when he assigned to spy on himself. His home is bugged with cameras and microphones. And he's relieved, since now he can find out who is pulling all the "funny stuff" around the house. He suspects one of his housemates, James Barris.

His superiors don't realize that they have assigned him to watch himself because he (like all other narcs) wears a scanner suit at all his briefings. The suit scrambles his identity.

Gradually, as the effects of Substance D become more pronounced, Arctor becomes schizo: his narc personality splits from his Arctor personality. He comes to believe that the man he is making holograph tapes of is not himself, and definitely a guilty party that he wants to convict.

As Arctor he is friends with Donna Hawthorne. She is into drugs as well, but tries to help him. Dick's description of her is somewhat cliched and perhaps sexist--the woman is "foxy, a good chick with nice tits"--but effective. (And it's uncertain whether the sexism is the author's or merely yet another aspect of Arctor's character--or both.)

The horror and the pain is vivid, and hits with some imaginative and aesthetic grace. Arctor nearly dies from his drug addiction, and the convulsion scene (in which Donna tries to save him) is surprisingly moving. The last few chapters are very calm, almost pastoral; Dick changes both his style and point of view.

The book is based on personal experiences, as Dick makes clear in his Afterword. He wrote a speech, "The Android and the Human," which appeared in *SF COMMENTARY* and Bruce Gillespie's *PHILIP K. DICK: THE ELECTRIC SHEPHERD*, in which he discusses some of the experiences which led to *A SCANNER DARKLY*. What is most disturbing, perhaps, is that Dick has always given the impression that he was "pro-drugs." His novels frequently dealt with them, and he wrote at one point that he used speed to assist him in his writing--until he found out it was simply a psychological crutch that he didn't need. The difference between *A SCANNER DARKLY* and Dick's other novels in which drugs play a major role is that here drugs are only used for "kicks." In *THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH*, *NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR*, *UBIK* and others, the drugs have other purposes. The side effects are rarely anything other than dangerous, but people seem to have important reasons for using them anyway. Drugs opened up possibilities, other realities, ones most

of Dick's characters couldn't cope with. But his characters were all provoked to change; they were made to face reality, rather than evade it. This is the change of viewpoint I detect in this novel. Drugs only hurt, nothing is gained by using them, and Dix's vision is very black. Coming from another writer, this novel wouldn't have the same ambivalence, and might almost seem "preachy". But Dick has been there and come back.

This is not one of Dick's most successful literary efforts, but it has its place.

Cy Chauvin

COSMIC KALEIDOSCOPE by Bob Shaw.

Pan Books, Ltd., Cavaye Place,
London SW10 9PG, ENGLAND.

174pages, 1978, \$1.95

Personal tastes in science fiction as in other fields are everything. Personally, I prefer my science fiction logical. It can be as fantastic as all get-out, as long as it holds together and makes sense and has a good story. New-wave, drug-culture SF has never appealed to me along with certain forms of abstract art, atonal music, blank verse, etc., because it is too darn surrealistic. This is one of the reasons I am a fan of Bob Shaw's work. Not only is he dazzlingly inventive within the restrictive form of the science fiction short story, but his stories are rooted in bedrock values and sensibility.

This new book is the second of his short story collections published originally in 1976. Admittedly, of the nine stories, some are better than others, but you won't find a really bad one in the lot. First class all the way. The fifth story, "The Gioconda Caper," a private eye (or should that be "psi"?) uncovers the truth behind the smile on the Mona Lisa and the answer will really knock you out. Not only is it hilarious but incredible as well. There is an opening SF Western that stands as an excellent example of both genres, a murder double-cross, triple-cross plot set on an alien planet, a group of abominable snowmen building a second Mt. Everest, an uncomic horror story that could be a direct description of something out of the Warren Publications EERIE and CREEPY (but funny just the same), a club devoted to perfect products from the future, a UFO abduction by a plant creature of a petty sneak thief that turns out disastrously for both, an item that combines modern warfare and ancient mythology

and a form of flying belt law enforcement. I found the last two items to be the weakest in the collection, possibly because they were originally published in US magazines and somehow lack that peculiar flavour that British science fiction is concerned with in their magazines.

I note that one story goes back as far as 1959 when Mr. Shaw was just beginning as a writer under the name of Peter Hamilton for Nebula science fiction. It is interesting that in the 17 years between then and now that he has lost nothing in the way of presenting a story, and, in fact, has gotten better.

As a critic, I usually have to Pan (pun intended) a new novel or anthology and at the very least point out any shortcomings in order to give a balanced appraisal. However, this book is making things darn difficult for me. I am bending over backwards trying not to be ecstatic about it, and the harder I try, the worse it gets. Mr. Shaw had better watch out, he is going to give a lot of book reviewers the hives attempting to come up with something negative. It is a shame that he is not as well known as he should be in Canada and in the United States, but that too will probably come in time. Don't miss this book if you can possibly avoid it. You won't be disappointed.

W. Ritchie Benedict

ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED by Joe Haldeman. St. Martin's Press, 184 pages, \$7.95. Avon, 221 pages, \$1.95.

Despite some wonderful exceptions, characterization has never been the strong point of most science fiction. Characters tend to become lost in the fantastic worlds the inhabit; this becomes painfully obvious when the main character of a story never is himself.

Otto McGavin is "chosen" to be a prime operator for the ultra-secret CIA-like TBII Bureau--an arm of mankind's interstellar Confederation--because of his excellent physical and mental condition. Like protagonist William Mandella, Joe Haldeman's character in THE FOREVER WAR, Agent McGavin is a member of an elite group who is being used and abused by his government for low--or no--purposes. But unlike the earlier work, in which Private Mandella's fighting suit merely extended his physical powers, ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED finds Otto McGavin subjected to 34 personality over-

lays during his lifetime that involve plastic surgery and hypnotic conditioning. Otto assumes the shapes of 34 different people so he can infiltrate whatever criminal activities these unsavory individuals may be perpetrating and correct them according to the Confederation's Charter.

This involves him with the lowest forms of human being and the most powerful men on various planets (usually one and the same) in an endless array of political intrigue and bloody slaughter. And throughout all of this very realistic action Otto struggles to remain Otto. He can only emerge from the adopted persona during extreme emergencies, and even then "Otto" is all "Prime Operator"--a ruthlessly efficient machine with the knowledge of how to immobilize or kill a man in a 1,000 different ways. By the last of his missions Otto is reduced to spouting: "I'll tear off your head and beat you to death with it," -- and lots of blood.

The novel itself is composed of three "Episodes" (linked novellas) and four "Interviews," which give the reader glimpses of Otto's original diplomatic intentions and his struggle against his conditioning. But the strengths of Haldeman's work are the plot and action scenes.

ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED is an exciting adventure from a first-rate storyteller. Haldeman is very good as interjecting a future society's elements unobtrusively into his stories. He never stops to lecture, and never needs to.

The alien races Otto encounters are particularly well-conceived and vivid. The society portrayed in the title episode could form a fascinating backdrop for a new novel. Among the S'Kang of the planet Cinder, the sun ebbs and flares in long cycles and their body's life processes slow and regenerate during a 50-year cold. The S'Kang have no means of reproduction and no memory of ever being born. Haldeman adds a delightful touch to these immortal beings in their absurdist form of logic: the planet's chief philosopher calls himself "The Keeper of Useful Sarcasms."

The human bit players who descend to various levels of despicability and cause trouble for Otto throughout the novel are not cardboard figures. Rather, they cut impressions like flat steel with razor edges; they are singleminded, driven tools of Haldeman's imagination and not the pawns of some government.

It is obvious that Haldeman intended to say something with this

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I am not sure how this section is going to turn out, seeing as I am sitting here typing first draft/final draft (as I usually do), and it is December 26, 1978, and I am trying to think back almost a year ago to the events just prior to CONFUSION PI, and everything that has happened since. Some of the conreports will be short, I am sure--my memory has not been as good as it used to be (must be getting old)--as will the ramblings be condensed. What comes out will depend on how strongly I was affected by the events of the cons and of my teaching at school. With a little bit of luck (and maybe imagination) this might turn out not-too-badly.

RAMBLINGS 8.1

School ended. The basketball team had tied for first place in the private school league. Selena II (hereafter known as Selena), my new Dodge Aspen, was handling beautifully in the snow, slippery streets and slush. Vacation was here, and I was going to enjoy it.

I recall winding down from the pressure of the pre-vacation "wrap-up" syndrome from school, everyone attempting to end a unit of study, end with tests and such, so that no homework would be assigned over the holidays. I also recall finishing my Christmas shopping, doing some fanzine work, apahacking, letterwriting, and making many visits to friends. Come Christmas Day, I dined with my parents, brother, sisters and their spouses, and my two sing aunts. Visits from other relatives was welcome, and I passed out several jars of my pickled tomatoes to them.

When New Years rolled around, I had a choice of three parties, and decided on Denise Bozung's, mainly because it was the first I had been invited to. The evening was pleasantly spent talking, eating, getting rowdy, and doing many of the traditional things done on such occasions.

None too soon afterwards school started once more, and we made the final mad dash to the end of the semester. Mid-year exams came during the week before CONFUSION, and with all the test correcting, grading, writing up of comments and stuff, I was kept very busy, but knowing that I had a con coming up during which to unwind, made the difference. I didn't complain, and got it all done by Friday.

CONFUSION II

On the Friday of the convention, I pulled into the Ann Arbor Inn parking structure, registered with the hotel, dumped my stuff in my room, grabbed the coonskin cap and headed for the con registration table. The rest of the afternoon and most of the evening was spent talking to fellow fans, renewing friendships, cruising the art show and the hucksters room, passing out copies of my fanzine, and meeting the Guest of Honor, Kate Wilhelm. Patrick Hayden continued his intense dislike for me by ignoring me in spite of my attempts at establishing a line of communication. He passed me in the hucksters room while I was talking to Fred Jakobsic, and I said hello and started to hand him a copy of my fanzine. He half-waved, turned around and walked back out. Fred laughed; I just shrugged my shoulders.

During one of the first panels on Friday evening, "Care and Feeding of the GoH", I sat near a lovely silver-haired woman who turned out to be Kate Wilhelm. In talking with her I found that this was only

her eighth convention or so, and she was very anxious to learn what she was supposed to do as GoH from this panel, especially since, I believe she said (my memory is a bit fuzzy here), this was her first time being a Guest of Honor! She learned that the concomm will feed and take care of her needs as best it could (as long as she let them know what needs she had) and in return she was to be on one panel, give her speech at the banquet, and be available to the fans for talking, autographs, and enjoy the con herself. And that she did.

I also had a brief encounter with Gene Wolfe, who praised my

fanzine for its looks and arrangements. He told me that if he had time he

would write a loc or something. He

did say that I should continue to strive for quality, rather than frequency of publication. And he liked the cover of LL #6.

I remember some of the parties on that night. The consuite fluctuated with the flow of people, and I remember conversing with George R.R. Martin, Joe Haldeman, Niel Rest, the Fan GoH Jackie Causgrove, Mike Glicksohn Phyllis Eisenstein, and many others. The only conversation I recall was with George Martin, who mentioned that he was going to conduct a Writing Workshop in June.

I also seem to recall a MARCON party, but I don't remember if it was on Friday or Saturday night. I do remember getting slightly high there, and having some interesting encounters with Mark Evans, Ross Pavlac, Bob Hilles and Diane DeVorn.

Saturday brought about a new day of fun and relaxation. I attended and participated in the workshop conducted by the SF Oral History Association on conducting interviews. I learned a couple of things which would help augment my already natural talent for doing such things, and I helped by throwing out a few helpful hints of my own. The Fan Panel was Jackie's turn to shine, and that she did. Our Fan GoH Jackie Causgrove made everyone feel comfortable, and her warmth and friendship pervaded the room. She did not have a speech, but an informal discussion with her friends who asked her questions about herself. Bill Bowers, Mike Glicksohn and Ro Lutz-Nagey were the three sitting on the panel firing questions, and everyone in awhile someone would take a pot shot from the audience. I didn't learn much more about her than what I knew before, but it was pleasant to hear her talk.

One of the most informative panels (that I attended--the L-5 people would probably contend that theirs was the most informative panel, but I was busy elsewhere during that one) was the one of The Milford Conferences, moderated by Lloyd Biggle, with Kate, Gene Wolfe, Joe Haldeman, Gordie Dickson, and (I believe--bad memory again) Phyllis Eisenstein and George Martin in attendance. The Milford Conference is an invitation-only workshop given for SF authors by SF authors. Each writer brings in a piece he/she/it is working, or has completed, or even sold, for a critical appraisal by her/its/his peers. It has

CONREPORTS and Ramblings 8

been beneficial for many writers, and is always entertaining.

There was one early elevator party, in which nine people, not all of them fans (see Barney Neufeld's "Remember Confusion" report elsewhere in this issue), were trapped in an elevator for about an hour. Ro Lutz-Nagey was term Hero for preventing a latent claustrophobic from going berserk by talking to her.

The banquet was fine I suppose (I couldn't afford to eat at it), but I know that the speech by Kate was terrific. It was entitled "Relative Truths" and dealt with how we learn basic truths and ideals, mainly through lies. These "lies" are in the form of fictions and stories which are told to get a certain point across. Even science, the most rigid of all thought organizers uses "lies" in the form of hypotheses, which are changed and amended as necessary, as new "truth" is discovered. We accept these "lies" in order to get at the underlying truth. The analogy Kate used was that of a cartoon character who runs off a cliff, he doesn't fall until he realizes that the ground is no longer under his feet. Had he continued to run, he would have gotten to the other side of the chasm. In a similar fashion we suspend our disbelief so that we can get to the truth on the other side of the chasm of lies in the form of stories, fictions and parables. If we accept, consciously, the fact that what we are reading (hearing) is totally false, we don't get to the truth.

She received a standing ovation for her speech. Afterwards I asked if I might be able to publish it in my fanzine, but she said she wanted to think about it. She hadn't considered it that good.

Later Kate, Dana Siegal, Barney Neufeld, Niel Rest and a few other fans started a hall party by the elevators around the corner from the con suite. And it turned out to be a real party--Dana brought some crackers and cookies from the afternoon tea she had had in her room, and everyone in awhile we would send a passing fan into the con suite for more drinks. People in costumes passed by on their way to the costumed-disco party, and made our own pick of the best

ones. And we chose as number one the same costume as the judges picked.

I stayed with that group for about two hours, then went wandering, looking for other room parties, seeing if I could find Anna O'Connell, whom I had first met at CONCLAVE that previous fall, and I had seen earlier that afternoon, so I could sit and talk with her. I was not lucky in finding her then, but I believe it was around this time that trouble happened in the con suite. A former hotel employee got into the suite and

began to make an ass of himself, became very obnoxious, and then almost maniacal. He turned out to be psychotic

and at this time very depressed and hostile. Ro Lutz-Nagey became a hero once again by talking to this guy and keeping him occupied while Larry Tucker got in touch with the authorities so they could get him out of there.

This guy had an 8-pack of beer cradled in his arms, and a fan came by and was going to grab one of them. Ro shoved the fan away when he saw the look in the guy's

eyes and said, "It's his beer; if he wants all of it, he can

have all of it!" Ro said that later the fan

came up to him and thanked him for probably saving his life.

Sunday was the usual hectic rush to check out of the hotel before checkout time. I said goodbye to several people, and spent most of my time in the consuite talking to Kate, Tom Barber, Joe Haldeman, and several other fans and pros who happened in. I finally left for home in the late afternoon and got to bed early. A new semester started the next day, and I wanted to be somewhat fresh-looking when I started teaching.



RAMBLINGS 8.2

The days from CONFUSION to March blended together as a montage of hard work and near-boredom. There were volleyball games to attend, the usual business of quizzes, tests and the corrections that comes with the job of teaching, dormitory duty, and the usual Monday night meetings in Ypsilanti. The SF Oral History Association made plans for attending MARCON and

NOVACON in April, and continued its search for a viable cataloguing system for recordings.

There was a small convention, WONDAYCON 14, at the University of Windsor, which turned out to be more a party than anything else. There were about a total of ten people there, and after going out to eat, we ended up watching the Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Film Awards.

The days of February moved through snow and cold until the brink of March was upon me. Several things happened then, as if excitement and surprises had hoarded themselves to spring upon me then. Ergasterion, the theatre group at Kingswood/Cranbrook, put on the musical OLIVER. Beth and I went to see it, marvelling over the staging, backdrops, scene changes, the dancing, singing, acting, the full orchestra. The lead of Oliver was played by Rachel Freudenberg, a new student that year at school and very talented. Her parents invited Beth and me over after the performance to a friend's home for a small party. It made the entire evening very enjoyable.

The next two weeks was taken up with Interim. All the classes at the two schools were suspended for that period of time so that the students could do and experience other things. Some went Wilderness Camping in the Smokies; others went on trips to England, France, Italy and Greece, Mexico and out west. The rest of the student body stayed and attended various classes especially set up for Interim. I taught a SF short story class, and Fanzine Publishing. The students in the latter course did a lot of work on the material that appeared in LL #7 and in this one. I also sponsored a comics class, and the students who ran it really knew their stuff.

The two weeks went by very swiftly, and we started our Spring Break immediately afterwards. I relaxed, rested, and touched base with John Benson about the approach of MINICON. We planned our departure for the evening of that Wednesday before Easter, and Bill Waldroop decided to join us in our venture. The early departure would enable us to spend more time with our friends in Minneapolis, and we also decided to leave one day later, thus staying for the dead dog party Sunday night.

MINICON 13

On Wednesday, March 22, the first day of Spring, Selena, fully loaded with various items of con-survival, departed from Detroit at approximately 10:00 PM. The three occupants of the car, John Benson, Bill Waldroop and myself happily watched the lights of the big city fade into obscurity as we headed west out Interstate 94. We caught the tail end of the news about a fire at a hotel in Southfield, right near the con hotel for AUTOCLAVE, but we did not catch the name of the hotel. An hour later we heard that it WAS the hotel where AUTOCLAVE was going to be held. Unfortunately we were going to have to wait till we got back to get more details.

As we journeyed westward into darkness, a meteor streaked the sky. I asked John if that were a portent of good or bad things to come. He replied that it was an inigmatic sign from the gods; it could mean either. So I took it as a good sign, as did John. Neither of us were to be disappointed.

We stopped once before Chicago for gas, then in Wisconsin for food and gas. As was my usual wont I attempted to drive all the way, the 13 hour trip, myself. This time, I really became too tired, and let Bill take over for about an hour and a half, until I rested a bit, and we neared the Minnesota border.

At the Hotel Leamington where the con had been held for the past few years we quickly registered and carried our stuff up to the broom closet. John and I had already planned for a double, mainly to give us each a key. Bill stayed with us for one night, then found a better arrangement for the rest of the con. Bill sacked out for a couple of hours, while John and I visited a couple of bookstores. I bought a few books I didn't have in my collection, then we went back to the Hotel. John and I split after that. He had friends to visit, and I walked over to the Bozo Bus Building to see David Emerson. He was not there but I talked briefly with Scott Imes. Next door to the BBB was Castle Anthrax which housed Imagination Unlimited. Ric Gellman was there, and I spent some time talking with him. I went back to the hotel after that, sacked out for a couple of hours, then wandered around the hotel lobby hoping to see a familiar face to find directions on how to get to Dave Wixon's new place for the collating party. Eventually I ran into Lynn Anderson, and he consented to drive us all over.

Getting there was a minor adventure in itself. We went to a local store to pick up a TV set which Lynn had to do. Then we drove around the city till we got to the Wixon home. Minneapolis isn't the best laid out city in the world, and I got my directions screwed around. I still couldn't tell you where Dave and his wife Caryl live.

Things were really going along fine at the party when we arrived. Tucker was there, as were Joe and Gay Haldeman, Don R. Benson and many of the MinnSTF members. I talked with Denny Lien and Mike Wood, asking if they had gotten the checks I sent them. While checking over my records I found that at the previous MIDWESTCON I had made a mistake in splitting the cost for the room, so I sent them back money I had overcharged them. I also discussed a possible time for me to interview Mike for LL. As it turned out, through the con either he or I were not ready for the interview whenever the other brought it up.

When the collating started, I tired quickly of standing in line waiting for people to move around the table. I am used to moving swiftly; when I collate with Carol Lynn and her magazine Craith, or when I do my own, speed and accuracy are the rules. So I took some from each pile, went into the bedroom where all the coats were piled on the bed, and began my own method of collating. I think I ended up putting together about five or six to every one that someone else collated. I figured, get it done, then have more time to party.

Lee Pelton was there with Carol Kennedy, a lovely redhead whose back, neck and shoulders received a good rub/massage from me. We talked about various things, and I seem to recall him asking me to join LASFAPA, which I said that I thought I might. He, Carol and I also talked about pubbing, since the two



STAR DANCER

of them edit RUNE.

Erica Simon had also attended. I met her along with Lee Pelton at the last MINICON. We went off into a corner and talked for a long time. I also massaged her back, neck, shoulders and arms, and she asked if I would teach her a few things about massage technique, and I told her to see me almost anytime during the con.

I don't recall what time we left for the hotel, I had talked briefly with a few other people, and was just settling down to a good conversation with Bob Tucker when I had to leave. Although Bob and I were supposed to get together later during the con to talk some more, the plans never materialized.

Friday morning both John and I got up early. Jim Odbert had said that he would need some help in setting up the art show so we went to help him. When I went down to the lobby to see if he had arrived, I met a lovely lady who was looking for the convention. Her name was Kathy Marschall, and she thought that since it was supposed to run from Friday through Sunday, it would get started early on Friday. Since she was a neo, I took her aside and explained a few things. We shortly met Annie Eisenberg who then took care of Kathy, even bringing her in to where the art show was being set up. With Jim, John and myself, and occasional helps from Kathy and Annie, we got the display boards set up quickly. By the time we were done, Denny Lien had come and he was getting the hucksters room organized. So I left John and Jim to help Denny. When all that was done, I headed for registration.

Well, registration was not set up by that time; in fact no one was there at all, except a few fans who were wondering when registration would open. I checked back with Denny and he said that it didn't open until 2 PM. So I relayed the message, and stood around in the hotel lobby talking with other fans and dispensing information. Due to my hat, I was easily recognizable as a fan. I met several interesting people, like Meridyth Hossman from Nebraska who was attending her first con, Fred Mayer from California, among others.

Soon the registration person showed up, whose name I quickly learned was Bev Elmschauser. I offered my help and she gladly took me up on it. For the next few hours I sat at the registration table and checked people in. I met more people that way, a couple from Michigan near me that I did not know were fans.

That evening, after registration closed, I attended the opening ceremonies and met Samuel R. Delany.

In thinking back over books that have had some influence in my life, four of them were written by Chip Delany. I told him so as he was autographing my copy of DRIFTGLASS. With THE FALL OF THE TOWERS trilogy, I learned to appreciate descriptive prose; in THE BALLAD OF BETA-2 I discovered how beautiful a description of the sex act could be; BABEL-17 influenced my study of language and linguistics;



and in EMPIRE STAR I found for the first time that I could follow an extremely complex plot, and keep everything straight. In signing the book, Chip wrote "Thanks" and signed his name.

Unfortunately, the Fan GoH was on a very tight schedule, and was late in getting in. I believe he arrived sometime early Saturday morning.

Saturday morning found me working registration again with Bev. I stayed until the early afternoon when John found me and said that it was time to take our yearly sojourn to Donald Wandrie's place in St. Paul. So John, Joe West and I piled into Selena and headed over to Don's home. It was sunny and warm, temperatures in the high 60's--MINICONs have always had good weather, ever since the Detroit people started going there regularly (which was a year before I got into fandom). Don was very happy to see us. It was the happiest I've seen him in the three years I have been going there. I learned more about his fight to recover his possession of Arkham House Publishing, about him as a person, and that he is still writing, although he has not published things in years. We stayed for a too brief three hours, and I enjoyed every minute of it. As a result I missed all the afternoon programming, but however interesting it looked, I didn't regret it one bit.

I could not afford the banquet, so I ate elsewhere, and returned in time for the speeches. I was very sorry that I did not have my tape recorder because it was all super. Krissy, the toastmistress, introduced Chip by singing a song she had written about his story THE BALLAD OF BETA-2. After the very hearty round of applause for her, Chip talked about SF and literature. He said several things that piqued my interest. When one sits down to read a SF novel (or short story, etc.), that person brings with her/him/it a certain frame of mind which is conducive to that genre of literature. This happens in all other genres also. For example take the line: "Her world blew apart." In mainstream and many other genres, it would be alluding to some emotional crisis; in SF that might also be true, but more than likely the woman's world actually was blown apart (into asteroids!). Other examples Chip included were: "He turned on his left side," and "He straightened out his head."

Chip also went into the area of academics and criticism of SF. One nicely written paper submitted to him dealt with a new form of SF which the author had just discovered in a novel by Michael Moorcock. That academic was talking about an alternate earth/history story (whose name I've forgotten--damn, I wish I had taped it), and he gave this form of SF a very academically sounding name (which I've also forgotten). The Moorcock novel was written in the 60's. Chip very carefully pointed out about ten other novels and stories which use the same method, all before the Moorcock novel. Very few academics have the necessary background to do a good critical study of the field, or of any written work. The historical background is necessary.

Chip also mentioned a few other things, not the least of which was a friend of his whose expertise in college had been in Victorian literature, who eventually turned to SF. After years of reading science fiction he decided to go back and read a Jane Austin novel, and he found that he wasn't reading it as an historical novel, or a novel of Victorian society, but as a SF novel, trying to imagine the world in which this was the society.

When Chip finished, Krissy introduced Spider Robinson, who regaled us with an opening speech filled with Spoonerisms, puns, entendres, and double-entendres. Then he sang a folksong entitled "Bova", sung to the tune of "Georgia." He had everyone rolling on the

floor with laughter.

Somewhere midst all this Dave Wixon got up to the mike and congratulated everyone on the concom and staff for the most successful MINICON ever. They had broken all previous attendance records. He thanked the various department heads, and gave special thanks to various people, including myself. That made me feel good. Finally, Krissy and Bob Tucker got together to end the speeches by having a smooth. Krissy took a swig of Bob's Beam'sChoice, then Bob did, and to the amazement of all, he choked. Coughing, he turned his back to the audience and his face red. He was all right, more embarrassed than anything else. Krissy and he finished the smooth, and we all headed for seats for the fan production by the Mobius Theatre, a group of thespian-oriented Chicago fans.

STAGE WARS, or WHO'S BIGGS? was the second of two STAR WARS parodies I saw at MINICON. The production went through the basic plot of STAR WARS, with a few minor changes, as in names (like Princess Layoff, E-I-E-I-O, Me-2 Me-2, Dumb Waiter, Okee-Wan Fenokee, Luke Warm-water, Drum Solo, Doowacka, etc.), and zany slapstick comedy. It was funny. Some of the highlights: anytime someone mentioned the Jedi Knights, a song and dance duo would sing and dance across the stage with a verse about the Knights ("On a planet, out in space, Jedi Knights get on your case."); Dumb Waiter trying to strangle one of the generals opposed to him (from a distance, as in STAR WARS), and nothing is happening to that officer, but behind him is another one writhing on the floor in death throes; Phil Foglio as Luke in the seat of his fighter, being bombarded by paper planes not only from the Mobius Theatre cast, but also by a good percentage of the audience. I was fortunate in having a seat fairly close to the front; I sat with the MinnSTF people, in thanks for giving them a hand throughout the con.

The other STAR WARS parody, which I saw three times, was HARDWARE WARS.

I did get an interview with Ben Bova, whom I had called before the convention, to arrange for it if he was going to be there. As to which night it was, Friday or Saturday, I have forgotten. If it were Friday, then Spider came in earlier than I mentioned before, because he dropped in my room where I was doing the interview with an audience of Barbara and Rose Bova, Dennis Jarog, Barney Neufeld and Jim Satterfield. And he gave the interview a twist I had not expected, making it even more interesting.

As I mentioned earlier I gave a few tips on massaging to Erica Simon, with whom I spent a good part of Saturday evening/Sunday morning. We had not seen each other since SUNCON, and we had a lot to talk about.

I also talked to Clifford Simak

for awhile. I took a couple of good slides of him for my files. I learned that he had recently retired from the Minneapolis Star and was writing full time, and he is enjoying himself immensely.

Sunday morning brought breakfast, more pleasant work with Bev and Gayle at the registration desk, and a viewing of Sandra Miesal's murder of classical art as she used such slides as visual aides to her con report. While sitting at the table, a fan in jean bib-overalls came up to me and thanked me for a terrific con. I said your welcome, but I had very little to do with it. This inspired Scott Imes, standing nearby, to say that I was going to be next year's con chairman, which brought a big laugh out of everyone else. That poor fan walked away bewildered.

The Space Rabbit left eggs at various doors again this year. Suzi Stefl and Dotti had a good time sneaking around from room to room leaving the eggs outside the doors. I forgot about the Space Rabbit coming and almost stepped on the egg as I came out the door in the morning.

Most of the rest of the time on Sunday afternoon was spent saying goodbye to those fans who were leaving that day. In the hotel lobby was a group of fan who were singing medieval seasonal songs; among them were Jon Singer and hummm, my memory is really shot! Can't seem to remember anyone else's name. Anyway, they were very good.

By eventide all were ready for the dead Dodo party. I was surprised at how many people actually stayed for the party. And I was somewhat shocked, even though

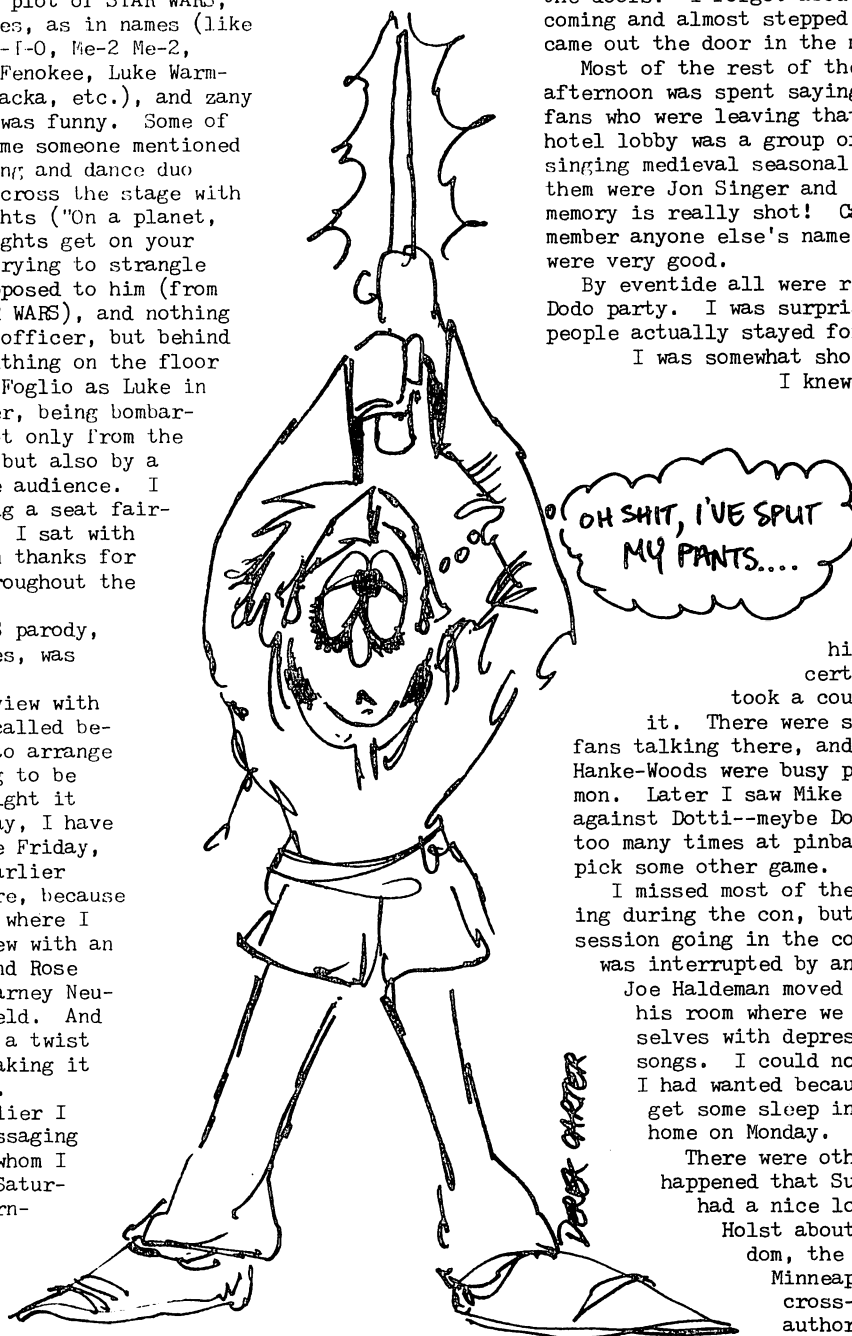
I knew about it, to see

Rusty Hevelin
with only
half a beard
on his face.
During the
TAFF and DUFF
auction money
had been collected
so that he
would shave half
his face, and he
certainly did. I even

took a couple of slides of it. There were several groups of fans talking there, and Dotti and Joan Hanke-Woods were busy playing backgammon. Later I saw Mike Glicksohn playing against Dotti--maybe Dotti had beat him too many times at pinball so he had to pick some other game.

I missed most of the regular filksinging during the con, but we had a nice session going in the con suite, which was interrupted by an obnoxious fan. Joe Haldeman moved the sing up to his room where we entertained ourselves with depressing to happy songs. I could not stay as long as I had wanted because I did have to get some sleep in order to drive home on Monday.

There were other things that happened that Sunday evening. I had a nice long talk with Chuck Holst about Minneapolis fandom, the history behind the Minneapolis in '73 bid, cross-country skiing, authors, and a dozen other topics. Gayle



Dixon and her husband Steve joined Chuck and I, and further conversation ensued. The range of topics covered have become a blur, although I do recall a discussion of strange things that have happened to us.

I saw Bev Elmshauser there with her husband Steve and their little boy, and I was sorry I could not spend some time talking to them then. They left early, so I look forward to seeing them once more at the next MINICON.

Throughout the con I sat and talked with Kathy Marschall at various times. She was shadowed most of the time by a hulk of a man who seemed to have monopolized most of her time. In the course of those little talks I found out that she was an artist, and I encouraged her to bring her artwork to cons, now that she has discovered an outlet for her work, and to submit some to various fanzines (like mine, for instance). We said goodbye tenderly with promises to keep in touch.

We finally left Monday morning with one more passenger than we came with; Mike Harper needed a ride to Detroit, to Sid Altus' house, who would then drive him to the train station in Windsor the next morning. The drive back was relatively uneventful until we hit rush-hour traffic in Chicago, and it got cold (it was supposed to hit the high 70's in Minneapolis that afternoon).

After dropping Bill, then John off, I sped toward the other side of the city to Sid's place to drop Michael off. By the time I got home I was very tired. All I did was to drag my stuff out of the car and up to my apartment. Without unpacking, and pausing only to shuck my clothes, I tumbled into bed and fell asleep, dreaming of MINICON. Even now I consider it tied for first among all the cons I've attended (tied with AUTOCLAVE I). The warmth, the friendship of the Minneapolis fans, the new friends I made, the old friendships rekindled, the parties, conversations, the people, all contributed to this.

I remain anxious for MINICON XIV.

RAMBLINGS 8.3

Just prior to MINICON my typer broke. So I took it in for repairs, and worked on LL #7 at school. When I got back, it still wasn't ready, so I continued to finish my fanzine with the selectric at Kingswood. Once I had all the master copies typed up I rushed them to Wayne State Press for printing. That left me with not too much time left for reading SF for the Hugo nominations ballot, getting ready for other cons that I would be going to in the month of April. With MARCON coming, and me on the panel to interview the GoH A. Bertram Chandler, I started reading as many of his books that I could so to be prepared for it. But there SF activities before then.

NOVA 3

NOVA III was put on by the Order of Leibowitz at Oakland University in Rochester Michigan on April 1. Actually it started the night before, but I did not go then. Admission was free, and I did want to meet Algis J Budrys who was the GoH. Also in attendance were to be some of my students who took one of the SF courses I taught during Interim. And two of them, Halina Harding and Tammy Rollocks were present and former (respectively) members of MISHAP, an apazine



edited by Brian Earl Brown, and two people thought to be my hoaxes. Indeed they were there, but got tied up in the wargaming room and I didn't see them until after Brian had left. But I did get witnesses that the two did exist!

I also, again, met Anna O'Connell who was dressed in a lizard outfit--a beautiful costume--and Julie Dabrowski, whom I had met at MINICON (she was one of the people who lived relatively close but I didn't know as a fan).

In addition to meeting A.J. Budrys and having him autograph my copy of MICHAELMAS (and correcting the four mistakes therein), and talking very briefly to Tom Sherred, I enjoyed the movie made from his book WHO? It was a very good adaptation of the book, but almost too enigmatic at the beginning. The plot, briefly, deals with an American scientist who has a car accident near the Russian occupied border of Germany and is captured by the Russians. Because of the accident he must be fitted with prosthetics: the entire skull, including eyes, mouth and ears; the chest cavity with an artificial lung; one prosthetic arm; and extensive surgery on the rest of his body. He is then traded for a Russian agent and he comes back to the US only to find that he is under suspicion as to who he really is. His face is a metal shell; an atomic engine keeps his prosthetics working (and all this before the concept of a bionic man--the novel was written in 1958). US security cannot be sure he is the real scientist or a fake.

The movie moves forward from two points in time: the first from the time of the accident, the second from the time he is handed back into US hands. The film alternates between these two lines until the end of the first meets the beginning of the second. Finally he is given clearance to work on top secret material again, but then denies that he is the scientist. (The book handles it much better than the movie.) The hardest thing to follow is the jump from one timeline to the other; it very confusing. Had I not read the book first I would have been totally lost, although I did talk to a couple people who had not read the book and could still follow it. Anyway, I did enjoy it.

A.J.'s GoH speech dealt with him becoming a writer, not the thought of being a writer, but sitting down and doing the work necessary to have your work printed with your name as the author. I like the speech, and although it did get me thinking somewhat about turning my talents toward that end, I decided to stay with the fan-pubbing for awhile longer.

I took off for home shortly after that. I had to get back and start planning for teaching which would be starting soon after. Spring break was coming to an end, and it was time to forge ahead to the end of the school year.

SF TEACHING SEMINAR

The next week I managed to attend the SF Teaching Seminar at Eastern Michigan University. Bill Prescott, the Headmaster of Kingswood School, funded the workshop for me, and I commuted to and from the University for the various activities. Although I had tried to get the Spec Lit teacher to come along, he had already made other plans for that weekend and couldn't.

I approached this as a con, even bringing my coonskin cap along. Before I put it on, I was recognized as a fan by Beverly Friend because I wore my Joan Hanke-Woods name badge. Among the fans/pros there included Lee Carroll, Fred Pohl, Thomas Clareson, Lloyd Biggle, Verna Trestrail (Doc Smith's daughter), Barry McGhan, Karrie Potter and Charlene Hinchliffe. Encountering Charlene was strange; she did look somewhat familiar, but I couldn't really place her. After introducing ourselves to each other, we discovered

The next week I managed to attend the SF Teaching Seminar at Eastern Michigan

MARCON 13

The following weekend was MARCON 13. Somehow I managed to get the afternoon off from teaching, by assigning some special work, I believe (Oh memory, why dost thou fail me now?). I picked up Terry Williams, Cy Chauvin, and was there someone else? For some reason I do not remember--so I shall continue with things that I do remember.

I settled in at the HOJOMOLONOCOLOH (Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge North, Columbus, Ohio), grabbed my hat, a stack of fanzines (LL #7) and went out to register and pass out my zines.

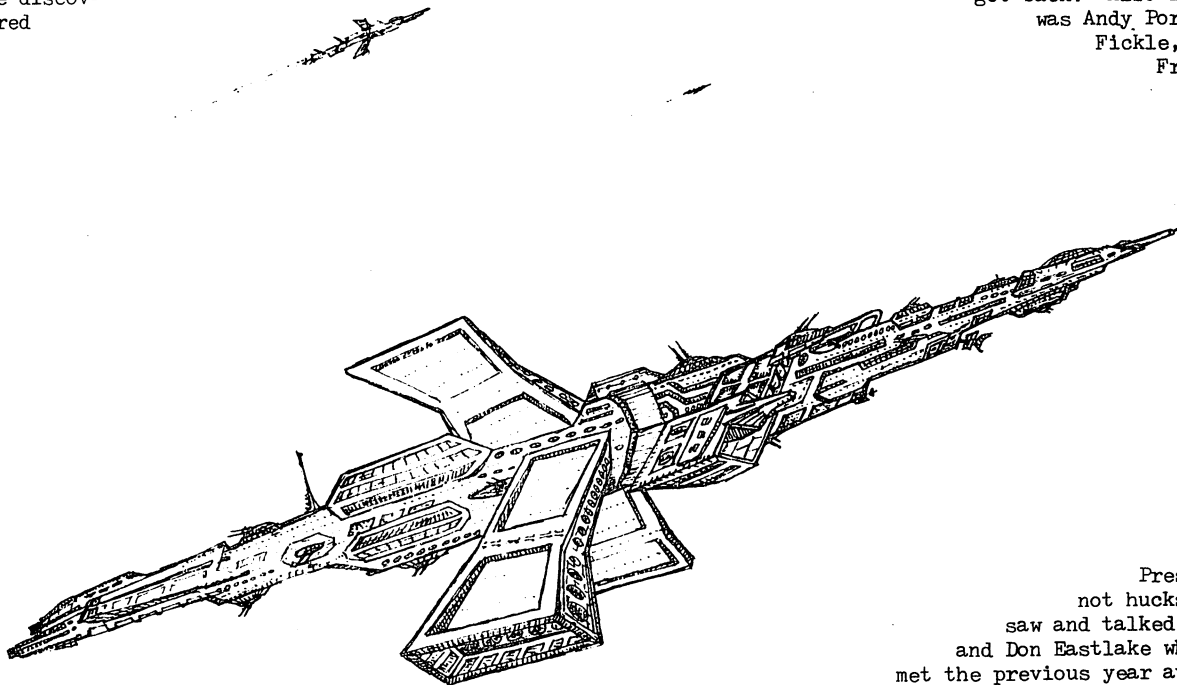
I spent a lot of time in the hucksters room where all the action was. I talked with Bob Gaines and Rusty Hevelin, buying books from both of them (and giving each a copy of my fanzine). Greg Ketter was there and I talked with him a bit about what

had happened in Minneapolis since MINICON. I did ask him to say hi to

Kathy Marschall for me when he got back. Also in there

was Andy Porter, Ken Fickle, Steve

Francis and George



TP 77

that
we both
had been at
MINICON; we recalled

the distinctive clothes that each of us had worn. I then pulled out my coonskin cap and confirmed the identification. We did spend some time throughout the rest of the seminar talking.

I learned a few things which would help me when I next taught my SF classes for Interim. I also befriended a couple of other teachers, Kathy Spencer and Carol Stevens, whom I introduced into the joys of backrub fandom.

The most interesting seminar was held by Roger Schlobin on Fantasy. His work and research into that field, so far as I know, has not been matched by anyone. He made me want to start immediately reading every fantasy book I could get my hands on.

Bacher.
Present but
not huckstering I
saw and talked with Jill
and Don Eastlake whom I had
met the previous year at B'HAMACON
and SUNCON, Devra Michele Langsam (with
whom I traded LL for a copy of one of her
zines, MASIFORM D), Bob, Ann and Robin Passavoy,
Andy and Jody Offutt and Sarah Prince.

In the evening the concomm held the Pre-Opening Ceremonies--poolside. As the fans gathered, Ross Pavlac, Mark Evens and a few other committee members got into the pool. Then they proceeded to throw Ross the Boss (the con chairman) out of the pool. Upon the execution of this unusual ceremony, Ross announced that there would a special Opening Ceremony the next afternoon, and then officially declared the con started, which meant that the consuite was opened. I changed into my bathing suit, grabbed a drink from the consuite, and took up a position in the pool as lifeguard.

For the first couple of hours there was almost no one in the pool. As the pool began to be used, (and people discovered that there was a sauna), Suzi Stefl came by to take my place for about a half hour or so, just so I could take a break. I headed for the con suite, talked with Carolyn "C.D." Doyle, Andy Offutt, Al Curry, and Diane DeVorne, grabbed a

drink from Mary Mueller and Steve Simons (who were tending bar at that time) and headed back to the pool. On my way I said hello to Gordie Dickson who happened to be passing through the hall, Kelly Freas who was doing likewise, and a few other fans (like Gary Blievernicht) whom I recognized.

I released Suzi from her stint of lifeguarding, and took up my post once again. Sean Carroll, Suzi Monique Tiffany, Jim Muttner and Mike Farinelli took out a cassette player and started playing the soundtrack to THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW, danced the "Time Warp" on the pool deck, and did other things which were RHPSFannish.

I did find out that because of my lifeguarding, I missed another of Bill Bowers' practice speeches for his spot as Guest of Honor at IGUANACON. I heard that it had gone over well, and I saw Bill several times passing through the pool area.

Saturday morning. Up and at 'em early (as usual), watched the group leave for the film premiere at the Raintree Theatre. I've forgotten what the feature was. After breakfast I visited the hucksters room and the art show. Kelly Freas had some very lovely paintings, one of which was sorely desired by Mark Bernstein. In the course of the morning I talked to CD Doyle with whom I had interesting talks with Don and Elsie Wollheim and A. Bertram Chandler (the GoH). I had Don autograph a number of books of his (hardcover) that I own, mostly the WORLD'S BEST SF series, and THE SECRET OF THE NINTH PLANET. CD asked him about agents, and Don gave his very strong opinions on them.

We met Chandler in the hucksters room, and he told us a few puns about koalas. He is a very funny man, and still very spry at the age of 66. Difficult to understand at first because I was not used to the Australian accent, once I adapted my hearing I found him delightful to converse with. He related some of his experiences in Japan (giving me a foreshadowing of what he was to talk about in his speech at the banquet).

I saw very little of Ross during the morning. I found out why when the opening ceremony took place. The members of the concom lined up in the front of the program room near the storage area. They started clapping hands in unison and "da-da-ing" some tune, each in different keys, and out comes Ross dressed in a BLUE AARDVARK SUIT!!!! With mask, cane and hat, leaving his tail trail behind him the Avenging Aardvark dance across the front of the room. Everyone was rolling on their chairs in laughter. When everything finally calmed down (about five minutes later) Ross introduced the Guest of Honor A. Bertram Chandler, and the Fan GoHs Larry Smith and Bob Hilles. We then made preparations for the first panel, an interview of Chandler sponsored by the SF Oral History Association.

Chaired by Lee Carroll, who would be concentrating on the Commadore's early writing period, the panel consisted of Donald Wollheim, who would ask questions from a publisher's/editor's point of view, Ross (still in his Aardvark suit sans mask), concentrating on anything anyone else missed, myself, asking questions mainly from a fan's viewpoint, and, of course, Commadore Chandler himself. The panel was very well done. The audience was fairly large, and the questions asked by the panel members and the audience at the end were very good ones which elicited a lot of information. In the program book Chandler wrote how Grimes, the main character of a number of his books, seemed always to be one step ahead of him in rank. I asked

the Commadore if this were some sort of wishing on his part to assume the office that he promoted Grimes to. Lee augmented the question in asking how closely Grimes was to his own character. Commadore Chandler replied that one time while he was on a ship at the invitation of the captain, he was asked by that captain what he (Chandler) would have done if Grimes were one of his officers. The Commadore said that he replied: "There would be no room on one ship for two Grimeses!"

In preparing for this interview I had read some of the Chandler books in my collection that I had not read before. Again I fell in love with the man's writing, recalling all those intriguing books I had read in my bedroom with the excuse that I was studying while in high school. Even back then I was impressed with Chandler's handling of women characters, giving them equal status with the men. He was the only author then that I read who had really built up a universe with a history; there was a development of technology with the change from Ehrenhaft generators to the Mannschenn drive; the stories were connected with a single character, John Grimes; the setting was on the rim where all sorts of strange things could happen. I had met Chandler 2½ years previously at my first MIDWESTCON, that same summer that saw the biggest failure of cons in fandom history, SF EXPO. I only talked with him very briefly, but was very impressed. I felt honored to have been on the panel interviewing him, and to have talked with him several times during the con.

The program book which was mainly put together by Ross Pavlac, reads as a tribute to A. Bertram Chandler. Aside from the usual background paragraphs of the GoH, there is also a couple of pages written by Chandler himself, then a complete cross reference listing and bibliography of his works, the Rimworld series (in approximate chronological order), ships and planets of the Rimworlds, miscellaneous topics found in the Rimworld series, and Autobiographical Notes on John Grimes by Chandler. The bibliography is completely annotated. It is a collector's item, and anyone who has any interest at all in Chandler should have a copy. I still marvel at the completeness with which Ross did his research.

Shortly after the interview I brought my entire collection of Chandler's works to him and he autographed every one of them, including both sides of the Ace doubles (even though I told him that he didn't have to!). I knew that I had a lot of books, and I had checked with him beforehand about autographing all of them. The Commadore said that he was used to it, for he had toured Japan and had signed books at several locations in that country. I also found out that Chandler is the third largest seller of the foreign authors in Japan; in fact Japan gets translations of his works into print before they are even released in the US, he is that popular.

From then until the banquet I talked with other fans, looked at artwork I couldn't afford to buy, and browsed through the hucksters room. The banquet itself was very good; I ate and went back for seconds. I sat with CD, Suzi and Dotti, Gary Blievernicht, and several other fans. The introductory speech about Bob Hillis and Larry Smith was interesting and funny; as were their respective short speeches. Chandler related several stories of the incidents which happened to him on his tour of Japan. For example, the time he was eating...raw fish...with his hosts and friends, and the fish was not dead, but merely knocked unconscious. In the middle of the meal the fish suddenly flapped its tail and gills. All the Japanese, said

Chandler, thought that it was very funny and laughed. However, he didn't finish eating. Then there was the pretty Japanese woman whose name was Sieko, for whom he autographed a book with the words: "To Sieko-san, A Girl to Watch." He said he couldn't resist the pun.

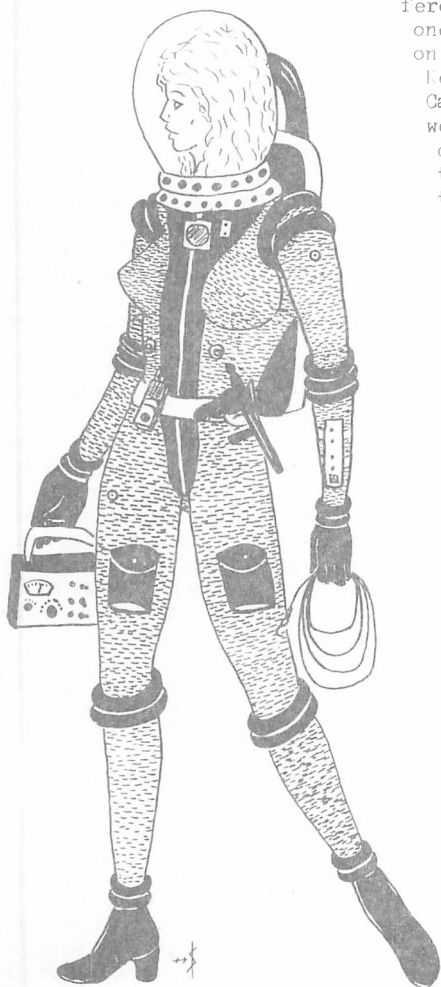
At the end of the banquet Ross announced a clone contest. One member of the attendees at the con was chosen to be a clone, and the person who discovers who it is would receive a special prize, a copy (autographed) of a Japanese edition of one of Chandler's books. I found out that I had asked CD too soon if she were a clone, for she was the one. Alas, I had forgotten it as soon as the banquet was over.

I stayed for the auction, mainly because there was one thing that I wanted. Although I had not put any bids on any artwork, I did want the autographed copy of Chandler's speech which he had given at Ohio State University the previous Thursday. It came up early because I asked for it--I had to go on lifeguard duty. The bidding was somewhat furious and fast. I went beyond my \$30 limit by too much, and still didn't get it; Micky Weeks beat me out.

My night at the pool was pretty much as the night before. Few people at the beginning, gradually increasing till closing time at 1 AM. (I did forget to mention the slide show put on by Don and Jill Eastlake, representing the Boston in '80 bid, which was done right after the banquet.) I stopped by the Boston in '80 party and talked with no one from Boston (they were out wandering). Some of the people

who were there were talking about different people, one remarking on the fact that Ken Konkel and Candice Massey were neither of them at the con, so therefore were elsewhere together. Typical fannish logic!

The next morning CD and I went to breakfast in the HoJo restaurant, and were joined by Teri Lewis and her friend. I found out that Teri was from the Detroit area, so I gave her a copy of LL and she pro-



mised to write me a loc.

With breakfast finished, and with the extra money that I hadn't spent on the auction, I perused the hucksters room again. There were a couple of things that I bought, among them the Crusader series, at least a start on them, by John Cleve. Thinking ahead to the '79 worldcon, I sought out Cliff Amos and joined NORTHAMERICON.

Before I left, I said goodbye to several people, and found Terry Williams reading a Starsky and Hutch manuscript. Unfortunately I had to take her away from it before she finished. On my way out I also heard about a SPACE:1999 convention coming to Columbus at the end of July. Fortunately, I had already planned to try to make RIVERCON, and AUTOCLAVE was the weekend before. So I was covered--not that I didn't want to attend a, uh, SPACE:1999 con *ahem*!

RAMBLINGS 8.4

Spring. The time for renewal. I missed it last year. I was sorry I did. I swore that I wouldn't miss it this year.

Last year had been my first year teaching at Kingswood School Cranbrook. I had been busy, concentrating on my classes, following the teams in sports, almost unswerving in my attention to whatever was happening at school. Before I knew it, the end of May hit me over the head with the celebration of Memorial Day. I stopped to look around me and saw the trees aleaf, the flowers ablooming and everything around me active. Yes, I had missed the change of season. I work in one of the most beautiful spots in Michigan, and I had missed the change from snow covered hills to the emerald refurbishing. Thinking back, I did recall seeing the snows melt, seeing the buds emerge on the trees, seeing the new plants poke their heads out of the soil, but I had not noticed.

This year was different.

I watched the snow mounds melt. I saw the stream swell to near overflowing and the icy pathways turn to mud. The ground softened and a thousand different seed took root. The tree and bush buds grew, extended, stemmed and leafed. Gradually the yellowish-brown dead grass turned green as new shots grew to replace them. I walked in the rain at times, slipping on the slick trails around campus, watched ponds fill, saw birds court and begin their nest building. Yellow flowers soon covered daffodil hill, a sure sign that summer and graduation was approaching.

No, I did not miss spring. I savored each minute that I took out to enjoy it. Witnessing the renewal of life around me made me more energetic. The warmer weather signaled several things: baseball, lacrosse, gardening, and the end of the school year.

The baseball team had its best season ever. They won the division title, then went on into the regionals where they were stopped in the finals. Our pitcher was a new student this year, a senior, whose style was one of the strangest I had ever seen. When Ann wound up for the pitch, her hand came back over her head till she could see the ball, then whipped around and let the ball fly. She had a fast ball that burned through the air. Ann went to the University of Michigan for try-outs for the softball team, and was told that she would probably make varsity her first year there. Although she was not as fast as some of the other girls who had tried out, Ann had more different kinds of pitches.

Four of our team members made the All Area Team put together by a local newspaper. Ann was the pitcher chosen, a surprise to her, since she considered



another girl to be better than she, one who had pitched a game that we had lost. Two more of our team members made the second team.

I LaCrosse we also did very well, although we ended up second in the league. The girls played well and were extremely happy with their wins, but they still would have wanted first place. Unfortunately most of the team were seniors, and would graduate in a matter of weeks. Next year would be a rebuilding of teams year.

My garden took up a bit of my spare time. I asked for more garden space this year, spurred on by the success of my "green" thumb of last year. To double the size of my plot I had to be in the "unplowed" section, i.e., I would have to turn over the ground myself instead of waiting until the groundskeepers decide to do the plowing and discing in the garden. What actually happened was that the "line of demarcation" between the plowed and unplowed sections was moved to the other side of my garden plot.

This year I planned my gardening a bit better than the previous year. With double the amount of space from last year, I planned big: four rows of broccoli plants, beans, lima beans, six rows of onions (both from bulbs and seeds, white and yellow), garlic, cucumber pickles, tomatoes, corn, carrots, lettuce, rutabagas, peas, potatoes and cabbage, and peppers.

I used fencing made of chicken wire to support the peas, and purchased some very heavy gauge wire fencing (6" by 6" square) five feet high to make cages to support the tomato and cucumber vines. It was an experiment this year, which I hoped would pay off. One of the other gardeners had them last year, and they looked as though they helped. The fencing was cut into 5 foot sections then rolled into a cylinder and buried 6" into the ground. Tomato plants and cucumber seeds were put inside the towers.

I tried starting some of the plants indoors this spring. All of them came out long and stringy. I found out later that I was supposed to use florescent lighting to increase the amount of "sunlight" that the plants receive, because the winter sun, the spring sun, does not shine long enough to effect proper growth. Live and learn.

Spring also brought the various end-of-school activities like the sports banquet, plays, concerts and (of course) finals. I was especially interested in attending as many of the concerts as I could. Some I could not fit into my schedule, but the ones I went to I did enjoy. The best of them were the Madrigal concerts and the Senior Recitals. The Madrigals are always good. The Senior recitals were done by those seniors who are music majors. I heard some of the best voices on campus at the recitals. If I had to single out my favorite concert of the recitals (and this is quite difficult), I would have to pick Lisa's as the one.

Lisa entertained the audience. I heard about her putting on a recital on the after noon of the evening she was doing it. Fortunately it was easy to re-arrange my schedule to accommodate it. And I was glad I did. Lisa sang, danced (somewhat), acted, played a trumpet, harmonized with her sister---really entertained her audience. She sang happy, sad, funny songs. She made us laugh and cry, she made us feel good, sentimental, happy. She was a one-person show; she loved doing it, and we loved her for it.

During the year I had become close to Frank and Cindy Norton and their family. Frank teaches physics, reads SF, and incorporates SF into his classes. We attended one of the concerts together (the three of us), and Frank and I were amused at watching the piano accompanist. Franklin Coleman, who is the organist for Christ Church (associated with Cranbrook), had several loose sheets for one of the numbers. The page-turner put them up in almost the right order; there was some shifting around, and in the middle of the number, Franklin turned over one sheet that was upside down. The whole situation was like a comedy routine, and Frank and I had all we could do to keep from bursting out laughing.

Among the other things that happened was that Beth graduated from night school and was a certified Animal Health Technician. She had graduated as one of the top three in the class. Those top three traded places often during the two-year span of the course. She could very well had been at the top.

Then came graduation. Long awaited for by the seniors, they did indeed enjoy it. As usual, that week of finals, on the Wednesday evening of the last

##concluded on page 52##

Bram Stoker Meets the P. B. S. or

by Mark R. Leeper

DRACULA gets CULTURE

A student in the Soviet Union was asked at one point why it is that the Communist system is superior to all other systems of government. "It is because Communism is able to cope successfully with problems that do not arise in other systems." I suppose that the same could be said about the Public Broadcasting System--it is able to cope successfully with a problem that does not arise in the other three networks: getting viewers to shell out money to see television that any contributor could be seeing free (assuming not all viewers decided to shirk en masse). Their strategy is a relatively simple one. PBS simply supplies programs, for a fee, to the member station and lets them run membership drives at fixed intervals. At these intervals PBS arranges to be showing programs that have higher than average (for PBS) audience appeal. Presentation at these times are chosen with what may be less of an eye to quality but more of an eye to attracting viewers.

This is not to imply that quality suffers at these times. If it does, it does so minimally. But instead of showing dramas based on Maugham or Tolstoi, they show, for example, "Steambath," a contemporary comedy by Bruce Jay Friedman which is unfortunately better known for its nudity than for the humor and philosophical bent of the play. It is a pity that a play of this quality does not attract an audience without the sensationalism, but for this particular period it is the sensationalism that causes the play to be chosen. The name of the game is to get a big audience and guilt-monger them into contributing, and the priorities place audience attraction above quality. Out of fairness to PBS I should point out that on the other three networks it is extremely rare that quality as a consideration takes precedence over audience size, and while pandering is an occasional necessity on PBS, on the other three networks it is a way of life.

This time around PBS had a surprise waiting for their fund drive. Whether you are aware of it or not, this year is a sort of milestone for Dracula fans. There are on or near Broadway no less than four plays running about Dracula. As a sort of perspective, to the best of my knowledge the character has never appeared in more than six films in a single year world-wide, and never in more than two films of any note in the same year. While it is comparing apples and oranges to compare plays and films, if you consider the number of plays involved vs. the number of films, you can see that at least in the New York area the Dracula mythos this year has made a significant impact on the public consciousness.

To answer this tremendous public interest in Dracula, PBS has decided that during their membership drive they would present "Count Dracula," their own adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel via their regular program "Great Performances."

Now a word about attempts to adapt the novel DRACULA to other media. The medium that packs the most plot into a single story is undoubtedly the novel. Generally speaking, a film can do a reasonable job of adapting somewhere between thirty and a hundred pages of a novel plot, depending on the novel's and

the film's respective styles. If a film tries to adapt a story of more than a hundred pages it will either have to be an exceptionally long film or it will have to cut down and/or modify the plot to fit the film. DRACULA is a fairly long novel with a lot of plot, so as a result, adaptations to other media have always been unsatisfying at best. The best known adaptations (NOSFERATU, the Bela Lugosi DRACULA, and Hammer Film's HORROR OF DRACULA) have done little more than pay lip service to the novel on which they claim to be based. Another film version, the Spanish COUNT DRACULA, was moderately accurate but still took large liberties with the plot and in addition was agonizingly woodenly acted. Dan Curtis' earlier television version also strove for some accuracy though it gave a radically modified interpretation of the nature of a vampire.

Theatrical versions have been even less faithful to the book due to the obvious limitations of a live stage production. Oddly enough the most faithful adaptation to another medium was probably the premiere performance of Orson Welles' Mercury Theatre on radio. While the Mercury Theatre is best remembered for its much less faithful adaptation of WAR OF THE WORLDS just a few months later, this version packed into one extremely busy hour more of the plot and feeling of the original novel than any other version (with the possible exception of the PBS adaptation) ever has. The fact that it could be so well adapted into a radio play only an hour long is a tribute to the genius of Orson Welles and to the capabilities of the medium of radio, in which the plot is not slowed down by the necessity to show visual images. Compare, for example, how long it takes to say, "The dog jumped over the ship's railing to the beach below, ran down the beach, and was out of sight," with the length of time that scene would take in a film.

The techniques used to cut down the book to a manageable size are usually to 1) rewrite the plot to eliminate the need for major sections of the book, 2) eliminate characters for the same reason, or 3) funnel two or more characters into a single character who represents the actions of both. NOSFERATU did the first to such a degree that the other two did not really apply. After the vampire arrives in Germany (changed from England) the story completely diverges from the book.

The Bela Lugosi DRACULA made the unlikely funneling together of Jonathan Harker and the madman Renfield. It eliminated a number of other characters, the story of the ocean voyage to England (which is an excellent horror story in itself), and the climactic chase.

The Hammer Film HORROR OF DRACULA did a major rearrangement of the plot, having Harker at the beginning of the film already in a conspiracy with Van Helsing to destroy the vampire. Hammer apparently moved Dracula's castle from Rumania to somewhere in Western Europe, one night's journey from Arthur Holmwood's estate. By severely cutting the scope of the

story, the need for many of the characters and most of the plot is removed.

COUNT DRACULA, the Spanish film, was fairly faithful to the original, but it still felt obliged to funnel Dr. Seward and Van Helsing into a single character and eliminate the ocean voyage to England. The Dan Curtis television version does the same and in addition funnels parts of Jonathan Harker, Dr. Seward, and all of Quincy P. Morris into Arthur Holmwood and eliminates Renfield entirely.

Most accurate was the Mercury Theatre radio which got by in one hour by excising only Renfield, Quincy and some dramatic but less important sections of the plot.

That brings us to "Count Dracula" done on three consecutive hours of PBS' "Great Performances." The first thing to note is that we have here the longest version of the story other than the original novel. There are approximately 150 minutes of drama in this adaptation and hence we have greater opportunity to have an accurate representation of the novel. The opportunity is not wasted. There are many small details of the novel that are not in previous versions

or are only part of the Mercury Theatre version. For example, Dracula has hair on his palms, and pointed fingernails. Only the Mercury Theatre version has noted this detail, though Christopher Lee, who played Dracula in both HORROR OF DRACULA and the Spanish COUNT DRACULA, claims that this is the only detail about the physical appearance of the vampire missing from his portrayal in the latter film. Lee says, "These are details that could hardly ever be picked up."

Some scenes have an amazing degree of detail from the book while others vary from the book with interesting effect. By the literal word of the novel, Dracula is motionless in his coffin when found by Jonathan, but I far prefer the eerie semi-conscious eu-

phoria Dracula had in the PBS version. He watches Jonathan's movements but even being hit with a shovel does not remove the contented smile from his lips. Another "re-interpretation" that works out better than the original is the Shavian arguments Dracula gives in his own defense when confronting Van Helsing. Stoker's vampire merely scowls and threatens. Jourdan captures for one all too brief moment some of the feel of "Don Juan in Hell."

Incidentally, as in the novel, but not as in many vampire films, Dracula is not confined to his coffin during the day. We see him traveling abroad during the day (as a cab driver) in one scene. He simply loses his superhuman powers during the day. It is only at night that he can pick up with ease, as he does in one nicely understated scene, the case that Jonathan Harker was struggling with just a moment before.

Another detail preserved in this version was the setting of Jonathan's arrival at Castle Dracula on the eve of St. George. The Bela Lugosi DRACULA is

the only other version that placed the arrival on a special evil night and it substituted the somewhat better known Walpurgis Night (used also in Goethe's FAUST). Still another touch unexpectedly preserved from the novel is the youth of Jonathan, Lucy, Mina, and Quincy. I do not remember the exact information from the book but I interpret them as being in their early twenties, perhaps the women even in their late teens. Most film versions add ten to fifteen years to these ages.

At some point I have to get to the liberties this version took to pack the novel into even a 150-minute film. I have three complaints. The first is the reduction of the ship's log to a three-sentence reference. This section of the plot is one of the most dramatic incidents of the book, as both NOSFERATU and the Mercury Theatre radio versions amply demonstrated. It is deleted here probably because the only major character it involves is Dracula himself, but I think it performs an important function in the story. This is a tale of what really is a small group of people who discover an evil force that is loose in the world, lose one of their number to it, and finally destroy this embodiment of evil. Perhaps it is less obvious in dramatic adaptations of the book, but nearly the entire account of the story is told by members of that small group. It is not too difficult for so small a group to be accused of parochialism. The ship's log is one of the major independent confirmations that Dracula really is the evil they claim he is, being written by a ship's captain whom the group never gets a chance to meet.

My second complaint deals with a less effective sequence but one which also should give independent confirmation of the evil of Dracula as well. The sequence of "bloofer" lady attacks on local children is much curtailed in this version and the one child attacked is discovered by Van Helsing. Again we lose an independent account. Incidentally, something I had not realized until seeing the PBS version is the meaning of "bloofer" lady. I had assumed it was a sort of a distaff version of "Bogey man." For the first time that I know of, it is explained that "bloofer" is really a child's pronunciation of the word "beautiful."

My third complaint is that they found it necessary to take two characters, important characters, Arthur Holmwood and Quincy P. Morris, and amalgamate them into a single character with the unlikely name of Quincy P. Holmwood. What makes it even worse is that the actor did an embarrassingly bad imitation of a Texas accent that sent more shivers up my spine than any of the horror of the story. He sounded like an English schoolboy who saw DR. STRANGELOVE and walked out of the theatre imitating Slim Pickens. "Whoa there, little lady. Ah sur, hope that ain't the effect ah'll always have on va."

I suppose that I cannot really complain about the much abbreviated final chase of the vampire. Due to time considerations, we lose a good deal of the effect of the cat-and-mouse game of trying to intercept Dracula before he can reach his castle, a game using Mina as a spy via a telepathic link to the Count that the Count himself carelessly arranged. Though it is a little melodramatic, this race is a full five weeks long and is, in the final analysis, won and the vampire defeated by a matter of about five seconds. I should add that this version did include, during the chase, the "confrontation in the woods," and this is the first time I've seen it done. It also threw in gratuitously a sort of Western shoot-out with some of the henchmen of Dracula during the same chase,



substituting a Western touch for the detective-story touches they missed. Another touch PBS missed, although I've seen it observed only in the Spanish adaptation, is the fact that Dracula should start old and grow younger. This is fairly important in the vampire's motivation and would have been a welcome touch had it been remembered.

The PBS production, "Count Dracula", is a new step towards the now popular, though not necessarily accurate, trend to play up the erotic aspect of Dracula. Particularly in this version scenes with possible erotic interpretations are played up. Dracula's attacks seem to involve as much body contact as possible, resembling intercourse. It is easy to say that Stoker would have wanted to make Dracula Highly sensual and erotic, but the times would not permit it. It seems to me that this is really an attempt to bring him down to terms that we all can understand and dismiss away. The power of the novel comes in part from the fact that Dracula is entirely apart from normal human experience. He is incomprehensible. He is the unknown. If vampirism is just a sexual perversion, it brings the novel down to the level of a Harold Robbins novel. If vampirism is a social problem like heroin addiction, as it is portrayed in HORROR OF DRACULA and even more in its sequel BRIDES OF DRACULA, then the original novel is on the level of a Kojak episode, and our heroes are rushing against time to catch just an exotic pusher. The essence of the horror of the novel is the questions: "What the hell is this thing, this nemesis, we are fighting?" and "What the hell have we gotten ourselves into?" Jourdan's rather erotic lover/vampire partially nullifies the effect of these questions.

The casting of Louis Jourdan as a Dracula with a French accent is a little hard to accept. Generally the accepted philosophy in casting Dracula is to make him look like the historical Transylvanian warlord who was already legendary when Bram Stoker first heard of him, though there were no vampire legends connected with the original historical figure as far as I know. I could be wrong about no bona-fide legends about the original being a vampire, but if there are any, I'm fairly certain they are recently discovered "legends." It is amazing what can be uncovered if one decides a priori that he will find the historical evidence to support a point of view. If you don't believe it, look at IN SEARCH OF FRANKENSTEIN by Radu Florescu, in which he uncovers some amazing legends about the Frankenstein family, legends that it's highly unlikely that Mary Shelley had ever heard when she more-or-less pulled the name out of the ether to use in her novel.

I guess I am digressing. My point is that it is not necessarily ideal to model a dramatic Dracula on the historical Dracula. He is an obvious model since we have paintings to tell us what he looked like, but it is not entirely clear to me that Stoker modeled his vampire visually on the historical person who did not have hair on his palms, the pointed nails, or the fangs of the fictional vampire (admittedly these may be the side effects of the vampirism). The ideal portrayal of Dracula would be as Stoker saw him, not as contemporary painters saw him. Still, the French Dracula is a bit far afield even from Stoker's description. Perhaps Christopher Lee's portrayal in COUNT DRACULA really was the closest, though based more on the historical original. Only his portrayal and John Carradine's seem to remember the detail of the moustache, for example.

Frank Finley's Van Helsing fits well within the rather wide spectrum of screen interpretations of

this character, which range from the wizzened old Edward Van Sloan to a young and virile Nigel Davenport. Finley's Van Helsing is certainly a likeable character, whether he is charming Lucy or being amused at the strange twist of English that calls a door frame a "door jamb." Still, he seems better cast in THREE MUSKETEERS. Frankly, I don't know who I would cast as an ideal Van Helsing, though I have a prejudice for Peter Cushing who may not be accurate in the part but has a certain personal magnetism as Van Helsing, and who may well be the best actor who has ever taken the part. Beyond that, the character of Renfield is notably strange, though expressive, in his part, playing a more intellectual Renfield than most, but in the final analysis not the most memorable one I've seen. (Perhaps Klaus Kinski deserves that honor.) The actor who plays Quincy, as I have noted before, is only too memorable.

Somewhere along the line the decision was apparently made that this was going to be a visually striking version of the story. Unfortunately a number of the effects used are either over-familiar or just plain obvious. When Dracula is about to strike the color of the scene is electronically filtered or reversed to negative. I'm not sure which, but it's a fairly familiar and obvious effect. Somebody felt color reversal was effective; I'm not sure why, but it was even used as the credit sequence. It was an unfortunate decision, however, since playing with colors and cartoon animation simply look too synthetic. It ruins a hallucination scene in the first episode and pervades each of the episodes. Another scene having Dracula enter a room as "elemental dust" is done by animation and comes off looking like TinkerBell. Peculiarly, when the stake is driven through Dracula's chest it unleashes a geyser of dust that could have been done by the same effect, but this time the special effects people used a physical geyser of dust that came off looking much better.

Somewhat more successful and believable are the results when the special effects technicians resort to standard effects. A matting technique is used to show Jonathan's reflection in the mirror but not Dracula's. It is nicely done though it misses points because Jonathan's actions are not precisely synchronized to those of his matted-in reflection. Incidentally, there is no explanation why Dracula is so concerned with Jonathan bringing a mirror into his castle but keeps highly polished and reflective gold plates on his table. Perhaps vampires do reflect in gold!

Another effect that unfortunately is not done with the expertise that it is done in the Hammer film is the staking of Lucy. The effect is rather obviously created. A dummy torso is placed in the coffin and



holes cut in the coffin where the head and arms should be. The actress places her own head and arms through the holes so that the dummy torso appears to belong to the actress. The torso is filled with an inflatable cushion which is inflated and deflated to simulate breathing. Also in the torso are tubes to spew out blood when the chest is pierced. Not surprisingly, PBS is not used to creating this effect as Hammer films are, and the torso came off a bit stiff and cardboardy. Still, they were recreating a scene that twenty years earlier Hammer films was accused of being degrading and vulgar for filming. PBS dramatizing graphic horror, to paraphrase Mark Twain, is a little like a dog walking on its hind legs: it's not that it does it well; it's just amazing that it does it at all. Perhaps PBS should have taken a special effects course from Hammer. They telegraph their techniques occasionally by sloppy work. The Host touched to Mina's forehead starts smoking just a moment too soon, before it even touches her, and obviously from a tube in Van Helsing's sleeve. No less obvious but more effective is the scene of Dracula crawling down the castle wall. Obviously it was a horizontal wall, but for the scene Jourdan mastered a sort of jerky crawl that suggested a bat, perhaps a rabid bat, superbly well. That may sound like a put-down, but it's not intended as such. It is a piece of highly creative physical interpretation and an effect that Hammer tried only once and not as effectively.

I ought to tie all these stray bits together in an over-all impression of the PBS "Count Dracula." While it is highly flawed, I think I would have to say it has fairly closely tied the Mercury Theatre adaptation of the novel for the most accurate representation I have seen. As far as the most enjoyable adaptation, I would place it third, after the Mercury Theatre and Hammer versions. Somehow it seems to embody sex and violence, a little bit of Western action, a little detective show, and a fair dose of horror--in fact all the elements that make the other three networks so successful and from which alternative television was first invented to escape. Still, if PBS does not feel they are sully their image by producing a sensationalist horror story, I'm the last person who would complain. I rather hope that next year they will adapt FRANKENSTEIN.

I should cite a couple of sources I used in writing this article. Leonard Wolf's ANNOTATED DRACULA is only fair as annotated classics go, but the calendar of events of the story he includes in the appendix is extremely useful for finding given incidents of the story. The definitive book on the many adaptations and offshoots of Stoker's novel is the Donald G. Glut's THE DRACULA BOOK, published by Scarecrow Press. While I took only Lee's quote on his own COUNT DRACULA directly from the book, where my memory was foggy on some of the adaptations I had seen, I was able to use the book to verify what I was unsure I had remembered correctly. In any case, it is worth reading.

SPLINTERS AND PULP.....

book, besides entertaining us. Perhaps he has succeeded. Haldeman is echoing the Orwellian notion so devastatingly portrayed in 1984, that the "object of power is power." "That 'me' died," Otto insists at the end of the novel, "when he signed up for Foreign Service and you (the Confederacion) pre-empted him for TBII....Otto McGavin died and was replaced by what I am today, when I'm not someone else."



... AND
HERE'S YOUR
RED CROSS BLOOD
DONOR'S CARD!!

RAMBLINGS 8.4.....

day of finals was the Prom. I attended as an unofficial chaperone and had a pretty good time, although not as good as the previous year. Then I attended the Afterglow, the all-night party (till 4 AM) at the home of one of the seniors (parent chaperoned, although they did stay in the background). Fortunately it was all indoors, for it started to rain heavily about midnight.

The next day was mainly left to the teachers to correct finals, work out grades (especially for the seniors), and one meeting for the faculty to decide on which girls would graduate. All of them did, with two provisionals--meaning that before they would be awarded a diploma, they had to meet some other requirements.

Friday was Graduation. The seniors never looked better. It was a happy/sad event. I choked up a couple of times as some of my favorite students came up for their diplomas, but still I did not cry. I can see that day coming, though, as I become more and more attached to some of the students.

Graduation passed, and we had our final meetings of the year. Some girls were invited back, others were dismissed for various reasons. During the school year I lost two of my advisees: one for plagiarism (on top of other violations of school code), and the other because she was caught spending the night in the boys' dorm. That pattern held from my first year here. I hope that it does not continue into my third year! I can say, though, that it was a good year. I did have some minor problems with the freshmen I taught, but a couple of talks together smoothed things out, and made me love them all the more.

I found a home, a place I love to work. I think I'm gonna stay right here awhile.

Joe Haldeman is threatening to become a "one-idea writer," for governmental exploitation of humans has been a major theme in his last three books. But he looked quite content at CONFUSION in 1978, sitting in a worn jacket and jeans, sucking on his pipe and watching the professional panel discussion. He remains one of the best "hard" science fiction writers of the day.

Marty Levine

Empathic

Post

Scriptings

I received a tremendous response from LL #7, as well as a few straggling comments from LL #6. I'll start with those, then move into the locs on the seventh LANTERN. Taking the suggestions that some readers have made about the use of the (()) between which I include my comments, I have changed to using the double pound sign ## ## between which to write my comments. As this issue is already over the limit I had originally set in terms of pages, I have attempted to pare down the letter: I have received, yet still giving worthwhile comments proper space. In some cases more than one person made pretty much the same comment and I printed the one who said it best, or the one that I received first. I have tried not to slight anyone (too much, anyway), and I wish I could print everything I got (it's great egoboo), but that's not possible. So.....

Lee Pelton
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When Carol ## Kennedy ## and I collate RUNE, we have a party and virtually do nothing except run off the 1000+ copies of each page. This, however is a bitch. We have a David Egge original to look at but the TV is located in the opposite direction from the mimeo. Music helps and changing records is a welcome break from watching the paper flow by and ink the weak spots as they appear.

Not having seen EXORCIST II, I have not much to say about Mark's review. You may be interested to know that this particular movie was voted worst of the year by a local weekly that surveyed such stuff.

The interview with Jackie Causgrove gave me a good all around over-view of her and I think I would like her very much. ##She is one terrific person!## I have seen her artwork displayed at many regional cons and was impressed. I am only unhappy that I could not afford them. SAY LA VEE. ##Weep, Lee. I have five different pieces of hers, and every one of them a gem!## Maybe she'll read this and take pity on a poor fan/editor. And Jackie was wrong, it was a good interview.

The Haldeman interview was very good, too. I was amused to hear the story concerning the ATTAR series. I had heard rumors concerning Joe's involvement with the series and his revelations were interesting. All in all, he struck me as an interesting and talkative man. ##He is; I transcribed less than half of what we talked about in that interview.## I have only seen Joe peripherally at conventions and suspect that if I got a chance he would be a good man to know. Of course I would have to try and catch him when he was sober (~~fat/very fat~~). ## He's just as funny sober as he is not-sober. I have always found him interesting to talk to. Once you get him started, he's like Gordie--it's difficult to turn him off.##

Joan Hunter Holly
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The con reports made my mouth water; I laughed, soared and thoroughly

lapped up the interview with Joe Haldeman; and I learned a lot from "We Can Build Your Grandmother."

The cartoon on page 18 was hilarious--the one concerning the Enterprise and pointed ears--and brought to mind a speech Robert Heinlein gave last September in Ypsilanti, Michigan, ##CONCLAVE 2## when he received his Honorary Doctorate. He pointed out the

fact that there has always been an Enterprise in the U.S. Fleet. He had the historical dates, which I do not have, but it is a tradition that runs far back in time. In fact, the existence of two Enterprises today is the first instance when this dual-name has occurred. I hope this doesn't break the Kirk/Spock heart. We can still dream it the way we like to dream it, can't we!

I missed CONFUSION this year and missed it sorely. I don't intend to let it happen again. ##Don't, I and my racoon skin cap missed you too.## It seems to be my one convention of the year and, without it, the year do drag. The "thing" in Detroit/Ypsilanti last September ##CONCLAVE 2, again## threw me off my stride due to its real zinger of oddness. Can you imagine this? Here I was, meeting Robert Heinlein for the first time in my life and just as awed and honored as I should have been, and what happened next? He bought me a "second supper" of lime jello and tea in a Ponderosa, of all places! Mrs. Heinlein and Barbara Bova were present too, but I'll never forget thinking that if all those customers and Ponderosa employees only knew the identity of the man passing through their cafeteria line, they would probably fall over in dead faints. He had steak and I had jello. Who could have swallowed anything else? ##Many mundanes are very impressed when I tell them that I have talked with the likes of Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and other notable authors of SF. Yet it is easy to do because of their availability at conventions. As for being in awe in the presence of Big Name Pros, yes I still feel that too.##

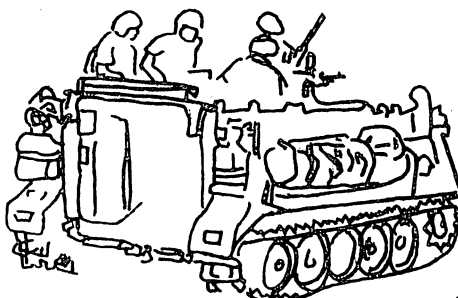
Jan Brown
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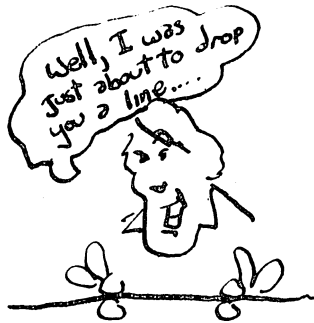
As to STAR WARS, when I first read the novelization (some time before I saw the movie, which arrived in Cleveland fairly late) I was struck by its similarity in plot and style to TAR-AIYM KRANG. I dismissed it as coincidence, since I know one would-be writer whose stuff reads a lot like Foster's--and he started before KRANG came out!

Who was that?## Next time I'll trust my instincts!!

Your zine is most readable--in both senses of the word. I enjoyed the articles and interviews, and the Joan Hanke-Woods artwork was especially notable. As for your repro--I once received someone's zine, the repro of which was completely illegible. Yours has its flaws -- no-

OK. NOW HOLD YOUR FIRE
'TIL WE GET TO 47 VALLEY WAY





lably a slight unevenness (or is that because I wasn't wearing my glasses? No, there is an unevenness!) There are a few typos, but nothing gross--you are at least as good a typist as I am, and I make my living pounding one of the beastly things!

Somebody in #6 commented on the similarity of Ander-

son's WAR OF THE WING-MEN to Foster's ICERIGGER. Has anyone besides me noticed the resemblance between Maxim Malaika and Nicholas van Rijn? ## No, no one else has--how about an article showing the similarities between the two?##

Ah, you're another one who puts yourself to sleep by telling stories. ##I haven't done that in quite awhile--usually I'm too tired to think of any stories and just drop off to sleep fairly quickly.##

And you know medieval dances--is there no end to your accomplishments? ##No, not yet...##

Allen Chen
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I have to take issue with Michael Sestak's comments on DNA. That is, I think I'm taking issue with them, It wasn't clear to me wheth-

er he was supporting or criticizing (maybe both?) the handling of the affair. I've done a little work on the policy side of the recombinant DNA issue, and I've found two things. The first is that there is really very poor communication going on among the various groups involved (although this has changed somewhat recently). Scientists really don't know how to talk to policy-makers or to the public (which is not always the same thing), and they now have to go through that rather painful process of learning how to communicate with someone who is not "in". A lot of the current misunderstanding and mistrust probably stems from the simple inability of some scientists to say, clearly and concisely, what they are trying to do with their work, how they are doing it, and why they took the actions (i.e., the moratorium) that they did.

The other thing that I've found is more a subjective (and no doubt value-laden) opinion than it is a fact. I just don't think the experimentation is as bad as it is hyped up to be. The risks increase in time, but so does our knowledge. And I think that society is intelligent enough to make a conscious decision not to go straight to human experimentation before a lot more is known on the subject. I agree with the go slow policy: society (i.e., the policy-makers, and public, as well as scientists) should be able to evaluate progress along the way.

I am intrigued by Mark Leeper's article, "Who Wrote STAR WARS?" Most of the reasoning sounds good, although I'm not sure about the last paragraph, the conjectured reason for giving Lucas credit on STAR WARS and Foster credit on the second novel. It seems to me that most adaptations of scripts by authors who did not write the original have a notation somewhere which tells you where the book is adapted from, and usually who wrote the original script. (See, for instance, Foster's other adaptations, of which there are legion.) Then again, I have no idea why Lucas would want (or Foster would want to give) credit for the writing of that novel. ##I have received nothing from Alan Dean Foster at all about the article. When I mentioned it to him at SUNCON that I would be printing such an ar-

ticle, he said that he was interested in reading it. He made no confirmation or denial. It just keeps us all wondering!##

I'm getting into interviews these days. It seems as though a lot of the fanzines I've read recently have interviews, in one form or another. (Is this the vogue these days? What next!) The Haldeman interview was interesting, although I had some preconceptions of him shattered by it. He's very cynical (that shows up all too well in his novels), and I think this grated on me a bit. But he was also surprisingly easygoing and pleasant to read about. ##It is unfortunate that he does not get out to the West coast for cons; corner him and get him talking, and Joe will keep going for hours; just keep him supplied with bheer!## I also enjoyed the Jackie Causgrove interview; the two of them together were nice and balanced, not only fan/pro, but two dissimilar personalities too. You have an interesting conversational style in your interviewing. I've done some interviews myself (not SF) and I always prepare all my questions in advance, in a strictly prearranged order which almost nothing will make me change. I have difficulties breaking away from that set pattern and have, unfortunately, missed following up on some interesting trains of thought. The conversational style works very well for SF fans and writers. ##In the past I have avoided reading interviews, and had forgotten why. Just recently I read the interview with Isaac Asimov in KNAVE, and found out why. They stuck to a set pattern of questions and did not follow through on some lines of thought that would have been quite productive. I do prepare a number of questions which I keep in mind, but usually I cover all of them in the course of the interview, because usually something the person says sparks the proper question.##

Good conreps, although you might try jazzing up your style a bit. The stream-of-consciousness thing (i.e., the linear style) gets monotonous sometimes. ##I'm working on it!##

Richard Brandt
4013 Sierra Drive
Mobile, AL 36609

I'm glad Leeper was able to see so many downright laughable things about EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC, but I'm worried about his admiration

for the plot. First it's just a rehash of Teilgard De Chardin; second, what does he think of a sequel which totally redefines the context of the original, if the author of that original had nothing to do with the followup? It's a shame to ruin someone else's work. In toto, THE HERETIC was beautifully designed and photographed (almost heartbreakingly so), and the stupidest movie in years. For example, about halfway through the movie characters stop having motivations for anything they do. The writer can just say, "Oh, well, they're demoniacally possessed," and shuffle the players around for no reason, like witless chess pieces. That's lazy writing (like assuming insane people act for no reason--they don't), and it's not even interesting. Also, Warner Brothers did not ship out "corrected" reels. Boorman begged them to let him re-edit the film, but Warners already had over a hundred prints in distribution, and recalling and replacing them would have been just too costly, and too much of a hassle with the exhibitors. But--when they released a foreign-language version, Boorman made over 120 changes--"to take out the laughs," he said.

A fun movie, but dumb.

Enjoyed the Jackie Causgrove interview. But: What's so primitive with a mimeo about having to take a brush and brush the ink on a pad? That's how I had to do it, when I hank-cranked my first fanzine, 10 these many years past...

Joe Haldeman gives excellent interviews, and I wish we'd see more. Also, you are an excellent inter-

viewer, and I hope you keep it up: you are probably the best interviewer working for fanzines, come to think of it. ##*blush* Thanks---and I do plan to keep it up.##

J. Owen Hanner
3509 Woodland Circle South
Island Lake, IL 60042

I must thank you profusely for the issues of LL 6 and 7. I did not expect to get two

issues, and it was a nice surprise.

I thought they were both quite good. Sometimes (a lot more often than you think)(well, I guess you would on account of you've been at this a little longer than I have) you get fanzines that are not bad, but not especially good either. Very...what's the word?...adequate. Nothing to really get excited about, but I found LL to be unlike that. The non-Lan articles were good; I liked Mark Leeper's film reviews alot, even though I only saw DAMNATION ALLEY and not EXORCIST II. I think he didn't condemn DA enough, because I thought the whole thing was atrocious, with no redeeming values whatsoever--but maybe we saw different versions or something. His critique of EXORCIST II was very intelligent and interesting for the viewpoint alone, but sadly, that does not make me want to go see the thing now. I may be in love with Linda Blair, but I don't like to waste my money if I don't have to. Actually, I thought the original EXORCIST was a laughable movie.

T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS had me rolling on the floor, it was so funny. Loved it. The satire on SPACE ACADEMY wasn't as good. I've seen the show a few times and I was taken by the effects and stop-motion animation I saw without thinking about story values. But then, I was so thrilled the first time I saw STAR WARS I didn't stop to think about story or anything. I've never had anything like that happen before.

The best part of either ish was your con reports and ramblings. One thing I noticed was the way you always do things, go to cons, go to Disney World, alone, even though you've got a girlfriend. I don't know why that in particular struck me, unless it's because I haven't had any kind of love relationship since 1975, and if I ever have one again, it won't be something I easily overlook. ##My girlfriend at that time, Beth, and I have stopped seeing each other. We had different interests--she with horses and riding, working with animals, I with my science fiction and fanac. We sampled each others interests and she found herself out-of-place in my world, and I didn't fit in very well in hers either. Over the past summer we grew apart. So it goes. I've fannish girlfriends now---see LL #10 (whenever it comes out realsoonnow!!!##

Anyway, the conreports were very interesting (you sure do go to alot of cons) ##you should see how depleted my bank account is now!!! as were the Goll speeches and the Haldeman interview, and the Tucker interview. I saw Haldeman interviewed elsewhere not too long ago ##STARWIND, maybe?##, but yours had an informal feel to it that made it easy to read. It was almost as if I were there. The Tucker interview was welcome because all I know about him is his legend, and I hear very little about the man. Somehow I expected him to be younger, even though I know full well how long a time he's been active. I suppose now I'm going to have to get a few of his books and see what he was talking about.

I thought your personal comments were good too. I get the impression from the news reports that teachers who enjoy their work and actually bother

with things like preparation, effort and enthusiasm are few and far between. It's nice to see things that way with you; I wish there were more around. ##I do too. I am proud to be a teacher, and I work hard at trying to be a good one. I teach in a private independent school, and many of the students that come in from the public schools have poor Math, English and reading skills. Fortunately we have tracking to accommodate most of them.## Like the Reverend Jesse Jackson is wont to say, "You must teach the child when the child is a child." The parents can't do it alone, and the teachers can't do it alone. It sounds like you've really got a handle on where you're going. ##Thanks--I feel I do too. Next ish (#10, that is) will have a long interview with Ben Bova, and with Spider Robinson joining in and Barbara Bova and a fan named Jim Satterfield, the interview takes a turn and they discuss education. Very interesting stuff!##

Marty Levine
6201 Markley Hall
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

I can empathise with your editorial of #6 because, though my fanzine BRASSOR is considerably less of a task to collate, I used

to publish a 30-page high-school zine on my own. I wouldn't let anybody touch it. It was even a factor in the break-up of a girlfriend and myself--she didn't understand why I didn't want to talk to anyone while hunched over typers or mimeos for hours everyday after school. It was a labor of love, this school zine. I wrote 75% of it, typed it, stencilled the heads and artwork, made the electrostencils, ran it off, collated it, stapled it and drove it to school to distribute it once a month. I used to bring the thing home to collate it on my ping-pong table downstairs (to get back to the subject at hand). I guess that is an advantage over having an apartment.

Also, I used to line up three rows of five pages each:

from row left to right, middle row from right to left, and back row from left to right. The motion of collating flowed easier that way and my back only felt a little strain. I also made 120 minute cassette tapes to sing along with while I collated. The floors didn't creak, the tape needed changing only once an hour, and I enjoyed singing tremendously.

So that doesn't answer your problem, but at least you know you've got one more companion in collation.

I'm surprised no one mentioned Escher in #7's loccol when praising John Benson's Orms. It reminds me so of the marvelously intricate Escher designs. ##John's Orms are not eye-fooling as Escher's; John works for patterns and interlace. I do so much like his work!##

Midway through your conreps in both issues I found myself thinking, Gees, I normally wouldn't enjoy reading these kinds of conrepts, why am I reading this? But I honestly was interested in your ramblings. Your personality, as projected through your writing in your zine, comes off as very nice and calm, almost overwhelmingly reassuring midst the turmoil of events (especially the anit-freeze/burn incident in #7). Your accounts aren't really engrossing, but rather easy to read.

The art in 6 and 7 was quite admirable. I would like to know what the concept behind #6's page 21 piece--it is very intriguing. Very high quality art all around.

In #7, the best piece was definitely Andy Offutt's speech, followed by your ramblings and conrepts. Again,



quite enjoyable. The only piece I really didn't enjoy was the Space Academy parody. First, because I've mercifully never seen the show, and second, because the sarcasm was often humorless. When sarcasm is overused or not tempered with other humor it isn't funny; it becomes instead hateful (sounding).

I'm not sure if I can figure out what that back cover is supposed to be; is it the artist's conception of what the offspring of Apollo and a female elf would have looked like had he been a teenager in America during the fifties? Or is it a Vulcan and Flash combination? My apologies to Bill Bryan, for such horrible thoughts about his art.

R. Laurraine Tutihasi
1217 Majestic Way
Webster, NY 14580

My reaction to LL #6 is almost most overwhelmingly positive. The lettercol got a bit boring in spots. I like your

idea of checking interviews and transcriptions with the interviewees and speakers before publication.



I hope that I remember to be as courteous. I didn't react terribly strongly to anything in the zine until I got to Ben Indick's letter. I must say I agree wholeheartedly with him about the welfare mentality. I have other reasons for being against welfare, but that is certainly a damn good one. I'm glad to hear that he got his insurance money. When the blackout happened, I kept hoping none of my friends or acquaintances were affected, but I'm finding out more and more that fen are not immune to these stupid, petty crimes or any other kind.

Comments on #7. Nice puzzle, no errors and a nice challenge, but I feel that all of the words should have crossed in at least one place. "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" -- I usually don't care for English-language verse, but this one is fun. I enjoyed reading the SPACE ACADEMY parody. Re swimming at SUNCON, I find salt water much easier on the eyes than either chlorine or bromine; it's closer to your natural body chemistry. Finally, I enjoyed Andy Offutt's speech. Is CHAMBANACON really that great?

In reference to the letter from Mike Rogers, John Williams has written scads of film scores. Off the top of my head I can name STAR WARS, JAWS and THE REIVERS. In an interview that I taped from part of a PBS show about movie music, John Williams said that he had written about fifty to sixty compositions; I'm not sure if all of these are film scores; he's written other things too. Among those he mentioned were:

EARTHQUAKE, POSEIDON ADVENTURE, TOWERING INFERNO, JANE EYRE, and LASSIE. Personally, John William's style reminds me of Richard Wagner and Stravinsky. I see absolutely no resemblance at all between John Williams and Vaughn Williams other than their names.

##I would agree with you there; although Vaughn Williams writes programmatically, the resemblance between his and John Williams music is almost nil. John Williams uses more the harmonic sequences of Stravinsky, and both use the leit motif technique of Wagner.##

Steve Tymon
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Long Beach, CA 90813

A brief, very brief, letter. First and foremost, congrats on the best issue of LL I've ever seen!!! Keep it up and you'll be the long awaited replacement for OUTWORLDS (actually, that wouldn't be a bad idea, if you've got the determination, money, time, etc. I'm really not kidding. Give it a try, send it around to the pros and editors, and see what happens, eh?). And, keep the interviews coming! ##I doubt I could replace OUTWORLDS. Chu, I can't keep a consistent schedule, the zine doesn't come out on time and I have to keep apologizing for that.... come to think of it, so did OUTWORLDS. Hmmmm, maybe I could....##

Colin Langeveld
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West Denby
Liverpool 12
ENGLAND

The most important thing about LAN'S LANTERN was that it was so readable. I mean, I just could not find a boring bit in it. I was pleased and a little sad when I read Howard DeVore's recollection of Edmond Hamilton. I never met Ed, but I am proud to say that I met Leigh Brackett at a meeting of First Fandom which I was privileged to attend during SUNCON. And now I hear she has gone to the lost cities of Old Mars. A great loss. ##Indeed, she has died, almost a year ago as I type this up. Yes, a great loss of a fine human being.##

I really enjoyed your con reports. They gave that "wish I had been there" feeling. And, of course, full marks for the artwork. At this point I think I should go easy on the compliments, or you might have to get a bigger coon-skin cap. ##Don't worry about that, it's a bit big for me. My head can swell--just a little!##

During Easter I attended SKYKON at Heathrow. There I met Ken Bulmer, Bob Shaw, John Brunner (who shared our table at the banquet) and Bob Sheckley, who awarded me a prize for the most humorous painting. Now I know all this sounds like blatant bragging, but can you remember what it was like when you first met a real living Science Fiction writer? Anyway, what the hell, I am bragging.

I would like to send my regards to all the fans I met while I was in your great country, and thank them for the kindness shown to my wife and I. ##On behalf of all the fans, I say "You are very welcome!" And thanks for the artwork; I have used some of it in this issue. And I shall use more later.##

Charlene Hinchliffe
Route 3
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Have just finished reading LL #7, the most interesting zine to have come across my desk this week. Instead of mundane activities to which I should attend, I am playing with the names puzzle. I'm in partial agreement with Marty Cantor concerning puzzles; part of the fun is doing one once it has been properly laid out. The balance is thinking of words from right to left. You as a mathematician should note the symmetry, Ian.

For the Space Academy episode to have been ridiculous rather than sublime, the scene with Loki reading the serial number on Chris' last dollar bill just before Laurie is blasted and Loki is ejected from the

grabage chute has been omitted.

As a neophyte of only a year, and an innocent maiden besides, the conreports are very impressive to me. How ever I manage my time, I cannot fit more than two cons in a four week slot, and afford but one financially. Fandom Is A Lifestyle, Yet I Like To Eat, Regularly (FIALYILTER).

Julie Dabrowski
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Rochester, MI 48063

I read
your zine
and found
it inter-

esting, though I felt at a loss over some of the things mentioned. I had never seen LL before (poor deprived child) so now I'm very curious as to what the cover of LL #4 is. ##I'll send you a copy of it.##

Actually I was wondering if you needed any help in putting together your zine, or does the Wayne State group give you all the help you need? ##I could probably use some help later. I have a fanzine publishing class that will help me collate this issue. I will call you the next time I need an extra pair of hands.##

I was surprised to see some artwork in LL by a friend of mine, Charlie Wise. It wasn't bad or anything like that, but I was just surprised. ##I try to use a good number of different artists' pieces in my zine. I have too little of Charlie's stuff, but I do use whatever I get.##

Steve Bridge
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Indianapolis, IN 46218

Lan's Lantern (#7) continues to grow more interesting. I got the puzzle on page three right. Not too hard, but interesting and well constructed.

I had really intended to send you my review of Stephen Donaldson's fantasy trilogy, "The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, the Unbeliever." (LORD FOUL'S BANE, THE ILLEARTH WAR, and THE TOWER THAT PRESERVES) However, the books affected me so deeply and so personally, that I find a reviewer's words inadequate. Easily the best fantasy I've read since Tolkien, and perhaps just as good. I'm voting for LORD FOUL'S BANE for best fantasy novel (Gandalf Award) and Donaldson for best new writer. I am awed by the books. Perhaps I can get myself together enough to write a coherent review later.

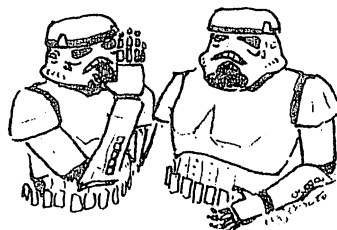
##I am still interested in the review if you can do it. /// I found one of my students reading THE ILLEARTH WAR in paperback, and asked her if she had the third book. She said no, so I loaned the hardcover I had to her. The rest of the family is reading it as well. Her father thanked me personally for letting him and his family finish the trilogy without having to wait for months till the paper edition came out. /// Have you read the DERYNI series by Katherine Kurtz? I am finding that series better than Tolkien. She's an author to watch!##

William Goodson
No. 11, Jalan 2/12
Shah Alam, Selangor
MALAYSIA

Regarding the Andy Offutt Speech, the paperback racks at San Francisco, Dulles International, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Hong Kong airports

are all the same. I am surprised the airlines don't object to the flying saucer and Bermuda Triangle books.

Andrew Jefferson Offutt, the Fifth. I am William Wilson Goodson, Jr. Try that in a country where most folks have one name. The Malays call me Mr. Wilson, the Chinese Bill, and my Japanese neighbors, also volunteers, avoid any name because they cannot pronounce the American W or L.



Do you know why Darth Vader wears that
breath screen?
I heard something about him getting his
head caught in a mechanical rice-picker.

The New Avengers (did it show in the States?) was a distinct disappointment. Steed seldom appeared, while the two new aides, Mike Gambit and Purdy, carried on an infantile banter totally unlike the witty romance between Steed and Peel. The plotting and villains, where before they seemed bizarre, were now silly. The change to Canada simply led to lower production standards. I did, however, enjoy Steed's habit of beating Gambit at every turn.

The question of the GOD-FATHER versus STAR WARS has never come up. Movies should be compared on theme, not production values. Let me rephrase...only movies dealing with the same theme can be

fairly compared. So far, none of the truly good science fiction films have covered the same material. STAR WARS deals with the most classic of adventure themes, the development of a shallow young jerk to hero. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS deals with the alienation of the imaginative misfit in normal society. The protagonist becomes obsessed with a vision, one which cuts himself from his wife and family, but grants him the prize of the wondrous voyage to never-never land. Guagain followed such a vision to Tahiti, and Paul to Christ. 2001 is about evolution. Is it directed by blind chance (Darwin)? or a divine power (God)? or aliens? This film has too many trip (ISD) qualities to take on thematically. FORBIDDEN PLANET is a Campbell-type problem story, which deals more deeply with the concept of the working out of subconscious fantasies. MOON ZERO TWO is a mystery story set in a lunar environment. I enjoyed it, but on the second viewing could not help feel there would be some empty space on the moon to drop that meteor. The seduction of the female FBI agent by the male criminal is something of a joke on women's lib. (I certainly don't want to be a sex object.) CYBORG: THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN is about a person adjusting to a handicap. STAR TREK: THE MEHAGERIE is about the difference between reality and illusion; the illusion caster, film makers, or members of the jet-set, who tempt people to leave the real world. This is the only film I remember that asks: What's wrong with fleeing reality? even though those we approve of doing so are in terrible condition?

There is, perhaps, one set of films that can be compared: SILENT RUNNING and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. Both deal with people who cut themselves off from society in keeping with a vision. Duc, I think his name was, seeks to protect the vision of an Earth once again green and growing. Neal is drawn to the image of the mountain where he will be granted a vision, a journey, where all his dreams of adventure and wonder can be fulfilled. At first I wanted to scream "SHOOT" when it seemed Neal and the other invited guests were being controlled, but now I see that the strangers simply sent a message: "You can come and meet us," to those with sufficient sense of wonder able to receive. (The entire NFFF should have attacked the barricades to get in.) I still feel that the crews of the mission planes were treated quite shabbily, but one cannot determine intelligence without test animals.

I don't find the New Avengers all that bad. True, there is not the sophisticated interplay as there was with Steed and Peel, the way Steed outmaneuvers Gambit is well worth watching, as well as watching Purdy. As for the movies, I've never stopped to analyze them in that way. Quite interesting. Thanks for bringing it up.##

Roger Reynolds
1301 Bernard Ave.
Findlay, OH 45840

#7 was really an enjoyable zine. I'm terribly upset that I don't have #1-6, but I do understand that they are all out of print (unless you go ahead and print up a few copies extra and give them to me!!). I am sure that this one is an improvement over the last one, and the one this loc is appearing in is an even greater improvement over #7. Keep it up.

I'd like to thank you for your help and suggestions for FUTURE FOCUS #8. I should have it out by MARCON XIV. Hope to see you there---next time, you buy the bheer!

Mike Rogers
233 Barton Ave.
Chattanooga, TN 37405

You and I have been in fandom for approximately the same length of time. Yet I think of you as a much bigger name in fandom. Maybe it's easier for faneds to make a name than con-workers. All I know is that if anyone ever asks me to be a Fan GoH (I'm not holding my breath), I'll die and go to heaven!

##We talked about this at RIVERCON IV last summer. I still don't consider myself a BNF as you suggested then; I don't feel as though I've accomplished enough to have earned the title. But being a faned is but one way to obtain it. Running cons, loccing zines, being "in evidence" at conventions are other ways. Working within the fanzine areas is probably the best way--you reach more fans that way.##

Jacqueline Lichtenberg didn't like your con reports because they use the first person point of view, which produces a report that could be called, "What I did at ____." Her comments suggest that she would rather read a report not seen through one person's eyes. It would be hard to consciously control all the variables she mentions in her letter without using a third person point of view. I like reading your kind of report, but if I start writing them myself, I think I will keep her opinions in mind.

I would not be thinking about a Best Fanzine Hugo if I were you. I like your zine, but it's too much of a personalzine to be considered by most fans. And the writing throughout is just one little step from being top-rate. I imagine that the Hugo-winning fanzine will be almost devoid of personal-zine style. If you want a Hugo, that's the way you'll have to go. You'll have to start selling it, so that you can afford the gigantic distribution the zine will need to get enough votes for the Hugo. LAN'S LANTERN would be a much different zine from the one it is now. Let the semi-pros like Andy Porter and Dick Geis fight over Hugos. Just keep putting out an interesting zine, and fandom will love you.

##I have no intention of changing the zine, except in places that I feel need improvement, like graphics, which I feel have come a long way in this issue. As for the Hugo Award, that would be nice, and it is possible to win one, since Andy has stated that ALGOL is a prozine. Block voting would usually net someone a Hugo, since the non-fans who vote are really not up on who's who in fandom, and thus could care less who wins the fan awards. The Hugo is in mind, but not so much that I would destroy what I have worked so hard for thus far---a good readable fanzine (and the egoboo that goes with it!)##

William H. Pugmire
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Seattle, WA 98118

I am always amused at the orthology of fandom, and the way we condemn those who misuse it. The bigotry that is at the core of SF fandom's hatred for the term "sci-fi" astounds me. A noted faneditor, talking about a letter from a boy he did not like, ended his statement with, "And he used 'sci-fi', which tells you alot about him." How this prejudice against the word and those who use it began I don't know; I do know it is a pity. The mere fact that almost all sf-fandom will condemn me should I use the term--and I use it often because I like it--bothers me. And so, I want to tell you that your statement on page 30--second to the last paragraph of column two--disturbed me. I do not judge an article's intelligence by the fact that "...Sci-Fi ain't used once." I know I am a minority concerning this, and I usually applaud myself in being unique; but I cannot enjoy the cold, hate-filled looks I get from SF fen when they hear me use this term. To you all, may I humbly say: Grow Up. ##I'm sure Andy Offutt will take notice of your feelings. The term does not bother me; I spend a lot of time with mundanes, and many of them use that term. I've always used SF. I find it easier to say. In fact, I've always used SF, even before I became a fan.##

I agree with Don Ayres that QUATERMAS AND THE PIT is one of the finest SF cinema productions ever produced. I like it because, not only is it SF, it has supernatural overtones as well; plus a lot of visual power.

Your layouts are improving tenfold, and your witty editorial remarks---such as "No, but I have collated in circles"--made this an especially enjoyable one to read. Good luck with all future zines. ##Thanks, Willum.##

Shelby Bush III
P.O. Box 792
Crossville, TN 38555

Had I known you were going to reprint the Tucker interview, I could have provided you with the original pages, and avoided

all that re-typing ##and typos## -- and saved a page in the process. Oh well....

The worst thing about DAMNATION ALLEY was the fact that they ignored the Zelazny book (almost) completely. I wish they had kept the title they had considered using--"SURVIVAL RUN"--since RZ could deny the thing.

I'm going to have to write Andy about the CHAMBANA-NA speech--I loved it when he gave it, and loved reading it again. Good stuff. (I do think there is a mis-transcription, top of page 30, column 2: it should have been: "put out a contract on Cliff Amos, or who threw a rock at Isaac Asimov..." Cliff never threw rocks at Ike.) ##The transcription was proof-read by Andy, and he made no changes there, so I printed it as it was.##



Arthur Hlavaty
250 Coligni Ave.
New Rochelle, NY 10801

It's good to know that Andrew J Offutt and Andy Offutt are the same person, but that still leaves me a bit perplexed, because I have suspected that there are two Offutts--the funny one and the serious one. I like the funny one; he's obviously the one who made the speech, and he also wrote THE GREAT 24-HOUR THING, MESSENGER OF ZHUVASTOU, and parts of EVIL IS LIVE SPELLED BACKWARDS. The serious one writes heroic fantasies that (like all heroic fantasies) bore my ass off. When I found out that Offutt also writes porn under the name of John Cleve, I investigated and found the same problem. The funny John Cleve wrote HOLLY WOULD, which is a delightful book in spite of its dumbass title, and has lots of laughs and lots of nice juicy sex in it. On the other hand the serious John Cleve writes really rank porn--mundane Gor novels in which an uppity woman finds true happiness with a REAL MAN who dominates her and beats the crap out of her when she steps out of line, and maybe rapes her once a week if she's been good enough to deserve it. Feh! If you ever figure it out, let me know.

I like Carolyn Doyle's attitude towards immortality. Those who wish to attain physical immortality out of fear of death/annihilation strike me as a dangerous bunch. I prefer those, like Robert Anton Wilson, who see death as a transformation, rather than the end, and yet wish to remain alive because of their love for life.

Vytautas J. Vitkauskas
7033 S. Campbell
Chicago, IL 60629

Thanks for bringing my fan activity back to life. LAN'S LANTERN #7 is the only independently produced fanzine that I've received in the past few months that means anything. Not only does it look good, but articles, when they're good, they score; the best being the conspeches, the Tucker interview, and your conreporting which best produced your personality (which I believe is the foundation for any successful fanzine). Your editorial, which at first seemed indecisive, was handled exceptionally well, for that form. As for the poetry (which I like when it's good) and the Space Academy episode, the ideas were good, but the execution was disappointing. The DAMNATION ALLEY review was too long; it just didn't deserve so much space.

You really look like you got your act together. Keep it up. ##I intend to--it's just that I take so long between zines...maybe it will be a bit less time between this and the next. Thanks for the glowing praise.##

Bob Caylor
1423 W. Washington St.
Bluffton, IN 46714

Are Bizarre hats common in fandom? Of the three fans I know well, one has a denim cap grafted to his scalp every April, to be removed when snow flies. The other one has a Danish sailor's hat. I can occasionally be seen in an army issue jungle hat. Your coonskin tops them all, though. ##Funny-hat fandom does exist. The more famous members are Jan Howard Finner with his Australian hat, Mike Glickson with the same, Steve Simmons and Mike Privett with cowboy hats, and Mike Lowrey with his Orange hat (and orange tennis shoes, and orange pants, etc.).##

Even though I have never seen Space Academy, I've heard derogatory comments by the dozen about it from other kids. I was enjoying the parody Hajime wrote until the very end, where I saw a striking resemblance to the ending I saw for a STAR TREK skit on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE.

##Haji might have gotten the idea from there, but I did think that he handled it very well. Besides, don't all TV shows and stars have nightmares like that?##

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

The reiteration of "what to write" in the editorial is a cadence I've never been able to see any art in, ever since Terry Carr did it with: "Do you want to know what kind of town Bereley is? Berkeley is a college town." I wonder how such things last? ##When I rolled the paper into the typer for that editorial, I honestly did not know what I was going to say. That's what came out of it. Usually, once I start something, I manage to put a bit of substance into what I write. Of course, only the reader can say how much substance was really there. ##

Cal Johnson
803 N. 37th
Corsicana, TX 75110

The Space Academy parody came close to having me rolling on the floor. I often wonder at the gall behind the incredibly boring TV show. I liked Space Academy only a little bit less than I did ARK II, which was another clinker. I mean, how are we ever going to have any fans from the kids presently old enough to watch these shows? If they get the idea that this is SF.... ##I run into that problem all the time, especially when I teach an Interim course at school. Most of the students' contact with SF has been the TV, movies, and spinoff books from both. Maybe we should actively recruit in the schools...##

I thought Kenneth Moore's CHAMBANACON FGoh speech was fascinating, provocative, and will keep me thinking for a long time. Offutt's speech was good too. ##Gee, and to think that Ken only muttered a few sentences. Imagine what might happen if he makes a 5 minute speech? Boggles the mind....##

You know, yours and Tim's and Randall Thomas' observation that "No two fen ever go to the same convention" sparks another obvious observation....no two fen ever read the same fanzine. And, where seeing two conreps together would be interesting and possibly fascinating, seeing the various letters is just about as good! ##There are two reports here of CONFUSION, although one definitely concentrates on a specific incident. If I could get conreps of the same con, I would pub them. That almost happened with the RIVERCON III report this ish, but I never got the other one. I wonder if I might pull what one other fan did: He called up a friend of mine and asked for a "Black Chalice" story. He had advertized that he would have such a story in his next issue, but it was nearing the deadline and he didn't have one. So my friend quickly whipped one out and sent it. When the zine appeared, there were something like 8 "Black Chalice" stories, all different, of course. Hmmm, does give me an idea or three.###

Brian Earl Brown
16711 Burt Rd.
#207
Detroit, MI 48219

AM READING LL#7 STOP READ IN SUNCON REPORT "I WORK WELL UNDER PRESSURE" STOP "SO DOES FRANK HERBERT" STOP (PLEASE) YOU'LL BE DUNE IN FOR THAT STOP ME BEFORE I PUN AGAIN FULL STOP.

Fred Jakobcic
113 W. Ohio Apt. 4
Marquette, MI 49855

The people who want Kiddie programs often get what they deserve and SPACE ACADEMY is it. Terrible is the word. Although I've only seen it in passing, and I don't (and never have) liked Jonathan Harris(?), I cannot see why it is on TV, except as a kiddie program, but even they should

realize how bad it is. But that is the adult in me saying that, and most kids are not mature enough to see it. SF on TV, whether it be cartoons, animation, film, whatever, most of the time looks like it has been produced by TV people who know nothing of science fiction, who hold the typical mundane view of what SF is (who also know nothing of science fiction), have never read any SF, have no contact with fandom or the SF writers.

I found your B'HAMACON report interesting, especially your comments on Murray Leinster and his writing as a sideline only. There should be some mini-books of sorts, small biographies on them, especially those deceased. There has not been much done. ##I believe the Tuck encyclopedia gives a good biography of the authors. Sam Moskowitz' THE SEEKERS OF TOMORROW has some of that material in it as well, and there are many more reference books about SF and the authors. You might also want to check the book WHO'S WHO IN SF.##

Liked your Frank Herbert Joke about working under pressure. ##Glad someone did!##

I disagree with Buzz Dixon that 2001 is true SF and STAR WARS is not. What was SF of the 30's and 40's etc., but SF? STAR WARS is a slam-bang space opera which does make as much true SF as 2001 and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. They are all SF.

Nan Lambert
Rt. 1 Box 315
La Vernia, TX 78121

Leeper's review of
DAMNATION ALLEY
reflected my own
opinions precisely.

ly. I went to see it with high hopes (Zelazny being one of my favorites), which made the disappointment even worse. I don't think he should have let them use his name on that thing. Or else, there should have been a warning: "Any resemblance to the novel of the same name is purely coincidental."

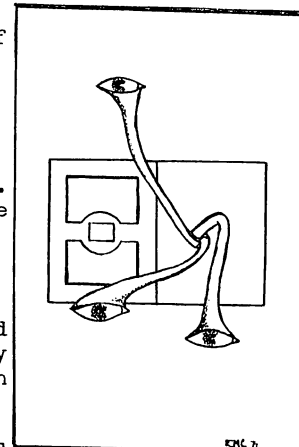
I think Hajime should get an agent and try to sell that SPACE ACADEMY show; they might buy it. At least it's funny, which is more than you can say about most of the episodes. ##It's about as scientifically sound as the ones they've produced already, too.##

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

I hope the interview with
Bob Tucker will inspire
more fans to read lots of
his fiction, and to write

some learned articles about those novels. It's ironic that Bob's popularity as a person should have obscured in fandom his importance as a writer. I think his fiction will age much better than most science fiction, will have a much better chance to remain in print twenty-five and fifty years from now than the novels which create more excitement when they're new. My only major complaint about his professional work is his failure to write at least one long, mundane novel about life in the United States. I think Bob has the ability to do something approaching Mark Twain in quality and popularity, if he would write a relaxed but wise novel about the twentieth century US.

The "Night before Christmas" parody has some good moments. I regret to say that it reminded me too much of something I did a year or two ago for me to give it undivided attention. For the local newspapers, I do a piece analyzing what would happen if the original Clement Moore poem should have been written in the 1970's and read by the nation's bureaucrats as fact. Public health authorities would have issued warnings to the public about the danger of a serious epidemic because of abnormal inactivi-



Denis Jarog
P.O. Box 48461
Niles, IL 60648

I talked long with Tuck-
er once -- the first MI-
NICON I attended back in
75, I think-- and did

sundry fannish things, more smooths than I care to tell, and he told me about his writing--how he preferred QUIET SUN over his other work, the movie if it comes here will be a pleasure to see. I have run into Tuck on various occasions since then, but likely I will never forget that night.

I can't agree more with Mark on the subject of DAMNATION ALLEY. I don't think I have seen anything worse visually as SF---no, I take that back---I watched the premiere episode of Ponderosa in Space and I will not watch any more--every ghodammed cliché ever tried. Such drek!

##My favorite saying about Battlestar; Ponderosa comes from Matt Tepper: Adama says, "Here come the Cylons; Quick, gather the spaceships into a sphere!"##

Jan Brown
11868 Clifton #40
Lakewood, OH 44107

Ouch! I take back all the nice things I said about your typing --you need a good secretary.

##I received a return of my last zine from T. L. Sherred with all the mistakes marked. I felt sheepish at all the mistakes.##

CD, I used to sit and listen to the reminiscences of older fen and mourn that I had not known the times and the people they talked about. But if there were a way of preserving the living presence of someone like Tucker, it would not be so precious to us. Of course, one day a generation of younger fen will sit at our feet and listen to our reminiscences, and mourn that they could not know the people the people and the times we knew, and wonder what fandom will be like without Glick-sohn! ##Croggles the mind, doesn't it!##

THE AVENGERS was full of in-jokes, if you could get them. I remember one in which Mrs. Peel's double was reading a book on self-defense. The book was written by Ray Austin, the show's stunt arranger. Interestingly, Austin later directed a number of SPACE: 1999 episodes. What a come-down--he should have stuck to choreographing fight scenes. Then, in the third season, there was a scene where she was desperately trying to get word to Steed that she was in trouble. With her captors listening, she let on that he was her husband

and asked about "the children--Gordon and Alfred and Julian and baby Brian." I don't know who Gordon was, although I think a Gordon somebody-or-other directed some episodes. The others were producer Fennell, exec producer Wintle and producer/writer Clemens (who I think wrote that episode). ##Didn't Brian Clemens write some of THE PRISONER episodes? I seem to recall seeing his name on the credits.##

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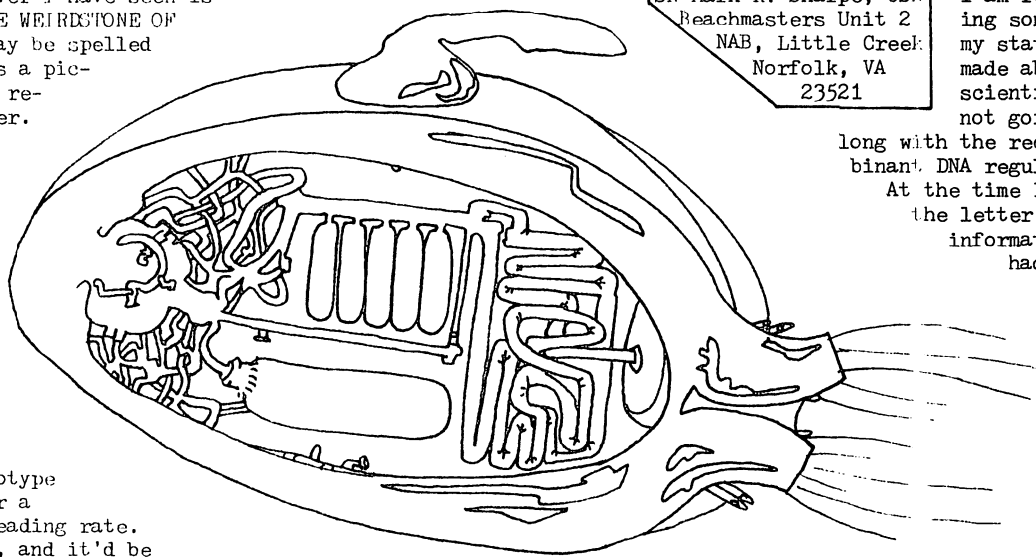
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1323 Ohio St.
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Lawrence, KS 66044

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The rock tower on page 31 was my favorite illustration of the issue. It seemed to ache to be attached to a story, evoking tantalizing but ephemeral images at the edge of perception.

The wave-hewn isle
Became their abode,
They built in Harmony
With the upreaching rock.
Something like that maybe...?
##Yeah, Nice!##

I Also Heard From: P.Byrnes, R. Teague, I. Koch, H. Andruschack, L.A. Goldstein, J. Meadows, J. Scrivner, A. Beatty, R. Bartucci, G. Fredricks, D&N Lynch, B. Indick, D. Franson, S. Schmidt,

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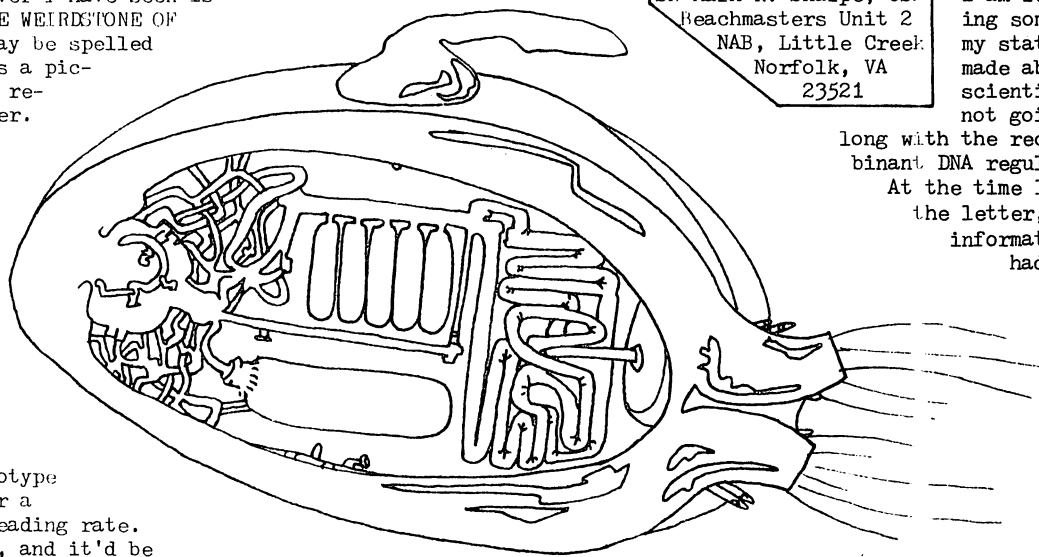
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Lawrence, KS 66044

Re: Harry Warner's letter, nuclear power plants can't blow up, but they can melt and release radioactive materials into the environment that way if there is a serious accident. But I agree with Harry that coal (and oil) are more harmful to people, especially since there are hardly any safeguards at coal power plants or in any parts of the fossil fuel processing industry.

The rock tower on page 31 was my favorite illustration of the issue. It seemed to ache to be attached to a story, evoking tantalizing but ephemeral images at the edge of perception.

The wave-hewn isle
Became their abode,
They built in Harmony
With the upreaching rock.
Something like that maybe...?
##Yeah, Nice!##

I Also Heard From: P.Byrnes, R. Teague, I. Koch, H. Andruschack, L.A. Goldstein, J. Meadows, J. Scrivner, A. Beatty, R. Bartucci, G. Fredricks, D&N Lynch, B. Indick, D. Franson, S. Schmidt,

M. Hossman, G. Garrett, J. Lichtenberg, R.A. Jirak, L. David, T. Roaix, M. Middleton, K. Marschall, S. Oberembt, D. Starke, C. Chauvin, H. Summerlin, P.G. Moore, E. Chamber, A. Valenza, E. Whitley-Chalker, M. Gunderloy, J. Hanke-Woods and probably a bunch of others whom I've forgotten---sorry!

