

it was in the stars

Fanish Constellations

FROM THE EDITOR

OF
ROCKETS
AND
RACOONS

by Lan



OF ROCKETS...

I won the Hugo Award. Yes, I did. And I was happy and proud to receive it. A fairly complete account of my feelings about getting the award appears in my Worldcon Report this issue. Here, I want to talk a bit about my fanzine and the Hugo.

Most people were pleased that I won, some wanted "No Award" to win but were still happy for me, a few were disgusted that "No Award" didn't win. I've received all these reactions, and so would like to relate my feelings on this.

When I started publishing Lan's Lantern, I maybe had wild fantasies about the Hugo, but knew I was not in the same class as many of the zines I read then. As the years went by, I learned more about fanzines and publishing, and said I would be pleased just to get the nomination. Upon getting that, and seeing the others on the ballot, I felt that I had the best fanzine (a little prejudice here), though I would not have minded losing to ANVIL or HOLIER THAN THOU. So I thought, "Yeah, a nomination is fine, but I want the award!"

And I got it.

Then came the critics. My zine was not "fannish", it did not have a "consistent theme", the layout was unexciting, there was "no editorial presence felt throughout the fanzine", and so on. To all but one of these I say, "Good!!!!"

I keep working on layout and arrangement, and learning more about them. I know this is a weak area for me, but I am improving. The issues keep looking better, and I try a variety of fonts and positioning of titles to make the layout different.

As for the rest, I am glad that I am not just "fannish", and there is not a "consistent theme" (unless I put out a Special Author Issue). I publish a genzine, and a consistent theme destroys that idea. To be totally "fannish" also destroys that concept of being a "general fan magazine". I enjoy a variety of things, topics and subjects. I particularly like analyses of books and authors, and articles on Science Fictional and Fantasy themes. I also enjoy some fannish writing, some off-the-wall stuff, and have interests in SF in other media (all of which are scattered throughout the zine). So I in-

clude all these things and more. I am eclectic in my likes, and hope that my readers will find something of interest to them among the articles I choose to publish.

That there is "no editorial presence felt throughout the fanzine" just makes me smile. These people have just told me I have been doing my job correctly. I edit many of the submissions, but I do it in such a way that the "flavor" of the contributor is kept intact. I provide a forum for some writers, and an exposure for new writers. Even if a particular essay or review is not *great*, I am willing to publish it. New writers should be encouraged, not discouraged. I do have minimum standards, but almost every one who sends me something has sent good work. Those who realize that they have not done as good a job as they might have add a note to me to do some editing, or send it back with suggestions for a re-working. It is nice working with writers like that.

I'm glad that people have been taking note of what I have been doing, and thank them for their comments. What many see me as doing wrong, with one exception, makes me glad. Lan's Lantern is coming out as I had hoped it would.

Now to work hard on layout and design....

...AND RACOONS

My hat, the coonskin cap, has become a trademark for me. It makes me easy to spot in a crowd, and has made many cartoons possible for the Lantern. However, the way the coonskin cap established itself as my totem came about purely by accident.

The summer before I found fandom I toured the New England states by myself. On that trip I bought a coonskin cap for a friend of mine who collected hats. I took to wearing it while I travelled and grew to like it, so I bought my own. I took it to my first big convention, CHAMBANACON, in 1975, mostly to have fun with it should there be some sort of masquerade. I wore it for a few hours on Sunday morning of the con, and got some nice comments on it.

I wore it to my next big con, CONFUSION, in January of 1976, and got a bigger reaction -- both positive and negative -- but one of the highlights of the convention was that I was mentioned in an article that ran in the Ann Arbor News as a "fan wearing a coonskin cap." I took it as a sign that I should wear it as my trademark, and have been doing so ever since.

IN THIS ISSUE

I have so many neat things in this issue that I could just repeat the Table of Contents here and say "This is interesting, read it," to all of them. In particular, though, I want to point out Danny Low's article for those who like taking pictures of costumes at conventions, Wendy Council's article "Searching for a Beautiful Book" which should interest all readers, and my Worldcon Report (I should plug my own stuff!).

I did really try to cut back on the number of pages, but it looks like another issue above 100. Maybe next time I'll be more successful in reducing the page count. So enjoy this issue, and keep those cards and letters and contributions coming in.

From The Editor

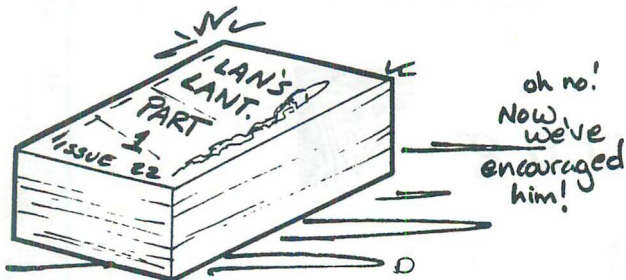


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Front Cover: Fannish Constellations.....	Diana Stein.....1
From the Editor: Of Rockets and Racoons....	Lan.....2
Tables of contents, artists; colophon.....3
Critiquing the Critics: The "Write Stuff"...	Susan Shwartz....4
Personal Time/Space Warps.....	David Yoder.....8
Newer Waves: The Cyberpunks and Humanists..	Robert Sabella..10
On King Richard the Homosexual.....	Andy Offutt.....12
The Fannish Cuisine of Vermont.....	T. L. Bohman....14
Ellison on a Spit: The Harlan Ellison Roast..	Kris Gilpin...16
Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction.....	Robert Sabella..18
The Land of Opportunity.....	Mark R. Leeper..19
DANGEROUS VISIONS: A Twenty Year Retrospective.....	David M. Shea...20
Eulogy and Promise.....	Misha Sestak...24
Universal Horror Movies: An Appreciation...	Jim Mann.....26
Searching for a Beautiful Book.....	Wendy Council...27
Shooting 'em in the Dark.....	Danny Low.....32
The Fen Sang "Bouncing Potatoes".....	Sourdough Jackson..36
A Personal Fan History.....	Roy Lavender...37
Incident at a Movie Theatre.....	Tim P. Ryan....41
An Ode for the Eternal Champion.....	Terry O'Brien...41
Same Bat Time, Same Bat Channel.....	David Stein....42
The 1986 TV Season Anthologies.....	Evelyn C. Leeper..44
Pulp and Celluloid: Book and Film Reviews by---	Ann Cecil,
Kathleen Conat, Maia Cowan, Julia Ecklar, Dennis Fischer	
Dean Lambe, Lan, Evelyn C. Leeper, Mark R. Leeper,	
Terry O'Brien, Robert Sabella, David M. Shea, Robert	
Whitaker Sirignano, Dale Skran, and Laura Todd.....	45
The Katherine Kurtz "Special Section".....	76
My First Worldcon.....	Elizabeth Ann Osborne..80
Convention Etiquette: Approaching Pros...Alan Dean Foster..	83
Ask Doctor Science Fiction.....	Dr. Science Fiction, Ph.D....
Questions from A. Nonymous and Mary Kay Jackson.....	84
Fanzine Reviews.....	Lan.....85
A Letter from Nola Frame (with 'toons)....	Nola Frame.....89
The Worldcon -- Some Memories.....	Lan.....90
Post Scriptings -- Letter from the Readers.....	98
Addresses of the Contributors.....	120
A List of Those Lan Heard From.....	121
Some Special Announcements.....	122

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DEDICATION

To
Maia,
As always;
To
the HUGO Voters:
however you voted,
please continue to care
and to vote.

TABLE OF ARTISTS

Bob Barger - 26
Sheryl Birkhead - 44L, 81
Jennifer Crosby - 42, 51, 59, 71, 72
Family Creative Workshop - 29, 30
Brad Foster - 91
Steve Fox - 20
Nola Frame - 89, 106
Harriet Goren - 94
Carol Belanger Grafton - 27
Teddy Harvia - 40, 54, 80
C. L. Healy - 11
Hank Heath - 66, 67,
Cathy Howard - 43, 55, 61, 64, 122
John Howard - 13, 103,
Fred Jakobcic - 90
Terry Jeeves - 46, 101
Colin Langveld - 84
Jean Larcher - 8
Linda Leach - 93
Stacy McDermott - 75
Erin McKee - 50
Ted Menten - 4, 9, 16
NASA - 24
Tullio Proni - 25, 56, 76
Renaissance Coloring Book - 31, 45
Jessica Amanda Salmonson -
Allen Darnell Salyer - 10, 32
Diana Stein - Front Cover, 2, 3, 19, 44R, 52, 97, 98L, 117
Sylvus Tarn - 15, 65, 82
John Thiel - 95
Jim Thompson - 14, 60, 86, 88, 98R, 121
Jeff Tolliver - 108
Phil Tortorici - 85
Angela Varesano - 63

Why You Are Receiving This

- ☐ Contribution (art, article, loc printed, loc received)
- ☐ Contribution received (will use in a later issue)
- ☒ Trade ☒ You wanted one
- ☐ We're in an apa together
- ☐ Mentioned in Conreports and Ramblings
- ☐ Mentioned in Letter Column
- ☐ Your book/zine is reviewed
- ☒ I would like you to contribute art, articles, etc.
- ☒ I would like you to contribute to one of the special issues coming up -- see the back cover
- ☐ This is your last issue unless you do something

ToC, ToA, etc.



Critiquing the Critics



The "Write Stuff"



An essay by Susan Shwartz

This essay was originally delivered at Confederation, the 1986 Worldcon.

At present, the relationship among academic critics of fantasy and science fiction, fan critics, and fiction writers doubling as critics, looks like something out of science fiction: three separate entities relying for survival upon the same body of texts, and squabbling over who's getting the most out of it. Are they parasites, saprophytes, or symbiotes?

The answer to that question varies. At times it seems that fandom and academic criticism will perdure whether or not anyone ever writes anything again; while writers, savaged once too often in the fan press or ignored, misquoted, or weirdly interpreted by academics, hasten to remind everyone that SF is a popular genre, and -- invoking Heinlein -- the only people who get to tamper with their texts are the editors who buy them...maybe.

What we have here is a failure -- by communicators bred, born, and trained -- to communicate. The problem, reduced to lowest terms, is simple: we have here three groups obsessed with the same thing, who don't speak the same language, who disagree on methods, set different priorities, but nevertheless must all hang together if they're not to be hanged separately by tenure committees, marketing MBA's in publishing houses, and the likes of Harper's infamous Luc Sante.

Surely not even the most stubborn writer or iconoclastic fan critic can deny that science fiction can and should be judged by its own proper and rigorous standards. In two essays in The Language of the Night, Ursula K. LeGuin, whom I regard as one of the finest of the writer-critics in our field, has pointed out:

What all of us need is some genuine, serious, literate criticism: some standards. I don't mean pedantry and fancy academic theorizing. I mean just the kind of standards which any musician, for instance, has to meet.

Ideally, she writes in her essay, "Escape Routes,"

One way we can show our strength is by helping the serious critic of SF to set up a critical apparatus, a set of standards suited to the study and teaching of SF. Some of the criteria by which the conventional novel is discussed and judged apply to SF, and some don't....

But she is well aware if one problem that establishing such standards creates: hostility to one another by some writers, fans, and critics, as witness her comments in "The Stone Ax and the Muskoxen," her 1975 Worldcon Guest of Honor Speech:

Within the SF ghetto, many people don't want their books, or their favorite writers' books, judged as literature. They want junk, and they bitterly resent aesthetic judgment of it. And outside the Ghetto, there are critics who like to stand above SF looking down upon it, and therefore want it to be junky, pop-cult, contemptable

More recently, LeGuin seems to have retreated from these positions. She is currently on the Board of Science Fiction Studies, the most "literary" of the academic periodicals. In a recent LOCUS note, she declared that she was no longer interested in outer space; her most recent work, Always Coming Home, is a collage that explores the inner space of a future-time, low-tech California sub-culture. Interesting, but, much as I venerate LeGuin's work, not profoundly useful to SF as a whole or to the squabbles among types of SF critics, as I see them.

I plan to examine, very briefly and very generally, the strengths and weaknesses of criticism as written by academics, fans, and fiction writers in turn. Then I will suggest

a few ways that we can turn this family quarrel into productive discourse, if not actually into symbiosis. One caution, please: though this is an overview, it reflects the experience of one writer, critic, and fan -- myself -- and should not be regarded as encyclopedic or, regardless of my tone, as an ex cathedra pronouncement. Since the examples I have cited reflect my interpretation of events, to avoid embarrassment, hostility, or libel suits, I have deliberately avoided naming names.

I. A Trashing of Teachers

Fans and writers love this sort of thing; and what seems to be professional masochism of the professoriate lends itself to critic-bashing. But let's look more analytically at "friendly" critics. By friendly, I mean the people who try to write seriously about fantasy and SF, not the tenure committee, or the snob from the Classics Department who waves the latest mainstream diatribe in one's face. Many people in the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA) genuinely love what they write about. And, after initial problems with accuracy (which can happen if a critic is new to the field), they have developed some mastery of the field. They have some very strong points: discipline and thoroughness, a grasp of academic methodology, and critical legitimacy. Even the most serious and constructive fanzine is still a zine; academics have quarterlies and journals.

However, these very strengths are also precisely where academic critics may go wrong. Though their thoroughness is invaluable when compiling encyclopedias and bibliographies, I find that it, coupled with their knowledge of methodology as practiced in traditional English departments, may lead some to miss the original pulp printing of a story in favor of a reprint in a collection, preferably hardbound (unlike the fan, who probably remembers when the story first came out, and still has the magazine).

Their insistence on close readings of texts appears in Extrapolation and Science Fiction Studies, the two major academic journals devoted to the study of fantasy and science fiction, both of which, I should add, have professional writers on their editorial boards. Extrapolation appears to specialize in close readings, while Science Fiction Studies, perhaps due to its editor, Darko Suvin, seems devoted to the more arcane branches of literary theory, notably structuralism, with a faint Marxist overlay.

When you add the mandarin formality of language deemed suitable English for academic publication in such journals, you get precisely the sort of pedantry and fancy theorizing that LeGuin said we didn't need. Complete with footnotes, titles with colons in them, and -- at least in the case of SFS -- a request for synopses both in English and in French. This is profoundly alienating to the non-initiate, non-tenured, or non-academic. I would like academic critics to ask them-

selves for whom they are writing. If it's only for a Ph.D.'ed in-group, they exclude the wide and articulate communities of fans and writers who may not choose to meet entrance requirements.

In addition, the academic critic belongs to his or her own university and, to my observation, shares many of the non-SF-related academic's philosophical viewpoints. These show up in critical works almost as fads. Granted, utopian theory and feminism are very important trends in modern SF; their absence should be -- and has been -- commented on, with Daphne Patai as an extraordinary example. An academic with prejudices of his or her caste can easily deal with a feminist novel, or one condemning acid rain, or dealing -- as did a whole recent issue of SFS -- with nuclear holocaust. With the exception of H. Bruce Franklin's study of Robert Heinlein, I have seen denunciations but very few analytical treatments of aspects of SF less socially acceptable on campus: SF's tendency to conservatism; military SF; the predilection of fantasy for "return of the king" motifs. And to the best of my knowledge, only Robert Scholes and Eric Rabkin have dared to show how a hard-SF writer actually uses science, in their analysis of Poul Anderson's Tau Zero.

I hope that scholars can use the academic freedom that they have fought for and the objectivity they've always praised to deal with these unpalatable subjects! Perhaps this might let them analyze the military and SF, SF and the New -- or Old -- Right, SF and Survivalism, and so on. Ideally, this stretch of tolerance and imagination might extend to the technophobia all too prevalent all too prevalent in humanities specialists; perhaps a book on relativity, chemistry, or biology might be useful reading too.

Academic "orthodoxy" also shows up in such critics' choice of writers to deal with. Despite the bibliography contained in the most recent issue of Extrapolation, analyses of writers appear to follow a fashion: LeGuin has been supplanted by Gene Wolfe; but Bill Gibson's coming up fast. I also note that many writers who are, at times, somewhat to the right of Genghis Khan, receive short shrift.

Finally, the academic's methodology may lead him or her to disregard the fact that SF, at least in the United States, is driven by the free market and is part of an industry. My favorite, horrible example of this is an anecdote I heard regarding a January, 1986, speakers' series at Rollins College (Florida), at which -- I am told -- Darko Suvin proclaimed that today's American SF writers write too many books too fast. When it was pointed out that writers must work rapidly to make a living, he retorted that the government should subsidize them. Wonderful: if we lived in Europe, where there is a tradition of such genteel support; but not very realistic in the light of American publishing and current American politics. Perilous as the ivory tower (to use a phrase I personally detest) may be, it is still a closed environment in which people can mis-

take things as they'd like them to be with things as they are. Please try to see the field as it is, not as a dream of collegial writers and editors.

II. A Flourish of Fans

Fan criticism has much the same problem as academic criticism: its strengths are also its weaknesses. What are its strengths? In addition to a consuming love of the material (which, for me, salvages much fan criticism), the strengths of fan, or amateur criticism, are encyclopedic knowledge, knowledge of the writers, and insiders' understanding of many of the chief issues within the field, and an open, informal forum. From professionally published criticism such as Tom Staicar's book, The Feminine Eye, from Ungar Press, which included essays by academics, fans and writers, to the most crudely mimeographed fanzine, almost any fan who wants to say something can find someplace that will print it.

Given near-eidetic memory and a range of experience that goes all the way back to First Fandom, the fan writing criticism can find this strength a disadvantage for several reasons. First is the temptation (shared by academics) to confuse pedantry and obscurantism with learning. For example, listing the women who wrote SF during the 1930s and 1940s does not refute charges of sexism within the field; it merely lists women writers who managed to be published despite it. Then there are the critics who exhume obscure writers, sometimes in translation, out of print, or both, not to bring them to the general readership's attention, but to condemn the general readership for being so provincial that they neither recognize nor knew of these writers. Then there are the celebrity-chasers, who love to tell other fans stories that their favorite writers told them -- not to set the record straight in a literary argument, but to brag about their "pro contacts". Fan critics would gain more credibility if they could leave their laundry lists and sandbox squabbles at home, not publish them in fanzines.

Then there's the old-line "ser-con" (serious and constructive) fan-writer, who combines learning and a desire to prove a point, yet may lack the critical methodology necessary to organize the material cogently. I have seen essays where the level and range of knowledge to overwhelm the reader, on whom falls the burden of assimilating the data and providing a critical superstructure. I would love to see such fans work more closely with formal academics: their knowledge base, combined with structuralist, anthropological, Jungian, or what-have-you analyses, would make illuminating reading.

Fannish enthusiasm, though it often gives fan criticism a verve that makes reading it a joyous rediscovery of the books under discussion, very enjoyable to readers, leads some writers into another pitfall -- the desire to believe without testing the evidence. Fan writers who produce interminable

analyses of how an Earth-Mother-worshipping matriarchate was replaced by a Sky-Father-worshipping patriarchate are a fine example of this will-to-believe; as are the writers who cite sources from occult presses as if they were debating, say, with a creationist. In its most serious form, this will-to-believe takes the shape of "my argument is just as good as yours," or "we're just doing this for fun, so it doesn't matter."

As I said before, fans tend to seek closeness to writers. Usually, if they achieve this, they make their contacts through voluminous correspondences, conventions, and local groups. This gregariousness means that they follow trends in SF very closely. Unfortunately, it also means fan feuds, whether chronicled in Asimov's autobiography or the latest internecine squabble by a Convention Committee; this contentiousness shows up in fan writing in terms of diatribes, elaborately written insults to other contributors to the same fanzine, and not-too-hidden agendas.

One of the least constructive of these agendas is a rampant hostility to academics. "Keep SF out of the classroom and in the gutter where it belongs," say some iconoclasts. They give the word "academic" a strongly negative connotation, and, since they condemn (with much justification) academic criticism's stuffiness, they can occasionally retaliate with a folksy, anecdotal, style ill in keeping with what they are trying to say, like Garrison Keillor in a starship. Like writers confronting the professoriate, fans who distrust academics and their theories may adopt a self-consciously venal pose: why'd the writer do that? For money. They complain about dogmatism and academic orthodoxy, but in doing so, show themselves tarred -- here comes a cliché -- with the same brush.

To a certain extent, fans and academics will have to fight this one out. Fans might, being far more flexible, try to regard academics with the same tolerance they give other alien life forms; academics might remember that SF has a tradition of persecution by the academy, and that -- from the supremely gifted kid who dropped out of high school due to boredom, to the writer who left college to avoid "Mickey Mouse regimentation", to the academic renegade who flounced out after post-doctoral study -- this disaffection also affects individuals.

Ironically, media fans -- now decried by many of the senior and intellectual fan writers -- show a tendency to regard them the way that they regard senior faculty. At BOSKONE, a group of teenagers wearing hall costumes adapted from Japanimation asked me why the older fans were so serious, literary, and stuffy.

III. A Worry of Writers

Of the three groups battenning on SF texts, writers like to think that they -- we -- are the most necessary. After all, we're the ones who will produce the books that fu-

ture fans will read and future Ph.D. candidates will write about. Right? That's what we'd like to believe. But writers also know that universities and the mainstream press went on very nicely without us, and that fans could have great parties and feuds all by themselves: if we want to stick around and grow into big-name writers, it's up to us. And we're only as good as our last booknot to mention our last royalty statement.

With the exception of a few very gifted and very senior writer-critics whose advances, royalties, and, in some cases, university salaries free them from day-to-day financial worries, most writers simply cannot afford to write academic criticism. Not only must it be submitted with every footnote in place, groomed for commas and semi-colons, and pruned for appropriately formal synonyms and syntax (and don't forget the precis, either...in French, too, if you're submitting to SFS), but it's free.

Free.

The academic who polishes an article lovingly over a sabbatical or leave, expresses gratitude to the facilities of this or that research library, and to the faculty that freed him or her up to write, cannot imagine the loathing with which the writer, who's trying to escape the tyranny of pennies-a-word for the tyranny of the four- or five-figure advance, speaks that word. The usual tirade runs like this: "They want to give it away! Not only that, they're hassling me for footnotes. I haven't done footnotes since college, and I'm not going to do them now. The hell with it; I'll write a letter of comment for that fan I met at BOSKONE. He doesn't want footnotes, and he'll be happy to hear from me."

Current negotiations between SFRA, and SFWA, in which some SF writers claim that universities bring writers on campus and then overwork them, are another symptom of the clash between academics who write for joy and merit-raises and writers who do it for a living. Despite the press of the school year, the struggle for tenure or continued funding, academics are salaried. As writers perceive it, they have time on their side: no one's asking them to polish off 100,000 words in six months while working a side-job, or skirmish for the next -- or the first -- book contract. As academics (as I remember) perceive it, they're asking writers only what they ask of themselves: long hours, commitment, non-profit status.

When the professional writer does turn critic, however, the results are excellent, as witness the works of James Gunn, Ursula LeGuin, and Samuel Delany, just to name a few. The combination of style, of understanding how the craft works (or did in the last book, anyhow), and the body of reading such a writer brings to bear on criticism, make it literate, informative, and even enjoyable.

This is rare, and should be encouraged. But how?

I have a number of suggestions, many of which are already in progress:

1. Academic Tracks of panelling similar to those at the World Science Fiction Convention are a very good idea. Con-

vention committees for the major regional conventions might consider running one or two such panels.

2. Academics might also be integrated into regular SF and fantasy panels.
3. Anthology collaborations: either reprint anthologies such as Martin Harry Greenberg's series of reprints (often edited in collaboration with writers such as Robert Adams or Isaac Asimov) which bring little-known texts to the attention of fans, writers, and critics, or original anthologies such as Parke Godwin's forthcoming Invitation to Camelot which combines fiction with a critical essay by Raymond Thompson of Acadia College. Where the writer/editor of such an anthology is not a professional specialist in a given field, this type of partnership could be extremely productive.
4. Use writers, fans, and scholars to write articles for such magazines as Amazing, where Patrick Price has opened up the review column to qualified critics, or for encyclopedias such as the one currently in production under the general editorship of James Gunn.
5. Book-length material such as the Star-mont Guides. It was very instructive to see scholar Lillian Heldreth interviewing Tanith Lee for an upcoming volume; this sort of work, when well-done, fosters mutual respect between writer and academic.

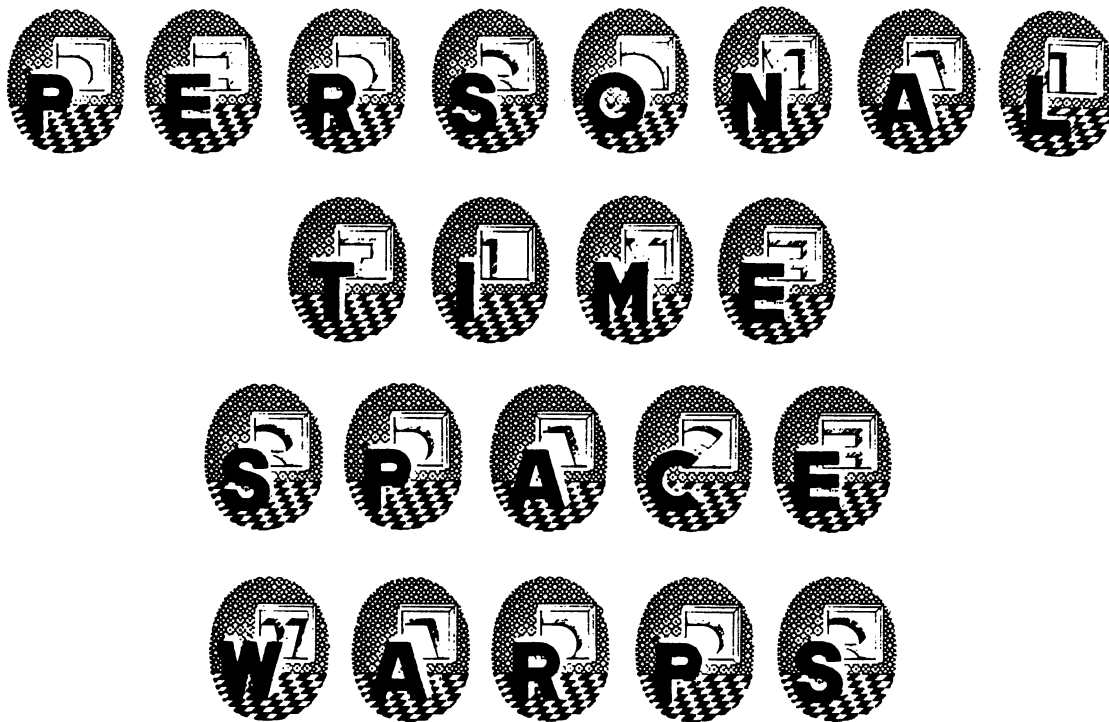
Finally, I am going to make a suggestion that I'm stealing from Washington, DC, writer Roger McBride Allen. He promises to read any manuscript sent to him by a fan. Granted, this is nothing new: many writers started life as fans, and, long after they saw professional print, continued to flourish as fans and writers. Marion Zimmer Bradley, who is responsible for developing many fans into writers, is an outstanding example.

What I'm suggesting may give academics a way out when people tell them, "Those that can, do; those that can't, teach -- or write literary criticism." Earlier, I said that fiction writers do some of the finest SF criticism around. If writers can turn critic, why can't critics turn writer?

I will make the following offer: if an academic with a finished novel or short story manuscript -- and who is serious about trying to write fiction -- sends me that manuscript (in proper form, and with return postage), I will read it and comment on it as soon as I can.

I have two reasons for doing this. I owe any success I've had in my professional writing and editing to the writers who read and shredded my earliest work. Second, I believe in putting my money where my mouth is. I think it's important for writers, critics, and fans to respect one another. And the best way I know to bring this about is for us to start working together on the thing we all, presumably, love, understand, and respect.

I'm waiting for you -- and I dare you!



An article by David Yoder

The Time/Space Warp as a science fiction plot device has, for many years, been the subject of debate. Some feel that as a means of FTL travel it unfairly avoids the problems of interstellar flight, time dilation and various other technical difficulties inherent in the idea: it is an easy out for those not willing to wrestle with the questions the subject raises. (Recently, with the "invention" of the tachyon drive, some of this has been circumvented -- who says that science is outpacing SF and making it more cramped and difficult to write?) Other have no compunction about using these interstellar short cuts. If FTL travel is necessary to the story and there are no requirements as to the method, does it make any difference as to the vehicle employed? The theories which back up the warp method of travel are not unsound and, to the best of my knowledge, have not to date been proven to be impossible.

The idea of time travel through this medium is on somewhat shakier grounds. It requires a little more stretching to make the general ideas fit temporal transposition. However, if you need time travel, it is perhaps a bit more satisfying to the scientific mind than: "Professor Smith went out, bought ten dollars worth of scrap, and built a time machine" a la The Men Who Murdered Mohammed (which is not intended as a criticism of that story).

Personally I do not care much for time-travel stories -- of course, having just said that at least a half dozen exceptions occur to me immediately, including the one mentioned above. Most plots which use it could just as easily tell the same story

with some other setting; naturally this is often going to require the use of an FTL drive.

Now I could insert a number of cute references here to Star Trek, The Rocky Horror Picture Show, or the weaving industry, just to name a few possibilities, but I'm not going to. This is supposed to be a serious piece.

The biggest drawback to T/S warps is that while marginally theoretically possible, there is no good, solid evidence to back up the theories.

Until now, that is.

Everyone has, at some time or another, grappled with the mystery of having put something aside and upon returning for it found that it is no longer there. Sometimes an extensive search will turn it up in some improbable location which would appear to be impossible. At other times the object will be found, after you have ransacked your house looking for it, right where you had originally thought you had left it. I believe that this is a common enough occurrence, one which most of us have experienced, not to need further detailing.

Upon examination one often finds that one's spouse or whatever has moved the missing article to some, to them, more reasonable location. Another common scenario is to have them observe you lay the object down absent-mindedly somewhere, and then bemusedly watch you as you attempt to locate it at the spot where you had intended it to be. (This will often lead to some acerbic comments on the part of the observer which, when added to the cumulative frustration you

have experienced, ought to be considered as grounds for justifiable homicide.) Upon still other occasions the entire household may turn out for the search only to find, after many fruitless man hours, that the dog has taken a fancy to whatever it was and has dragged it off under the bed where he is happily gnawing away at it. (I believe that further study will demonstrate a direct correlation between this and cruelty to animals charges against otherwise peaceful families.)

While the above account for the preponderance of events, there remains a certain percentage which allow no such mundane solution. These occur predominately when one puts something away in other than its usual place or dumps it into a convenient cubbyhole to get it out of sight for a while. Then hours, or days, or months later, when attempting to retrieve it, one discovers that it has vanished. Generally these items will be given up as lost after a seldom more than perfunctory search, but even a careful, detailed search will in almost all cases fail to turn up the prodigal.

This would be one of life's great mysteries were it not for the fact that days, or months, or years later this almost forgotten piece of kipple will reappear in some place that you know it was not yesterday. Indeed, if your memory is good enough, you will discover that it is just where you thought you put it all that time ago. Furthermore, observation will show that this phenomenon is centered around one location. (In very rare cases there may be two or more points of singularity but, while not unknown, this is unusual in the extreme.)

In my own case this curious event is related to my organ bench. Now this handy piece of furniture is designed as it is to provide a convenient place to store the music which one intends to perform on the organ. However, I keep my music in a wastebasket sitting next to the instrument. This minor idiosyncrasy allows the bench to function as the repository for a wide variety of odds and ends which accumulate in other places and periodically need to be cleared away when we want to put on a good appearance for someone.

Until sometime within the past year I had never taken any particular notice of anything unusual about it. While I had experienced things like those described above, I had not attributed them to any particular agency. Then one day while looking for something else I ran across something which I had not seen for quite a few years. Now, you may not see anything wonderful or unusual about this discovery: after all, I have admitted to misplacing and/or losing things frequently in the past (or if I haven't, I will), but this case was special.

About five years ago, my wife Carol and I moved back to Pennsylvania from Ohio. When we did this, most of the contents of the organ bench were discarded. The disappearance of whatever it was predates the move, both Carol and I agree on that; and it was not there at the time of the move. We agree on that. We are also certain it was not there prior to our relocation.

I was puzzled by this. Obviously miracles are not the sort of thing one calmly accepts as being part of day to day existence. When Carol, only half-humorously, suggested a time warp, I scoffed at the idea: scientific anomalies occur even less frequently than miracles and I was not prepared to accept either one -- at that time. Is it reasonable to expect an ordinary, and not too well made, piece of incidental furniture to house a wonder of this magnitude? However, the seed was planted and my attention had been drawn to the bench.

As the days and weeks rolled by there were no further incidents. Then, one day, I caught it! Someone announced that they were going to be dropping by shortly so Carol and I did a quick ready-up on the house. In the process I tossed a book into the bench instead of putting it away. Later that day when I went back for it, it was no longer there. I knew I had put it there. When I asked Carol if she had moved it, she denied it and said she had seen me put it in the bench. A short search found it neatly shelved right where it belonged. Neither of us had put it there, but there it was. The only explanation left was the space/time warp we had originally discounted as unbelievable.

Close and careful observation since that time has produced further evidence of its existence. While it is obviously a thing of some power (consider that the original, known, incident involved a displacement not only through six or seven years, but also across about 500 miles), it manifests itself only in small ways and, necessarily, with small objects.

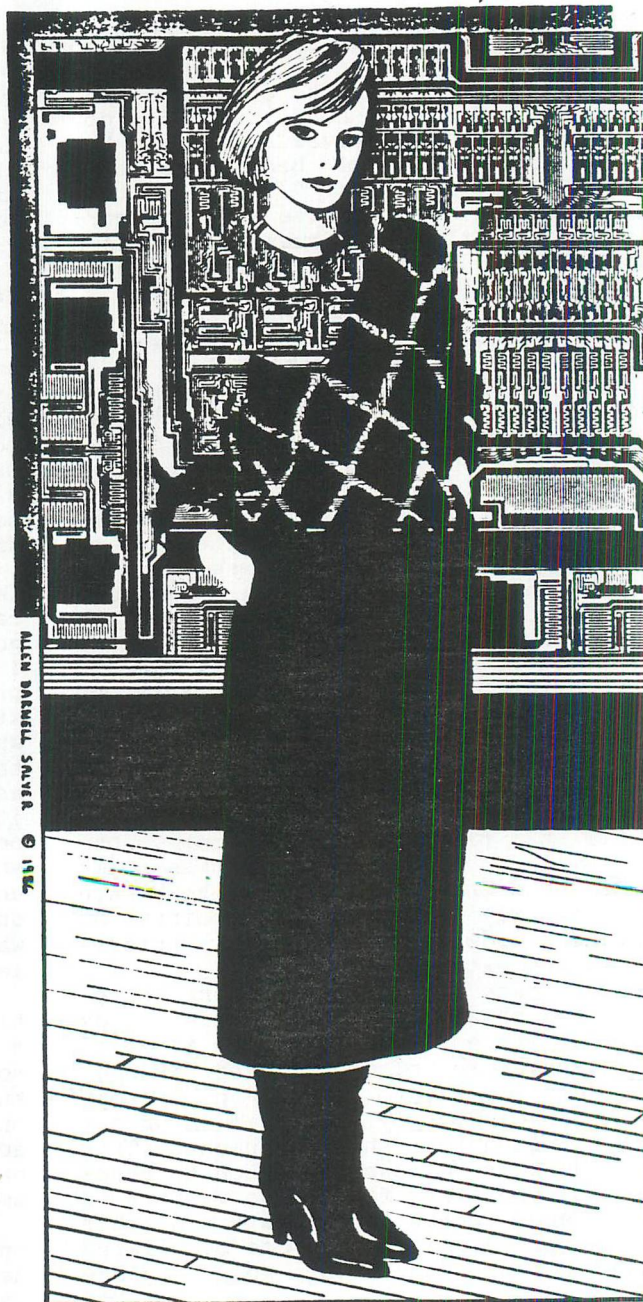
Though it is a fearful thing to share one's living quarters with something of this nature it seems, if not kindly, at least not unkindly disposed toward us. We, for our part, do our best to give it the respect and treatment it deserves and to learn to accept and deal with its effects.

Through conversation with other people I have been able to determine that most houses or apartments have such a singularity. Most people put the effects down to faulty memory or the actions of others but, with careful observation and control, you should be able to locate one or more of these doorways in your own home or workplace and prove for yourself the existence of these mysterious phenomena.

NEWER AVES

Some Comments on
the Cyberpunks and Humanists

by Robert Sabella



Most readers of Lan's Lantern have probably read Michael Swanwick's "User's Guide to the Postmoderns" in the August issue of Asimov's. It was an interesting tongue-in-cheek discussion of the new writers who have entered the science fiction field in the 80s. It made much of the fact that they are split into two different camps: the "humanists" whose main influence is classical literature, and the "cyberpunks" or "neuromantics" who spring from science and technology.

What Swanwick does not say, although I'm sure he realizes it, is that such a split is

common in the history of science fiction. Hardly a decade goes by without the appearance of a new group of writers who experiment quite drastically with the genre. Established writers often react to the newcomers either by denouncing their tinkering or ignoring them and going their merry old-fashioned way. The dichotomy seldom lasts longer than a half-dozen years which is how long it takes a new generation of writers to merge the best qualities of the experimenters with the grand traditions of science fiction.

Sabella: Newer Waves

Consider the early 1930s. At that time science fiction was dominated by the super-science extravaganzas of E. E. Smith and such clones as Edmond Hamilton and John W. Campbell. But in 1934 Don A. Stuart created a softer, introspective science fiction which quickly found its own audience. At first none of the established writers took heed of Stuart's fiction, but by 1937 when John W. Campbell became the editor of As-tounding Stories (since Stuart was actually a pseudonym for Campbell) the two types of science fiction were merging quite nicely.

The most well-known split occurred in the mid-60s when writers such as Samuel Delany, Thomas M. Disch, Roger Zelazny, Harlan Ellison, John Brunner, Norman Spinrad and Michael Moorcock sought to erase the genre's last vestiges of pulp fiction by experimenting with style and structure. They also tended to favor fantasy, mythology and "soft" sciences such as psychology and sociology to such traditional "hard" science as physics and biology. This split into "New Wave" writers and "Old Wave" writers was often quite acrimonious. At times the hostility between the two camps threatened to tear science fiction right in half.

But by the 70s the split faded entirely. A new group of writers emerged -- Children of the New Wave, if you will -- who fused the traditional ideas and hard science of the Old Wave with the writing values of the New Wave to produce a higher form of science fiction than had ever existed previously. Consider the following writers who emerged in the 70s:

C. J. Cherryh: Her novels have their basis in space operas (Downbelow Station, the Chanur series) and traditional tales of alien cultures (Brothers of Earth, Hunter of Worlds), yet they are primarily concerned with the structure of alien societies and the characters of aliens and humans, both New Wave concerns.

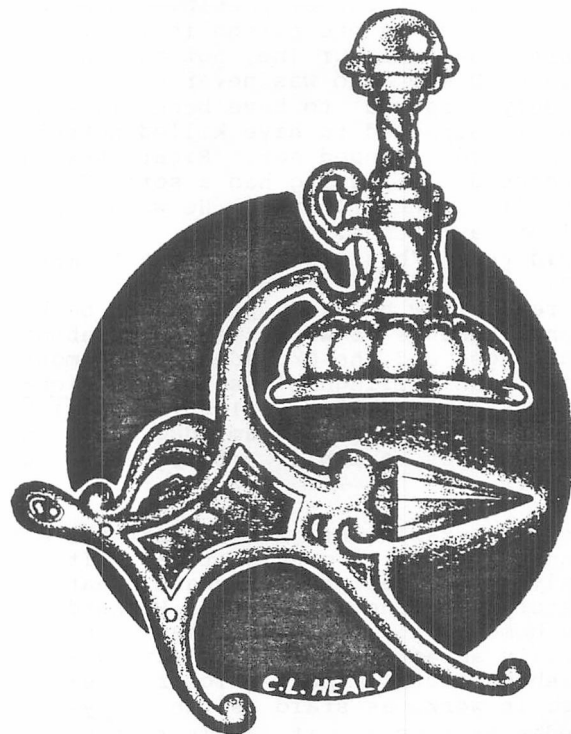
George R.R. Martin: His plots also concern aliens ("A Song for Lya") and their cultures (Dying of the Light) but much of his emphasis is on creating moods and emotions.

John Varley: The most creative of the new science fiction writers, his stories positively ooze "sense of wonder" (such as "In the Bowl" and "In the Hall of the Martian Kings"), yet his humanitarian concerns and characterization ("Options" and "Blue Champagne") are pure New Wave.

And there are others: Joan D. Vinge's output ranges from the space adventure The Outcasts of Heaven Belt to the multi-faceted The Snow Queen; Vonda N. McIntyre updates traditional science fiction ideas in Dreamsnake and "Aztec"; Michael Bishop's stories read like pure New Wave yet he has a strong anthropological bent in stories such as Transfigurations and No Enemy But Time.

What is unusual about the latest split is that two groups have splintered from the SF mainstream simultaneously. The "humanists" are even more concerned with literature than the New Wavers were. For example, the stories by John Kessel and Kim Stanley Robinson are strongly influenced by Herman Melville. On the other hand, the "cyberpunks" are concerned with "hard" science and technology yet experiment with style and structure in a way that would have shocked the Old Wavers. Consider William Gibson, the most successful of this group. His high-tech computer stories are pure hard-science reeking of "sense-of-wonder", yet they are as innovative as anything written by the most experimental New Wavers.

At the moment the differences between the two groups seem immense, but history has shown it is only a matter of time before the differences fade. Bruce Sterling, one of the best cyberpunks, has already begun moving toward the humanists with such stories as "The Beautiful and the Sublime". By 1990 one of two things should happen: Either William Gibson will collaborate on a novel with Kim Stanley Robinson or a new science fiction writer will emerge who combines the poetry of Roger Zelazny, the characterization of John Kessel, the technological extrapolation of William Gibson, and the traditionalism of Larry Niven. This writer will merge the cyberpunks and humanists in a way similar to how Ursula K. LeGuin's The Left Hand of Darkness merged the New and Old Waves in 1969. Unfortunately, such a writer will be much too good to ever make the New York Times Bestseller List!



A commentary by Andy Offutt

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On King Richard

the Homosexual

(and Other Misconceptions)

A few lines in LL #19 hit my go-button. The lines, from Mark Schulzinger, are:

"[Randell Garrett] postulated a world in which King Richard Plantagenet didn't die in Austria, but returned to become an effective ruler. Whether such a notorious pederast would ever have produced an heir is a tough question to answer."

This from a notorious heterosexual with credentials of advanced study of psychology and presumably a scientific mind! The fact is...

King Richard was heterosexual for eight centuries, from his birth in 1157 until 1947. The first mention of possible homosexuality was opined by one person in 1947. The Lionheart's heir Arthur (no, not the famous one of c500 AD who also was never a king) is still widely assumed to have been his son; and a nun is supposed to have killed herself because Richard demanded her. Ricart Rex is even "accused" of having had a sort-of affair with his sister, Joanna. He wasn't homosexual or gay either.

Why did that "historian" choose to make that up?

I've read a few hundred pounds of books and taken thousands of words in notes about the Middle Ages and the Crusades. The most recent is John Gillingham's scholarly Richard and The Lionheart (1978 & 1985). British history professor Gillingham dug deep, in several languages, and his bibliography is impressive.

"Most remarkable of all is that the legend-making still goes on today. It is only in the past thirty years that the story has gone around that Richard was a homosexual. Although this is now generally accepted as the 'plain, unvarnished truth' about Richard, repeated in works as staid as the Encyclopedia Britannica, it is in fact no more than a highly colored assertion which cannot be substantiated -- in other words a new legend which tells

us more about our own times than it does about the character of the man whom it ostensibly concerns." (p.7)

"...the first writer to state Richard was a homosexual was J. H. Harvey, The Plantagenets (London, 1948)." (p.298)

Apparently Harvey should be accepted and believed as a historian much as Suetonius, who prepared himself for the writing of The Twelve Caesars by finding all the gossip he could, weighing and question nothing.

Harvey based his allegation on his mistranslating and misreading of two passages in the Gesta and Chronica of Roger of Howden. It appealed to those who'd rather believe than check, and of course could be "backed up" by noting that Richard's mother was an extremely strong woman and his wife (Berengaria of Navarre, whom he met just before their marriage) was a weak one with whom he was never friends.

Teddy Roosevelt's mother was also an unusually strong woman. And you must close both eyes to overlook that fact that Richard's father Henry was also an extremely strong parent and role model. This helped lead to the macho Richard's taking the first castle he besieged -- at age 18 -- and was one hell of a soldier and captain-general ever after. He "lost" the Third Crusade, in a way, but like Pompeius Magnus and G.J. Caesar, lost no battles.

Why did that "historian" choose to make that up? Why did so many people choose to believe it? I remember that once a reviewer seemed able to write only of "too much sex" in one of Vardis Fisher's brilliant looks at our prehistory -- our formation. The book contains no sexuality, but later Fisher learned that the reviewer had had one cancerous testicle removed just before he wrote the "review". Ahhh. We'd better not opine on opiner Harvey's sexuality or possible sexual problems, had we. Remember the other dummies who wanted Tom Sawyer banned because he and Becky, two children, spent the night in a cave alone? -- who wanted the Tarzan novels banned because Tarzan and Jane were

never married? (They were, by her preacher-father.)

Lord, why do so many mispronounce Jerghis Khan's name as if it started with a hard G? (It's the Mongol pronunciation of the Chinese honorific "Ching-tse", and it's mighty hard to get a hard G out of a soft ch. The first G in the unfortunate "Genghis" spelling is the same as in "giant"; the second one is hard.) How come so many "writers" refer to the "firing" of arrows? The verb "to fire" meaning "to propel a missile" began with the invention of firearms. Firearms. Arms or weapons based on gunpowder. "To fire" means "to set afire" as in "touch the match to the tinder to set alight the powder to create the explosion to propel the missile: cannonball or bullet." What dumbness we've been reading all these years! Arrows were not fired, unless they were lit to become flaming shafts. They were loosed, sped, released.... We can't accuse all the thousands of writer and "writers" who have said characters "fired their arrows" or "advanced under stiff arrow fire" of being dumb, but we can accuse them of failing to think. J'accuse.

Here's some information of far less import, but it's interesting, especially to

one whose mind is trained both to scholarship and to the speculative thinking that leads to science fiction. Ricart, Duke of Normandy, Poitou and Aquitaine; eventually gained England's crown. He spent six weeks on that island. He had to fight constantly on the continent -- he did love warfare, like so many others -- and at last went off on Crusade because clerics yammered at him about it and King Philip of France agreed to go, too.

The gods know what might have become of Saludin & co. had Philip not, in a fit of pique, stomped off and returned to France. (Source for a lot of SF there, if probably not such great fun as Garrett's series of stories about milord detective in a world of magic.) There Philip the Liar began to raid Richard's lands, so that Richard had to get out of Palestine and head home, or lose them.

Philip was delighted when a venal little man kidnapped Richard, then "sold" his captivity-for-ransom to another; it enabled Philip to continue his land piracy. Richard died, presumably of blood poisoning from an arrow wound, in the siege of a castle that amounted to next to nothing. He was never "King of England" (Rex Angletterre) but was Ricart Rex Anglorum: King of the English. "England" as a nation hadn't quite been invented, then, just as Philip's France was smaller in area than Richard's continental baronies -- now part of France.

Whew. Try not to wind me up this way any more, Lan -- and Mark. I can't afford it.



((Yes, I realize that these ladies should be loosing their arrows, but I thought Andy would appreciate this illustration. Lan))

The Fannish Cuisine of VERMONT

An article by T. L. Bohman

Not only is the fannish and ethnic cuisine of Vermont not well known outside New England, it's not very well known inside New England. Or inside Vermont, for that matter. Vermont, for all its rustic charm and rural beauty is not a haven for the international fannish gourmet. Its capital has a population of less than 10,000 and that, my friend, is the big city by local standards. I correspond with people who seem, well, hazy on exactly where Vermont gets squeezed in on a United States map. And once on a trip through Quebec -- only a couple-hour drive north of here -- I stopped at a gas station whose attendant apparently wasn't sure whether my license plat was genuine.

"Vfer-mou," he said. "Ah, yes. Uh, where is Vfer-mou?"

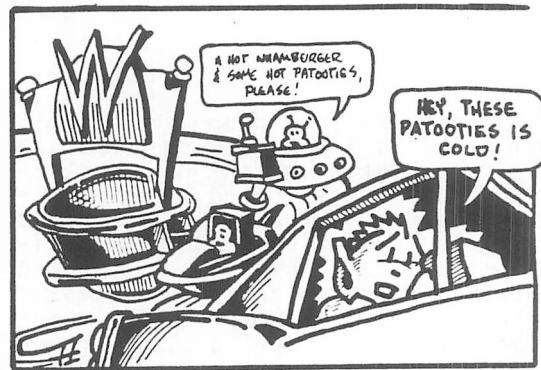
In the interest of international relations, I refrained from telling him that Vfer-mou was 40 miles south of your size 12s, Buddy. Or, size 46s, recognizing that Canada, at least, had the sense to go metric long ago. "Vermont's just north of Massachusetts, between New York and New Hampshire."

"Oh. Oh yes," he said. Either he had heard of New York or knew that no respectable Canadian would pronounce a word like "Vermont" the way I did. "In the Yew-Ess?"

That was the trip on which I encountered the Amazing Awesome Green Mountain Pizza, one of my life's great revelations. And you thought I had become hopelessly sidetracked, didn't you?

First an admission: I'm not really writing about fannish cuisine. Vermont, you see, has such a small population density, that the fannish population -- I'm sure does exist, somewhere -- directs its fanac toward the populations of New York and Massachusetts. New Hampshire probably has fanac of its own but that seems to be concentrated in the remote populations centers near the seacoast. And besides, we tend to view New Hampshire as a kind of imitation Vermont and the less we can say about that the better. So because of its size, Vermont has little sense of fannish cuisine. But the real reason I'm not writing about fannish cuisine is that, aside from vague visions of rubber chicken and bouncing potatoes, I really don't know what fannish cuisine is. So if you believed the title, sorry, chum, but you've been had.

Vermont does have its own cuisine, and much of it is extremely good. But Vermont cuisine, with few exceptions, is meat-and-potatoes stuff. It finds its focus in the Sunday dinner, the church supper, and such



informal get-togethers as wild-game dinners, sugar-on-snow festivals, and Aunt Bessie's Ked Flannel Hash. Vermont cuisine exists in a social context quite ignorant of McDonalds and Burger King, and the social context is integral with the cuisine. Taking a Vermont scalloped potatoes out of the church supper is like watching a Panda in a cage. It's just not quite the same thing. Any fan, I think, would understand that aspect of Vermont cuisine.

One item you won't find at a Vermont church supper is the all-American milkshake, at least not the kind you're probably used to. Order a milkshake in this state and that's exactly what you're likely to get: milk that's been shaken up. That's it. If you want something with ice cream in it, you don't want a milkshake, you want a "frappe". Granted that ordering "Milkshake" in most of the big cities, or from the national fast-food chains, or even occasionally from the local dairy bars may actually get you a real milkshake, one with ice cream, but that's still the exception. The definitions are just different. The only thing I've never been able to understand is why anyone in this state might want their milk shaken.

Ethnic cuisine is something else again in Vermont. "Ethnic" means "foriegn" and Vermonters just don't seem to speak that language. I remember a cute little log cabin restaurant 10 or 15 miles south of here that opened as "The Mexicali Rose" and featured a varied menu of Mexican cooking. The menu certainly looked authentic and I honestly can't say the food was bad. The couple of times I was there the food actually tasted pretty good, if you managed to forget what it was you were supposed to be eating. I mean you had to look at your burrito to tell what it was you were biting on. It just didn't taste Mexican. It tasted like food made by some Vermont farm hand to look like pictures in a magazine. I suppose that's what it was.

But easily the most remarkable object I can remember eating was a Vermont pizza. A friend and I were driving down through the northern part of the state one beautiful afternoon when we stopped for a dinner at a roadside restaurant. The Green Mountain Dinner featured the usual Vermont meat-and-potatoes fare...and pizza. We both liked pizza, so why not? Shall I describe the anticipation? Outside was a perfect autumn afternoon. The sky was a crystal blue with a hint of winter chill and a faint crescent

moon hanging above the hills. We'd had a few cool nights and an occasional tree was practicing the colors that would soon decorate our world. We'd enjoyed our trip. We were invigorated and just tired enough to relish relaxing in the diner talking, waiting, talking. And finally it came, warm and golden and tinged with melted brown.

Who ever heard of a cheddar-cheese pizza? The thing we got tasted like a toasted cheese and baloney sandwich -- not even bologna: baloney! Again, if I closed my eyes, it wasn't bad; the problem came when I tried to reconcile what I was eating with any preconceptions I may have ever held of pizza. It is hard to describe this peculiar combination of native foodstuffs, except, perhaps, to say that had a certain foreign government learned of it, we'd likely still be at war with Italy. There is something to be

said for honor, and this device was, if it was anything, an affront to it. To say that I'd have run screaming for any Papa Gino's within 20 miles may give you an idea of the experience.

That experience, two years past now, is not something I brood about, but every now and again I do recollect the Amazing Awesome Green Mountain Pizza and wonder if it was really as bad as I remember. I wonder if that little diner is still up there serving the same bizarre concoction. And who eats it? Unsuspecting tourists? Appreciative natives? There's an interesting study awaiting some enterprising anthropologist.

He can forget about The Mexical Rose: it lasted barely half a year. But the Green Mountain Diner -- who knows? I wish him luck.

And I hope he packs a lunch.



ELLISON

ON A SPIT

The 260 or so seats in the Los Angeles Press Club were completely sold out on the night of Saturday, July 12th, 1986, in anticipation of a Harlan Ellison celebrity roast. The speakers (virtually all of them old friends of Harlan's) included Ray Bradbury, Robert Silverberg and Robin Williams -- yes, that Robin Williams.

The doors were kept open in the small Press Club room on that hot summer night, while drinks were served at an adjacent bar (which shamefully ripped me off for \$4.50 for a shitty cup of plastic ginger ale!). The speakers sat around a long table on the small stage, as Ellison, wearing a yellow jacket and a red sweater, sat at the far right end, yelling out retorts now and then when he just couldn't take the insults any longer.

The evening began with William Rotsler setting up a screen and showing a series of slides strung together in Ellison's "honor". (This portion of the tape, mentioned at the article's end, could not pick up Rotsler's voice very well.)

As the lights dimmed, Harlan yelled, "Wait! I wanna see the slide show, too!" This presentation, with narration by Rotsler, included shots of castles, bare skin, cactus, the infamous stripper-actress Kitten Natividad, the wonderful gargoyle caricatures which adorn Harlan's home ("Ellison Wonderland") and a close-up of an incredibly young Ellison (a shot of a sperm cell).

L.A. critic Digby Diehl then took the stage as the night's Master of Ceremonies, and his running commentaries were very funny throughout. "We actually tried to assemble a dais here of men of Harlan's stature [with this began the first of many quips concerning Harlan's height]; unfortunately, some of us didn't make the four-foot-seven meter mark. I'm actually only here as M.C. because Herve Villechaize is busy tonight! As far as we know, [Ellison's] mother and father were normal -- the milkman was a syphilitic dwarf." David Gerrold giggled loudly throughout the entire evening, as Diehl in-



troduced the speakers stating, "These are the people your mother warned you about. In fact, this dais is Ed Mees's personal nightmare!" which brought the house down.

In introducing the evening's first speaker, Diehl said, "Ray Bradbury has spoken about how many of the younger writers are his children. Well, Harlan's the only bastard he admits to! Ray actually was going to read a poem comparing Harlan to Moby Dick, then I recalled to him a few words that Harlan had said several years ago before he was trying to entreat him to come on this panel. He remarked that Ray, one of our foremost science fiction writers, 'is kind of a senile, sentimental old wimp, who writes simpy, girl-school prose. A crumpled shell of a has-been.' Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Ray Bradbury!" (All were pretty mean, in a roughly playful manner, to Ray that night.)

A SUMMARY BY KRIS GILPIN

"The reason why Harlan is such a brilliant writer, such a great stylist," Bradbury concluded, "is..." At this point Ellison yelled, "Daddy!!" "...is that he's my son, yes!" Bradbury finished.

"That was certainly pathetic, Ray," Digby said upon retaking the podium (which stood in the middle of the table). "We'll plead Alzheimer's for ya!" (Robin Williams mimicked sign language at times behind Diehl's back.) After reading a telegram from Isaac Asimov ("I don't want to say anything derogatory; that would be too easy"), which ended with the "P.S. 'Kick him in the balls!' -- Frank Sinatra," Diehl gave the podium over to David Gerrold.

"Since Twilight Zone came on the air, Harlan has a whole new field of unemployment," Gerrold said, taking moments out to also roast some of the others on the panel. "This is difficult, for me to stand up here and say mean things about Harlan, who's been my friend for six years...I've known him for 18." About Bradbury Gerrold said, "When Ray stands up and walks around the table, check his knees out. They make little crinkly faces, little Happy Faces." Back to Ellison: "The fact that Harlan is a self-made man relieves God of a great responsibility! The great Sidney Coleman said, 'Nasty, brutish and short is a) Hobb's description of the condition of life, b) Harlan Ellison, c) sex with Harlan Ellison. For years Harlan suffered for his work; now it's our turn.'"

"It's so hopeless, Bradbury's leaving!" Diehl said, as Ray left for the evening. As each guest took the stage, Mad magazine and Groo comic book writer/illustrator Sergio Aragones drew large sketches of each speaker while standing in a corner of the stage.

Next was Phil de Guere, producer of the new Twilight Zone. "This is my first visit to this building," de Guere said. "Looking around I get the impression it was never new. I want you to know I'm honored to be in the same room with Robin Williams and Ray Bradbury, in one of their rare visits to Earth. Of all the writers I've worked with, Harlan is by far the shortest. In fact, if the word gets out to all of his enemies that we're paying tribute to him tonight, we're gonna have to find a larger place to hold this meeting -- like his mouth. I've never spoken at an affair like this before so, when I was asked to be here tonight, I called a friend who'd been to many roasts, and he said, 'Phil, if you want to be a hit, just talk dirty and mention a big name. So: fuck Edgar Allan Poe!' And with that he left the podium. Phil's comments were, in fact, written by Nal Kanter, the legendary film writer/producer/director.

Diehl then said, "[This is] a dais of friends of Harlan's, and Harlan has friends he hasn't even used yet." He then introduced Stan Lee.

"Good ole Harlan," Lee began, "whichever one he is, and I have been the very best of casual acquaintances for many years. There is no way I'm gonna stand up here and insult a living legend like Harlan Ellison; in fact, there is no way you can insult Harlan

Ellison! This man has brought a new meaning to the word "literature," which used to be a respectable word. Even though some unthinking people claim that Harlan talks too much, I say, 'So what?!' [Lee pauses here for this to sink in.] That wasn't even the gag!" he then admits as Gerrold tells him to "quit while you're ahead!" Stan continued, "One of the nicer things about Harlan is his docile, peaceful nature; he's an incredibly difficult person to arouse. And if you don't believe me, ask any of his former wives."

"Thank you, Stan," Diehl said when Lee was finished. "Harlan, you're right -- he is a blithering old fool." Then, "If it were true that a man's what he eats, then Harlan would be a vagina! Our next roaster has provided a permanent career for Tony Perkins."

Robert Bloch is Ellison's friend of the past 30 years. In a wonderfully deadpan delivery, he told of how he went to an astrologer to get an opinion on Harlan Ellison. "He said, 'You don't need an astrologer, you need a proctologist.'" Bloch then mentioned how Harlan had once "gone up on a girl," which caused several roasters to cross that joke off their own notes. Before Bloch was through, Ellison asked, "Who farted?" and the author of Psycho finished with one last burn: "Harlan, you're a credit to sci-fi."

Next came Paul Krassner, editor of what Digby called "the most offensive magazine in America," The Realist. "I don't know if you know this," Krassner told the audience, "but there's a urinal behind this podium. I'm pleased to roast Harlan; actually, it's more of a microwave. Harlan is known as an egomaniac, partially because at the moment of sexual climax he calls out his own name." After having trouble reading his notes in the room's light, Krassner said, "Maybe it does make you go blind." Robin Williams then went to the podium to help; donning Paul's glasses Williams said, "These glasses make everything look big." As Ellison put them on, Krassner said, "O.K., now look down, Harlan!"

Henry Holmes, Jr., Harlan's lawyer, followed next, as the entire evening's proceeds were going toward legal fees for Ellison. A libel suit has been brought against Harlan as a result of comments made by him concerning a comics writer in a published interview a few years ago. When Holmes left the podium, Diehl told Ellison, "You're going to need the Twinkie defense!"

Ellison's childhood friend Robert Silverberg then took the podium. With more deadpan he spoke of how he'd set Harlan's calendar ahead a year, "and he made three deadlines!" Commenting on Harlan's comments regarding Silverbob's wardrobe: "I know as much about clothing as you do about the English language."

"Incredible as it may seem now, Silverberg's early books really are quite readable," remarked Diehl before introducing Robin Williams, "fresh from Club Paradise, his biggest failure yet!"

Williams went into his usual stream-of-consciousness, multi-voiced insanity. In a woman's voice: "I like Harlan. He's smart;

He gives good mind." To lawyer Holmes: "What you did up here was like foreplay for a cat-atonc." And, "Harlan's one of the few men to actually be circumcised by a Water-pik."

Finally, Digby introduced the guest of dishonor, "with the milk of human kindness dropping from his fangs." Harlan began with, "I had a friend once, but the wheels fell off. I'm gonna sue the rest of you mother-fuckers for slander! Wanna talk bad taste, Williams? I've got four words for you: Club Paradise and The Survivors." To which Robin replied, "They'll go on a bill with A Boy and His Dog, right?" About David Gerrold, Ellison began, "He's been in and out of the closet so many times....," while mentioning that Bradbury had gone "running out of here to get a fat transplant." He called Paul Krassner "modern America's answer to the Elephant Man," while saying of Diehl, "His noblest desire is to become Gene Shalit. I really should be kind to Digby; I've known him since he was thin. Why am I looking forward to the trial?" Harlan asked, scanning the faces seated around him. "I live in fear that, if I get into a car accident, I'll have to relive this."

After closing words from the M.C., Arago-nes' posters were sold outside and, if it seems I've been skimming through the comments of that hilarious evening, I have indeed, since a set of audio cassettes containing the complete text of the roast is available for \$21 from: Herc/Harlan Ellison Roast, 8530 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 309, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

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TEN YEARS AGO IN SCIENCE FICTION

-- WINTER 1977 --

by Robert Sabella

The first issue of Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine appeared with a lot of fanfare and several reasons for optimism: the biggest name in science fiction was on each cover (as was his picture for several issues); the publisher had a successful track record with such long-running magazines as Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, Mike Shayne and Alfred Hitchcock; Editor George Scithers was quite familiar with science fiction, having edited his Hugo-winning fanzine Amra for many years. The first issue of Asimov's featured a lead novelette by John Varley, currently the hottest writer in the field. But the issue was stolen by unknown Herb Boehm with his chilling short story "Air Raid." SF fans soon learned that Boehm was actually a pseudonym for Varley.

Recordings of spoken science fiction were spreading rapidly with authors such as Brian W. Aldiss, Theodore Sturgeon, Robert Bloch

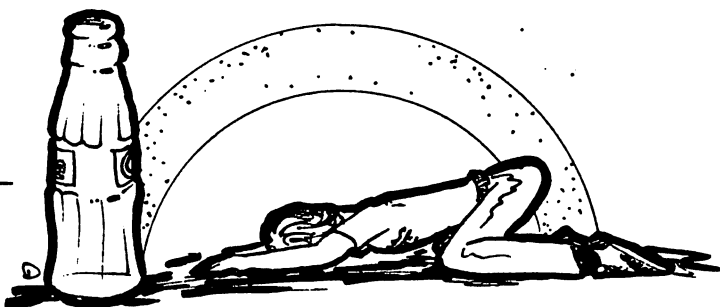
and Harlan Ellison doing recordings. Analog announced a forthcoming series of spoken SF, beginning with Isaac Asimov reading "Night-fall". The recording Harlan! Harlan Ellison reads Harlan Ellison topped the Nebula nominees for Best Dramatic Presentation but lost the prize to the ubiquitous No Award.

Ballantine Books released the novel Star Wars by George Lucas in anticipation of the movie's release in the Spring. Most SF fans immediately assumed the actual author was prolific adapter Alan Dean Foster. Lucas-films had made a big pitch for the movie at the previous year's Worldcon, successfully attracting many potential viewers with its special effects and razzamatazz but alienating others with its illogical science and simplistic plot.

The literary vultures circling over Galaxy Magazine gre in number as the signs of its impending death grew: it began skipping issues, publishing several serials after their publication in book form; owners Universal Publishing and Distribution began selling other titles and closing offices. Editor Jim Baen temporarily worked out of his home, soon to flee the sinking ship for an editorial post at Ace Books. He was replaced by James J. Pierce, causing a collective gasp in those of us who remembered his anti-New Wave wars a decade earlier.

The Land of — OPPORTUNITY —

Nihilistic comments by Mark R. Leeper



I was just eating at a York Steak House -- one of those where you pick up your own silverware, tray, etc. -- and thinking about how this is really becoming the Land of Opportunity. What brought it up is that there were no steak knives to be had. It was an off-hour -- there should have been plenty -- but the restaurant just did not have enough steak knives. And why? Because enough of their customers had realized over the months that they were holding in their hands steak knives of some value and they had an opportunity to add these knives to their home collections for the price of one washing. What a great opportunity! And the management had foolishly set up a business that provided this opportunity to its customers. This is not to say I don't blame the customers who took the knives even more -- a lot more, in fact -- but human nature is getting better at sniffing out opportunity and the only answer I can see is that the rest of us have to get smart about not providing the opportunity.

Let me give you an example of such a successful avoidance. It used to be that hotels and motels had in their closets standard hangers for clothing. You know, the sort you have in your closets at home. And, you see, that was the rub: the hotel was putting into guests' hands something that had an intrinsic value. Not much, mind you, but some intrinsic value. They were placing in guests' hands a golden opportunity to get more nice hangers for their homes. And, of course, there were some people who just couldn't pass up such a wonderful opportunity. Then someone got smart; they developed a coat hanger that didn't have a hook at the top. Instead, it had a little knob that could be held by a ring around the rod in the closet. Without such rings on the rod of your closet at home, the hanger is useless. The opportunity had disappeared! But so did much of the convenience of using the hangers.

Of course, non-stealable knives may not be as simple an invention. What will probably happen is that the restaurant will just keep buying more knives and increase the prices on their menu. That means they will either go out of business or their patrons will pick up the cost of a business providing this wonderful opportunity.

So what relevance does all this have to science fiction? Well, this keen awareness of opportunity is shaping the future. The world will be different because of it. All kinds of little details and perhaps some really big ones will be different because

there are so many opportunities to take advantage of.

For twenty years or so one of the most convenient ways to administer drugs has been the capsule. You don't need special binders that might cause side effects to hold your drug together. You simply put it in an easy-to-swallow capsule. Ah, but capsules provide an opportunity to someone. They open up so easily and reclose so untraceably. What a great opportunity to demonstrate your personal power. You can open up the capsules, put in cyanide, close them back up, and you have killed someone---someone you don't even know and who doesn't know you. But you were the most important person in their life.

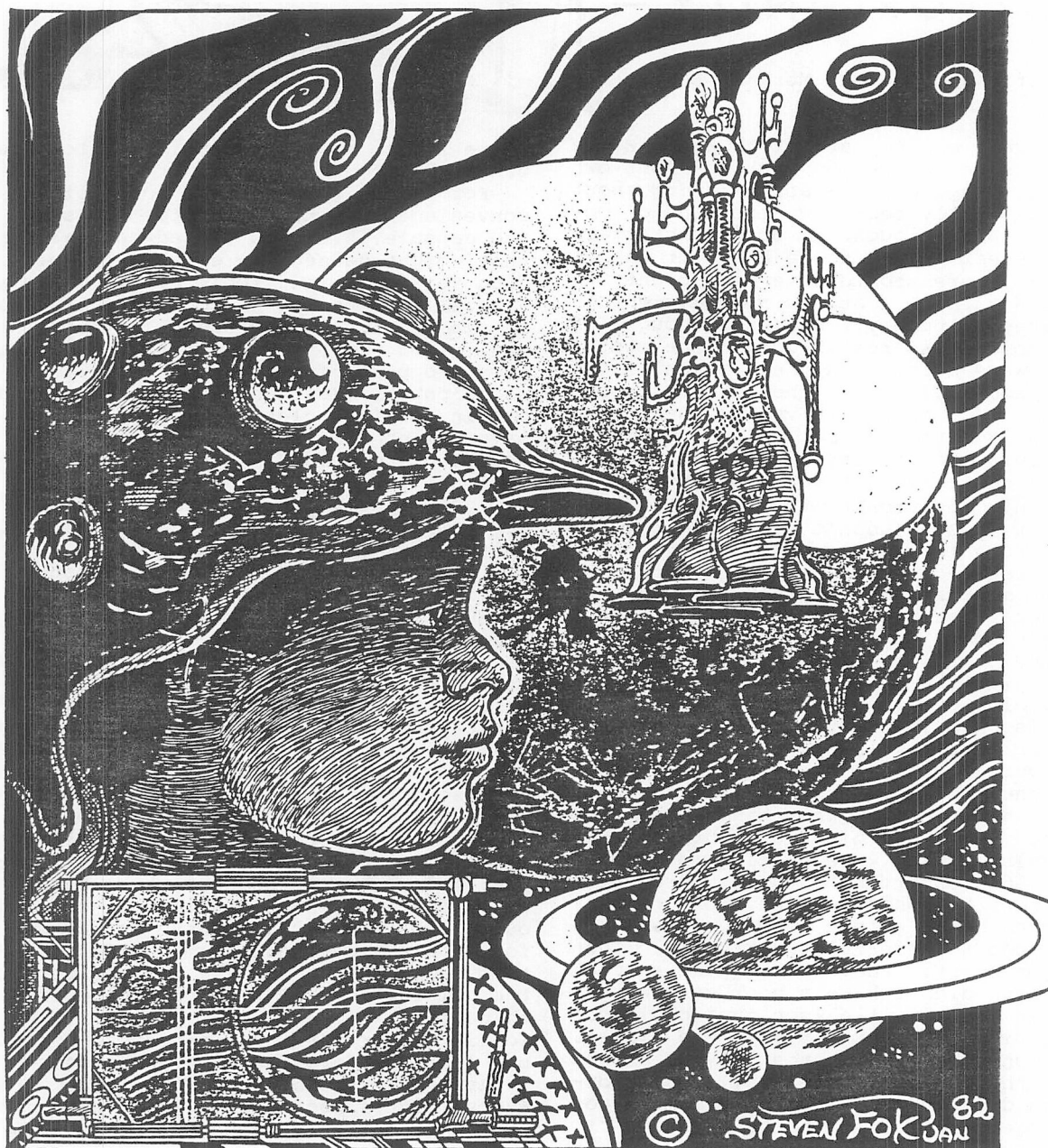
And the drug industry is closing off the opportunity in the only way it can. It is retreating from using capsules. There is, for the time being, much less opportunity provided by pills with binders.

But that is just the first step. Jell-O boxes provided opportunity too. Hey, they are already full of packets of white powder. Some clever person has already seen his opportunity there and we have had our first non-capsule-related poisoning. And that may be only the beginning. We may be coming out of a period of artificially low food prices because nobody realized what great opportunities our packaging provided. Look through your grocery store. Other than the cans all the food comes in resealable bottles, cardboard boxes, cellophane; the produce isn't wrapped at all. Look at all that opportunity out there! We may just have to end up with food coming in something more fortress-like than packaging as we have thought of it, and the pricing for all that packaging is going to be paid for by the consumer. No more looking over the fresh produce before you buy it. That provides too much opportunity.

And there is more opportunity out there. Every little wooded area is a platinum opportunity for some industrialist to save big money on toxic waste disposal. Even roads, unguarded at 2 AM -- for the moment -- have provided toxic waste dumpers with opportunity to save big bucks.

My father and I once sat in our car at a grocery store waiting for my mother. A young woman, apparently a college co-ed, parked her bicycle, pulled out a heavy chain, and proceeded to lock her bicycle to a lamppost. "You know," my father said wistfully, "this would be a much nicer world if people were honest." I am afraid, Dad, that you ain't seen nothing yet. This world is going to get a lot worse before, if ever, it gets better.

Dangerous Visions



A Twenty Year Retrospective

An article by David M. Shea

Childe Harold. "The Raven". Les Fleurs du Mal. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Finnegans Wake. "Guernica". The Tropic of Cancer.

The history of art and literature is filled with examples of revolutionary departures: startling visionary breakaways by individuals who scrapped all the previous rules and proceeded according to the dictates of their own artistic sensibilities. These radical approaches have produced great works of art -- and vast quantities of forgettable garbage. History will judge, as history always does, whether new modes of expression have lent new life to artistically bankrupt realms, or ventured down side roads to oblivion.

Since science fiction as an artistic medium has a shorter history than, say, sculpture, perhaps its "historical" perspectives may be obtained in a shorter time. It is in this light that the present article will attempt to view the genre's most notable and deliberate attempt at a revolutionary departure: the original Dangerous Visions.

Strange as it may seem, an entire generation has grown up since this seminal collection came into being. Though its origin (as editor Harlan Ellison explains in his introduction) go farther back, the stories were written in 1966; the introduction itself is dated February 1967, and the Doubleday hardcover hit the bookstores around March or April of that year. Opinion is divided as to whether it immediately "set the science fiction world on its ear"; but impact of some sort was unmistakable.

Just what was the response at that time? James Blish said, "There has never been a collection like this before..."; much-respected critic Algis Budrys said, "You should buy this book immediately..."; even the New York Times got into the act (at a time when the serious mundane press seldom reviewed SF): "...what we mean when we say an important book...."

That was what they thought then. How well does it stack up now, after twenty years of age, evolution and perspective? Let's take a look. For purposes of this article, the basis on which we're going to examine each story are: How much of a "dangerous vision" was it? And how does it read, now, as a story?

But if we're going to look at Dangerous Visions from our point of view, perhaps it behooves us to give some thought to its point of view; for the book is unmistakably a product of the 1960s, and for better or worse must be viewed in that light. Just as one's appreciation of, say, Hamlet is enhanced by an understanding of Elizabethan politics, so we must examine briefly the historical imperatives of Dangerous Visions.

The 1960s were a period of great intensity -- "frenzy" is not too strong a word -- especially among the young. For the people born roughly during and after World War II, the civil rights movement -- conventionally religious, morally clear-cut, and non-violent -- had absorbed a great deal of youthful vigor; yet it left one vital point impressed on literally millions of minds:

Sometimes it's all right to break the rules. Sometimes it's even desirable to break the rules. With the single-mindedness of which youth are capable, people began to look beyond Jim Crow laws and question everything within reach.

The heady fumes of this doctrine inevitably boiled over into the artistry of the times. The preceding decade had seen the exploratory "New Wave" movement among European filmmakers, led by such notables as Francois Truffaut. (It is no coincidence that Truffaut himself made a brief appearance in Close Encounters of the Third Kind.) A new, vivid, expressionist mode of science fiction writing borrowed the name and much of the style, and made major figures of a whole new generation of science fiction writers.

At the forefront of this movement was that wild-eyed iconoclast, Harlan Ellison. Ellison's unique style both as a writer and as a speaker alienated many, but struck a resonant chord in the flaring doubt of younger readers. And if the publishers who controlled the field might have a queasy feeling about Ellison, they noticed also that his books sold. Sold big. There seems little doubt that this single factor played a major role in the birth of Dangerous Visions; and make no mistake, the spiritual fingerprints of Harlan Ellison are all over this book. (Or as Dr. Asimov noted in his foreword, "This book is Harlan Ellison. It is Ellison-drenched and Ellison-permeated.") Both for good and ill, as we will see, this is true.

Considering that the entire work is conceived, basically, as a revolutionary act, it is notable that the contributors can be divided mainly into two camps: the youthful Ellison contemporaries and friends of the "New Wave", and, surprisingly, a large number of veteran SF writers with pre-New Wave reputations. In a sense one might almost say that Ellison was attempting to seduce his elders in the field into the revolution. Even in a field which prides itself (sometimes excessively) on its "open-mindedness", this was a daring concept.

The book was also a departure from the usual practice of the times in that, as a rule, short fiction then was published in magazines first, and anthologized, if at all, later. Ellison single-handedly invented the all-original anthology, and specifically the sub-class of the all-original theme anthology, a format now widely used. It is only one step further to the "shared world" anthologies of our time. The process by which this approach was sold to a conservative publishing house is highly interesting and amusing, and I refer you to Ellison's introduction for his inimitable account of it.

Having thus covered the preliminaries, let's move on to the actual material. It may be noted at this point that Ellison wrote introductions to all the stories, and permitted each author to include an "afterword"; some remarks may be borrowed from these commentaries during our review.

Lester del Rey's "Evensong" was evidently chosen by Ellison to lead off the book for reasons having to do with their friendship, and little with the merit of the story; the chief virtue of this leaden, heavy-handed religious allegory lies in its brevity. Robert Silverberg's "Flies", however, has a telling sensibility. The author calls it a "symbolic presentation of vampirism", which is a reasonable metaphor. This story stands up well. Score: one up, one down.

(If it is not immediately apparent, I am using "down" as a shorthand for a story that doesn't make it in terms of "danger" and current readability, and "up" conversely.)

Frederick Pohl's "The Day After the Day the Martians Came" is a straight-ahead racial metaphor intended to shock the reader into racial tolerance. The point is very 1965; it would be too easy to dismiss this piece were it not for the fact that the science fiction community remains, by and large, overwhelmingly white. However, as a story, it doesn't work for the 1980's reader. Two down.

Philip Jose Farmer's "Riders of the Purple Wage" is by far the longest piece at nearly 30,000 words; and is lavishly praised in Ellison's introduction as "easily the best" in the book. I have for twenty years found this mystifying because I find the piece absolutely incomprehensible: sixty-two pages of convoluted gibberish, like something produced by a Byzantine-history major on PCP. As Samuel Johnson once said of a learned paper of which he was asked his opinion: "The words are well arranged, Sir, but I don't understand one of them."

Clearly there is something seriously wrong with either my, or Harlan Ellison's, literary perception; choose as you see fit. Save that the title is a take-off on that of an old Zane Gray novel, I can find no comment on the value of "Riders" to the contemporary reader.

Score: two down, one up, and one out in left field somewhere.

Miriam DeFord is described as primarily a crime and mystery writer. "The Malley System" is based on the notion of making the punishment fit the crime, an idea at least as old as the Greeks, and they probably filched it from someone. The choice of crimes is suitably horrific, but the piece is unsatisfying on a conceptual level.

Robert Bloch's and Ellison's own Jack-the-Ripper-in-the-future stories -- "A Toy For Juliette" and "The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" (if you can't figure out which is which, you don't know Ellison's titling very well) -- are good Ripper stories if you're into Ripper stories. Since Harlan blows the gaff (i.e. that it is a Ripper story) in the intro, the Bloch piece has few surprises. Ellison's story provides an eminently reasonable motivation amid the gore, and thus holds up much better. This runs the cumulative figures to four down, two up.

"The Night All Time Broke Out" is a typically off-the-wall Brian Aldiss idea (time as a utility pumped into your home like gas;

what happens when the main breaks?), given a typically geeky Aldiss treatment. As usual for this writer, the story stares down its patrician nose with absolute contempt for the characters, which I find wears rather thin rather quickly. We'll have to give this a half up (for a truly good idea) and half down.

"The Man Who Went to the Moon -- Twice" is surprising on two levels. Firstly, it's by Ellison's screenwriter friend, Howard Rodman; and secondly, it's a gentle, quirky little fairy tale. There's little danger to be found here, but I haven't the heart to criticize this modest little piece. Count it up.

I never liked anything I read by Philip K. Dick -- except his story in Dangerous Visions. "Faith of Our Fathers" is a sympathetic, tautly constructed look at a world ruled by Communist China (in 1966 it was nearly treason even to say "People's Republic"); it's thoroughly believable and, in an odd sort of way, almost affirmative.

My opinion of Larry Niven is well-known. Honesty forces me to concede, however, that "The Jigsaw Man" is a good Analog-type story: Take a scientific trend and extrapolate to absurdity. It might even happen. I don't think it's terribly well-written, but we'll scale it as half and half. This brings the cumulative score up to five and five (four and two halves each way).

Fortunately, one of the best of the good guys is coming to bat. Fritz Leiber's "Gonna Roll the Bones" is a crackerjack shootout of a crap game with the devil. Beware cheap imitations (as a recent Twilight Zone episode); this is the genuine stuff, and it's a barnburner, with a wonderful surprise twist ending.

A pity the same cannot be said of Joe Hensley's "Lord Randy, My Son", another piece which seems to have gotten in because the writer was a good friend of Ellison. Marginally better was Poul Anderson's "Eutopia" which startled the younger me on first reading, but rates a yawn today. The kicker, a creditably new notion at the time (and which you also don't get to until literally the very last word), is that the hero is gay. It's still perfectly readable but has lost the power to shock; score it half and half again.

For some indecipherable reason, David Bunch has two short-shorts in the book, both grotesque, set in a world in which war is the only game. He says in his afterword, "So I've overdrawn it." I'll say! However, due to merciful brevity, we'll only deduct one point. This is immediately balanced by the "up" point added for James Cross's excellent "The Doll House". Yes, there actually is a doll house in it, but this is far from a children's story. Knowledge of Greek and Latin are helpful but not essential. "Cross" (an admitted pen name) vanished into SF obscurity after this piece; more's the pity.

Slightly more than halfway through the book (also unique at the time for its then-staggering length of 32 stories and 239,000 words) the cumulative score stands at seven and a half each way.

Universal Horror Movies

An
Appreciation
by
Jim Mann



Hollywood seems to have forgotten how to make horror movies. More to the point, they seem to have forgotten what horror movies even are. Terror has been replaced by disgust. When an audience cringes in one of today's horror movies, it usually isn't because they are afraid of what might happen to one of the characters (who are all cardboard, anyway) but because they are anticipating being grossed out.

It wasn't always this way. For one brief period -- lasting perhaps 15 years -- some of the best done, most stylistically innovative movies were "horror" movies. The films I'm referring to are the original cycle of horror movies made by Universal Studios: Dracula, Frankenstein, The Bride of Frankenstein, The Son of Frankenstein, The Wolfman, and The Mummy. Even a few of the later movies in the series, though less impressive than the original group, were far more interesting than any of today's horror films. In fact, these films were unique: no movies made since have ever been like them or have ever been able to capture their style or mood.

What made these movies so good? First of all, they were all good stories; they kept the viewers' interest. At the same time, they were tightly written. There were no long, dull spots that didn't seem to belong. Every minute seemed to fit. This is why the running times of these movies is usually less than an hour and a half. Try to describe everything that happened in one and you'll become convinced that they MUST have been longer; that much can't happen in a 90-minute movie. Perhaps not -- in a 90-minute movie made in 1986. But it did in these movies from the 1930s.

Another important aspect was the characters. Certainly they were only two-dimensional at times, but they were still interesting. They were not just props put up on the screen to be hacked apart in Friday the 13th or The Penultimate Chapter or whatever. They were people whom we often cared about, or at the very least were interested in. And at times -- especially in those characters created by Boris Karloff -- they were something more. Karloff's monster, in the first three Frankenstein films, is, ironically, one of the better examinations of humanity in the cinema.

The mood and atmosphere of these movies was also important. This has many aspects. One important one, tied to both the plot and the characterization, is that they dared to be subtle. There was no need for blood and gore on the screen. The movie makers knew that what we didn't see was more frightening than whatever they could show us. Furthermore, they didn't break the eerie mood by grossing out the audience.

A big part of the mood was established by the sets. The dark castles, shadowy forests, and so forth helped unsettle the viewer. The viewer was further unsettled by the fact that the sets weren't quite right. Ceiling beams went off at strange angles, doorways were always crooked. Some of this was a carry-over from German surrealism (see, for example, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari). The effect, however, was quite different. The sets in Caligari were very unreal, making it obvious that we were not in a realistic setting, but in (as it turns out) the fantasy of a madman. In the Universal films, however, it is a realistic sort of unrealism. On first watching one of these films, the viewer may not consciously notice that something is wrong with the sets. They seem, superficially, to look real. But somehow they are wrong. It is usually only on repeated viewings that a viewer notices the way the sets have been constructed.

Photography, lighting, camera angles -- all add to the macabre, somewhat unsettling mood.

Compare this with modern (1950 or later) remakes of these movies. The various Hammer films, though interesting at times, forgot about mood and instead often went in for shock value. The sets were quite realistic and therefore a bit less unsettling. The films are in color, which somehow makes them less authentic. The eerie mood is often broken by scenes of violence or, in later Hammer films, sex. More recent films, bottoming out with Andy Warhol's films and the Frank Langella Dracula, were garish or just plain disgusting.

I always look forward to reruns of the Universal movies (and I now own four of them). They were marvelous cinematic landmarks. Let's hope some executive with a bright idea doesn't "colorize" them.

a checkout at Kennedy Space Center tied up the freeway to south Houston on a Sunday afternoon as though it were the busiest of rush hours. I had no trouble getting in on my bicycle, however. I stayed and took pictures half the day and watched the glow in people's faces.

Somewhere along the way, the books and classes of Princeton professor Gerard K. O'Neill spawned the L-5 Society. These people had dreams and hopes and made plans, competent plans, outside the NASA establishment. Maybe private enterprise could be made to see the value of investing in such a long range goal. That is still to be seen, but the hope still holds.

At that time, the delays of the shuttle had become so embarrassing that NASA and the contractors were reduced to the level of distributing little egoboos to the engineers for each stage of the process toward a successful first flight of the Shuttle completed and to spur them on to the next in the form of patches and decals depicting the goal or accomplishment. The rest of us not directly working on the shuttle got these decals weeks to months after the engineers and technicians. "Go for Pad", "Go for FRF", and "Go for Launch" adorned my bicycle fender for many years. When I moved back to Colorado, people probably wondered, but I knew.

There were many successful shuttle launches to follow and we were proud, no matter the occasional delays.

January 28, 1986, was registration day at CSU where I'd returned for a PhD. I'd finished classes but still had research to work on. I came in early to avoid the traffic. As I occasionally do on days when I come in early, I turned on the radio at work to get my NPR fix for the morning. After the news the calssical music show went on for about a half an hour before a shaky-voiced announcer broke into the selection and spoke two short lines. "The shuttle Challenger has exploded about one minute after lift-off. We will have more information as it becomes available from the network."

I quite truly did not know what to think. This was not the kind of station that would play such a prank, but was it any more likely that it really had happened? I picked up the radio and stared at it. I went out in the hall. Much as I wanted to, I could not speak with anyone else. I went back in my office and waited. The press conference came on and I knew it was real. I had a lot of questions about how far into the flight the explosion actually occurred, like was what had exploded a solid booster, the external tank, or the main engine. That the radio did not answer. I knew I could go across to the Student Center and the TV networks would undoubtedly have replays which would provide many of these answers, but I couldn't do that either. I did little that day. At home in the evening I finally turned on the TV news and saw it. I cried. I gather I was not alone in that.

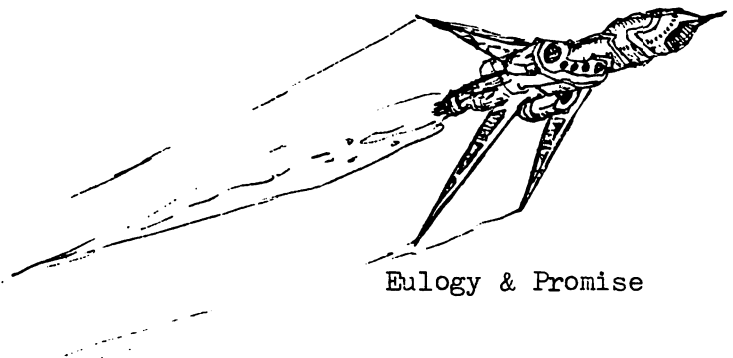
I know why it was such an emotional event for me. I was born on the edge of the Space

Age. But my dad, a retired Air Force officer and now an executive with the Farm Bureau in Wyoming said he didn't get anything done that day after hearing the news either. Maybe it was the teacher, Krista McAuliffe. But, I hardly paid any attention to that until the day of the flight except to be jealous of her. Another person who seemed to be hit harder than would be expected was President Ronald Reagan. The man who uses stale anecdotes, misquotes figures, and tosses off one-liners from other people's movies as polished rhetoric, gave his most memorable speech on that day (in fact, of everything he's said since entering office, it is probably the only thing worth saving for posterity).

We mourn seven heroes: Michael Smith, Dick Scobee, Judith Resnick, Ronald McNair, Ellison Sizoo, Gregory Jarvis and Krista McAuliffe. We mourn their loss as a nation together.... [They] were daring and brave and they had that special grace, that special spirit, that says, "Give me a challenge and I'll meet it with joy." They had a hunger to explore the universe and discover its truths. They wished to serve and they did -they served all of us.

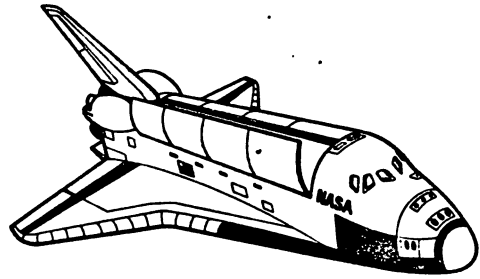
We've grown used to wonders in this century; it's hard to dazzle us. For 25 years, the United States space program has been doing just that. We've grown used to the idea of space and perhaps we forgot that we've only just begun. We're still pioneers. They, the members of the Challenger crew, were pioneers.... The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted. It belongs to the brave. The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future, and we'll continue to follow them.

After the Apollo 1 fire, the US space program was stronger and we may have reached the moon sooner for the consolidation which occurred during the year delay which ensued than without. Perhaps this delay will allow the planners to produce a more unified program one again. I know I am going to do what I can to help this come to pass. We must encourage them not just to produce another DC-1.5. We don't want a trucking company in space. We need covered wagons to take daring pioneers and then a SuperChief to take new towns and industries to the new lands where the resources of tomorrow are waiting. We must get beyond the edge of the Space Age.



Eulogy & Promise

Eulogy and Promise



An article by Misha Sestak

Yes, this is about the explosion of the *Challenger* and the death of the astronauts. It is also a personal history of my involvement in "outer space".

I was born at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on December 31, 1952. As I am wont to put it on occasion; I was born on the edge of the Space Age. X-15s flew over my crib. I never saw one in the metal. I was born blind.

Several operations later, I attended first grade during the International Geophysical Year and saw news shows about Sputniks and Explorers. I watched cartoon shows about a family living on the moon. As time passed, the conquest of space began to seem more and more real. Through the thin cold air over Laramie, Wyoming, I saw the silvered mylar Echo balloon satellite pass overhead. A man came to my older brother's class to show the material it was made of and talk about this satellite. I was jealous.

My older brother then brought home an orange book with blue lettering and one morning at the breakfast table proceeded to tell us of the wonders contained in this book. How in free-fall you could sip globs of water right out of the air through a straw but without a glass. How a sneeze could launch you across the room. I was only in second grade and my brother was in fourth but that was the first regular book I can remember reading (i.e. not a Dick and Jane reader provided by the teacher). Between my brother and I, that book never made it back to the library, either.

Since then, many books of space travel, both science and fiction, have passed before my eyes. I have built a model X-15, built and launched model rockets. I studied science. I knew who would be the pioneers on the space frontier: scientists. Along with Walter Cronkite, I learned the jargon of astronautics as we reached for the moon. I got up early many a morning and stayed up late many a night and cried bitterly when school forced me to miss some crucial launch, splash-down, EVA or other event (yes, really, literally).

One July night I goggled at a bizarre caption to the picture on the TV screen: "Live from the Moon," it read. I admit that I probably stared at that caption as much as

what was going on above it. Some things are difficult to believe, even when you have dreamed of them for as long as you can remember. The next morning, though, it all seemed wrong. Suddenly, the world of science fiction clashed violently with reality. Somehow the excitement of *Moon Rocket One* was lacking in the solid engineering triumph of *Apollo 11*. It quickly became apparent that once we were there, no follow-on would be made. Earthbound we remained.

Yet, the dream survived. At Michigan State University I joined the science fiction clubs, learned about conventions and studied chemistry and biology. I learned about fanzines and APAs, wrote science articles for them and tried to write fiction for the professional magazines.

Lo and behold, I graduated then went on to graduate school. At Colorado State University, I helped start a science fiction club which, in a fit of pique at the local bureaucracy, we called the "Anti-Martian Society," for which the only membership requirement was that your IQ be greater than your shoe size and in which Pepsi Cola won the election for second in command (Lesser Wazoo).

We lacked formality and that may have been responsible for the small number of regular members, but our meetings were regularly quadrupled in size whenever we offered a night of NASA films (which our meager treasury could easily afford as the only cost was return postage at special fourth class rates).

I got my masters degree. I got a job offer from Lockheed Electronics to help write a data base program for use with agricultural crop yield models in Columbia, Missouri. I was told that the job would last for about three to six months, then I could go back to school for my PhD or maybe get transferred to the Johnson Space Center. I said yes. Within six months I was working at JSC on trying to integrate LANDSAT derived information into the agricultural yield models among other things.

As I worlded in Houston, the Space Shuttle program was cut from the DC-3 of space to a DC-1.5 and it seemed we would be even more earthbound. Watching the tourists at JSC kept the dream alive, though, especially the foreign students. The people of Houston were no slouches either. A stop-over of the *Enterprise* between an Edwards drop test and

Ellison says, "No one writes like Carol Emshwiller." (Yet another point over which the critics can and did carp at Dangerous Visions: only three stories by women, none noteworthy. In fairness, in 1966 the explosion of good women writers in the genre was just beginning.) One can only be grateful that Emshwiller's style will not be inflicted on the reader by other writers. "Sex and/or Mr. Morrison" is intense, sexual, and weird to the point of being perverse. Damon Knight's "Shall the Dust Praise Thee?" rates no such tortuous description; it's merely bad.

Theodore Sturgeon's "If All Men Were Brothers, Would You Let One Marry Your Sister?" is a truly dangerous vision in a typically gentle Sturgeon way. It's deftly written, strings the reader along for forty pages without blowing the surprise; I have sufficient respect for this story that I won't blow it for you.

Larry Eisenberg's engaging Jules Verne pastiche "What Happened to Auguste Clarot?" is fun to read but how it qualifies as "dangerous" is beyond me. It doesn't seem quite fair to give full credit or blame for either this or Henry Slesar's brief and kinky "Ersatz", which could easily have been published in Hustler; but if we credit a half for each it runs the score to ten down, nine up, with "Purple Wage" still wandering somewhere in the wilderness.

"Go, Go, Go, Said the Bird" by Sonya Dorman is of interest mainly for its title (from T. S. Eliot) and because it is in this introduction that Ellison took his famous notorious cheap shot at Zenna Henderson. John Sladek's "The Happy Breed" shares common ground with the Cyril Kornbluth classic "The Black Bag" but is considerably more bitter and, yes, more frightening. "Encounter with a Hick" by Jonathan Brand (another "where are they now"; who remembers Campbell Award winner/"best new writer" P.J. Plauger? No, I did not make that up -- check the records!) probably ought to get some credit for its hippy-dippy dialect -- which oddly enough works -- but scores a downer for its paper-thin idea.

Kris Neville's "From the Government Printing Office" (a title which makes no sense) is an adequate but too-simple idea -- terror as a child-rearing tactic -- not especially well used. There are sufficient false notes to grade it down. Overall we stand at thirteen down and ten up, and this is not improved by R.A. Lafferty's "Land of the Great Horses", typically incoherent and rambling. Yeah, okay, the world is mad, we get the point. That doesn't justify incoherent prose.

Ellison's introduction to J. G. Ballard's "The Recognition" really enhances this fantastic, wonky, quintessentially British allegory: in sober and discreet prose, it's exceedingly weird but much too polite to tell you so. Something of the same quality shows in John Brunner's "Judas", which fails, however, for the same reason the del Rey and Knight stories fail. If the reader wishes to believe that I just don't like religious science fiction, please yourself. I liked Dune; I liked Brothers of Earth....

"Test to Destruction" is quite a good, mainstream Keith Laumer story. It didn't strike me in 1967 as especially controversial, and it doesn't strike me that way now;

but despite occasional lapses into too-purple prose, it works well enough as a story to rate an up vote, bringing us to fifteen down and twelve up.

If a prize were to be given for titles, Norman Spinrad's inspired "Carcinoma Angels" would be a serious contender. It gives me a chill even thinking of it. The title is so good that the story can't quite live up to it; it's funny and whacko and peculiar and all that, but it's not a great story. (You want a standard of comparison? Okay: "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" is a great story; "A Boy and His Dog" is a great story.) But "Carcinoma Angels" is easily good enough to rate and upcheck in this review.

Everyone knows that Roger Zelazny and/or Samuel Delany can't be God because Dr. Asimov already has the part. However, were we holding an election, they ought to at least be nominated (along with Ellison and LeGuin). It makes the intros describing them as "promising young writers" rather amusing. Roger's Gonforesque and demented tragicomedy "Auto-Da-Fe" is so beautifully written that you're willing to forget that he's capable of better.

The editor points out that "Aye, And Gomorrah" was Delany's first short fiction. That's a stunning fact. His intricate and yet lucid language makes his work an effort and a joy to read. If you haven't read Delany, this swamping, profoundly asexual sex story might be a good place to start. Better yet, go buy a stack of Delany novels, sit in a corner for a month, and read.

The fact that Dangerous Visions ends with two superior stories (not to mention the editor's goal of finishing with "a kick in the ass") balances our final score at fifteen points either way; and if you then point out that there are thirty-three stories, you haven't been paying attention to my idiosyncratic and possibly ludicrous system. A conclusion, it appears, still hangs in the balance. Thus, some closing thoughts:

A work of art may be a product of its times, and yet extend beyond those times. Is Dangerous Visions still, after twenty years, dangerous? The answer is a qualified "yes"; qualified, mainly, because it has expanded our concepts of what is "right" and "true" and "real", and that's what "dangerous" and "revolutionary" are all about. This book took science fiction into whole new areas, and if it seems less startling now, this is because so many books have followed into those new lands that we now think of them as familiar. Dangerous Visions was an explorer, and that remains a risky line of work.

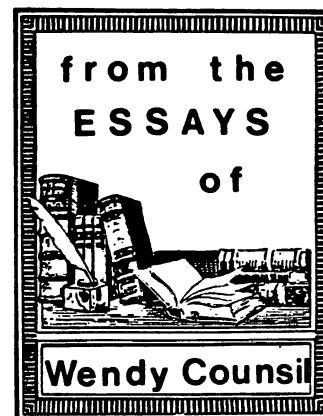
Is it still readable? Another qualified "yes": mostly, here and there, with some notable exceptions. Some single-author anthologies are likely to contain a higher percentage of agreeable reading of for no other reasons than that the singularity of view is more in tune with the reader's perspective. The evaluation of the stories in this article represents one person's opinion, as literary criticism always does, and take it with that caveat. On the whole, the level of readability in Dangerous Visions compares well with other general (i.e. multi-author) anthologies, especially those where the material dates back this far.

Does Dangerous Visions stand as a major accomplishment?

You better believe it.

Thank you, Mr. Ellison, and good night.

Searching for a Beautiful Book



I am a book lover. Like me, you probably like the contents of books -- the excitement of new ideas and the involvement in a good story. I assume any reader of Lan's Lantern loves books that way.

What I mean is that I also love the physical presence of books. I like the musty smell of a used book store. I like the feel of thick, textured pages between my fingers. I enjoy a beautifully reproduced plate. I like the look of several hundred year old leather bindings on a shelf. I'm that kind of book lover.

So I buy books. Not only to read, but to enjoy looking at, touching, to create my environment. I have a severely limited budget for this pursuit, so my collection is neither large nor impressive. I have become more discriminating in my tastes because of that limited budget. I recently began thinking about how books are made. I noticed that many of the "limited first editions" of science fiction books being sold for \$35-\$70 new at the Hucksters' tables weren't really very special. Limited, sort of. Special, no. They were simply the normal mass market hardcover, rubber stamped with a "This is number ___ of 750", and stuck in a hastily glued cardboard box covered with fabric that quickly unravels. I like the look of my mother's juveniles from the 1920's more than I like the look of modern hardcovers. I also noted that occasionally a book will have nicer typefaces or illustrations than its peers. With lots of curiosity and little knowledge about the publishing business, I tried to discover more about how current science fiction books are made, about what makes a beautiful book.

A VERY SIMPLE ANALYSIS OF BOOK-MAKING

My research indicates the quality of today's books is generally poor. A few specialty publishers create excellent books, but largely the books that we buy are not made well.

At one time books were only made a few at a time. Diligent craftspeople printed and bound them and charged a high price for each book. Only the very rich could afford a library.

In the early to middle nineteenth century, mass market publishing of books for student use was instituted. Cheaper materials and methods were used for these books than for their predecessors.

In the late 19th century, easier methods of typesetting were discovered. Eventually mass-produced paper was manufactured. Book binding changed to accommodate technological advances as well.

Things went in this direction for a hundred years or so. Technology changed book making. It was once an art, it is now an industry. While there isn't anything inherently wrong with technology, nor is a machine-produced product automatically inferior to a hand-produced product, it is true that most books today which are made by machines are less attractive and durable than those made by hand.

Technology also changed our world, changed our standard of living. There were more people getting rich and more people wanting to get rich. Corporations happened. Megacorporations happened. In 1800, a publishing house was owned by a book publisher, someone with a history in publishing, someone who presumably cared about books. In 1986, publishing houses are owned by conglomerates like RCA and insurance companies. Their boards of directors and stockholders presumably care much less about books than about profit. And the prices of wood pulp, gold, linen thread and other materials necessary to or desirable for the art of making books have skyrocketed.

This is the way of human existence. As the world changes, you win some things, you lose others. Won through technological advances: access to reading for a majority of Western people, affordable textbooks, books in every home. Lost: books that last your whole lifetime, books that aesthetically please, concern by bookmakers for the quality of their product. (1)

However, throughout the industrial revolution there remained a small but active group of small presses who made and still make quality books. Most books made today are poorly designed and constructed, but there are a few volumes that the book-lover can point to and say, "There's a beautiful book."

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BOOK?

That's all well and good, Wendy (you say), but I don't notice a difference between a mass-market hardcover book and a well-made hardcover. And I don't really care -- they all read the same.

Sort of (I reply). There are reasons why you might care about how a book is made. Obviously, you don't want it to fall apart after three readings. If you invest in books, the durability of the book becomes more of a concern. Just as obviously, you don't want several typographical errors to detract from the story.

There are also more subtle artistic concerns. Perhaps an author feels that illustrations throughout the book are critical to the message s/he would like to impart; however, if the publisher feels the cost is prohibitive and publishes the book without them, then we readers have missed part of the intended experience. Excellent typesetting make the book easier to read. Interesting but subtle hand-made papers are a sensory plus to the reading experience. Leather binding with inlays and intricate tooling can be works of art. (2) Books that are bound well not only hold together better, they also look better.

For me the ideal book differs from the 1980's mass market book in these ways:

MASS MARKET	WELL-MADE
cheapest possible paper	high quality paper
poorly bound	reinforced binding techniques
haphazard printing	careful printing
very little art work	art work appropriate to book
just like the last one	a unique work of art
price shows market concerns	price reflects value of work

The criteria for well-made books aren't as subjective as they appear at first. They certainly can be understood by the average intelligent person. Following is a brief overview of some of the specifics of good book-making which will help to illustrate why such details are important to the average reader. We'll examine printing in more detail, while just touching upon the highlights of paper manufacturing and book binding.

PRINTING:

Within which we'll consider printing, typography and layout.

Good printing is unnoticeable. Bad printing stands out. Have you ever been irritated by large spaces between long words on a single line, misspellings or trying to follow a hyphenated word from page 13 to page 14? These are all examples of bad printing.

Aldous Huxley, in the Introduction to Printing of Today says:

"Good printing cannot make a bad book good...but good printing can create a valuable spiritual state in the reader." (3)

Or, as another source puts it:

"The typographer is concerned...with communication. He, too, seeks a pleasing because he knows that printing that delights the eye puts the reader into a mood more receptive to the verbal message." (4)

The elements of readable typography (for my purposes, I'll use typography and typesetting interchangeably, although they are not the same) include:

1) Invisibility: The reader should grasp the meaning of the words and phrases without seeing individual letter forms. Several details contribute to invisibility. Spacing between lines (leading or ledding) and spacing between words needs to be adjusted so the eye moves easily from line to line. This is a requirement that only hand-setting of type can address perfectly. (5) Spacing considerations also include avoidance of widows (single lines on a page, or single words on a line ending a paragraph), avoidance of rivers of white (when the space between words is the same from line to line, creating a vertical line of white down the page), and avoidance of more than one hyphenated line ending in a row.

Line length should be a function of typeface as well as page size. Ideally, lines should be broken at appropriate points in the phrasing of the prose, much as is done in poetry. Thus: "She picked up her purse, put on her shoes/ and went out the door." rather than "She picked up her purse, put/ on her shoes and went out the door." To repeated break lines in inappropriate places causes breaks in reading rhythm, and will eventually result in quicker eye fatigue. Certainly this cannot be done with every line of prose, but the more confusing line breaks can be eliminated by a typesetter.

2) Proper proportions of the typeface: It is, for instance, big on the slug. This means for the reader that in relation to the height of the letter, the black lines which compose the letter are large. Also the narrow parts of each letter shouldn't be so narrow that they fade away.

3) Pleasantly textured: This means that the tonal values of an entire page are balanced. If 1) and 2) are handled well, this should follow. Too much black is overwhelming, too much white implies the message of the book is unimportant.

4) Appropriateness of typeface: It must be appropriate to the paper, considering size, grain and color. Typeface should also be chosen with consideration of the content of the books.

Printing itself, another aspect to the graphic production of the book entails as many variables as typesetting. There are many types of printing, including offset, gravure and letterpress. While all methods can produce a well-printed book, the purists prefer hand-set letterpress type. While not the least expensive method, it allows for more careful typesetting (see Invisibility above) and produce a texturally more attractive page when done well.

The printer must consciously control what kind of ink to use. Ink must be appropriate to the paper and to the printing process. Too much or too little ink destroys readability.

The intensity of the impression of the type on paper is important as well. Too light of an impression creates imperfect letter forms. Too heavy of an impression effects the reverse side of the paper adversely. Keeping ink from setting off (bleeding over to the facing page) is a critical aspect of printing.

Register, the lining up of the printed page so that every page has margins exactly the same, is not only a sign of a perfectly printed book, it also can make reading easier because at least subconsciously one does notice the shadow of the obverse page printing. Lining up involves folding, cutting, printing, and proofing and becomes more difficult as more colors of ink are added.

As a test, take the nearest book and hold a page up to the light. Is the printing lined up so that each line on this page covers the paper in the same place as each line on the reverse page? If so, you are looking at good register, a mark of good printing.

This is just a brief review of some of the criteria of good printing. All of these factors do effect how clearly a message gets across. Although subtle differences aren't noticeable, the cumulative effect of several poor typesetting and printing practices will make a book unreadable. If you find yourself putting a book down frequently, you may be the victim of poor printing rather than poor writing.

PAPER

Some of the qualities of paper which must be considered include: a) opacity, which prevents show-through of printing; b) color, which is to be avoided especially with small typefaces; grain which can effect the quality of the impression especially with illustrations; and c) weight, which one must consider in relationship to the size of the leaf.

Another debate about paper involves whether hand-made paper is better than machine-made paper. Admittedly, the main argument for hand-made paper is aesthetics. As one printer said, hand-made paper is real paper and machine-made paper is synthetic paper, the same as hand-made lace is real lace and machine-made lace is synthetic. (6)

Actually, in theory, there is little difference between hand-made paper and machine-

made paper. One can re-create hand-made paper's weight and texture in an automated process. (7) In practice, there is probably too much added sizing and other chemicals in manufactured papers which adds nothing and may detract from the feel and durability of paper.

BINDING

Obviously binding is important because without good techniques a binding will not hold. In 1953, Sydney M. Cockerell wrote:

"Ninety percent of the books bound during the last thirty years will need rebinding during the next thirty." (8)

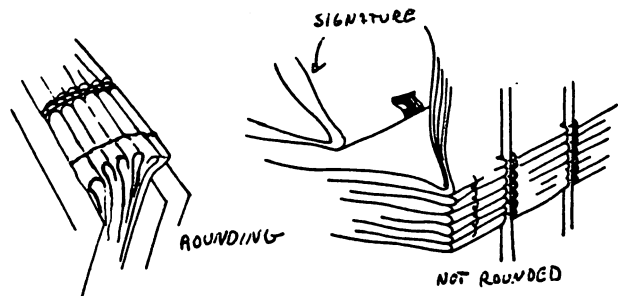
Mr. Cockerell was probably right, although today we tend to discard books, even fine books, rather than having them rebound.

There are really two ways to finish and cover a book. What I'll call True binding is one, "perfect" binding and casing is the other.

Perfect binding refers to stacking the pages in order, trimming them on all four sides, then brushing glue over the spine side to attach the pages to each other. Casing or slip-casing is what is done with paperbacks, and you may be surprised to learn it is the normal method of finishing mass-market hardcovers today as well. In casing, a pre-constructed cover is glued to the perfect-bound pages with end papers and glue.

True binding is much more difficult and costly and involves these steps:

- a) The naturally occurring groups of pages called signatures are sewn together with sturdy thread along the edge nearest the spine.
- b) Signatures are connected together in order.
- c) During this process the back is, in the ideal volume, rounded.
- d) End papers are prepared for binding



into the volume. Some end papers are not bound in, but are cut to size later and glued in. In science fiction limited editions this process, called tapping-in, is used to insert a page which states the book is a limited edition. (This makes it possible for the publisher to print a larger run of the mass-market hardcover, and turn some into higher priced specialty editions by gluing in a piece of paper which says, "This

is #__ of a limited run of 750" when in fact it is not even a separate edition of the book at all.)

e) Papers are trimmed to square on two or three sides (not the spine).

f) The back or spine of the book is prepared by sewing signatures laterally with a cord or linen tape. This cord is used to attach the raw boards of the book's cover.

g) The cover is prepared by attaching cloth, leather or paper to the boards. The cover end paper which goes over the inner cover face is prepared. Finishing the covering process carefully is critical. Poor detail work, for instance neglecting to trim the corners and glue them down evenly, makes the binding look haphazard.

h) The binding is decorated.

Without going into detail about each of these procedures, it should be clear that good binding is a time-consuming process which differs from perfect binding and casing. True binding results in a sturdier and potentially more attractive book.

Printing, paper, binding: the combination of excellence in these areas can make a book a beautiful piece of art. It also makes it expensive. Craftspeople do need to be paid. Materials are expensive; the high price of books today is dependent upon that fact. Good materials are very expensive.

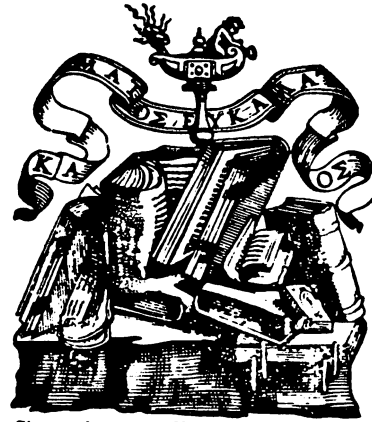
ARE THERE ANY GOOD BOOKS

Happily, there are books which satisfy my standards of excellence. Unhappily, I cannot afford even one.

Very, very good books are made by a few concerned publishers in North America today. In the science fiction genre, there is one excellent book publisher: Cheap Street Books. No other publisher comes close to their quality. With Bill Gillmore, owner of Dawntreader Bookstore and Bill's Bindery, I looked at a Cheap Street publication, Gregory Benford's Of Space, Time, and the River. There were actually two versions of this edition: a limited one, and a very limited one.

Gillmore unlocked the Dawntreader limited science fiction bookcase and pulled out the limited edition to show me. It was encased in a standard box, open on the side where the title shows. He carefully opened it to a random page. "Hand-set type," he pointed out. "And look at the register on this." I looked. It was perfect throughout. He flipped back to the chapter beginnings. It was printed in two colors on every chapter title page. He pointed out that even with the addition of two colors the register was still perfect. "They throw out any pages which aren't perfect."

Next, we looked at the binding, Gillmore's specialty. Even I could see it was bound well. He pointed out the details. "Look at the corner here. Do you see any glue? Any uneven corners? No! That's because these people care about their work.



Sixteenth-century Venetian engraving used to publicize newly bound editions.

There's one person who spends days simply finishing the box."

It was bound very well. An examination of the box and the book binding itself showed meticulous hand work. It had no seeping glue, no uneven edges, no unraveling threads.

The dustjacket was very nice. The jacket art work matched the art work inside the volume. It cost \$75, a reasonable price for the workmanship. I was sold.

Until I saw the very limited edition of the same book.

It had an entirely different paper, binding and box. Gillmore took out a closed box with six sides, including a lid which lifted over the front face of the book to reveal the dust jacket front. He removed the book from the box and set the book aside while we examined the box itself. It was covered in closely woven blue cloth. The box matched an inlay on the dust back of the book, which had three sections. We examined the corners and the interior of the box together, looking for flaws. There were none.

Gillmore put down the box and picked up the book. "See this dust jacket? The rest of this paper is hand-made real Egyptian papyrus. Remember the title of the book? The inlay describes a flowing river. Isn't that wonderful?" Yes, it seemed pretty wonderful to me, and I suspect the author felt very happy about it as well. Again, every edge and corner of the finished cover was perfect. Unless I had been looking for evidence that this was an assembled product, I would not have seen the presence of the craftspeople. The work is so perfect and so subtle that its effect can be felt and appreciated without conscious effort. Gillmore pointed out the quality of the end papers. He flipped to the back of the book, to the limited edition statement pages. "See, it's bound in, not just tapped in."

We looked through the book itself. It was illustrated and printed in four colors on selected pages and on two colors throughout. That means they had to match register on every single page twice. We checked several pages by holding them up to the light and found not one exception to the rule of perfect register.

The bad news is that it cost well over \$300. But it is worth every cent.

A nice detail is that all the artisans who contributed to the book (printers, binders) for Cheap Street are credited on the final page of each volume they publish.

There are other publishers selling limited editions of books, and some of these have a stable market resale value. However, they are not works of art. Cheap Street makes a beautiful book and no other publisher I have found comes close. But some do a better job than others.

An examination of a Phantasia Press limited first edition, selling for \$45 showed poor box construction, with binding and printing average for a mass-market book, and a tapped-in limited edition page.

A Whispers Press specialty book fared better, including higher quality paper and some illustrations. It's limited edition statement page was bound in.

A Blue Harvest limited edition failed my printing tests. The typeface was very uncomfortable and typographical errors were numerous. Otherwise, the volume was average, much like Phantasia volumes.

A Lord John Press limited edition showed good printing, but less than average construction.

A regular trade hardcover edition by Bantam of Samuel Delany's Stars in My Pockets Like Grains of Sand shows how a regular trade edition can be set above its peers. The title pages were in a delicate and attractive typeface, and each page's running footer also showed some artistic finesse. (The book design is credited to Nicola Mazzella.) For very little cost to the publisher, and at no additional cost to me, this book was improved.

But overall there are few publishers of specialty books who construct a book that is worth a higher price.

What does this mean? I am not suggesting that we refrain from buying whatever books we want and can afford. But hopefully those of us who care, whether from an artistic or merely cautious economic standpoint, about the physical quality of books can begin to discriminate between terrible and mediocre and great book-making. Then we can support the best level of craftsmanship that we are able to enjoy and afford.

NOTES:

- (1) Many argue that the same economic factors that make mass-market books so inferior also have negative influence over the artistic content of books (i.e. what gets published). William Goldman comes to mind (in The Princess Bride, Ballantine, 1979, chapter 1).
- (2) Fine Bookbinding in the 20th Century, Roy Harley Lewis, Arco, 1982, includes beautiful examples of beautiful bindings.
- (3) In the Introduction to Printing of Today, Oliver Simon and Julius Rodenberg, Davies, Ltd, 1928.

- (4) Ink on Paper: A Handbook of the Graphic Arts, Edmund C. Arnold, Harper & Row, 1972, page 80.
- (5) As opposed to mechanically-set or computer-assisted typesetting. There's no reason that computer-set type could not address many of these typesetting concerns, but it currently does not. I have not been able to determine why this is so; perhaps a knowledgeable reader could help me.
- (6) "The Ideal Book" by Porter Garnett in Books and Printing, Paul A. Bennet, Ed., World, 1951.
- (7) An interesting practice is when machine-made paper is made to look hand-made by adding a fake deckle, the uneven edge on the outside of the paper, as is added in most Science Fiction Book Club editions. This is rather like adding brown bug-holes to plastic plants since deckle is not considered a desirable part of hand-made paper.
- (8) Bookbinding and the Care of Books, by Sydney Cockerell, Putman, 1953, page 18.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE

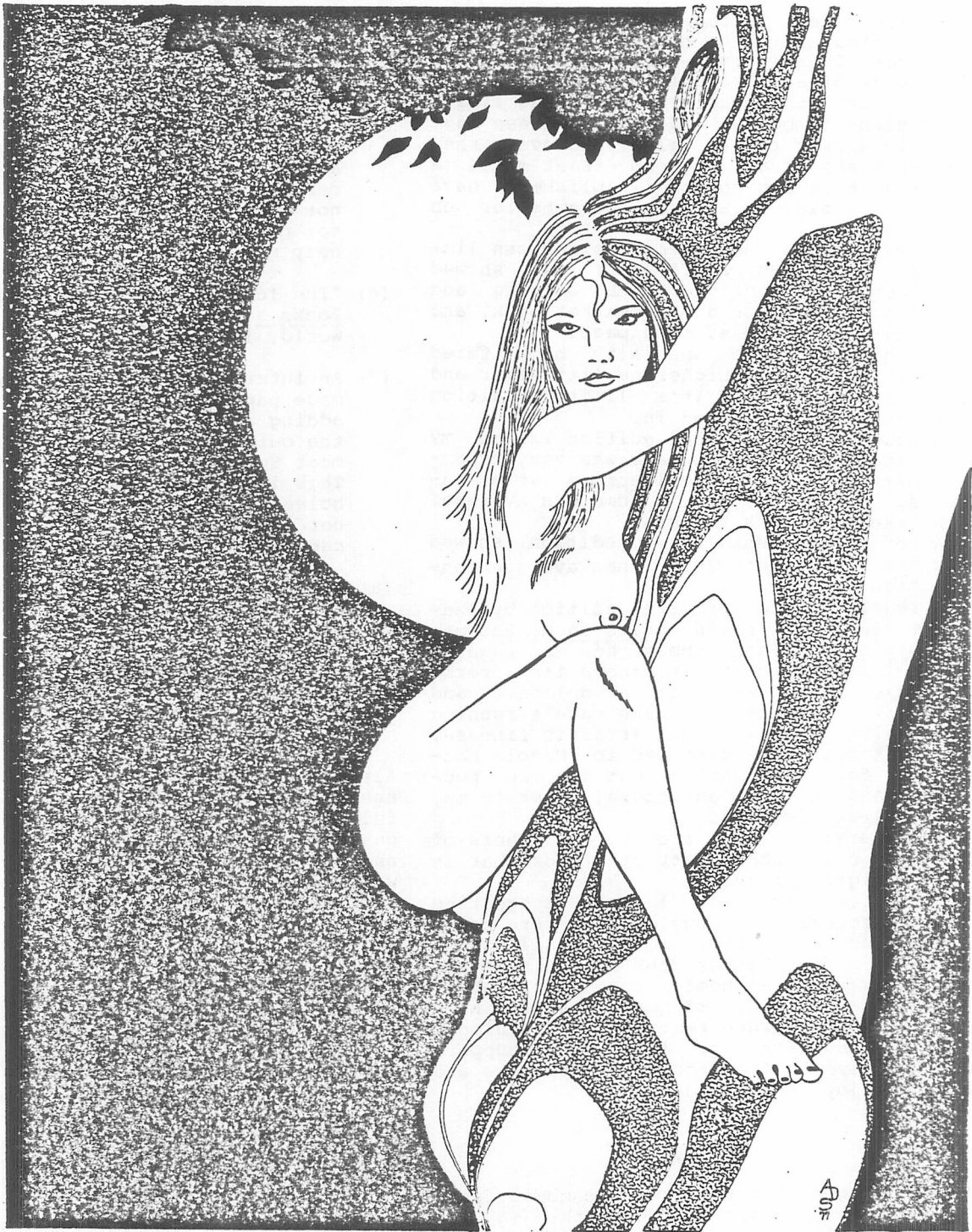
Papermaking, D. Hunter, Dover, 1978.

Also, I would like to thank the people who answered my constant questions about beautiful books, including Ray Walsh of The Curious Book Store in East Lansing, Michigan, and especially Bill Gillmore of Ann Arbor, who gave me many hours of his limited time to talk with me about books.



Shooting 'em in the Dark

An article by Danny Low



In a perfectly run con, the concommittee would have no need for this article, but cons are never perfectly run despite the best efforts of the dedicated souls who work them. One are of a con that seems to be especially susceptible to Murphy's law is the masquerade photo area. However, it is possible to get good photographs of the costumes despite everything that can go wrong if one is properly prepared

Before going into the details, I would like to state the assumptions that I am writing under. The first is that you have a 35mm SLR camera. The second is that you are not an expert in photography but you do want to get really good pictures of the costumes. If you have a 110, disk or compact 35mm camera, there is a special section at the end for you.

Low: Shooting 'em in the Dark

BASIC PROBLEMS and Possible Solutions

There are basically 5 ways the photo area can be messed up.

1. There is no photo area at all.
2. The photo area has only a flash or a combined flash and available light area.
3. The available light is bad.
4. The photo area is of inadequate size.
5. The backdrop is inappropriate.

The solution to the first problem is to use a flash and hunt out the costumes yourself. All you need is a plain background and you have your own personal photo area. In the second case, if there is someone coordinating the use of flash and available light, you can use either. The second and third problems are not mutually exclusive. When both problems apply, treat the problem as one of bad available lighting.

The third problem is actually two different situations depending on whether the light is bad because it is inadequate, or is the wrong color temperature. In the case of inadequate light, switch to flash photography. As a general rule, you want to be able to shoot at 1/60 second or faster with an aperture of f5.6 or smaller. If you cannot do this, then the light is inadequate. To a certain extent, you can control how much light is adequate by the speed of the film you use. The faster the speed of the film, the less light you need to shoot with. However, grain increases with film speed and the greater grain decreases film quality. I have generally found 400 speed film to be a good compromise between speed and picture quality. When possible, I try to use 200 speed film, but that is usually not possible.

At this point a slight digression on color temperature is in order. Those who are uninterested in this technical detail can skip this paragraph. In photography, color temperature refers to the light spectrum emitted by a classic black body that has been heated to that temperature. For example, daylight is defined to be equal to the light spectrum of a black body heated to 5500 degrees Kelvin. The actual spectrum of real daylight varies but at sea level at noon, it is approximately it is approximately the same as that emitted by a black body heated to 5500 degrees Kelvin. Ordinary household lights have a color temperature of about 2000 to 3000 degrees Kelvin. There are two special photographic lights (commonly but confusingly referred to as tungsten lights) whose color temperature is 3200 or 3400 degrees Kelvin. Flash units usually have color temperatures of 5800 degrees Kelvin which is why flash pictures tend to look so bluish. Most films used today are balanced for daylight. (There are special films that are balanced for non-daylight but I will not discuss them here.) Humans can adjust their color vision to maintain consistent color appearance under different light spectrums,

but films cannot. That is why pictures taken under conditions other than daylight come out with an orange or yellow tint. It is for this reason that it is important that the available light be daylight, balanced or be very close to it.

If the color temperature is wrong but the light is adequate, the solution depends on what type of film you are using. If you are using print film, you can shoot the photos normally but mark the rolls so you can identify them later when you turn them in for processing. The color balance can be corrected to remove the orange tint when the pictures are printed. Any photo-processor will do this if you tell them. It also should not cost you more or take longer to process your film if you ask for this color correction service. If you are using slide film, you must apply color correction filters to your lens before you take any pictures. You will need a blue filter. The lower the color temperature of the light, the bluer the filter you will need. As a general rule, a 8CA filter should do the job. However, there are some practical problems with using these blue filters. They greatly reduce the amount of light that gets through the lens. You will find it harder to see through the viewfinder of your SLR and the effective speed of your film is cut in half, so a 400 speed film is effectively a 200 speed film. Filters work by trimming down the light spectrum so it looks more like the daylight spectrum. In my experience, it is not worthwhile doing this and my advice is to use print film for the photo area. If you want slides, you can always have slides made from your print film.

Print film also has an advantage over slide film when taking flash photos. Slide film must be correctly exposed with an exposure latitude of only plus or minus a half a stop. Print film usually cannot take any underexposure but can be overexposed up to three stops without any problems. This is a big advantage when using a flash. In the flash area, you have a lot of photographers taking pictures all at once. Typically, I will find 1 or 2 pictures in every roll where someone else's flash went off as mine did. This results in an overexposed picture. With slide film, this overexposure can ruin the picture. With print film, the only result is the shadows are different from that of a normally exposed picture.

As for the fourth problem, usually when the photo area is of inadequate size, it means that you are too close to the costumers. It is rare but possible for you to be too far from the costumers. Too far is not a problem as you can always make an enlargement. Too close is best solved by having the right lens. Unless you are very good at judging which focal length to use and are very fast at changing lenses, the best lens for the photo area is a zoom. It should start out at 28mm and reach up to at least 85mm. A zoom that starts out at 35mm will not be wide enough for the large groups unless you station yourself at the very back of the photographers area. I use a 28-135mm

zoom myself. I also supplement this zoom with a 17mm ultra-wide-angle lens. It is nice, but not necessary to have such a wide-angle lens. The number of times you will need it are few, and these lenses are very expensive. Anything from 15mm to 20mm will be suitable if you want to acquire an ultra-wide-angle lens. I have found that wide-angle lenses between 20mm and 28mm to be of little use. One reason is rectilinear distortion at the edges. Ultra-wide-angle lenses have this problem even worse, but with them the edges of the picture are usually filled with empty space, whereas with a wide-angle lens, the costumers often fill the pictures all the way to the edge and the distortion is very noticeable.

The final problem of a bad backdrop has no solution. You take it as it comes. The same applies to garish carpets. A bad backdrop can cause on problem. If the color(s) of the backdrop are very light or dark, the meter in your camera may not work correctly. The whole question of correct metering is discussed later on.

In summary, the best preparation for the masquerade photo area is to use 400 speed print film and bring your flash. The best lens is a zoom that starts out at 28mm and extends to at least 85mm and the longer the better. A depth of field scale on the zoom lens is highly desirable.

FLASH vs AVAILABLE-LIGHT Advantages and Disadvantages

Given the solutions to the various problems that I have presented, the obvious question that comes to mind is why have an available-light area at all? Why not use flash all the time?

The main advantage of the available-light are is that you have a large area that is uniformly lit. There is a limit to how wide an area a flash can light up. Most flash units throw out a beam wide enough to cover a 35mm lens. Some can cover a 28mm lens. A 28mm lens is adequate for groups of up to 8 people without any large props. For larger groups or groups with large props, I have found my 17mm lens to be one of the most useful purchases I have ever made in a lens. However, getting a flash that can throw out a beam wide enough to cover a 17mm lens is difficult. Most flash units can take an attachment that broadens its beam at the cost of weakening it. Some flash units will cover a 17mm lens with such an attachment, some will not. This coverage problem does not exist with available lighting.

Another flash problem that does not exist with uniform lighting is that of differing exposures within the picture. Have you ever taken a picture where people in the foreground are washed out while people in the background are properly exposed? This problem is due to flash light being highly directional. Those closer to the flash get more light than those farther away. The flash sensor that regulates the flash output takes an average reading and as a result those

closer to the flash are overexposed while those further away are properly exposed and those in the very back are underexposed. With large groups, this problem can occur if you are shooting at an angle due to a bad position. The highly directional nature of flash light also means that costumers in the background can be blocked out by the shadow thrown by a costumer in the front.

There is yet another problem with using a flash. You have to change batteries. You can make a set of batteries last for 7 to 10 rolls of film if you do not care about recycling time. Unfortunately, the time you have to get your shots during the photo session is short, so recycling time is important. Recycling time is the time that it takes the flash to charge up again and it increases as the batteries weaken. I have found that it is prudent to change the batteries after 3 to 5 rolls during a photo session. For large masquerades I usually shoot a minimum of 5 rolls so I have to make at least one battery change in addition to all my film changes.

There are solutions to these flash problems, but they are either very expensive or not practical for the photo area. There are some advantages to using flash. The use of a flash can freeze motion. A flash gives you the equivalent of a 1/1000 to 1/35000 a second shutter speed. You can not only freeze any twitching by costumers, but you can also get action shots of them. I have some nice shots of a costumer flaring her cape using a flash which I could not have gotten with available light. The biggest advantage is that you can still take great pictures if the set-up in the photo area is totally screwed up.

SOME TIPS

At this point, I would like to present a few shooting tips. The position you get in the photographers' area is often a matter of luck, but there are certain positions that are better than others that you should try for. Generally you want to be centered in front of a posing station. The further to the side, the worse your angle will be for large groups. How close you want to be depends on your lenses. A 28mm lens will handle groups up to 8 people in the front of the photographers' area. A 35mm lens will cover that large a group only in the back. A 85mm lens will give an upper body close-up from the front row but you will need a 105mm lens to get the same close-up from the back row. All these distances assume a photo area of reasonable size.

Once you have gotten your shooting position in the photographers' area, the distance between you and the posing stations is known and fixed. You know approximately how far away and how close the costumers can be to you. With the depth-of-field scale on your lens you can select an aperture and focusing distance that will put everyone between near and far distance in focus. This means that you do not have to waste any time focusing. However, do not select a aperture

so small that your shutter speed becomes too slow. This technique works whether you are in the flash or available-light area. For example, suppose you are directly in front of the mark where the costumer will stand. The backdrop is 15 feet away. That is the farthest the costumer can be from you. The closest is probably 5 feet. You can pick any number you feel comfortable with for the closest distance. Use the depth of field scale on your lens to find the aperture and focusing distance that will put everything from 5 to 15 feet in focus. No matter where the costumers stand in the posing station, they will be in focus. Many zooms do not have a depth-of-field scale on them. In this case, there are depth-of-field charts available in most introductory photography books that you can copy and take with you. You should be aware that the depth-of-field decreases with increases in focal length. When you zoom in for a close-up, you will probably have to refocus because the depth-of-field will be shallower enough to require it, but minor changes in focal lengths should not require any refocusing.

This is also a good technique for taking flash pictures of hall costumes. The light in the hallways is often very dim which makes it difficult to focus. With a 50mm lense, you will have to be about 7 feet away to get a full length body shot vertically. In this case, pre-focus the lens for 7 feet and the aperture to f11. This pre-focusing means that if you see the full body in the frame, you are in focus. The f11 aperture gives you a generous error margin of +/- 2 feet. While I recommend an aperture of f11, the actual aperture you use should be the one specified by your flash unit, but it should be at least f8. If you cannot use an aperture as small as f8, you should either use faster film or get a more powerful flash.

Another thing I do is constantly check how many shots I have left and who is the next group that I will photograph. If I have only one shot left and I see that I will want more than one shot of the next group, I will change film right then. The few cents that you waste is nothing compared to great shots that you have missed because you ran out of film at the wrong time. As a general rule, when you are down to your last 5 shots in the roll, it is time to look at what is coming and decide when you are going to change to a new roll. In the excitement of the shoot, you can easily lose track of how many shots are left. It has happened to me despite my best efforts and I have missed good pictures as a result.

Metering can be a problem in the photo area. Camera meters assume that everything in the scene will average out to 18% gray, which is a special shade of gray that reflects 18% of the light that falls on it. Unfortunately, black and white costumes are very common as is the use of various highly reflective materials in costumes. These can cause your camera meter to give you an erroneous exposure. For the available-light area, the solution is to take a meter read-

ing, before the costumers arrive, of something whose reflectance is known and use that exposure throughout the session by using your camera in manual mode. The best thing to use is a special 18% gray card. The most available thing is someone's skin, but remember that caucasian skin will give you a reading that is one stop underexposed while black skin will give you a reading that is about one stop overexposed. People with 18% gray skin are rare, even at SF cons. A similar technique can be used in the flash section. Instead of relying on the flash sensor to control the flash output, use the flash in manual mode. This is a bit more involved than using your camera in the manual mode in the available-light area, and is one reason I prefer available-light over using a flash. Metering is not normally a big problem, but if you have ever gotten pictures of white costumes that looked grayish or black costumes that also looked grayish, this is the reason.

An additional piece of equipment that you might want to consider is a monopod. While not as stable as a tripod, it does relieve you of having to support the weight of the camera for several hours and provides enough stability that you shoot at speeds as low as 1/30 of a second. You generally do not want to shoot at any slower shutter speed as movement by the costumer will show up in the picture.

110, DISK, and COMPACT 35mm CAMERAS

The simplicity that makes these cameras so easy to use also restricts your ability to adapt to any divergence from the ideal in the photo area. Many of these cameras have built-in flashes that cannot be turned off. With these cameras, you have no choice but to use the flash section of the photo area. Even when the flash is optional, you will find that you will get better pictures if you use a flash because the film that you sometimes must use is often very slow. These cameras are usually equipped with a lens that gives the coverage of a 35mm lens on a 35mm camera. With such a lens, a location in the second row will enable you to take photos of groups of 6 to 8 people. However, you do not want to be in the back row as the flash units on these camerase are not very powerful. If you know that there will be no groups larger than 4 to 6 people, you can position yourself in the front row and get tighter shots of the smaller groups and individuals.

* * * *

When Lan asked me to do this second article, it occurred to me that I have a natural trilogy. The first article was an anecdotal history of my experience working in the photo area. This article is a how-to for the photographer based on my experiences. The logical third article is a how-to for the photo area director.

And that's the next one.

The Fen Sang "Bouncing Potatoes"

Tune: "The Band Played 'Waltzing Matilda'"
 Words: copyright (c) 1986 by Sourdough Jackson

When I was a neo a crudzine I pubbed
 And I dreamed one day I'd win the Hugo.
 But every loc panned me and told me I'd flubbed,
 Giving brief comments on just where to go.
 But an old trufan took me aside and said, "Kid,
 Forget all about that blown crudzine you did.
 Start Afresh with my help and of crud you'll be rid."
 And he helped me crank out my next zine.
 And the fen sang "Bouncing Potatoes"
 As my mimeo cranked through the night.
 And amid the black ink, stencils and corflu stink,
 We got that zine to come out right.

How well I remember my first SF con
 When I drank bheer and coffee like water.
 They told me collecting was marvelous fun;
 I walked in like a lamb to the slaughter.
 The hucksters were waiting; they'd primed themselves well.
 They rained me with bargains on pulps they would sell.
 And in ten minutes flat my dough went clean to hell,
 Nearly put me right into the poorhouse.
 And the fen sang "Bouncing Potatoes"
 As I carted Astoundings away.
 I had got mine, the hucksters felt fine,
 For we started again the next day.

After that I went back to my home SF club
 Full of energy, words, and desire.
 For six years or so I would pub and I'd pub
 While around me the fanzines piled higher.
 Then a letter one day knocked me arse over head --
 I couldn't believe the short message I read,
 But three times I looked, and still the thing said,
 "Nominated you are for the Hugo."
 Now I'd go once more bouncing potatoes
 To Worldcon. I was so proud
 Of my top-grade genzine with its repro so clean.
 How I'd stand out in any fan crowd.

So they gathered us up, Hugo nominees all,
 And they fed us a poisonous dinner.
 The authors and artists took rocketships tall
 While my patience grew thinner and thinner.
 The toastmaster reached "Best Fanzine" finally,
 And I ogled that spaceship; soon mine it would be.
 But he called up a fan, and that fan wasn't me,
 And my heart plunged right down through the floor.
 And the fen sang "Bouncing Potatoes"
 As we losers did rue this dark day.
 None of us cheered, we just sat there and stared,
 Then we turned our long faces away.

And still, every Labor Day trufen convene
 To talk, drink, laugh, sing, whoop, and holler.
 I come every year and I bring my fanzine
 Though the fanzine crew's getting smaller.
 The Fanzine Room we run to try to bring more
 New blood to revive a forgotten lore,
 But the young neos ask me, "What's all the fuss for?"
 And I can't make sense of that question.
 And the fen sing "Bouncing Potatoes"
 As thousands throng all through the hall,
 But as year follows year, fewer fanzines appear.
 Someday none will be published at all.
 And their ghosts are still heard
By the call-girls at that swimming pool,
"You'll come a-bouncing potatoes with me."

UNIVERSAL
TRANSLATOR

ERBdom

KARHOON

ENERGUMAN

PANAZINE

Yandro

Twildu

FOSTAX

ANVIL

Amra

LAN'S LANTERN

LOCUS

MAYA

Algol

ERG

OUTWORLDS

FILE:770

Xenium
TANGENTHolien
Than
ThouIt Comes In
The MailHi
Tech
Terror

ARORA

A Personal Fan History

-----ROY LAVENDER-----

Chapter 1

The Allen Hotel and the Other Four Magazines

The Allen Hotel at the corner of Winter and Sandusky streets in Delaware, Ohio, always had one of the front windows filled with a display of pulp magazines. The slicks were in racks inside. With my allowance of a quarter a week, the purchase of the latest Amazing Stories or Air Wonder Stories represented high finance of the first order. There were always six issues in each stack at first. I became aware that other people read the stuff when the stacks lowered. When one that I was planning to purchase with next week's quarter sold out, I was devastated.

I spent my tenth summer in the hospital with a broken leg. My Grandmother spent part of every day in my room, and she brought me books from the library. Several per day. I read everything in the children's section that wasn't utterly juvenile, all the science fiction from the adult section, and was doing rather well on the "risque" books the librarian kept in her lower right hand desk drawer before I went home. My Grandmother and I never mentioned some of the banned titles to my mother.

As a result of the extended reading session, with no relief of distant scenes, I became nearsighted. As a bribe to keep me from biting the optometrist (or at least keeping my curiosity to myself concerning all those trays of interesting lenses), I was promised any science fiction magazine on display in the Allen's window.

That was volume one, number one, the Fall 1929 issue of Science Wonder Quarterly and cost fifty cents, a fantastic price for those times. The cover story was "The Shot into Infinity" by Otto Willi Gail, and the cover, by Paul, had three men in spacesuits. Typical of Paul, the spacesuits hung on them like GI fatigues. I wrote a letter to Willy Ley protesting that the suits should be inflated tightly. That led to a correspondence that ran on for many years, and eighteen years later served as the opening for getting Willy to speak at Battelle Memorial Institute.

It was through this observation of the lowering of the stacks that I first discovered that there was another science fiction fan in school. His name was Don Ford. From then on, our reading doubled. We carefully coordinated our purchases so as not to duplicate.

But we never did find out who bought the other four.

In the mid-30s, the lurid covers were a problem. If we tore them off, the magazine was never the same. If we carried them home under our arms, helpful neighbors called our mothers on the telephone to let them know "those boys are carrying those magazines again." If we stuck them under our shirts, the ink came off on our bellies.

Don and his family moved to Columbus when we were seniors in high school. He went to North High in Columbus, while I continued on at Willis High in Delaware. Don discovered a second-hand magazine store, and since I was hitch hiking down to visit Don as often as I could, I also became very friendly with the proprietor. The large size Amazings were listed at a dime, but since I always sorted very carefully and restacked with equal care, we formed a bond -- I was recognized as a collector. I got them at three for a quarter. Don made the mistake of mentioning one time that he had sold the three issues containing Skylark of Space for a dollar. From then on, he was unwelcome in that store -- he did not appreciate the magazines as a collector should.

My collection grew, and by the time I graduated from high school, there was zero space left under my bed and in my closet, and I had all issues of every science fiction magazine published in the United States. While I was at college, my mother threw them out. When I later replaced them, I let her know the price of each one.

Don and I both took time out for a war and starting a family. After I returned from the Army, I sold that collection for enough to outfit an apartment for Deedee and me and our growing family. Don and I kept in touch by letters. He and Margaret settled in Cincinnati, and we got together again at the Cincinnati Fan Group.

Charlie Tanner was the grand old man of the CFG. We sat at many Saturday evening

meetings and argued Fortean matters. Charlie was an organic chemist by trade (with time out for driving a streetcar during the depression) and he believed thoroughly in the scientific method. That was what made him so much fun when Stan Skirvin and I brought up Fortean material.

We could never win against Charlie. His phenomenal memory gave him page and paragraph on things he had read in 1915. One evening he quoted a paragraph from an old Argosy All-Story, gave the page number and described the picture on the facing page, along with the artist's name. When Stan finally located a copy, Charlie was right.

The only time we ever won an argument with Charlie -- one evening we concealed a tape recorder behind the couch and after Charlie had worked himself half way around the circle, brought it out and played back the opening statements. It had a better memory than Charlie.

At the time, I was doing research at Battelle Memorial Institute that involved the use of Teflon. Even though the basic patents on the material were in the open literature since 1928, the very existence of Teflon was classified. Then one day we got word that it was no longer classified. That early material was very thin and flimsy, much like the white tape used now by plumbers in pipe joints. I got a piece about four inches square and mailed it to Charlie, along with a letter which said it was part of the intestinal lining of an animal killed by the first Martian expedition. About three weeks later, after trying just about every solvent known to the organic chemistry clan, Charlie sent back a card which said simply, "I believe you."

Don and Lou Tabakow made a team, especially when it came to bringing up new ideas. It was out of just such ideas, plus Doc Barrett at Toronto in 1948 that the CFG got the Worldcon for 1949. (Worldcons only needed one year lead time in those days.)

Chapter 2

The Telephone Company, Don Ford, and I

Don and I went to school together in Delaware, Ohio. I was staying with my grandmother through the school year and Don lived only a couple of blocks away. We both had bicycles and we cruised the alleys for interesting items of electrical equipment. One of our favorite places to look for treasures was the trash bin behind the telephone company.

The time was middle 1930's and the telephone company was replacing the old wall-mounted type that had a hand crank magneto to call the operator. Those handcrank magnetos could generate enough voltage to get a rise out of almost anyone. And we were always looking for more to put in our stock because teachers and others kept confiscating the ones we used.

Another treasure was the cut off ends of lead covered cable. The cables were 1111

pairs of heavy gauge copper wire. The telephone company wanted the lead for salvage, but not the short lengths of copper wire. We would sit on the curb and bash the cable ends against the concrete until the lead expanded enough that it would slide off, then we could take the two- or three-foot lengths of copper cable without objection.

From there, we would go to my workshop at my grandmother's where I had a heavy-duty tin-snips mounted in a vise. It was fitted with a wooden stop so that each wire would be cut the same length and a piece of steel bar came down and bent the cut off piece into a neat vee. My first experience with mass production tooling. A fifteen minute session and we both would have our pants pockets filled with one and a half inch pieces of heavy copper wire bent into V's.

Remember also that sliced bread was very new on the market at that time. To hold the slices together until they reached the wrapping machine, a rubber band was used. These were very high quality rubber, food-handing or surgical grade, in fact. The band that came around the bread could be stretched almost three feet. Two of them linked together and applied to a Y-shaped frame made of coat hanger wire made an admirable slingshot. Used with the copper wire, they were devastating.

The rubber bands could be used just over your fingers with equal effectiveness, as far as shooting the copper wire was concerned. The only problem that once in a while a V of wire would hang up and not fly. Instead, it would return and embed itself in the flesh between thumb and first finger. I still bear the scars.

With a virtually unlimited supply of copper wire, Don and I left for school nearly every morning with two pockets full, and returned in the evening with pockets empty. In between, they were dispensed at targets of opportunity.

The high school used the auditorium as a study hall. The teacher seated Don at one side of the room and me on the other, for some reason. That led to some nice trick shots. With the slingshot held at the edge of the writing arm of the seat and the copper V pulled almost down to the floor and one tile to the side, about one in ten would hit the chandelier over Don's seat. It a bulb popped, Don would pick up his notebook and hold it over his head until the fragments stopped falling.

The teacher would focus her attention on Don. However, since we never looked up at the chandelier, but instead used our blind aiming method, he would let one off at the chandelier over my head. Same percentage of hits. Either one of us could be shooting the slingshots and maintain a completely innocent expression and never look at the target.

The other target that was almost irresistible in the auditorium was the large, red fire alarm gong high on one wall. Neither of us considered it sporting, since it was so large. When others brought in slingshots and started shooting at it, some of them committed the sacrilege of using fence staples.

Distinctly unsporting -- store-bought ammunition. We thinned their ranks by hitting the gong often enough that the teacher had to take action. This led to making each boy stand up and empty his pockets. A pocket full of staples (fence staples, that is) could get you a paddling in the principal's office.

Naturally, as instigators, Don and I always passed our ammunition to the girl sitting next to us. We used the color of the teacher's forehead to gauge the proper time.

We had a rule, never to shoot at a person. However, there were times when the temptation was more than we could stand.

That season the girls were wearing slacks, almost a uniform, it seemed. And as happens, some were not so slack. One class change, Don and I were walking along the corridor and a girl with a wide bottom stooped and put her head in her locker. Her head and shoulders were behind the locker door and safe from hits by copper V's. Don and I looked at each other. He said "Left," and I said, "Right."

We each hit our target.

Two bloody slashes through slacks, panties and skin. The injured party straightened up so fast that she bent over backward and jammed her hips into the locker.

There was a lot of noise and confusion before a janitor came with an automobile jack and sprung the locker door frame enough to release the victim. Of course, Don and I were in class before anyone thought to look for the perpetrators.

Another memorable shot came about when Don and I were in an English class. The previous few days, Don and I took turns walking up to sharpen a pencil...at the rate of once every ten minutes. After perhaps three days of this, the teacher blew up and informed us there would be no more walking up to the pencil sharpener.

Came the next day.

The weather was warm. The windows were swung out, and as happens, a sparrow flew in. The waving hands scared him and he sat on the edge of the loudspeaker for a time. Gradually the teacher got the class quiet once more, then she reached up with a long pointer and pucked the bird off. He flew to the top edge of one of the swung out windows. Without even glancing at each other, Don and I both shot. Both hit, and the sparrow was demolished, leaving a very messy window.

That got all the boys up to the teacher's desk to empty their pockets, one at a time. When Don's turn came, he pulled out first the works, then the shell, of a full-size, wall-mount pencil sharpener, put it together, held it down and sharpened a pencil, then took it apart and put it back in his pockets.

When my turn came, I dumped out two handfuls of old keys, then a large pocket knife. When the teacher thought such a large knife was not proper in the classroom, I opened one of the many blades (the largest one) and sharpened a pencil.

The third irresistible shot happened one morning as Don and I were riding our bikes

toward school. We were still coasting from the speed built up coming down Central Avenue hill. As we approached our turn-off toward the school, in the next block a woman was hoeing the flower beds in front of her house. Her back was to us. When she bent over, neither of us hesitated. We each arced a high trajectory shot and heard the double hit.

The woman straightened up, hoe in hand, and started for an elderly gentleman who was walking on the sidewalk between us and our target. He slowly realized that the woman had violence in mind and turned to run. He was making very good time before the woman saw Don and me on our bikes, laughing, and changed her course. We went on to school.

Rapidly.

Those old hand-crank telephones played another role in our relationship with the 'phone company. By carrying away every one of them that we could get our hands on, we eventually put together two that worked. Then we started saving all the short coils of twisted pair telephone wire. After a while we had enough to reach the block and a half between our houses.

For a time, getting our line across the two streets presented a problem, but we solved it in the same way as the telephone company. We put it up on the telephone poles. The telephone worked fine, until someone noticed the difference in the way the wire was put up. We had simply taken a turn around the pole. The telephone people came out and cut our wire down, rolled it up and took it away.

The next day, Don and I went past our favorite trash bin and retrieved the wire, spliced it back together, and reinstalled it on the poles. We had, however, learned. This time we used telephone techniques, complete with glass insulators at each pole. It was still up several years later when I was back in Delaware, after going to college and the Army.

Don's family moved to a house near the south edge of Delaware. About three more houses south there was a vacant lot where a man parked a sort of shed on wheels. He sold ice cream, soft drinks and hot dogs. There were narrow counters on either side and wooden doors that swung down to close the sides, or up to form awnings.

This man had a habit of shortchanging the kids. An ice cream cone was a nickel and a hot dog a dime. Give him a quarter and you were likely to get a nickel back instead of a dime. There were lots of complaints, but nothing happened.

One Halloween night, Don and I were riding our bikes south from his house and we saw the man just getting ready to close his stand. We speeded up and one of us went past on either side. As we did so, we each stuck out an arm and took out the props that held up the wooden awnings. They came down, sweeping the counters clear of ketchup, mustard, and assorted glasses and dishes. It made a wonderful clatter.

We turned to go behind the houses toward Don's. One of the houses had an outhouse behind. The homeowner, on other Halloweens,

was the victim of pranks which involved his outhouse, so this year he decided to sit in it with his shotgun.

There was also a clothesline wire running between the house and the outhouse. Don and I each hit it with our chests as we were pumping along on our bikes. We both were flipped off our bikes. With our weight on the line, and the outhouse being lighter than the house, it tipped over on its face, door down. The shotgun went off, blowing a big hole in the roof of the outhouse and breaking the second story window in the house.

Don and I were on our bikes and out on the street heading north very soon after that. In fact, I have no memory of the trip from the back of the house to the street. We got almost to the cemetery when we saw the flashing red lights coming, so we turned and started back toward Don's house again. We pumped hard to follow the police cruiser to the scene, a little ahead of all the other kids on bikes.

After the man was rescued from the outhouse, the police tried to make sense of the story the man with the mustard on his clothes was telling about what had happened to his hot dog stand, but when he pointed to the now rather large gang of kids on bikes watching the show, the police cut him off. After all, they had seen us peddling hard toward the scene.

My grandmother expressed concern at the large red welt across my chest. I told her the truth, that I had ridden into a clothes line. I just didn't fill in the details.

Chapter 3

Events Leading to the CINVENTION

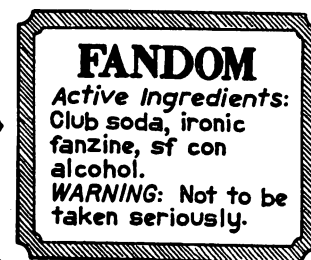
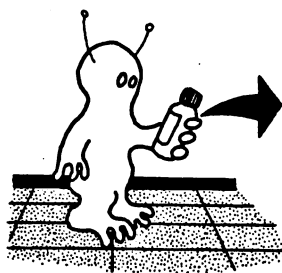
or

How Tucker Got BIG MAIL

Mal Korshak phoned Lou Tabakow from TORCON I suggesting that the Cincinnati Fan Group should put on the next World Science Fiction Convention. The group accepted, but with a lot of misgivings. When Doc Barrett and Don Ford came back from TORCON I with the Worldcon actually in hand, it was even more of a shock. The lead time in those early days was one year. Some of the earliest contacts with the hotel had already been made, but that was about all.

Stan Skirvin was handed the program book to do. Funding: essentially zero. Program -- well, maybe later. I don't think his available funding ever exceeded \$5 but he wrote hundreds of letters to bookstores and other fan clubs, and went around to every small business within walking distance of the Metropole Hotel soliciting ads, and the program book became self-supporting. Lee Greenwell did the cover, a program of sorts took up the two middle pages, and it was a reality.

Deedee and I did our thing by inviting Big Names to the CINVENTION. Between us we wrote to every author whose name appeared in an American SF magazine (at least those not



known to be deceased). We used a striking letterhead and, knowing we were writing to very busy people, trimmed our letter to three paragraphs. We were very blunt, saying essentially, please come to the con, pay your own way, and, incidentally, we'd like you to appear on the program. We hit a lot of pen names and house names, but we also heard from a lot of very generous authors and editors and publishers who came a helped make the CINVENTION the most successful convention up to that time. Another first: the CINVENTION got serious coverage in the Sunday edition of the Cincinnati Enquirer instead of the usual reference to "that Buck Rogers stuff", and on television it was seen as far away as West Virginia.

One Saturday night at a CFG meeting, we got the story of how Doc Barrett came to be sitting on the curb outside the convention hotel in Toronto.

It seems that in the wee hours, when fannish con activity was at a low point and exhausted fans were sitting around quietly in Doc's room trying to get up the energy to go to their own rooms and beds, one Bob Tucker went to each room on that floor that he could get into and telephoned a complaint down the the desk. A short time later, a squad of bellhops appeared and Doc was moved to the street.

It was this incident that came to mind, some months later, when Bob sent in for his membership in the CINVENTION. In his letter, he also mentioned that he was expecting a letter from a movie company which would contain a check for \$1800 for an option on one of his stories. Someone mentioned how lonely that letter would be in Box 260, Bloomington, Illinois, all by itself. I credit Charlie Tanner with that one.

From there it snowballed.

At the time I was employed at Battelle Memorial Institute. So was another fan, Marshall Spangler, a technical librarian. He obtained the bingo cards for free literature from every technical magazine coming into the library, at that time the largest technical library in the world.

Bob's name went on every one.

Where the literature could only be requested by a letter, on your letterhead -- well, Bob was not just a single individual, like some of us. He was, in those far times, Bob Tucker, Robert Tucker, Arthur Tucker, Wilson Tucker, H.P. Pong (from the fannish pseudonym, Hoy Ping Pong) as well as using a letterhead of "tuckerResearch" when doing some of his fannish surveys.

The library also had on its shelves the big, BIG catalog of the publications of the Government Printing Office -- and much of their production was free. We were very selective there. None of your piddling little 35 page papers on hog cholera. We went for quantity, not quality. An 800 page report on the conditions in women's penal institutions is an example I remember.

Then there was a donation of \$15 for postage from a Tucker admirer. Those were the days of the penny postcard. The arrival of the postcards happened to coincide with a fannish party, and Mike Keenan, Hugh Rear- don, and Stan Skirvin assisted in addressing cards.

We ordered everything free from Bill-board, the magazine of the entertainment in- dustry. In the carnival supplies division, those plaster dolls are referred to as "slum" and purchased by the ton. A free sample is generous, to say the least.

Then there was a scummy little magazine named Whispers, with page after page of sex aids and similar offerings of uplifting free samples.

Hardly worth mentioning except in the in- terest of completeness were everything free from Popular Mechanics and Modern Mechanics (it wasn't spelled Modern Mechanix until years later).

Doc furnished letters to every known man- ufacturer of surgical prosthetics (artifi- cial legs, etc.) and someone, probably Lou, who was in the dry cleaning business, sup- plied the name and address of every known supplier of girdles by mail. For this, the name of Marybeth Wheeler was used at Box 260.

Of course when a business has stock on hand that is not selling and offers free samples, it is often the last gasp before

going out of business, and mail is then re- turned to the sender, complete with the can- cellation of the originating post office. To prevent that giveaway, another friendly fan who drove interstate busses took bundles of postcards and letters and passed them on to other buddies so that they were postmarked all across the country. Did you know that in those days there were thirteen post offices in the United States with the name of Rose- bud?

One of these, posted in Los Angeles, was hand written in silver ink on black paper in a feminine hand. (The inmates of swank girls schools did things like that back then.) It was directed to Marybeth and expressed in- dignation at the scurvy characters who were sending her all this nasty mail. Apparently she reacted and wrote a hot letter to some suspected LASFS member. This was the first that anyone on the West Coast had heard of the "Big Mail for Tucker" program, but they happily joined in. Then some fan in Denver at the School of Mines heard of it and his fraternity took it on as a worthy project.

Through AEC channels, a similar project was centered in Albuquerque.

Through it all, Bob maintained a complete silence, but one travelling fan who passed through Bloomington reported that at the peak, Bob was removing the rear seat from his car in order to have more room for mail.

One last note. During the CINVENTION, Ted Carnell, our Guest of Honor, was acting as Master of Ceremony. Ted (completely inno- cent) was primed and he introduced Bob Tuck- er as "the man who will speak to us on how to get Big Mail".

Bob just sat there with nothing to say. And that's something you don't see very often.

[[To be continued.]]

INCIDENT AT A MOVIE THEATRE

Reported by Tim P. Ryan

I hate going to movie theatres, especial- ly during the day, and I particularly try to avoid matinees. I prefer adult audiences over the kids who talk incessantly and pay little attention to the screen. I recently made an exception to this and attended a matinee to see a first-run film.

I sat in the row in front of a mother and her children. Their silence as I sat down must have been a fluke, for they almost im- mediately started complaining.

Boy child: "This popcorn don't taste good."

Girl child: "Yeah, it tastes stale."

The mother replied, "They don't pop it here. They pop it in a popcorn factory. There wasn't a popcorn machine in the lob- by."

Her son had to go on. "It's like trying to eat styrofoam."

"Yeah, they don't make popcorn like they used to. When I was a kid, they used 100% whole wheat," the mother smugly replied, grabbing a handful.

AN ODE FOR THE ETERNAL CHAMPION

A poem by Terry O'Brien

I am John Daker, Erekos, Elric, Corum, Dorian,

I am Urlik, Aubec, Ililan, Clen.

I am all of these warriors, and uncounted more.

I am the unwitting, unwilling instrument of the power of the Balance.

I am the victim of the needs of the world.

I stalk the worlds with thirsty blade in hand;

I know its thirst: thirsty for blood and souls.

I hate that thirst, the thirst for the blood and souls of my friends.

I walk the worlds during the conjunction of the Million Spheres.

I see the cycles turn upon themselves.

I watch the worlds dance a pavanne to an unseen piper.

I am John Daker, Eternal Champion.

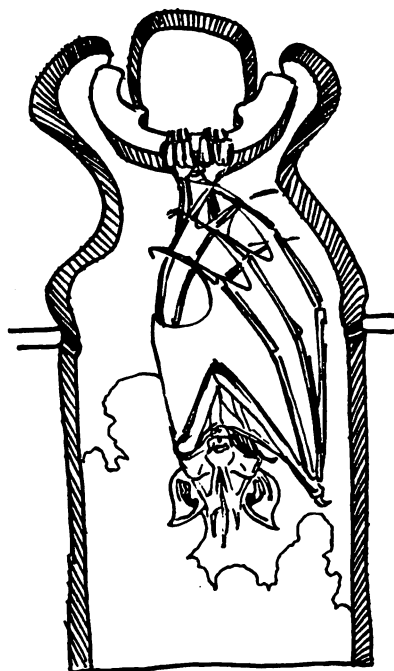
I look upon your works, o ye mighty Lords of Law and Chaos, and you despair.

Lavender/Ryan/O'Brien

S A M E

B A T

T I M E



C H A N N E L

A column by David Stein

Before I get down to the heart of this installment, I would like to respond to a LoC that appeared in the last LL that said they would like to see more depth to my reviews of Twilight Zone and Amazing Stories. When I first sat down to review the SF TV world, I decided that when reviewing shows like TZ or AS I would avoid complete episode by episode reviews and concentrate on the shows as a whole. I could fill page after page, issue after issue with individual reviews. But I do promise to increase the depth of my other reviews in the future, and hopefully this will increase your enjoyment of this column.

* * * * *

Now that the 86/87 season is in full swing, it's time to sit down and see how the networks are doing in the Science Fiction and Fantasy departments. The greatest fantasy of the season is that the networks are putting out quality programming. This season the three major networks have increased the quantity of the SF & F shows they're airing, but not the quality.

So Now it's Report Card Time:

MONDAY:

Alf: NBC. The story of a renegade muppet who crashes into a sitcom while out joy-riding around the universe.

In concept, a show dealing with an alien coming to Earth to see our way of life is not new, dating back to My Favorite Martian and Mork and Mindy, the latter of which seems to be the target concept for Alf. Unfortunately, unlike the other shows mentioned, Alf has nothing to do with the concept. For Alf himself is in no way alien. He acts like he just stepped off the bus from the Catskills. The only clever bit of alien humor in the show so far is Alf's taste for house cats and all the jokes therein. Other than that, it might as well be any sitcom about an eccentric relative coming to stay. Not that the show isn't funny. It has a sly sense of humor and it is this that in any way saves the show.

GRADE: D+

Stein: Same Bat Time, Same Bat Channel

Amazing Stories: NBC. Steven Spielberg's anthology series which tends to be anything but amazing.

Last season I gave Amazing Stories pretty high marks, mostly on the weight of its production value. And this season, there is no change in this department. The episodes are very well filmed and directed. Unfortunately there is also no change in the story department. So far this season, the episodes have mostly fallen flat. In concept, the story plots are great. Two good ones so far: a story about a timid wife who is possessed by the soul of an axe-murderess after wearing one of the departed lady's rings, and the tale of a man who dreams that an airliner is going to crash into his house and tries to prevent it. Both of these are fine plots. Sure, they're not new, but they're good ideas and give a lot to build on. Unfortunately the scripts fall flat, with absolutely no bite to them. Steven, how about a little more time on the scripts and less on the filming.

GRADE: C

TUESDAY:

The Wizard: CBS. A pint-sized mechanical genius who'd rather design toys than design weapons for the government.

David Rappaport, late of The Bride and Time Bandits, is a wonderful actor and is nicely cast as our little genius. The show itself is a cross between MacGiver and Raiders of the Lost Ark with a touch of The Wizard of Oz thrown in for flavor. And "thrown in" is a good phrase to use for this show. The show always strikes me as a jumble of special effects mixed together with a couple of car chases and topped off with a sugar frosting of tear-jerkers. Nothing here to write home to mother about.

GRADE: D

FRIDAY:

Sidekicks: ABC. The current in a line of "Electric Knights" teams up with a gruff police inspector to fight injustice.

Now many of you are going to say, "But Dave, this isn't a Science Fiction or Fantasy show." Not true! There is an underlining fantasy element to this show, much like the old Kung Fu had. Gil Girard, back to the present from his Buck Rogers stint, stars as a sloppy, gruff policeman who is conned into becoming guardian of Ernie. Ernie is a young orphaned Chinese boy who just happens to be the latest in a long line of martial art protectors of the weak. It's from Walt Disney Studios and is pretty well made, even if the plots don't always go anywhere. It has a certain charm about it, and the fighting is well choreographed. Sure,

it's a little hard to swallow -- a small boy round-housing a Hell's Angel and laying him flat -- but the charm of this show lets you overlook that.

GRADE: B

Starman: ABC. The sequel to the John Carpenter movie about an alien answering our invitation sent out aboard the Voyager. This time he's back to find his son and help him through life. All the while he is running away from crazy governmental-types who want to slice and dice him for lab parts.

Before the season started, I predicted doom for this show and I think I was right. Again we have the old alien-comes-to-Earth-to-learn-about-us routine, but this time we've got the old Fugitive being-chased-to-death-by-the-authorities angle on top of it. I'll admit that the show is better than I originally thought it was going to be, but it's very formulaic and predictable, and the alien-not-understanding-the-culture jokes are easily grating and tiresome. In short, nothing here at all to watch. The action is dull, the gosh-wow effects aren't, and the story was stalled out before they showed the pilot.

GRADE: F

SATURDAY:

Twilight Zone: CBS. The re-born version of the Rod Serling classic anthology show.

This was my last years' winner as best SF & F show on TV. Again, this year it's on top. Unfortunately, the storylines have slipped off and the new time slot (10:00 PM) has not helped the ratings.

It has been announced that CBS is shipping The Twilight Zone off into the twilight zone with no clear-cut date for its return. Truly sad indeed.

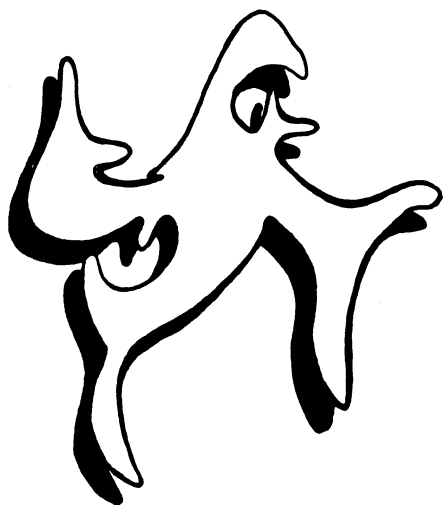
GRADE: A-

* * * * *

Well, that just about wraps up this installment. Next time we'll look at Saturday morning and see what's there, and in a future installment we're going to look at SF & F Music Videos. You'd be surprised at the offerings. So stay tuned.



Stein: Same Bat Time, Same Bat Channel



The 1986

TV Season

Anthologies

A commentary by Evelyn C. Leeper

Well, I've watched the three shows that are still running and have started their seasons: Amazing Stories, Tales from the Darkside, and Twilight Zone. Alfred Hitchcock Presents is supposed to return to the USA network but I haven't been able to locate it yet. Hitchhiker -- HBO's entry in the anthology sweepstakes -- hasn't started its new season as of this writing.

Amazing Stories started off this season much better than they did last year's, but then given the amazingly bad episode they started with last year, that wouldn't be difficult. This year's premiere, "The Wedding Ring", was a touching tale of two down-and-outers in Atlantic City who get involved with a wedding ring stolen from a murderess. Danny DiVito and Rhea Pearlman both do excellent jobs. My only objection is to the "parental warning" at the beginning that "some material may not be suitable for children." This seems to be there only to bring in more viewers hoping for the titillating. They will be disappointed. Rate it a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

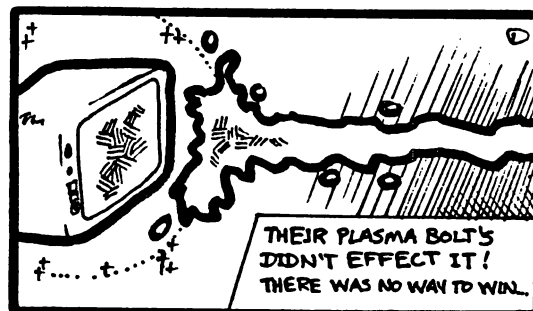
Tales from the Darkside presented "The Circus", a fairly predictable story about a weird circus. You know the kind -- Ray Bradbury, Charles Finney, and Tom Reamy are

the best known of the authors who have taken a swing at this. This teleplay (by George A. Romero) was based on a story by Sydney J. Bounds. Though predictable, it was well-acted, especially by William Hickey, the actor who played the "godfather" in Prizzi's Honor. Rate it +1. (If anyone cares, they've also changed the logo style.)

Twilight Zone had two episodes this time: "Once and Future King" and "A Saucer of Loneliness". "Once and Future King", about an Elvis Presley impersonator who goes back in time and meets "The King", was incredibly predictable and, in addition, suffered from the fact that neither the impersonator nor the actor playing Presley looked at all like Elvis. The ending was obvious almost from the beginning. George R.R. Martin did what he could in his teleplay from the story (by an author whose name escapes me), but there wasn't enough new to work with. This gets a -1.

"A Saucer of Loneliness" was based on the Theodore Sturgeon story of the same name and starred Shelley Duvall. It was acceptable, I suppose, but lacked whatever the special touch was that made the story so memorable. Although some short stories have translated well to Twilight Zone episodes, others have not. My feeling is that comedy translates to the small screen where emotion doesn't. Maybe someone could make Sturgeon's emotion transfer well, but David Gerrold, who wrote this teleplay, is not that person. That's not to say Gerrold is a bad scriptwriter, but this sort of script is not his forte. This gets a 0. (And the credits still go by too fast for anyone not a graduate of the Evelyn Woods school.)

So there you have it. Rumor has it that Spielberg is asking for more scripts for Amazing Stories than he can film, so that he can throw out the bad ones. He may even manage to get the series renewed (he's guaranteed by contract to last the season). Twilight Zone, according to reports at CONFEDERATION, will be further eviscerated (or, some might say, emasculated) by the network and may not last the season. Tales from the Darkside will continue to turn out stylish shows on its miniscule budget (when you have no money, "style" is often the best way to go). And I'll keep watching.



Evelyn Leeper: TV Anthologies



BOOK REVIEWS

Adams, Terry A: <u>Sentience</u> [Cecil].....	51
Aiken, Jim: <u>Walk the Moons Road</u> [Maia]....	53
Allen, Roger MacBride: <u>Rogue Powers</u> [Shea]	
.....	48
Anthony, Piers: <u>Race Against Time</u>	
[E. Leeper]	71
Asimov, Isaac & Martin Greenberg: <u>The Great</u>	
<u>SF Stories: 15 (1953)</u> [Sabella].....	74
Asprin, Robert & Mel. White: <u>Duncan &</u>	
<u>Mallory</u> [Maia].....	64
Asprin, Bob & Lynn Abbey: <u>Thieves World:</u>	
<u>The Graphic Novel</u> [Maia].....	64
Attanasio, A. A: <u>Arc of the Dream</u>	
[Sirignano].....	75
Bear, Greg: <u>Eon</u> [Lan].....	63
Biggle, Jr., Lloyd: <u>The Quallsford</u>	
<u>Inheritance</u> [E. Leeper].....	62
Bova, Ben: <u>Voyagers II: The Alien Within</u>	
[Lan].....	67
Boyett, Steven R: <u>The Architect of Sleep</u>	
[Lambe].....	52
Bujold, Lois McMaster: <u>Ethan of Athos</u>	
[Maia].....	57
Bujold, Lois McMaster: <u>Shards of Honor</u>	
[Cecil, Maia].....	56
Charles, Steven: <u>Private School: #1-#4</u>	
[Lan].....	69
Chase, Robert R: <u>The Game of Fox and Lion</u>	
[Lambe].....	65
Cherry, C. J: <u>Angel with a Sword</u> [Shea]..	55
Dann, Jack: <u>The Man Who Melted</u> [Todd]....	57
Deitz, Tom: <u>Windmaster's Bane</u> [Shea].....	59
Ecklar, Juia: <u>Divine Intervention</u> [O'Brien]	
.....	50
Felice, Cynthia: <u>Double Nocturne</u> [Cecil]..	57
Finney, Jack: "The Good Old Days" -- Com-	
ments on Selected Fiction [E. Leeper]..	60
Forstchen, William R: <u>Into the Sea of Stars</u>	
[Lambe].....	47
Forward, Robert: <u>Starquake</u> [Lambe].....	51
Hayes, Frank: <u>Don't Ask</u> [Lan].....	75
Hodgell, P. C: <u>Dark of the Moon</u> [Lan]....	71
Keith, Jr., William H: <u>Decision at Thunder</u>	
<u>Rift</u> [O'Brien].....	61
Kilian, Crawford: <u>Lifter</u> [Lambe].....	59
Kotzwinkle, William: <u>Trouble in Bugland</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	54

Pulp & Celluloid

Kurtz, Katherine: A Special Section ---	77-79
"Thank You, Katherine Kurtz" [Lan].....	76
Camber of Culti [Conat].....	77
Saint Camber [Conat].....	77
Quest for Saint Camber [O'Brien].....	78
The Deryni Archives [O'Brien].....	78
The Legacy of Lehr [O'Brien].....	79
Lichtenberg, Jacqueline & Jean Lorrach:	
<u>Zelerod's Doom</u> [Shea].....	46
MacAvoy, R. A: <u>Twisting the Rope</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	69
McIntyre, Vonda: <u>Barbary</u> [Lambe].....	50
McKinley, Robin: <u>Imaginary Lands</u> [Maia]...	53
Moffitt, Donald: <u>The Genesis Quest</u> and	
<u>Second Genesis</u> [Maia].....	68
Moorcock, Michael: <u>The Dragon and the Sword</u>	
[O'Brien].....	62
Perry, Steve: <u>The Machiavelli Interface</u>	
[Lambe].....	58
Perry, Steve: <u>Matadora</u> [Lambe].....	58
Petroski, Henry: <u>Beyond Engineering</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	67
Petroski, Henry: <u>To Engineer is Human</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	67
Pohl, Frederik: <u>Terror</u> [Lambe].....	55
Richards, Joel: <u>Pindharee</u> [Shea].....	53
Resnick, Mike: <u>Eros at Nadir</u> [Lambe].....	68
Resnick, Mike: <u>Stalking the Unicorn</u> [Lan].	49
Roberts, Keith: <u>Kaeti & Company</u>	
[Sirignano].....	73
Sagan, Carl: <u>Contact</u> [Skrant].....	55
Silverberg, Robert: <u>Tom O'Bedlam</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	65
Slonczewski, Joan: <u>A Door into Ocean</u>	
[Maia].....	48
Smith, L. Neil: <u>The Wardove</u> [Lambe].....	66
Sterling, Bruce: <u>Schismatrix</u> [Cecil].....	46
Sturgeon, Theodore: <u>Godbody</u> [E. Leeper]...	58
Sucharitkul, Somtow: <u>Mallworld</u>	
[M. Leeper].....	58
Swigart, Rob: <u>Vector</u> [Lambe].....	54
Warren, Bill: <u>Keep Watching the Skies</u>	
[Fischer].....	47
Weisbecker, A. C: <u>Cosmic Banditos</u>	
[E. Leeper].....	68
Williams, Michael Lindsay: <u>Martian Spring</u>	
[Shea].....	54
Zahn, Timothy: <u>Spinneret</u> [Cecil].....	49

FILM REVIEWS

Flesh and Blood [Mark Leeper].....	64
Film Restorations and Gance's <u>Napoleon</u>	
[Mark Leeper].....	70
From Beyond [Mark Leeper].....	52
The Name of the Rose [Mark Leeper].....	63
Peggy Sue Got Married [Mark Leeper].....	66
Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home [Terry	
O'Brien, Julia Ecklar].....	72
Troll [Mark Leeper].....	61

SCHISMATRIX

by Bruce Sterling
Ace Books, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Ann Cecil

An interesting and uncompromising book by one of the new "stars" in the SF genre. It's hard to read, physically as well as in maintaining interest. Paragraphs are indented only one space; while they've been creeping over for some time, this is still an affront to the eye. And Sterling deliberately does sharp transitions, jumping decades with unconcern. He makes no effort to create a likeable hero in the beginning. While the circumstances are interesting, it's hard to care whether Lindsay survives the traps the author sets. Since Lindsay is the thread that ties the book together, this is an arrogant and dangerous strategy.

If you make it to the end, the book has a cumulative effect, a sense of grand design. There are ideas here, weird aliens and even weirder humans, warped by their inventions, as well as enough costume descriptions to fuel several Masquerades. In the sense that SF pictures what inventions will do to people, this is intriguing and inventive. The overall themes -- that human society runs in cycles, and life is a series of ups and downs -- are not particularly new or original. *Schismatrix* is most like a serious "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Human Galaxy", with a satiric tone that is entirely serious. It's easy to see why it got a Nebula nomination, if only for its ambitious intentions.



ZELEROD'S DOOM

by Jacqueline Lichtenberg & Jean Lorrah
DAW Books, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by David M. Shea

I've tried four times to write this review, and there's no way to sugarcoat the conclusion: The reader who's read a lot in the Sime/Gen universe will find the book endlessly fascinating; the reader who hasn't will be hopelessly confused.

The trouble is that this book is so deeply enmeshed in the happenings of the previous seven books in this universe that, although the authors gamely try to give enough background for the new reader, there is simply too much to know. For example, this book is the long-awaited sequel to Lichtenberg's first novel, *House of Zeor* (which I would recommend along with *First Channel* as good introduction to this universe for the uninformed). However, it is also the sequel to Lorrah's *Ambros Keon*, and, though the authors are good friends and have collaborated before, they are to a certain extent working at cross purposes. Lichtenberg's main sympathy lies with the Farris family, the House of Zeor which they head, and the Tecton which Zeor dominates. Lorrah is more interested in the House of Keon and their Gulf Territory; and though, like their respective characters, they must work together to solve their problems, the strain is visible to the familiar reader. As for those who don't know this series, they're going to have problems.

In the distant future, humanity has mutated into two races: Gens, whose bodies produce but do not use the energy of life, selyn; and the tentacled Simes, whose metabolism operates on selyn -- which they cannot produce. Originally, neither perceived the other side as human; Simes killed Gens for their selyn, and Gens killed Simes in self-defense when they could. However, the "channels", a sub-mutation of the Simes, can take selyn safely from volunteer Gen donors and transfer it to ordinary Simes, thus preventing the kill. Thus are set up the two major conflicts around which are built all the fiction of this series: the ethical problems of an intelligent predator race trying to reach a civilized accommodation with its intelligent natural prey; and the prospect of averting Zelerod's Doom -- what happens if the kill-crazed Simes kill off all the Gens? (If it's not clear: since Simes need selyn, which they can only get from living Gens, Zelerod's Doom means the end of both races. Obviously the only solution is an integrated Sime/Gen society.)

It's getting to that solution that presents the problem, because there are different territories, different laws, different rules and customs, the usual nut fringe on either side which refuses to compromise -- and Freeband Raiders and the Church of the Purity to complicate things. If that weren't enough, Lichtenberg has coined a vast vocabulary of new words ("nager", "junct", "Sec-tuib") and special usages ("changeover", "need", "Companion"), all of which have to be understood if the reader is to make sense of the plot. Though there is a glossary in the back, it would surely be awkward and disruptive for the new reader to keep thumbing back and forth trying to keep all this unfamiliar vocabulary in mind.

It is, however, worth the effort. The Sime/Gen universe is a fascinating place, partly in spite of, but largely because of its complexity. Lichtenberg and Lorrah are both good writers who can plot solidly, develop interesting and believable people, and keep the story cracking along at a good

pace. (Both have written other books outside this universe.) There is an extensive "cult" of Sime/Gen fandom (though Jacqueline doesn't like the word), as there is of, say, Darkover fandom and Pern fandom. People who are only interested in one universe make me uncomfortable -- viz Trekkies -- but I still buy every new Sime/Gen book as soon as it comes out; and the next time I see Jacqueline at a convention, I'll have a new list of questions. The Sime/Gen books make me think, and that's a pretty good recommendation in itself.

Looking back, I see I haven't actually reviewed Zellerod's Doom at all, so much as I have reviewed the universe in which it takes place. There's the problem. The solution exists (go back and read the seven previous books first). Is it worth the time? Obviously I think so, or I wouldn't still be reading these books....

KEEP WATCHING THE SKIES

Vol. II (1958-1962)

by Bill Warren
Mcfarland & Co. Inc.
(Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640),
\$39.95, 839 pages

A book review by Dennis Fischer

This is the recently released second volume to the definitive and most extensive study of science fiction films from the 50s. Noting that trends do not follow calendars, Warren presents every science fiction film released theatrically in the United States from 1958 to 1962. If you love science fiction movies, this work and its predecessor are musts. (The combined set sells for \$65 and is only available directly from the publisher. These books are primarily intended as reference volumes for libraries and institutions, and are not generally available in most bookstores.)

Warren has made some improvements from the already excellent first volume. For one thing, this second volume tends to cover films which have not received as much coverage as the early fifties classics. Another aspect is that Warren has had access to videotapes of almost all the films covered in this volume. (The few, rare errors in the first volume occurred mostly when Warren relied on the script in places where it varied from what was actually filmed.) This allows for detailed and highly accurate synopses and fresh assessments.

Each film is covered with some general comments, a detailed synopsis, as assessment on how successful the film was on its intended terms, what critical reaction was like at the time (and since), and the background of the principals involved. Warren also frequently points out the kind of stupid, factual errors that filmmakers frequently made.

As a bonus, there are a number of interesting and/or rare stills with accurate but nonetheless amusing captions, a nice cover

drawing courtesy of Cathy Hill, and each year has the characters of the major films of that year presented in an amusing cartoon by Marc Schirmeister.

Among the interesting assertions Warren makes is:

"[The] intent of every Japanese fantasy film that I have seen is not to duplicate reality, but instead to present attractive, exciting imagery, sometimes bordering on the poetic and evocative, but not really to make it look as though it is really and truly happening, the goal of all American special effects in SF films, and in most fantasy films."

He also asserts that Karel Zeman's unique and wonderful The Fabulous World of Jules Verne "is the best film covered in this book" (i.e., the best film of the latter half of 50s SF films), despite its being totally unlike the typical SF films of the 50s, the love of which being what prompted the book in the first place. Perhaps the biggest surprise in the book is the exhaustive detail Warren accords The Phantom Planet, explicating just why the film is as incredibly dumb and boring as it is despite the apparent good intentions of its makers. But, as he says about Cape Canaveral Monsters, "that's not a sin against mankind, it's only bad moviemaking."

Compleatists and SF film researchers will also appreciate Warren's inclusion of six minor films that were overlooked from the first volume, plus an exhaustive set of credits that adds to and corrects all other sources. When it comes to covering these films, Warren has done his job admirably and intelligently. No matter how minor the film, Warren covers it as completely and fully as anyone could possibly expect, adding immeasurably to the store of information on films from this period. It's enough to make one lament that he does not intend to continuing giving this kind of coverage to films after 1963, but then this book truly represents a lifetime worth of research and will undoubtedly not be the last we will hear from Bill Warren, perhaps the most affectionate but evenhanded film critic the science fiction field has ever had.

INTO THE SEA OF STARS

by William R Forstchen
Del Rey/Ballantine, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

With his well-received first series of novels, Forstchen established himself as one capable of realistic post-holocaust detail. In his latest, he dumps a fuddy-duddy, balding history professor into a far future galaxy of terror, and wins one for the wimp in everyman.

A failure in the world of academic politics, Professor Ian Lacklin is forced to take on a fool's research project aboard one

of Earth's dangerously obsolete trans-light starships. Along with an alcoholic M.D., a bitchy sociologist, and his lovesick graduate assistant, Shelley, Lacklin searches space for the Lost Colonies. As an authority on those 21st Century space habitats, Lacklin is the logical one to head a mission to trace the groups lost for over a thousand years. When Lacklin's ship does discover a few of the hundreds of missing habitats, however, he finds that they have evolved in odd directions in the centuries since they fled Earth's final war. From naked savages to savage feminists, Lacklin's project moves closer to the galactic core, and closer to the terrible truth in orbit about Delta Sagittarius--a historical remnant of humanity's evil past now signaled by the debris of murdered colonies.

Politics and personalities are created and manipulated with deft strokes in Forstchen's fourth novel. It's well worth your time.

A DOOR INTO OCEAN

by Joan Slonczewski
1986, Arbor House, \$17.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

I enjoy SF most when a created world swallows me whole and leaves me feeling that the "real world" is the strange one. A Door Into Ocean describes such a world.

Valedon is a world of city-states, harsh politics, and patriarchy. The dominant state, Iridias, is under constant attacks by terrorists and supported by shaky alliances with subject cities. Every guild and clan has a precious jewel for its totem, and such names as Spinel, Jade and Beryl are common.

Its moon, Shora, is completely covered by ocean. The inhabitants are all female, experts in bioengineering who live on village-sized living rafts. They call themselves "Sharers"; their society is centered completely on cooperation and conflict avoidance. The ecosystem that Slonczewski has developed for Shora--including its human society--alone justifies the price of the book.

Conflict between the two worlds is inevitable. Shora is the only world not openly dominated by the galaxy's all-powerful Patriarch. Valedon has a high sense of manifest destiny, and eagerly takes on the White Man's Burden of imposing what it believes to be the Patriarch's plans for Shora.

The clash is military, although the Sharers refuse to fight in ways Valedon recognizes; cultural--the Sharers have literally nothing in their environment or consciousness that is not organic, and are both disgusted and fascinated by the Valans' "unliving" metals and stones; and even biological; the Sharers' adaptations to their world, from webbed fingers to symbiotic oxygen-storing microbes, horrify the Valans as much as nonorganic matter horrifies the Sharers. The irreconcilable difference is

symbolized by the worlds themselves: the stones of Valedon, the waters of Shora. The symbolism is certainly Freudian, but subtle enough I didn't even realize it for two weeks after I finished the book (in one sitting).

The book's last few pages are the only weak point. After reading it twice I still couldn't determine the ultimate outcome. Perhaps the two worlds themselves will never know what happened.

Except for the overly ambiguous ending (and that my have been my problem, not the book's), A Door Into Ocean succeeds in all areas. It has a strong and dramatic story, memorable characters (both heroes and villains are sympathetically portrayed), a brilliant and fully consistent universe, and a subtle, deep questions about the demands of society and individual conscience.

I hope this book comes out in paperback soon. It needs to be read by enough people that it makes the Hugo ballot.

ROGUE POWERS

by Roger MacBride Allen
Baen, 1986, #3.50

A book review by David M. Shea

There's a haunting ballad (by Ewan MacColl, if memory serves) about a young bride whose husband has gone off to war. Forty years later, a crazed old lady is still waiting for the man who never came back from Shiloh: driven mad by grief, she is unable to comprehend that the war is over. In a way, this illustrates the major problem I have with "space opera", however well-written. By "space opera" I mean in this context, a futurist, space-based war story in which Our Heroes are reluctantly forced to fight the necessary war, from the moral high ground--generally with a relatively accessible technology. Substitute lasers for artillery, fusion drive for internal combustion, the near stars for the Coral Sea, and you have most of Rogue Powers: another World War II story.

The war is over, people!

In a sense I feel badly about criticizing this book, which indeed I rather enjoyed reading (in a guilty sort of way). The author, whom I have met casually at one or two conventions, is a personable enough fellow. Here and in his first novel The Torch of Honor, to which this is a sequel, Allen has shown that he writes a solid, well-crafted story with good action, believable well-rounded characters whose personal motivations are generally plausible, and relatively consistent plotting. This is very good space opera of its kind, and certainly compares well with the works of, say, F. M. Busby (though comparisons to Mr. Heinlein--as in a cover blurb from LOCUS--are certainly premature). Further, the author adds a credible alien race whose interesting sociology is shaped by the biological necessities of their reproductive process, as in Busby's "Shrakken" or John Varley's Titanides.

On the other hand, the book does have definite problems. The dynamics of Allen's military establishment don't quite ring true to one who's been there. An important character goes into a room full of senior officers, and in the course of lecturing them on how they're screwing up the war, he says "sir" only once: no wonder the poor shlub gets court-martialled! Worse, people routinely speak over the com systems in clear language -- including personnel and ship names, and discussions of battle plans -- in the sure and certain knowledge that the enemy are listening in, and speak the same language. The curious fact that the whole galaxy speaks English (virtually all significant characters are American, British, Australian, or descended therefrom; and most are white) raises unanswered questions about the future of human politics.

The largest single problem, however, is that the author has deliberately set up as his villains, a group so grotesquely, ludicrously evil in origins and practice -- and at the same time so moronically inept -- that it profoundly if not fatally damages the ethical credibility of the book. It plays out on the morally infantile level of Rocky IV or the James Bond stories, without even the legitimate Soviet/Western rivalry off which those stories play, however badly.

Roger MacBride Allen is a good writer, and he could be an effective (as distinguished from merely successful) writer -- if he develops to the point of taking some plausible risks in his choice of material. As for Rogue Powers, it's reasonably good work of its type, which may well appeal to other readers than to me; but I can't quite bring myself to approve of it. Let's hope the author puts his evident talent to better use next time.

SPINNERET

by Timothy Zahn

Bluejay Books, 1985, \$15.95

Baen Books, 1986 (1985c), \$3.50

A book review by Ann Cecil

This book should be twice as long. Zahn creates characters so interesting that I resent it when another plot twist takes us off into an action scene. There's more than enough ideas here, true SF ideas, as well as politics -- human and alien, cosmic panoramas, cultural clashes, and six alien races -- all convincingly different. Zahn is moving into the territory held by Pohl and Cherryh: the mixture of complexity with solid characterization have been their trademarks.

The story is about an American settlement of a metal-poor world, a purchased chance from condescending Galactic aliens to expand beyond Earth. The aliens think they've snookered us, but the tables get turned spectacularly. All our practice at dealing with human politics comes in handy, as our beleaguered hero, an Army administrator, fights to keep the subplots in line while he invents ways to turn what could be catastrophe into success. It's exciting and entertaining to the very end.

As I said at the beginning, my only quibble is that it isn't longer; I'd have liked to see more of the people, watch them work out more of their own solutions. As it is, several of the subplots only exist to set up a bit of business. I wanted to understand more of Perez, the fanatic Hispanic agitator. And Carmen Olivero, who has a sort-of romance, just to put the scientist character in the right place to see the Spinneret at work. Another example: the name "Spinneret" is introduced casually, as a throwaway, with no discussion. Once the alien Spinneret is discovered, the book positively hurtles toward the conclusion. I'd have settled for fewer wonders and more depth in feeling their impact through the characters. In balance, an interesting book, if not a great one.

STALKING THE UNICORN

by Mike Resnick

Tor Paperback, 1987, \$3.50

A book review by Lan

For his first fantasy novel, Mike chooses as a background an alternate Manhattan which is inhabited by elves, leprechauns, cat-people, token-eating gnomes of the subway, and assorted other characters. The main character is John Justin Mallory, a down-and-out detective from our reality who is hired by the elf Murgenturm to find the unicorn stolen from him while in his care. In Murgenturm's world, elves are the best security force, and if an elf fails, his life is forfeit. Thus, if Larkspur is not found by dawn, Murgenturm dies, killed by his own people.

The time being 8:35 PM on New Years Eve, and nothing else happening except a couple of thugs beating down his door to avenge a bad deal made by his ex-partner (who had just recently run off with his ex-wife), Mallory takes the job and escapes to the other Manhattan with Murgenturm. As is the standard pattern in fantasy novels, there are wonders to behold and strange characters to be met, and Mike handles these with humor and lightheartedness, yet there is an undercurrent of seriousness. Mallory is there to do a job, and he does it rather effectively, even though he has to learn the rules of this new Manhattan. With the help of Felina, a cat-person (i.e., feline race), Eohippus (a horse), Col. W. Curruthers (a unicorn hunter) and others, Mallory manages to untangle a rather intricate web of fabrications around the theft of the unicorn Larkspur, and does solve the case, though not really to Murgenturm's satisfaction. His encounter with Grundy, the creature of such evil that the mention of his name causes people to quake in their shoes, is a deft piece of verbal and logical maneuvering. And Larkspur, the central character in the book, never makes an appearance.

The Grundy is a familiar character -- the evil ruler of this world. He is evil incarnate, and it is his nature to do evil, to be a balance to good. His description of himself sounded a lot like Conrad Bland who was

"Evil Incarnate" in Mike's Walpurgis III. Still, in spite of the Grundy's powers, Mallory manages to outwit him.

Mike has written a very realistic view of the familiar fantasy folk, and has created a grim fantasy world which works well with the story and characters. The hopes, wishes and dreams of the main and minor characters are brought up, each wanting more than s/he has, yet not quite getting it; they seem content with their lot, but not quite happy. In the end, Mallory chooses to stay in this alternate Manhattan; things look a little better there, but the undercurrent of him not being totally content is still present. Mike's original title for Stalking the Unicorn was Yes, We Nave No Nirvanas, which fits the basic themes much better.

The book is a mystery, adventure and fantasy. Don't miss it. It scores high in all three categories, and has a moral lesson as well. (And as with all Resnick novels, you can read it without "getting the message", and still enjoy the book; few people can write like he does.)



BARBARY

by Vonda N. McIntyre
Houghton Mifflin, 1986, \$12.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

Podkayne of Mars is . . . well, a Heinlein classic juvenile. Any similarity between Podkayne and Barbary is limited to the fact that they're both young girls with a penchant for disobeying their elders in space.

McIntyre, in her first "young reader" novel, offers a thin story about a 12-year-old orphan who smuggles her cat, Mickey, onto the research space station "Einstein." Barbary's new adoptive sister, Heather, strains her weak heart, while the adult dignitaries aboard strain their patience when the mysterious alien ship finally sends a message. Mickey catches a rat to justify his existence; Barbary's antics are never so adequately explained.

If you know a prepubescent female, there are I suppose, worse ways to wean her away from Sean Penn and Madonna and hook her on science fiction, but the Grand Master's Podkayne is a whole lot better.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

Julia Ecklar
Air Craft Records

A tape review by Terry O'Brien

Side A:

Overture/Ladyhawke!
Crimson and Crystal
Burnish Me Bright
Survivor's Song
Terminus Est
Fallen Angel

Side B:

Temper of Revenge
Crane Dance
One Man Magical Show
Silver
The Hand of God
Lullaby for a Weary
World

This is somewhat of an event: the first really orchestrated filk tape (at least that I have seen). Julia is the featured singer on all songs, although she is accompanied vocally in a few songs. She is instrumentally accompanied by a wide range of brass, wind, string, and percussion instruments, as well as guitars and electronic keyboards.

This cassette is also unusual in that it contains several excellent songs, and no really average (or worse) songs. All of the songs are excellent compositions. Most are from Julia's capable pen, except for "Overture", which was written by the arranger Michael Moricz, "Crimson and Crystal" written by Cynthia McQuillin, and "Lullaby for a Weary World" written by T.J. Burnside.

My personal favorites are "Ladyhawke!", "One Man Magical Show", "Crane Dance", and "The Hand of God". Each demonstrates a different theme and singing style.

"Ladyhawke!" is the perfect starter song for the cassette. Based on the very popular film, it is fast-paced and up-beat, which makes it a perfect "hook" for the listening public. The song also allows Julia the opportunity to demonstrate her singing range and ability, as well as showcasing the orchestra accompanying her.

"One Man Magical Show" is similarly paced as "Ladyhawke!", but the lyrics are more laid-back. Where "Ladyhawke!" exudes adventure and excitement, this song is almost snide with its air of self-confidence. The lyrics and Julia's singing of them captures the snappy patter of a carnival side-show magician. This is one of the few songs that makes you wish that it had been longer when it finishes, even after you've listened to it several times. The prologue with the carnival barkers is an excellent addition that quickly and easily sets the background for the tune. It is also this prologue that is the only clue to the ultimate origin of this song.

"Crane Dance" is a quieter tune, sensitive in its description of the philosophy that underlies the martial art of Karate, but no less effective. The simple piano accompaniment is perfect for this song. This song allows Julia to demonstrate the gentler and questioning side to her voice.

The most dramatic song on the cassette is "The Hand of God". The part that attracted me the most was the conflict it describes

between a dictatorial post-holocaust theocracy and one independent individual, but the power and emotion that Julia adds to the tune added greatly to my enjoyment. The counter chorus at the end adds something of the atmosphere of a Gregorian chant, which is paradoxically appropriate.

If I have any complaints about the cassette, they would be about the recording and mixing. Sometimes the background music overcomes Julia's vocals. Several songs nicely balance out the vocal and instrumental portions, like "Temper of Revenge", but in some, like "Overture/Ladyhawke!" or "Terminus Est", the instruments can drown out her singing (an admittedly difficult task) in places.

Another minor complaint is that many of the songs appear to be derived from another source, but there is no listing of sources. I've seen this on other tapes, and it makes me wish that cassettes would include listings of the origins to the songs as well. I've managed to identify origins of several of the songs, but there are some that I cannot figure out. I've assigned an origin to the following songs:

Overture/Ladyhawke! -- Ladyhawke (of course)
Terminus Est -- The Book of the New Sun by
Gene Wolfe

Fallen Angel -- Star Trek III

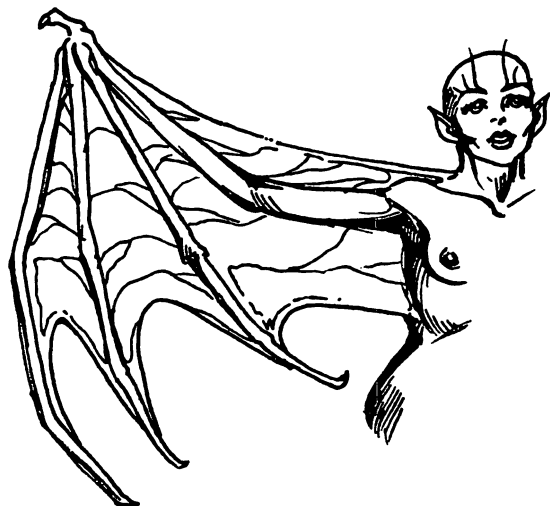
Crane Dance -- The Karate Kid

Silver -- The Silver Metal Lover by Tannith
Lee

One Man Magical Show -- The Tales of the
Galactice Midway series by Mike Resnick
(a guess)

I suspect that several of the other songs, like "Burnish Me Bright" and "Survivor's Song" are from another source. I would like to know the origin of "The Hand of God". Like I mention above, it is a very dramatic song.

Even with its (minor) faults, this is an excellent cassette. I heartily recommend it to anyone who likes filking or excellent singing. It is available from Off Centaur Press, and probably also available from any dealer that sells their tapes.



STARQUAKE

by Robert Forward
Del Rey, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Mark R. Leeper

Robert Forward's first hard-science science fiction novel, Dragon's Egg, was published in 1980. It was a remarkably enjoyable story of the visit of a neutron star to the Solar System, and of the inhabitants, the cheela, whose time sense is roughly a million times as fast as ours. At that time it appeared that Forward could go one of two ways: He could either be a new James Hogan, with adventures built around engaging scientific concepts; or he could become the new Hal Clement, with more cute, likeable aliens. After his third novel, it is clear that he is closer to Clement or even Alan Dean Foster than he is to Hogan. In fact, his plotting may be the weakest of any of them.

Forward's first two novels dealt with space expeditions and first contacts. His third novel is really a direct continuation of his first two, telling of the exciting adventures that happened on the one day following (the next 100 cheela generations). As with the previous novels, the characters are rudimentary and the science-as-background is the real star. Forward says in the 21-page appendix that "one can hardly imagine a more alien life form than the cheela." That may be true if "one" is Forward, but in fact the cheela are too much just oddly-shaped humans. Forward has touches like having the cheela wink at each other to flirt. Their shape is odd, but their behavior is very human.

Starquake might have been called Dragon's Egg: The Next Day. The novel takes place over 24 hours. That is about a hundred generations of cheela time, though clearly some cheela seem to live a lot longer than Forward's appendix suggests they do. What is more, Forward has some fun with cheela names and the he has, the less I had. The cheela now have names like Otis-elevator, Newton-Einstein, and, in what I assume was an inside joke for SF fans, Fuzzy-Pink.

Starquake does cover a considerable piece of cheela history and if you try you can get some feel for the sweep of history, but overall this novel of life on a neutron star is a bit light-weight. Forward may continue to write science fiction, but I suspect he will remain a one-book author. The best thing about Starquake is that it caused a re-issue of Dragon's Egg.

SENTIENCE

by Terry A. Adams
DAW, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Ann Cecil

First contact, cultural misunderstanding, telepathy, politics and prejudice, alien torture, and a love story; all this makes one very large book. The success -- and how



well you'll like the book -- depends on how much you believe the heroine. Hanna is a special person: a telepath, brave, bright, and of course beautiful. Hanna's difficulties are caused mostly by circumstance or by others who are maneuvering her. The problem, for me, was the sheer number of her trials.

The book starts with Hanna, member of a "race" of genetically engineered telepaths, in the middle of a last-ditch resistance effort, ready to sacrifice herself to save her world from brutish human landgrabbers. Saved at the last minute, she is, the author tells us, changed forever.

Next Hanna gets assigned as the only telepath aboard the *Endeavor*, humanity's first ship searching for aliens. Of course, almost everyone on board thinks Hanna is superfluous, and, of course, Hanna is the one who "contacts" the aliens. The hero, a true-human macho Machiavelli who's flawed only by not being quasi-immortal, turns up to sheer Hanna on, and incidentally orders everyone to take her seriously. Hanna gets turned over to the aliens, who are NOT friendly or nice, survives some seriously agonizing torture, gets possessed (in what I found to be the most interesting part of the book), and eventually learns that true understanding of an alien culture is a lot harder and more painful to achieve than she had assumed.

The book intends to have something for everyone, a mixture of ideas, romance, and action. Maybe the difficulty lies in the overabundance. I didn't feel that all the stuff about Hanna's family, friends, earlier lover, etc., had a lot to do with what turned out to be the real story (which I did like very much). While it's flawed, it does have good parts, and you certainly get your money's worth in words!

FROM BEYOND

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

CAPSULE REVIEW: Much more of the same crew that did *The Re-Animator* are back with another H. P. Lovecraft story. While there is much in the film that Lovecraft never intended, some of his themes have survived the transition.

Pulp & Celluloid

It has long been recognized that a film company that can turn out enough horror and science fiction films that are mediocre or better can stay out of bankruptcy. The company that founded the strategy was probably PRC in the 1940s, but American International in the 1960s (at that time the home of Roger Corman) seems to have been its most successful practitioner. The company doing it most successfully in the 1980s is Empire Pictures. Empire turns out one horror film after another and their quality is reasonably dependable. You probably can find Empire films in just about every video store in the country. Some are as bad as *TerrorVision*, to which I'd give a -1 on the -4 to +4 scale. *Troll*, on the other hand, would get a +2. Last year Empire hit box-office paydirt with *The Re-Animator*, and adaptation of "Herbert West -- Re-Animator" by H.P. Lovecraft. The adaptation was quite liberal, but then the story was probably one of Lovecraft's worst. That film was directed by Stuart Gordon and starred Jeffrey Combs. Empire knows a good thing when their accountant points it out, so the Gordon-Combs-Lovecraft combination is back with *From Beyond*.

Once again the adaptation from the Lovecraft story is more imaginative than faithful, though many of the plot elements are preserved, albeit somewhat re-shuffled. The story deals with a machine that, through vibration, somehow extends our senses so we can see things around us that would otherwise be invisible. The catch is that they suddenly can also see us.

From Beyond's source is a story only eight pages long -- less a story than a single scene, really. To adapt this into a full-length film a lot had to be added. There are plenty of ideas in the film. The best of them are taken from the original story. However, some of the film seems borrowed in spirit from the films of David Cronenberg. Then there is a kinky sex/bondage subplot which is nothing at all like Lovecraft would have ever written. The problem is that the ideas just don't fit together well. *From Beyond* does seem to create a feel of unnameable dread that Lovecraft would have appreciated. Though at times the pace is a bit too slow, overall the concepts make the film worth seeing. There is a little explicit gore, but much less than was in *The Re-Animator*.

From Beyond is a reasonably good little horror film that touches on some interesting concepts. Rate it a +1.

THE ARCHITECT OF SLEEP

by Steven R. Boyett
Ace Books, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

If, following Algis Budrys, SF means "speculative fiction," then hair-splitting about where science fiction ends and fantasy begins is generally futile. Rarely are the two ends of the spectrum confused, for like some judges' views on pornography, you


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 know it when you see it. Why, then, was this fine work of alternate-universe science fiction blatantly marketed as fantasy? Nothing about Boyett's well researched alternate-Earth, where ancestral raccoons developed thumbs and speech, while early apes did not, follows fantastic conventions. Even the notion that raccoon society is ruled by those with precognitive dreams adheres to a scientific rationale. No, somebody goofed in the classification of this novel, and Boyett may be missed by his proper audience.

The story unfolds in alternating chapters, first from the viewpoint of Jim Bentley, whose foolish solo caving expedition in Florida leads him through a portal into the "Planet of the Raccoons." The second narrator is Truck (so named by Bentley for a "normal" raccoon his friend once had as a pet), the recently deposed leader of what would be Georgia and most of the Carolinas in our world. Bentley and Truck meet under foreign circumstances for both of them, yet become friends because Truck, a trained Architect of Sleep, has dreamed of this strange "Bald Ape," and knows him to be important to his struggle to regain his throne. The two travel through small pseudo-medieval towns in what would be central Florida, and while Bentley tries to learn the raccoon gestural sign language, Truck searches out old friends who will aid his return to power.

A rich tale, marvelously told, Boyett's second novel suffers few flaws. The convoluted, continuous present tense of raccoon speech is off-putting, but perhaps justified as a vehicle for alien thought. Unfortunately, the story doesn't so much end as it stops. Clearly, this is volume one, and failure to warn the reader of that fact is a marketing ploy I despise. Read this one, by all means, and hope the rest of the fascinating yarn will be alone soon.

## IMAGINARY LANDS

Robin McKinley, editor  
 Ace, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

The "imaginary lands" in this book vary far and wide from feudal settings and the land of Faerie to invented histories, reconsidered myths and even a close approximation of our own modern life.

The quality of the stories, as in most anthologies, varies as well. I was quickly bored by Dickinson's "Flight," which seemed to go on much too long in a much too affected style. P. C. Hodgell's "Stranger Blood," though well-written, may make sense only to people who have read her Godstalk and Dark of the Moon (Go thou and do so at once!); the settings and characters are the same, with little background provided. James Blaylock's peculiarly British humor never fails to escape me entirely --but I admit it may delight readers with different tastes.

Still, I will never be disappointed by a book which also offers us Patricia McKillip, Joan D. Vinge, Jane Yolen and the editor herself in one volume. All their stories are finely crafted and enchanting. The remaining authors, Robert Westall and Michael de Larrabeiti, were previously unknown to me. Their stories here are reason enough to become better acquainted with them.

## WALK THE MOONS ROAD

by Jim Aikin  
 Del Rey, 1985, \$2.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

This novel is less than it ought to be.

Aikin creates intriguing quasi-human races, a colorful locale, and a complicated political situation, and then writes a standard adventure story that could as well have had any setting and any normal human characters.

Walk the Moons Road is an entertaining story, but it's a waste of a good science fiction background. I still clearly remember "The Lilith," on which this novel is based --and which I read five years ago in Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine. If Aikin can write so memorably, I hope that his next book will live up to that potential.

## PINDHAREE

by Joel Richards  
 Tor Books, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by David M. Shea

Dichotomy: it would be too easy to be too hard on this book. It isn't a truly awful book, just relentlessly mediocre in conception and execution. I didn't bother to put it in my permanent collection because I can't imagine wanting to read it again.

A Terran exploration ship lands on an alien planet. There is a high human (humanoid? It's not quite clear) civilization, but only a relatively few of the people remain in human form. Most of them have taken on different bodies (local wolf, deer, bird-of-prey analogs; it's not clear if they prey on each other; lots of things are not clear), or else have moved on to a completely disembodied state in which they float around Thinking Great Thoughts. All of them have profound psionic powers, of course. The evil Terran captain who is determined to colonize the world gets his comeuppance, naturally. The decent and honorable Terran deserts to develop his own psi abilities. A few good guys will be permitted access to the incredible fund of knowledge stored in a computer which judges you to see how much knowledge you're fit to receive. (Jeez, I hate a smart-ass computer!) There are bits and pieces of Eastern philosophy, a little martial arts, a few mildly kinky screw scenes; the book seems to contain fragments of everything which was ever appealing in any book

of the last twenty years. It drones on, never quite bad enough to toss away, but never developing any particular dramatic credibility either. There are no surprises, no new developments, no spark of excitement or humor.

A slightly dull fourteen-year-old with no conception of science fiction would probably like this book. Offhand, I can't imagine any adult reader with a serious interest in SF finding much here that would be worth his time.

## VECTOR

by Rob Swigart  
Bluejay, 1986, \$15.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

Set entirely on Hawaii's "garden island" of Kauai, this "thriller in paradise" is a pretty fair piece of day-after-tomorrow SF.

When microbiologist Chazz Koenig moves to the Douglass Research Center, he soon becomes involved in a bizarre series of murders on the peaceful island, horrible deaths that police Lt. Cobb Takamura cannot understand. Koenig is recruited by Takamura, although both he and his fellow scientists remain suspects. Do the deaths represent some new disease? Is a mutilation cult involved? Are the old Hawaiian gods angry? Is the big kahuna friend or foe?

The mystery, which will surprise no SF reader, hangs on secret Navy genetic engineering, but the actual science presented is surprisingly accurate. If Swigart can restrain his tendency to wax poetic when he should be getting on with the story, and eliminate the tiresome Charlie Chan hangups of Lt. Takamura, this could turn into an interesting "Holmes and Dr. Watson" series.

## MARTIAN SPRING

by Michael Lindsay Williams  
Avon Books, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by David M. Shea

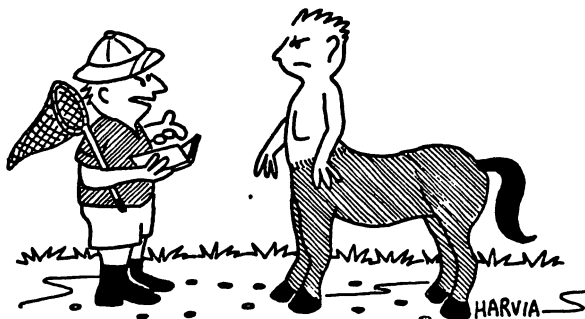
Here is an apt proof of the proverb which goes, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp." Burroughs, Bradbury and Viking have so pre-empted the field that Mars has been, in science fiction terms, pretty much of a dead issue lately: There hasn't been a notable Mars novel in twenty years. With the possible exception of Varley's "In the Hall of the Martian Kings" (arguably not his best), there hasn't been a notable Mars story in twenty years.

One is therefore tempted to look charitably on a book which attempts to break the drought, especially one which attempts to do so within the bounds of known science and technology. Martian Spring, however, is not that book. Not to put too fine a point on

it, Williams isn't much of a writer -- any book which has a line like "...the moon cajoled their shared emotions with its jocund fullness" on the first page, is already in trouble.

Part of the problem is that Williams re-invents the wheel at every turn. There isn't a cliché of the last few decades that doesn't find its way in here somewhere. The central character is, for no discernable reason, a telepathic android. If there is any purpose behind this, it's not clear to me. The author tediously explains about fusion reactions, lectures on the adaptability of the common cockroach, tells us in gruesome and laborious detail about explosive decomposition -- and this is all in the first chapter. The science fiction community is aware of these things, sir. He re-invents flying as an indoor sport, in tendentious detail, just as if Robert Heinlein had not done the definitive treatment of the subject in "The Menace from Earth" in 1957.

None of the characters ever came alive for this reader. Williams is so busy telling us what they think about every conceivable boring subject, and having them analyze each other in Psych 101 terms, that he never shows us any reason to care about his people. The prose is leaden, the pace glacial, and the inventiveness -- in terms of what's been done in the genre in the last thirty years -- nil. I absolutely could not force myself to finish the book. The cliché has it that if you can string 80,000 words in a row and have it make even rudimentary sense, you can probably get it published somewhere; but I had thought better of Avon.



Say what you want, but according to the field guide, since you have six limbs, you are an insect.

## TROUBLE IN BUGLAND

by William Kotzwinkle  
David R. Godine, 1986 (1983c), \$9.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Inspector Mantis and his sidekick Doctor Hopper live in Bugland, a country not unlike England, in a city not unlike London. And Inspector Mantis is not unlike Sherlock Holmes. But this book is not just another Sherlock Holmes pastiche. Such works as Sherlocko the Monk or Memoirs of Schlock Holmes (and the "Basil of Baker Street" books) may throw in the occasional reference

to the alternate milieu (Basil may be searching for the Lost Cheese or something), but don't really rely on it. Trouble in Bugland uses the premise (in this case, that all the characters are insects) throughout the work. In fact, the premise is essential to the work.

In "The Case of the Missing Butterfly", for example, the motive for the kidnapping of the butterflies has to do with the chemicals that the butterflies produce in their bodies. And in other stories also, a knowledge of entymology is probably necessary in order to fully enjoy the plots, and certainly in order to solve them. With this proviso, I would recommend this book, though it may be difficult to find, being available only in trade paperback.

The full-color illustrations of Joe Servello are much more detailed than those that one finds in other books of this type, and add even further to the enjoyment.

### TERROR

by Frederik Pohl  
Berkley, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

For most visiting Hawaii's Big Island, America's Pacific paradise offers sun, sand, and funny pineapple drinks. Pohl, as is his wont, looked beneath the surface for terrorists of the Maui MauMau, the native Hawaiian Liberation Army.

Rachel Chindler, middle-aged midwestern librarian, discovers Hawaii's terrorists the hard way, when her life is accidentally spared during a plane hijacking at Hilo. A few months later, the police call Mrs. Chindler back to the scene of her near-death to identify Kanaloa, one of the possible masked hijackers. While she can't be sure about Kanaloa, she does renew her friendship with retired professor David Yanami, and Yanami's incredible grandmother, Kushi Shiroma. Unfortunately, one of David and Kushi's relatives--a young man about the age of Rachel's son, Stephen--is a radical member of the Kamehameha Korps, and Rachel is recaptured by the terrorists.

On the side of right-thinking flag-wavers, the U.S. Navy plans a little mischief above Loihi Seamount, southeast of Hawaii. There, with the help of Russian defector, Arkady Borboradzhvili, the Pentagon plotters are tickling a volcano with an H-bomb, just the trick to out-dust Krakatoa and put a temporary hold on Soviet grain harvests. By the time the FBI, the CIA, and the KGB have muddied these blue waters, the terrorists have the keys to the Navy's nuclear nightmare, and Rachel is minutes from death, again.

While some might suspect that Pohl has just found a way to write off a pleasant vacation, his plot is deadly serious, and the true mystery is why he didn't double the length for a mainstream best seller. As it is, the real terror he backs up with very real science will be dismissed as mere science fiction.



### CONTACT

by Carl Sagan  
Pocket Books, 1986 (1985c), \$4.95

A book review by Dale Skran

Sagan has written a surprisingly good novel. For a first time writer, Sagan has remarkable plot control and characterization, as well as excellent SF ideas. The book's weaknesses lie in two areas. First, although the scientists in the book are well characterized, the politicians are the worst sort of paranoid stick figures. Sagan displays a deep-seated contempt, coupled with vast ignorance, when it comes to political matters. Second, the world view taken by the book can be best described as liberal, nuke-freezer, wet-dream, and has less reality than most comic books. Basically, everyone just gets together and works hand-in-hand for the common good, and if you buy that....

In spite of these complaints, this remains one of the best first-contact SF novels I've read, and deals with the issue in a gripping yet consistent way. Sagan makes certain technological assumptions, one of which is that worm-hole travel is possible, that point the story in a particular direction. What Sagan does not deal with is: suppose FTL is impossible -- where are they then? Sagan's SF ideas are also scientific ideas, and I assure you that the last page will leave you wondering for quite a while about the "numinous".

### ANGEL WITH A SWORD

by C. J. Cherryh  
Daw Books, 1985, \$3.50

A book review by David M. Shea

"Shared worlds" are all the rage nowadays, and C.J. Cherryh, one of the most popular and prolific authors in the genre, seems to be involved in most of them: Thieves' World, Ithkar, Heroes in Hell, Witch World. It comes as no surprise, then, that sooner or later Cherryh would be tempted to create her own "shared world" and in-

vite friends to write in it. Hence "Merovingen Nights" (TM), of which this Cherryh solo novel is the first sample; those cited as being involved in future books include McCaffrey, Asprin, Abbey, and "many others".

Merovin is a planet which was extensively settled by humans, until the alien sharrh demanded the removal of the human colony. Though many humans left, thousands hid out in the hills and refused to evacuate. Skip forward twenty generations, and welcome to the armpit of the world: Merovingen, the flooded canal city which is slowly sinking, and slowly dying, and doing a bad job of both. (Cherryh seems to have a predilection for drowned worlds: see Hestia and Well of Shiuan.) Uptown, where the wealthy merchants live, has at least a late 19th or early 20th century technology (metal working, internal combustion, rifled firearms, electricity); things are considerably less appealing in the lower part of the soggy city, where Altair Jones, a teenaged "canal rat", plies her trade, poling her small boat around, carrying chance cargoes of dubious legality, and trying to keep mostly out of trouble. Late one night, however, a gang of thugs heave a man off a bridge beneath which Altair is tied up. Almost against her better judgment, Altair fishes the victim out of the filthy canal; one thing leads to another and she is soon involved in a near-war which includes merchant robber-barons, slave traders, religious fanatics, and her own canaler society.

I might as well admit that I don't particularly care for the "shared world" concept. The reasons for this are difficult to explicate. An archaic prejudice that creation is (or ought to be) a solitary process? A lingering distaste for certain conventions of fantasy writing? I'm not entirely certain. I don't like lima beans, and I can't explain that very well either. The fact remains, though, that in most instances I have read the first volume of most shared worlds, yawned, and not bothered to continue the series.

So you're probably expecting to say that I didn't like Angel with the Sword, right? Wrong. I liked it a lot. The reasons for which I liked it, however, had much to do with its being a C.J. Cherryh novel (superb characterization, tight plotting, crisp plausible action, strong narrative writing); not much to do with its being a "shared world". The setting, the background, I didn't find particularly interesting. Physical scene-setting and sociocultural furbelows do not a story make. C. J. Cherryh knows this. Suffice it to say that this, on its merits, is a good book -- not a great book, but a good book. As to any other stories in this setting, by other writers, we'll just have to wait and see how they measure up.

## SHARDS OF HONOR

by Lois McMaster Bujold  
Baen, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Ann Cecil

This is a very nicely done love story, set against an interplanetary war between two human colony worlds. Both the heroine and hero are believable, attractive, resourceful, and immanently likeable. The plot twists are neat and reasonably surprising. The Hero's planetary culture has a Byzantine feel, while the heroine comes from an exploited America.

While the strength of the book is the solid characterizations underlying the romance, there are "small pleasures" throughout: an ingenious, if nasty-minded, way of dealing with the products of rape; some alien creatures that turn out to be viciously effective at capturing their prey; and the repeated reminders of the reality behind war. Altogether a very nice debut!

A book review by Maia Cowan

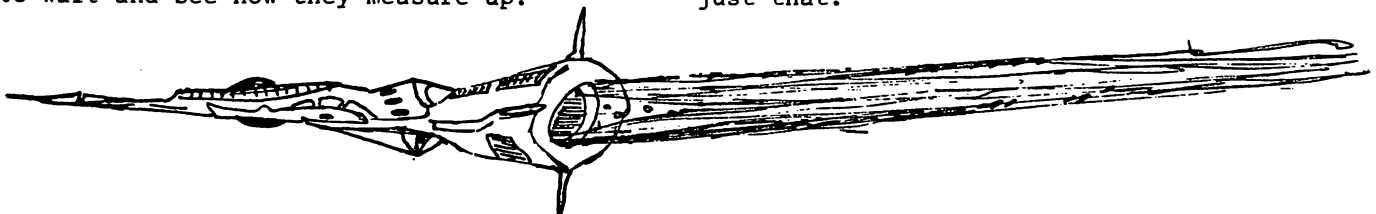
Watch this writer closely. She's going to be doing great things before long. These first novels are already very good.

Shards of Honor begins with an apparently senseless attack on a scientific expedition to a remote planet. The militaristic, patriarchal Barrayar justify the attack by insisting on a prior claim to the planet, and the right to defend it from "trespassers."

The sole survivor of the landing party slowly finds respect and reluctant affection for the Barrayaran commander, who himself is fighting treacherous elements in his forces. Within the conflict between their philosophies and their planet's politics, the two discover their common decency and saving humor: the "shards of honor" which they protect against the encroachment of dangerous circumstances.

The novel has realistic depictions of battles and schemings; a wealth of "real people"; romance, politics, science, psychology, and adventure; best of all, delicious turns of phrase that bring to life the scenes and the characters.

This isn't a simplistic story of "bad" invaders vs. "good" defenders. Each side in the conflict speaks for itself, each side has both heroes and villains, and a certain amount of sympathy even for the enemy. It's tricky to maintain this balance and still carry the story along, but the writer makes it look easy. Shards of Honor is most enjoyable to read, and I hope everyone will do just that.



ETHAN OF ATHOS

by Lois McMaster Bujold  
1986, Baen Books, \$2.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

No, Shards of Honor wasn't "beginner's luck." Ethan of Athos is just as delightful.

Though there is a fair amount of violence, this is a very funny book. The humor comes from the Bujold's delicious way of stating things, a dry understated wit that keeps the characters relatively calm in the face of chaotic events.

Ethan Urquhart is an obstetrician on an all-male planet. Right; reproduction is achieved through bioengineering, with the help of ovarian tissue cultures. When those cultures begin to wear out, Ethan is drafted to contact bioengineering firms in the Outside World(s) to get more. His main objection to this is that he'll have to deal with a dreaded species which has a hypnotic and destructive effect on men --women.

The first person he meets is an irrepressible mercenary named Elli Quinn. She takes an inexplicable interest in his welfare. So does a thoroughly unpleasant mobster and his goons. From there it gets really strange.

I liked the people in this book (even felt a little sorry for the villains), but I particularly hope we haven't seen the last of Elli. That woman must have many stories to tell, some of them true.

Ethan is a fast-paced thriller with some ingenious science and social invention. I could easily run out of adjectives describing its best features, so just go out and buy the book and find them for yourselves.

DOUBLE NOCTURNE

by Cynthia Felice  
Bluejay Books, 1985, \$16.95

A book review by Ann Cecil

Another love story; do I sense a trend? But this one is a disappointment. The author has done good work (Godsfire was excellent) but this book is sloppy and a bad idea. The SF elements are just background, and not particularly well done or original. The author seems to have been trying to do a Gothic, using all the cliches, but with a role-reversal. The naive but handsome hero stumbles from one mess into another, trying valiantly to stay pure while he waits for Ms. Right to come save him.

It's not a satire, but the characters are so thin and unlikeable that you don't feel sympathy, just impatience, as in a bad Gothic. At the end, the author apparently realized it wasn't working, and abandoned the whole idea. Suddenly our hero switches moral codes, develops a smattering of intelligence, and we are left with a half-ending, totally unsatisfying. This one is not worth reading.

THE MAN WHO MELTED

by Jack Dann  
Bantam/Spectra, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Laura Todd

You could call this SF drawing-room drama. It is unique in the genre because rather than setting people amidst world-shaking events, its primary focus is on the relationships among a trio of characters. There is a background of future chaos, but it is not developed or resolved. It serves only as a backdrop for Raymond Mantle's struggle to locate his missing wife and to sort out his confused feelings for her, a current girlfriend, and an old buddy.

Mantle's wife disappears during an attack of "Screamers". The Screamers are victims of a kind of mental plague which causes huge crowds to go berserk as they are psychically joined into one mindless entity intent on riot and destruction. Apparently the Screamer plagues, which draw in everyone in their path, have caused the collapse of organized society in many cities.

The concept of the Screamers would have been an interesting idea to develop, but it remains off-stage and in the background. The novel really begins when Mantle contacts a cult which believes the Screamers are a manifestation of a truth beyond the grave. He electronically plugs into the mind of a dead Screamer in search of clues to his wife's fate, and as a result his sanity is threatened. He sees hallucinations of his wife, dead, trying to suck him into the shadowed realm. A telepathic connection develops between himself and Joan, the woman who is trying to help him in his search. He loves her, yet believes she is trying to kill him.

Their relationship is complicated further by the presence of Mantle's old friend who appears out of the past, claiming he wants to help. Mantle's past relationship with this man can be described as "love/hate". This friend uses a lot of strange psychological tricks to spark Mantle's memory of his lost wife, including an eerily lifelike electronic replica of the missing woman's head.

If all of this sounds confusing, it is. This is a novel that tries very hard. It deals with Heavy Topics: love, fear, need, dependence. It received some glowing testimonials on the jacket, and I almost feel guilty that it didn't produce the desired impression on me.

I found it rough going. It reminded me of a type of story I've seen in the prozines under the label "cyberpunk". As in these works, the tone is cool, detached, trendy. It takes place in exotic foreign locales (Rome, Cannes, Paris), giving the author a chance to drop place names and detailed descriptions of local color. We then see a lot of scenes portraying a decadent electronic subculture of punks, people with computer implants and prosthetic genitals on their chests, organ gamblers, and the like. The



protagonists spend a lot of time traveling from one place to another while conversing in an opaque dialogue which fails to shed much light on their true feelings. All of this takes the place of clear plot advancement, and it becomes very tedious.

Nothing much happens until the fifth chapter. There is a plot, and the final revelation of the missing woman's fate is quite startling. But still the dominant impression I have of this book is of characters sitting around dissecting each other, and for all their earnest dialogue I found it hard to understand them or care about them.

### GODBODY

by Theodore Sturgeon  
Donald I. Fine, 1986, \$14.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Sturgeon's last novel is pure Sturgeon. It's full of Sturgeon's philosophy of love and humanity. The characters are real and you feel as if you might meet them just around the next corner. But much as I want to, and as much as every one else is, I cannot whole-heartedly recommend this book. It's all a bit too obvious. Anyone who tries to write a story centered around a Christ-figure needs to do something different to keep it from being predictable, and this applies even to Sturgeon.

Godbody is enjoyable reading. Sturgeon's message of love is appealing but when you boil it down it's the same story as last time. While perhaps not as overdone in science fiction as the "Adam and Eve" scenario, the "Messiah with a message" story has become a standard and as such I find it hard to get excited over it this time. My recent reading has led me to conclude that I am beginning to develop a serious dislike for old themes, no matter how well-done. If you don't have this reaction, then I recommend this book. If you do...well, read it anyway.

### MATADORA

by Steve Perry  
Ace, 1986, 211 pp., \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

As with any middle book in a trilogy, the sequel to THE MAN WHO NEVER MISSED furthers the story without ending it. Perry, however, has chosen to tell three reasonably separate tales, and this one gives us a 24th Century by-her-bootstraps heroine.

Dirisha Zuri rises from mudball-planet poverty and obscurity to challenge the galactic domination of Earth's Confederation. In this, the woman follows the plan, and the secret machinations, of the legendary Emile Khadaji, the man who single-handedly began the downfall of the Confed. Dirisha, already skilled in martial arts, joins former friends at Matador Villa, where she is trained to guard others who may advance the martyred Khadaji's goals. In mastering con-

trol over body and spirit, Dirisha learns one final skill--and comes to understand the greatest force in the universe.

Action and adventure flow cleanly from Perry's pen, and this new writer has us awaiting the third volume with interest and respect.

### THE MACHIAVELLI INTERFACE

by Steve Perry  
Ace, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

While publishers dearly love a series or trilogy, when a reader finishes the final volume, the question always begs: did the writer need that much length to tell the story? In Perry's case, the answer is a guarded "yes."

The Matador Trilogy does the "little tailor who overthrew an evil empire" tale once again, and while Perry has given us action and characterization aplenty, three books' worth seems a bit much for this classic rerun. The final volume returns the focus to Emile Khadaji, the "man who never missed," who started the revolution against the galactic domination of Earth's Confed dictatorship. The "matadors," those incredibly-trained masters from Khadaji's secret school, rejoin their leader, as they toss sand into the gears of the Confed, both in space and back on the homeworld. Throughout, Marcus Wall, the power behind the throne, tries to block the Khadaji-inspired rebellion.

The final novel doesn't stand well on its own, and is best read in proper sequence with the other two for the solid entertainment it provides.

### MALLWORLD

by Somtow Sucharitkul

Some comments by Mark R. Leeper

Somtow Sucharitkul strikes me as being the John Varley of the '80s -- a competent stylist with exciting, unpredictable ideas. Mallworld is a series of connected short stories with two intertwined themes. Read on one level, the book deals with the economics of Mallworld -- a moonlet-sized, orbiting mall with tens of thousands of shops, restaurants, hotels, etc. Stories revolve around owners, employees, "shoppers", and even the underground gangs of penniless punks. Plot lines are not black-and-white (such as in the classic novel The Space Merchants); moral ambiguity runs through the stories.

The second theme is that of human persistence, perhaps even human perversity. In the Mallworld universe, a very powerful alien race has found Earth. Recognizing that humanity is still barbarously uncivilized, this race puts the entire Solar System in a "side dimension" -- a pocket of existence divorced from the rest of the universe -- so we can mature (or self-destruct) without

danger to the rest of interstellar society. This may not sound too bad (after all, we have the whole Solar System), but Somtow does a convincing job of detailing how people are affected by this haughtiness and its major result: no stars can be seen. Space beyond the Solar System is empty, and black. The absence of stars, the yearning and frustration this absence produces in people, and the varying attitudes of the aliens about these human emotions, are the second theme of this excellent book.

### WINDMASTER'S BANE

By Tom Deitz  
Avon Books, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by David M. Shea

Anyone who has even a nodding familiarity with the Celtic mythos, and the extensive fantastic literature which has grown out of it, knows that there are certain places where the mortal world and the enchanted realm of Faerie lie close together: Tara in Ireland, Broceliande in Brittany, and so forth. I didn't know one such was on a farm in northern Georgia, but if the author says so, I guess I'm willing to believe -- up to a point. He cites in proof the Cherokee legends on the Nunnehi, the immortal spirit people who live everywhere, but are seldom seen.

David Sullivan is an average American teenager. Well, that's not quite accurate: David is a Baby-boom-generation fantasy writer's picture of what an American teenager ought to be like. He dresses casually, lets his hair grow (moderately) but is dutifully obedient to his elders, prefers The Byrds or Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers to heavy metal or country-western, and reads Tolkien and mythology, especially Celtic myth. No doubt there are some American teenagers like this, but how many do you know carve runestaffs for amusement? Well, never mind. It's a fantasy, it's not supposed to make sense. (David and his inseparable buddies Alec and Liz -- who are also conveniently well-read in magic and folklore -- also drink hot chocolate and play Monopoly. Sometimes they seem about thirteen, and sometimes they seem about eighteen.)

For reasons which are only dubiously explained, David has the Second Sight, and one night his magical talent is able to detect a travelling party of the Sidhe, the eldest and most warlike of the Faeries, caravanning through the south forty along the track which connects worlds. He plays the riddle game with a sarcastic dark Sidhe-lord, and confounds the Elder Folk by winning. Thus he is drawn into an ongoing duel of magic with an immortal enemy, in which David, Alec and Liz must risk their own lives to protect the other mortals who have inadvertently been

drawn into the combat. Finally they are drawn on a quest into the enchanted Realm itself, where they must face down the Drak Lord in a ritual combat in which ash wood and cold iron are little help.

If all this sounds familiar, it's because it is. Deitz is obviously deeply familiar with his source material, and is above average as a new writer; thus he has managed to produce an immanently readable book. Windmaster's Bane was highly recommended to me by its editor, Chris Miller of Avon (with whom I have a casual acquaintance) as being a "really different and unusual" Celtic fantasy. This is true in the sense that it's not merely another imitation of Faerie a la Katherine Kurtz, but attempts to relate the immortal Realm to the real world; indeed, much of the book does take place in "our" world. It's solidly plotted and well-written; one of the better compliments I can pay Deitz is to say the book is magical but not mystical. There are places where the characters ring true enough to carry the story. On the whole, I like this book, which is more than I can usually say about Celtic fantasy.

If the reader doesn't feel that the source material has been about done to death in the fantasy genre, this might be a good choice. Because I did enjoy the book, for the most part (though it will be interesting to see how it stands up to a rereading), it may be unfair to close this review with this comment: I was always aware that I was reading a novel.

### LIFTER

by Crawford Kilian  
Ace Books, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

With all the fuss over British Columbia's William Gibson, Kilian, the unsung Canadian, seems relegated to the third-string backfield. Yet, with this young adult tale of just such a high school ball player, Kilian delivers another solid, literate SF work. Lifter may lack rockets and razzle-dazzle, but this third Kilian novel merits attention.

Rick Stevenson seems to be just your ordinary teenage California genius computer hacker (despite the wildly wrong James Warhola cover painting), until the morning he astounds his dog by levitating before breakfast. We follow Rick's career in this funny new area of psychophysics, as he makes his way through "The Breakfast Club" of school classmates, falls in love, and massacres opposing football teams. Just for variety, we've got a football coach who combines "Mr. T" and Bill Cosby, a school yard tough with more Trans Am than brains, and a single parent with very special moxie. Sixteen-year-old Rick's strange new power introduces a real moral dilemma, and as he wrestles with his secret in the midst of adolescent growing pains, the reader gets a real lift as well. Read this one and pass it on to the nearest teenager.





# THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Comments on Selected Fiction  
of Jack Finney

by Evelyn C. Leeper

I just finished reading two books by Jack Finney: Time and Again (Warner, (1970c) 1970, \$1.50) and About Time (Fireside, 1986, \$7.95). The former is a novel; the latter is a collection of short stories. Jack Finney is known (if not by name) to a generation of young adults as the author of "Of Missing Persons", a staple in most junior high school readers that I've seen, and included in About Time. It's the story of the man who finds a travel agent who will send him to Verna, an idyllic paradise of forests, streams, and only "good" technology -- there are washing machines, but no televisions. But he only gets one chance. Finney has also had several other stories which have been much anthologized, including another story from this collection, "The Third Level."

If one were to characterize Finney, one would probably call him "Bradbury-esque". His short stories are often set in rural Illinois, and he spends a lot of time yearning for the "good old days." In "Where the Clueless Are", a new house built from Victorian plans somehow drifts back in time and the occupants spend their hours playing croquet and sipping lemonade, then strolling into their mansion lit with flickering gaslight. Sounds great, right? Finney can make it sound so enticing -- until you ask yourself what sort of plumbing the house has, and whether the occupants will get scarlet fever, and how they preserve their food. Such picky little details are avoided in Finney's nostalgia. "I Love Galesburg in the Springtime" is another story about how peaceful things were and how wonderful it is that a new factory isn't being built in town, since it would ruin the atmosphere. (The point-of-view character is employed, of course; one wonders what the jobless of the town would have to say if they were asked.)

Though About Time is billed as a collection of time travel stories, several of them have nothing to do with time travel. "Of Missing Persons" is one; others include "The Coin Collector", "Lunch-Hour Magic", and "Home Alone". In most of these, Finney isn't

so hooked on his anti-technology schtick -- in "Lunch-Hour Magic" he even shows some of the benefits of advanced technology -- and I found these more enjoyable. Finney's romantic (or perhaps I should say, romanticist) writing style is a joy to read.

In Time and Again, Simon Morley is just an average guy when he is recruited for a top-secret project: he is going to go back in time. The reason is not clear. He is told not to interfere, though that restriction seems to ease up as the novel moves along. His time travel method is similar to the one Matheson used in Somewhere in Time; he puts himself in an environment devoid of 1970's technology, or for that matter, any technology since 1882, and he hypnotizes himself into going back. The novel is really Finney's portrayal of life in the 1880s in New York. He is too tied up with the wonder of the city to spend much time on characterization or plot (though there is a rudimentary mystery). If you're not a fan of loving descriptions of life a hundred years ago, you could skip this. (If you are, by the way, I recommend Mark Helprin's A Winter's Tale.)

Jack Finney seems determined to pick up where Bradbury left off in the paean to those wonderful days of yesteryear when life was simpler and things were better. The back blurb of Time and Again even says "Would you like to travel back in time to a better, simpler world?" However, my tolerance for "good old days" stories is rapidly wearing thin, probably because the more the Moral Majority (or whatever they're calling themselves these days) tells me how I should want a return to the old-fashioned values, the more I remember all the baggage that came with them.

Although Finney gives a nod to such advances as antibiotics, antiseptics, and anesthesia, he seems more interested in emphasizing the pollution, injustice, and pettiness of the present. Simon Morley even says, "We had a chance to do justice to our Negroes, and when they asked it, we refused. In Asia we burned people alive, we really did. We allow children to grow up malnourished in the United States." But Morley seems to have forgotten that every generation since the 1600s has had the chance to do justice -- and didn't. He has forgotten the Inquisition and the witch trials in England during the Protectorate. He has forgotten that through most of history most people have grown up malnourished -- if they grew up at all. One of the things the government agent tells Morley helps him pinpoint the as 1970 instead of 1882 is the way that Morley and a passing Negro would "eye each other warily." Ah yes, things were so much better back in 1882 when those other people knew their places. (That's sarcasm, folks.)

Suffice it to say that while Finney writes these stories well, I can't bring myself to really dislike them. Like Tom O'Bedlam, the writing style can't overcome my distaste for the world-view that Finney presents.

## TROLL

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

**CAPSULE REVIEW:** This is a very surprising little film. The packaging makes it look like a cheap rip-off of Gremlins. Instead, it blossoms into a very fine fantasy film with some genuinely funny comic touches. It is literate without ever being boring. Recommended.

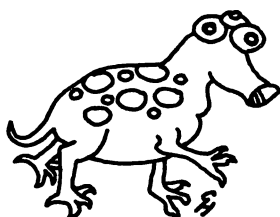
Something happened when special effects man John Carl Buechler was given Troll to direct. Buechler works for Empire Pictures, one of the many low-budget production companies making films for minimal theatrical release and for videocassette release. Empire's films include Ghoulies, Re-Animator, TerrorVision, Laserblast II, Decapitron, and Zone Troopers. Their films are predominantly dark horror films. Troll was reportedly originally envisioned as a sort of Friday the 13th with a magical creature killing people off. But Buechler was given the assignment to do the story as a PG-13 film. You can't do that story as a PG-13 film. What Buechler did instead was to make, on the same basic plot, a bright and delightful fantasy film. The transformation was almost as remarkable as turning a frog into a prince.

The story deals with a family of four who move into a new apartment building. Almost immediately the daughter is stolen by a troll who transforms himself to look like her. For reasons that become nearly clear, the troll goes around to the various weird residents of the apartment building and.... Well, that would be telling. Suffice it to say he doesn't exactly murder them. One might almost say he improves upon them.

Buechler earlier did special effects for Ghoulies. That film was a knock-off of Gremlins. That seems to be how Troll started too. But with Buechler's fantasy modifications and a fun script by horror movie fan Ed Naha, little Empire Pictures has really bested Steven Spielberg. At a much smaller budget, Troll is several times the film that Gremlins was.

Troll features an odd cast of actors having a good time making the film, but for once not all at the audience's expense. Michael Moriarty leads the cast as a very strange father figure. A pretty but untalented Jenny Hack plays his wife. June Lockhart, in one of her best roles, plays the old matron of the building who is clearly more than she seems.

Troll is a great comedy-fantasy lying in wait at your video store. Give it a chance. It gets a +2.



## DECISION AT THUNDER RIFT

by William H. Keith, Jr.  
FASA Corporation, 1986, \$3.95

A book review by Terry O'Brien

This book is based on the universe of the BattleTech series of miniature and role-playing rules published by FASA, about combat between giant robots (called BattleMechs, or just 'Mechs) and their support units a thousand years in the future.

Before I go any further, I want to explain that, although these are giant robots, they are a far cry from what you might have seen on TV. There is a realism and an attention to scientific details in this story, and the universe they are based in, that places this story totally within the realm of science fiction.

The story itself is about Grayson Death Caryle, the son of the commander of the mercenary regiment Caryle's Commandos. When his father and most of the regiment are killed in an ambush by raiders, Grayson must survive amid the troubled political and military situation of an alien planet while seeking to avenge himself against his father's murderers.

Adding to the troubles are the political machinations of Duke Ricol, the one who masterminded the raider ambush against Grayson's father. That ambush was one step in Duke Ricol's plan to establish a base on the planet to support his other advances in neighboring star-systems.

Grayson allies himself with the embattled King Jeverid, the real target of Duke Ricol's plans. The King commissions Grayson to create a 'Mech regiment to defend the kingdom, but Grayson's efforts are delayed because of interdepartmental wrangling, a lack of proper material and technicians, and by Duke Ricol's agents. A crucial attack on the raider base becomes a disaster when the enemy was waiting in ambush for him. Discredited, Grayson is jailed, but is rescued when his regiment realizes that the raiders are working for Duke Ricol.

The story concludes with the battle between Grayson's inexperienced regiment and the battle-hardened forces of the Duke. This is the climax of the book, a battle for both established military goals and important character resolution. This battle will not only determine victory or defeat for Grayson, but will also determine Grayson's character.

The book follows a standard formula, but it does have several positive features in it. One is the maturation of inexperienced Grayson into a competent soldier and leader while he stays alive as he pursues his twin objectives of survival and revenge. We see a sign of this maturation as his objectives change throughout the book. At first he is concerned with survival and revenge, with catastrophic results to the people who befriend him, but halfway through the story he starts being concerned with others' safety. In the end, he matures into a leader, a man

who looks beyond his own needs to those of the people around him. He has learned, through trial and much error, that it is the people around him and not the ungainly but powerful 'Mechs that he must trust.

Another is the interplay between Grayson and Lori Kalmar. She piloted a 'Mech for Duke Ricol's raiders, but was captured in the running battles after the ambush of Grayson's father. As she was a draftee with no real commitment to Duke Ricol, and one of the few people with any knowledge of the 'Mechs, she was released from prison to assist Grayson in the development of the 'Mech regiment. She is one of the people around Grayson that he eventually learns to depend on and trust, something he had a hard time doing, but urgently needed to learn.

On the negative side, though, the book is too long. The details of 'Mech operation and the universe are interesting, but after a while they just get in the way of the story. The story is about the characters, not the hardware they're carrying, and anything that detracts from the characters detracts from the story. As there is a small glossary and pages of sketches of the various 'Mechs, no more information was really needed in the story except that which was necessary to the story and could be conveniently brought out in the course of the story.

I partially recommend this book, especially to anyone interested in harder science fiction and military stories. There is enough action to satisfy anyone, told with a realism and pace that befitted the story. It is not quite to the level of the other writers of this genre (H. Beam Piper, Glen Cook, David Drake) but it is worth looking at. I would also be interested in seeing what the next books will be like.

### THE DRAGON AND THE SWORD

A Tale of the Eternal Champion

by Michael Moorcock  
Ace/Berkeley, 1986, \$16.95

Being the third and  
final story in the  
history of John Daker,  
the Eternal Champion.

A book review by Terry O'Brien

John Daker is once again summoned to become the Eternal Champion. Now he is Crown Prince Flamadin, on one of the Six Worlds of the Wheel, without any knowledge of his purpose, as is generally true. Together, he, the Ghost Woman Alisaard, and Count Ulrich von Bek (a refugee from Nazi Germany), must prevent Flamadin's twin sister Sharadim from taking the Dragon Swrod, thus loosing the forces of Chaos into the Worlds of the Wheel and becoming one of the Sword Rulers of Chaos herself. However, the Dragon Sword is held in the Chaos realm of the Nightmare Marches, the Hub of the Worlds of the Wheel, so the Eternal Champion must brave the forces

of Chaos without his familiar Sword. Yet, go he must, for there are greater events awaiting the completion of his quest than just the defeat of Chaos.

It has been a long time since the last Eternal Champion book, even counting the graphic novel by Moorcock and Howard Chaykin, The Swords of Heaven, the Flowers of Hell. This book is a welcome addition to the canon of the Champion, perhaps even the final addition. For in this book John Daker receives the peace he longs for, and the man who was the Eternal Champion receives a respite from the travails of war and carnage, back in his own life-time, ending where he started, a simple human man. And it was that humanity that gave him his strength and the capacity to survive. This book is certainly recommended to anyone who followed the career of the Eternal Champion.

This book also links the books The Warhound and the World's Pain and its sequel into the Eternal Champion series. The second lead character, Count von Bek, is a descendant of the hero of the former book, and that link between the Count's ancestor and the Grail forms part of the final resolution of the story. The character of the Count also gives Moorcock, who grew up in the middle of World War II, the opportunity to compare and contrast the fictional villain, the Champion's twin sister Sharadim, with very real individuals (Goering, Goebbels, and Hitler), and to make several comments on the nature of dictators and demagoguery, and the drive for power.

### THE QUALLSFORD INHERITANCE

by Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

St. Martin's Press, 1986, \$15.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

This addition to the Holmes mythos is written (Biggle claims) by Edward Porter Jones, a Baker Street Irregular who eventually rose to become Sherlock Holmes's apprentice. Watson's Failure to mention him he attributes to jealousy, though such jealousy, he quickly adds, was never overtly shown.

The mystery starts when one of the later Irregulars comes to Holmes to tell him about an old woman in the market who kept asking for "pitahaygas." This is pushed aside when Emmeline Quallsford comes to ask Holmes's aid in investigating the death of her brother. But the two chains join up in a typical Holmesian story.

Biggle writes a good mystery, though I think the denouement a trifle obvious. His portrayal of Holmes is well done and he has a feel for the period. However, I am a strict traditionalist. As such, I feel that the technique of having an apprentice who can see most of what Holmes can (though not all) and who can tell us what Holmes is doing while he is doing it detracts from the air of mystery that always surrounds Holmes in Doyle's stories. (Doyle's one attempt to tell a story from Holmes's point of view -- "The Case of the Blanched Soldier" -- was



one of the weakest stories for this very reason, as Holmes himself says in the story!)

On the other hand, this is one of the best Sherlockian stories that I have discovered recently and I would recommend it. By the way, Holmes fans, take heart -- on the way to the airport after CONFEDERATION, I heard Marvin Kaye saying that in honor of the Holmes Centennial next year, Doyle's estate was going to be authorizing a series of new Holmes stories. And Renegade Comics' third issue of "The Cases of Sherlock Holmes" is supposed to be a new story -- which if I can get my hands on, I will review here.

## THE NAME OF THE ROSE

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

**CAPSULE REVIEW:** A Sherlock Holmes clone in a Medieval abbey solves a mystery and takes a stand for truth and rationalism over religious fervor. The 14th Century Church takes a serious beating in this entertaining and occasionally gory tale of murder in an abbey.

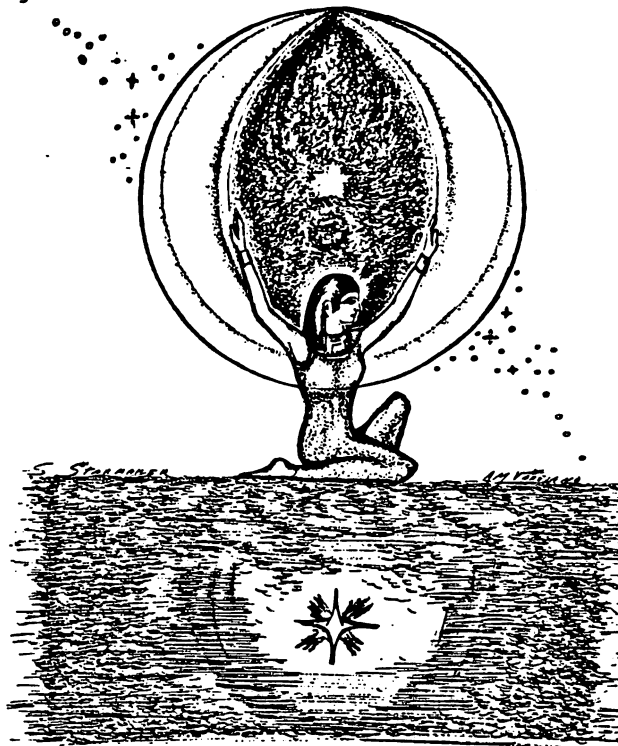
The #2 best-selling fiction book of 1983 (and second only to the Return of the Jedi storybook) was Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose. The story is of a certain Italian abbey in 1327 where some force, perhaps satanic, is murdering men. Coming to investigate is Brother William of Baskerville, an English monk with a love of the rational mind and a penchant for using his own. Six hundred pages later the Brother knows a good deal more about the workings of this particular abbey and so does the reader. The film has been produced as an Italian-West German-French co-production. (Most current American historical films these days are Westerns or don't go back before the turn of the century.) The Name of the Rose stars Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham.

To be sure, the story of The Name of the Rose, while based on a critically acclaimed novel, is not the totally original effort that a novel about life in a 14th Century abbey might be. It falls back instead, unfortunately, on the proven structure of a Sherlock Holmes story. Brother William may outwardly be a monk, but inwardly there is a good deal more Holmesian about him than just the name Baskerville. He is a perfect analog of Holmes for his century down to the magnifying glass and a Watson-like companion. (His name, Adso, as my wife Evelyn points out, is very close to "Watson" with the first and last letters dropped.) This "Adventure of the Murdered Monks" has all the plot twists and mystery that Doyle would have put in a similar Holmes story. The film has just barely started when he makes his first deduction: where his assistant can find the abbey privy. His second -- how a monk can fall to his death from an unbroken window that does not open is, as Brother William explains, "elementary". At least one of the four men who worked on the screenplay

was taking no chances that the viewer might miss the parallels to Sherlock Holmes.

F. Murray Abraham plays the power-mad Inquisitor Bernardo Gui. While he appears only in the final third of the film, the influence of him in particular and men like him in general is felt throughout the entire film. His power and his total indifference to the truth make him a sort of medieval Matthew Hopkins. He comes to symbolize everything that Brother William with his rationalist mind is against.

Director Jean-Jacques Annaud's theme of importance of enlightenment makes The Name of the Rose an interesting companion piece to his earlier Wuest for fire. In spite of being derivative, The Name of the Rose scores as an historical piece with an unusual setting. There isn't enough in the film to make a great novel -- presumably that was lost in transition -- but there is more than enough to make two hours of enjoyable watching. Rate it a +2.



## E O N

by Greg Bear  
Bluejay Books, 1985  
(SFBC Reprint, \$5.95)

A book review by Lan

Consider these facts: a fairly large asteroid takes up residence in an orbit around Earth; a world scientific expedition, spearheaded by the United States, investigates the Stone and finds it hollow...with engines at one end; there are seven levels within the rotating ellipsoid, filled with various artifacts and cities, and even art, sculpture and paintings by and of the former inhabitants; the former inhabitants WERE human; and the seventh level doesn't end where

the asteroid does. In the prologue, which has four starting points for the novel, and through the first four chapters, Greg Bear introduces the main characters and all of the above. Actually more -- there's the political situation on Earth and the Moon which is becoming explosive, increased tension among the soldiers and scientists working in the Stone, and the tense situation thousands of thousands of kilometers along the corridor where the Stone is supposed to have ended, just to name a few.

And that brings us up to page 62 of 436 pages.

The book is phenomenal. Greg Takes these ideas and runs with them, throwing in more detail, newer ideas, and taking one's mind through a rousing adventure and an intellectual romp through some wild ideas. His writing is more than adequate, the style flows smoothly, the characters are very real, the story as fascinating as the origins of the universe. And it moves fast. The end comes all too soon, and one is left wanting more. Fortunately, Greg is working on a sequel, but I wonder what else he could do that he hasn't already done.

I've pretty much enjoyed everything I have ever read by Greg Bear, though I've usually been too busy to read everything he's written. Now I have to pull out all his novels in the collection and find the time to read them. Anyone know of a way to get by without sleep?

### THEIVE'S WORLD

Robert Asprin & Lynn Abbey, eds.

Art by Tim Sale

1986, Donning, \$12.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

I'm not big on graphic novels, and I'm definitely not big on Thieves' World. But I am impressed by this adaptation of the shared-world anthologies Asprin founded in 1981.

The stories have enough action and visual concepts to adapt very well to this genre. Tim Sale's style expresses the tawdry decadence, the dark spirit, and the dangers of Sanctuary.

This color edition is an omnibus of three black-and-white books published separately. I recommend investing in this version even if you already have the original books. The colors and continuity increase the effectiveness of the stories, even above the original short stories.

### DUNCAN & MALLORY

by Robert Asprin and Mel. White

1986, Donning, \$6.95

A book review by Maia Cowan

Robert Asprin writes an amusing story. Mel. White draws devastating caricatures. The combination of the two can be deadly.

There's nothing particularly original about this story of two ne'er-do-wells teaming up for their mutual advantage (in the-

ory), against a world that isn't always as gullible as they hope. The jokes are broad and sly, the situations ridiculous, and all the right people get theirs in the end. The art and writing combine to create very effective comedy. Jane Fancher's coloring is particularly impressive. Watch the background for sneaky details and jokes.



### FLESH AND BLOOD

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

**CAPSULE REVIEW:** Cable offers a powerful film for those strong enough to watch it. This picture of life in 1501 is truly a harrowing experience. Anyone who complains about how bad society is today should be forced to see what it was like in other ages.

The cable listing said that it was a medieval adventure starring Rutger Hauer. I had visions of another Ladyhawke. Not exactly. Hey, you want to see a really memorable historical film? It's a quality film with high production values and I can guarantee that you won't forget it soon afterward. I know I've tried to forget Flesh and Blood and I keep seeing images from the film. This polyglot co-production grabs you in the first half-hour with interesting characters and authentic historical detail. The problem is the aura of authenticity. They could have called this film 85 Surprisingly Good Reasons for Not Living in the Middle Ages. The film feels believable, but at the same time horrifying and disturbing in ways Texas Chain-saw Massacre or Dawn of the Dead cannot even approach.

The plot concerns a band of mercenary soldiers betrayed by their commander and by the man who hired them. This leads to vicious attacks and counter-attacks until it becomes clear that these are all people that the world would be better off without. It is 1501 and the world is full of plague and panic and religious zealots. The Middle Ages have been portrayed in film with varying degrees of repulsiveness from the almost benign view of Brother Sun, Sister Moon to Ken Russell's bitter and violent The Devils, but no other film I can remember seeing has so disturbingly portrayed the crudeness and painfulness of that period. I am rarely affected strongly by a fictional story on the screen, but the thought of much of what goes on in Flesh and Blood still nauseates me long after the film is over.

The film -- apparently a German, Spanish, and who-can-tell-what-else co-production -- is more historical perspective than most people want to know about. This is not an enjoyable film, but it is a good one and it is worth seeing if you are strong enough of

stomach. Rate it a high +1. Warning: this film has nudity, rape, violence, adult situations, and situations that any adult would avoid like the plague. Oh, and it has the plague.

### TOM O'BEDLAM

by Robert Silverberg  
Warner, 1986 (1985c), \$3.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

[Warning: spoilers ahead.]

I like Silverberg's novels; I really do. But this one is so exasperating, so annoying, that (to steal a quote) I do not want to set it down, but cast it aside with great force.

So what do I find so exasperating? Not Silverberg's writing style -- that is as good as ever. And his characters are memorable, three-dimensional -- everything characters should be. It's the message that drives me up the wall.

Tom O'Bedlam takes place after the atomic war has decimated North America (and apparently the rest of the world, though no one can be sure anymore). Tom is a mutant who wanders through the western United States having visions of distant worlds and of the "Crossing" to them that mankind will soon experience. His visions, and those of the newly-born tumbonde' sect, and those of the patients in an exclusive mental institution near Mendocino, all point toward an apocalyptic transition for the human race. This vision is best expressed by one of the converts to tumbonde':

"The gate will open; the great ones will come among us and make things better for us. That's what's going to happen, and it's going to happen very soon, and then everything will be okay, maybe for the first time ever."

If this sounds like the current cults that say the ancient astronauts will return and solve all of mankind's problems, you're right.

My objection to all this is that Silverberg seems to be saying that we needn't do anything to improve things here on Earth -- powerful alien beings will show up to solve all our problems. He may even feel we can't do anything to improve things, a nihilistic belief that I simply cannot subscribe to. (Silverberg may not have these beliefs personally, but the book seems to be promoting them, so I'll use the shorthand of "Silverberg says".) One can argue that a belief in the Biblical apocalypse would result in similar conclusions, but at least that has the virtue (if one may call it such) that it relies on divine intervention, rather than on other mortals who are somehow more advanced than we. If these advanced mortals could pull themselves up to that level, why can't we? If one postulates that they were assisted by yet another advanced race, then we

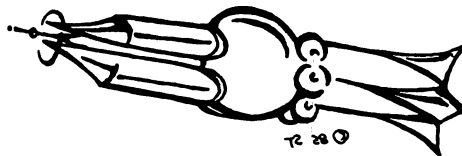
could easily get into the paradox of infinite regress here.

As if this weren't enough, Silverberg has Tom -- a gentle, pacifistic character -- engage in some highly questionable activities. Tom, because of his mutation, is a critical nexus in the Crossing. And while some people are eager to "cross" and become wards of these super-beings, others are not. And how does Tom feel about sending these, in effect killing them on Earth to send their souls elsewhere?

"It wasn't a killing anymore than the other killings were. ...if I hadn't, he would have killed me sure as anything with that spike, and then there would be no more crossings for anyone. You understand that...? I didn't kill you...I did you the biggest favor of your life."

So also said the Inquisition as it lit the auto da fe': "We torture your body so that we can save your soul."

Maybe Silverberg believes all this. Maybe he doesn't. But the book (which is the topic here) does seem to present these ideas as reasonable, so I must weigh the philosophical aspects of the book as well as its technical and literary aspects. While it gets high marks on the latter, I find the former leaves an exceedingly bad taste in my mouth.



### THE GAME OF FOX AND LION

By Robert R. Chase  
Del Rey, 1986, \$2.95.

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

Discussion of moral and philosophical issues between the lines of space opera is a fine old tradition in SF. With his first novel, Chase tells a good story--and examines the "what is a man" question once more.

Many centuries in the future, humanity has colonized many systems, but age-old political and religious factions remain. When perfected genetic engineering techniques permit the creation of augmented humans, the Multi-Neural Capacitants, as well as manlike beings with non-human genes, the Bestials, religious fundamentalists in the Defenders of Humanity protest violently. War breaks out with the Bestials, who fight for their very existence against the powers of Earth and the Centauran system. Centauran Councilor John Lei Chiang, head of Chiang Biosynthetics, searches out the last living Multi-Neural Capacitant, Paul Niccolo Renard, who he finds working as Brother Benedict among the

Catholic Order of Stewards in a terraforming project on planet Ariel. Against his will, Renard is forced to use his enhanced analytical powers, first in a complex power play to save Chiang's corporation from rival takeover, then as Sky Marshal for the Centaurans in the final battle against the massed Bestial fleet. For Renard the Fox, however, far more is at stake in his interlocked mental gymnastics, as he strives to manipulate everyone from space pilots to the Pope.

Look forward to more from this author, who handles plot and motivation very well indeed.

## PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

**CAPSULE REVIEW:** Francis Coppola's bitter-sweet time-travel story fantasy is a safe bet, "Twilight Zone" sort of story lacking any of the genius of Coppola's previous films. It is diverting and it tells its story. If it were some other director's low-budget first film, it would be an impressive start.

Who is the most potent force in American entertainment today? I think you could say that it isn't Red Turner, it isn't Michael Jackson, it's not Mary Tyler Moore. No, Mr. Big in American entertainment is Rod Serling. He may be dead, but he's right up there with Eva Peron in holding the reins of power from beyond the grave. Besides the recent Twilight Zone movie and the current Twilight Zone TV show, there are a lot of films being made that are uncredited remakes of "Twilight Zone" episodes. Instead of sending an armored tank to Little Big Horn, filmmakers send a modern aircraft carrier to Pearl Harbor, but it is essentially the same story. Recently playing at your local theater was another tribute to Rod Serling and The Twilight Zone.

In Peggy Sue Got Married, Kathleen Turner in the title role has a marriage that is breaking up while she is attending a particularly painful and ugly 25-year high school reunion. Wishing she could go back to high school and fix all the mistakes she made, she suddenly faints and recovers only to find it is 1960 again and with 25 years of knowledge of the future she is back in high school. Ah, but with 25 years of knowledge nobody else has, can you really change the future? This is actually an old question and one on which Jerry Leichtling's and Arlene Sarner's screenplay sheds no new light.

At first bemused by her odd situation, Peggy Sue makes all the predictable mistakes of someone pretending to be someone else (or rather, herself from a different age). Once Peggy Sue starts trying to do it right this time, the film bogs down into predictable high school love story cinematic ground. The only relationship that the audience feels anything for -- other than an abstract curiosity about past-changing -- is Peggy Sue's relationship with her grandparents.

As an emotionally affecting film, Peggy Sue Got Married is weak tea beside Somewhere



in Time (which, like Peggy Sue Got Married, had a silky John Barry score used primarily for emotional impact). As a study of time travel and its possibilities it falls well short of Back to the Future. In fact, Peggy Sue Got Married may even lack the intellectual interest of Somewhere in Time and the emotional impact of Back to the Future.

Peggy Sue Got Married is competent filmmaking and deserves at least a lukewarm +1. I guess the saddest thing about this bitter-sweet time-travel story is that the director who did the "Godfather" films is now doing extended "Twilight Zone" episodes. Whether that says something about Coppola, about Hollywood, or about audiences (or all three) is what's going to bring a tear to my eye.

## THE WARDOVE

by L. Neil Smith  
Berkley, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

Were it not for the oft-tortured prose, the muddled characterization, the rambling dialogue, and the anticlimactic ending, Smith would have a curiously-flat novel here. As it is, we have another continuation of Smith's parallel continua where the good guys wear anarchistic libertarian John Wayne white hats, and the badies are the suckers who put up with governments like thee and me. Again, the focus is on a private detective, this time a far-future war vet, Nate Blackburn, who fumbles his way to solving a series of murders aboard an aging starship. Somebody, perhaps a spy for the Cluster Powers, the Hamiltonian types who blew Earth all to hell a millennium back, wants to stop--very dead--the "war bond" tour of the rockabilly music group, "Fresh Blood."

Smith had a good idea here, and lost it somewhere in libertarian philosophy and feeble attempts at folk music lyric writing. Revival of early Dylan and Woodstock--whether in the '80s, or in 2006 -- simply isn't "an answer, my friend, that's blowing in the wind."

## TO ENGINEER IS HUMAN

by Henry Petroski  
St. Martin's Press, 1985, \$16.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

The subtitle of this book is "The Role of Failure in Successful Design" and that is what Petroski covers: what we can learn from failure. He discusses some of the more well-known engineering failures -- the Tacoma Narrows Bridge failure in 1940, the DC-10 crash in Chicago in 1979, the collapse of the Kansas City Hyatt Regency walkways in 1981, and many others -- and analyzes why these failures happened. It is in the nature of engineering, he proposes, that there will always be failures, because engineering consists of change and change implies that there will always be unknown factors. It is easy to build the millionth one-story house, but it is at least as difficult to build the first two-story house as it is to build the first one-story house. Engineering is based on models and sometimes the models are incomplete.

Petroski also looks at engineering successes such as the Crystal Palace and the Empire State Building. Much of their success appears to be due to the engineers realizing their limitations and insisting on double-checking everything as promptly as possible. This is contrasted with the construction of the New York Convention Center, beset by delays because (among other reasons) materials were not tested before being delivered to the site.

The pre-Challenger-explosion book puts into perspective the "disasters" of modern engineering. As such, it should be required reading for the technophobes and Luddites who see only the failures of technology, and not the lessons that we may learn from them. As Petroski says, "Falling down is part of growing up."

## BEYOND ENGINEERING

by Henry Petroski  
St. Martin's Press, 1986, \$17.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

This is Petroski's second book, and in it he attempts to merge the technical and the literary. Although his first chapter (which could have been titled "How to Engineer a Novel") seems like a very simplistic -- and I believe, inaccurate -- view of literature, he progresses to firmer and more interesting ground. He discusses generalization versus specialization and contrasts the stigma of illiteracy with the badge of "innumeracy".

He decries the absence of television series about engineers; after all, if lawyers, doctors, and the police can have their shows, why not engineers? He looks at digital watches (shades of Douglas Adams?) and wrestles with the thorny question of dust jackets -- are they part of the book or just advertising?

The essay in this book are not earth-shaking. The reader may feel that she could have written such a book herself. That may be, but it may also be that new insights will be gained from hearing them expressed by someone else.

## VOYAGERS II: The Alien Within

by Ben Bova  
Tor Books, 1986, \$15.95  
Tor Paperback, 1987, \$3.50

A book review by Lan

This novel is the sequel to Voyagers, which came out in 1981. This review will spoil the first novel for you, since Voyagers II takes up where the first novel left off, only 18 years later.

Keith Stoner awakes in a hospital room, a far cry from the alien space ship he "died" in. He knows he is not alone, for he feels the alien being within him. It is the alien whose body Keith had found in that ship, who, by its physical presence aboard, has given mankind a message that we are not alone in the universe. We catch some glimpses of the alien culture as Keith remembers some of his own past, and some of the alien's.

Eighteen years before, on a joint U.S.-Soviet mission to intercept and capture the alien ship, Keith and his colleagues were beset by human saboteurs who caused them to shorten their mission. Keith knew the value of this alien craft and while aboard the alien spaceship opened his suit to the cold vacuum of space, putting himself into cryogenic suspension. This gave the people of Earth a second reason for mounting a rescue mission. Keith knew that the world might not be willing to recover the alien vessel, but to rescue an astronaut.... Human emotions ran true, and Jo Camerata, the young student who had fallen in love with him, managed to get into a position powerful enough to effect the rescue. The major result was a change in the world due to the scientific advances found aboard the ship. Secondly, Jo had another chance to have the man she loved.

Keith is the most important man alive. That he is brought back from cryogenic suspension is valuable publicity for Vanguard Industries, Jo's company (which she owns with her husband, Everett Nillson -- it was his, and she has helped increase its wealth, power, and prestige). Keith is also the only one to survive cryogenic revivification.

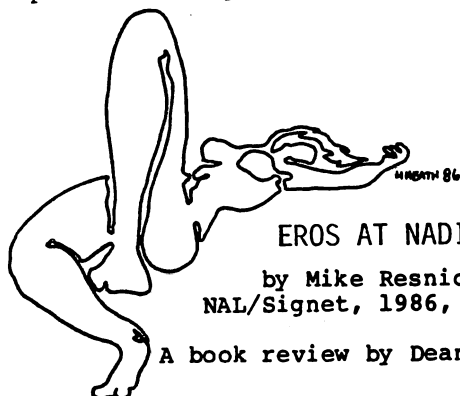
But Keith has his own mission, or rather, the alien within him does. There is a simple message he has to deliver to the entire world, but first he must bring peace to that



world. The alien has endowed Keith with special powers, which he uses to his advantage to stop many of the wars breaking out in Africa, and to elude those after him who would stop his mission. His efforts are being thwarted by the Soviets and other governments, Vanguard agents both from Jo and her husband, and agents from the World Liberation Movement which is actually the force behind many of the uprisings.

The novel is filled with fast paced action, adventure, love and intellectual discussion of human beings and their basic drives. Bova uses the alien and its observations of humanity to gain some interesting insights into the human psyche. I can't say that these observations are entirely true, but he has a good basis for them, and it has given me many things to think about.

Action, adventure, thought, and a subdued but evident sense of wonder: what else would you want from a SF novel? Yes, sex and violence are there too, but not it does not detract from the overall purpose of the author in writing this book. Humans are examined in all their roles, and Bova does not pull any punches. The good, the bad, the indifferent, are all there, but mostly the struggle to be better, to be free, and to be proud of being human.



### EROS AT NADIR

by Mike Resnick  
NAL/Signet, 1986, \$2.95

A book review by Dean R. Lambe

In the final volume of his "Tales of the Velvet Comet," Resnick pulls a neat trick, and completes the story of the galaxy's greatest orbiting brothel--a tale that seemed to end with volume three. Here, as with the earlier novels, playing "House" isn't always obvious, and prostitution isn't always in the mind of the beholder.

This time around, the whoredom is that of Nate Page, multi-media hack writer extraordinaire, whose dubious talents are hired by "Bull" del Grado. Now aging and stripped of her previous glitter, the Velvet Comet will live only once more, as site of a Del Grado Enterprises Round, a musical comedy media event. Page must pen the musical script and song lyrics while actually aboard the old derelict, in company with a few bottles of whisky--and the Comet's omniscient computer, Cupid. The glitzy musical, of course, will be "Eros in Orbit," a docudrama without a shred of truth, or at least that's what Page thinks at the start.

In typical Resnick fashion, the novel is both inflective and reflective as the story of a hack writer hacking writing turns back on itself to reveal human fundamentals.

Even Cupid, though "incapable of emotion," becomes increasingly human--and increasingly flawed. While more of a "writers' book" than most, all readers will benefit from the experience, as this most interesting and introspective SF series comes to a satisfying conclusion.

## THE GENESIS QUEST

### SECOND GENESIS

by Donald Moffitt  
1986, Del Rey, \$3.50

A book review by Maia Cowan

Now here's an idea I haven't read before! An alien race, the Nar, intercepts a transmission from 37 million lightyears away. The broadcast contains complete genetic blueprints for humans and other Earth organisms, as well as a detailed scientific and cultural history of Earth.

With this information and their own sciences, the Nar reconstruct humans and such Earth artifacts as they can. For several human generations --the Nar are considerably longer-lived-- the two species live together, although the humans strongly feel the disadvantage of their shorter lifespans and physiology ill suited for the Nar's interests and tools. Then a few of them rediscover the worst side of human politics.

The solution to this crisis is something of a deus ex machina, and an obvious lead-in from The Genesis Quest to its sequel. But the central idea is a intriguing, and the events not too improbable. I was bemused by the interpretations of Earth culture by aliens and by humans who never saw the original. The Genesis Quest is a good mix of the scientific and interpersonal.

In Second Genesis, the single major feature is the scientific speculation. The Nar-bred humans go out searching for their roots, in one of the more ingenious starships ever postulated. The voyage is a series of discoveries and narrow escapes from unexpected perils. The cover blurb could have announced, "In the tradition of Rendezvous with Rama and Ringworld." The characters are much less important and interesting than the marvels they encounter.

The humans both do and don't find what they're seeking. The book ends rather abruptly, with the distant possibility of another sequel: What if there are other races who also intercepted the ancient broadcast and reconstructed humans?

## COSMIC BANDITOS

by A. C. Weisbecker  
Vintage, 1986, \$5.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

The tag-line ("A Contrabandista's Quest for the Meaning of Life") and the blurb makes this sound like a rip-off of/tribute to Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. (Isn't it odd how a well-done work is a tribute,

while a hack work is a rip-off?) Well, it is and it isn't.

At the start of the book, the narrator, his friend Jose, and his dog High Pockets are in hiding in the Columbian Jungle. They had been trying to eke out a humble living as fantastically wealthy and dissolute Dope Lords, but a few things went wrong.... And then a few more things.... Having as a partner someone who believes that "there are very few personal problems which can't be solved by a suitable application of high explosives" didn't help.

About a third of the way into the book you suddenly find yourself in the midst of some serious discussions of quantum physics and the conflict between the particle theory and the wave theory of light. If this sounds strange to you, imagine how it sounded to the contrabandistas after a few magic mushrooms. Eventually you discover that the plot itself is an example of the "new physics" in ways which are best discovered for yourself.

This book defies description. It is a comedy, but it is also a treatise on quantum physics and a book about drug dealing and who knows what else. You will almost certainly get something out of it, though it may not be what you expected to get out of it. As if these weren't reasons enough, you should read it for the thought-provoking quotes from well-known scientists sprinkled through it, such as Einstein's "God does not play dice with the universe" and Hawking's rejoinder, "Not only does God play dice with the universe, but sometimes he throws them where they cannot be seen." However, I can't help but feel that the author and the proof-reader were both high on the leftovers of Mr. Quantum's stash -- Gary Zukav, the author of The Dancing Wu Li Masters, is quoted several times, and each time his name is misspelled "Zukov", and for some reason Jose's name has no accent mark.

### PRIVATE SCHOOL

- #1 - NIGHTMARE SESSION
- #2 - ACADEMY OF TERROR
- #3 - WITCH'S EYE
- #4 - SKELETON KEY

by Steven Charles  
Archway Paperback, 1985, \$2.50

A book/series review by Lan

[Warning: Spoilers ahead.]

I was looking for some relatively mindless reading one evening while browsing through the bookstore, and this series caught my eye. "Okay," I thought to myself, "I teach at a private school. So let's see what the author's done with this." I bought the first two books and read them. I went back for the third. I searched for and found the fourth. And I am eagerly waiting for the last two which will be published in January and February of 1987. In short, I got hooked.

Thaler Academy is a posh, private boarding school in Connecticut. Jennifer Field is a regular teenager from a middle-class

family who won a scholarship to go there, and strange things have been happening since her arrival. One of the outlying buildings is boarded up, but someone, or something, is using it. The structure used to house a science lab, and now someone is performing experiments unknown to the rest of the campus. One of the students is found dead on the grounds. And strange creatures are lurking in the woods. Are there werewolves about?

The first book presents this horror story. Jennifer and her friend Lee Fawkes, one of the boys from nearby Staines who takes advanced classes at Thaler, investigate the building and barely escape with their lives. But did they really see werewolves?

The answer is no. The second novel, Academy of Terror changes the tack from horror to science fiction. These are not werewolves, but aliens that look like humanoid wolves. They intend to take over Earth, but have to make some modifications. They need some sort of life-support system, a small device which enables them to breath Earth's atmosphere. In the third book, Witch's Eye we find that the aliens are "terraforming" Earth in their own planet's likeness.

Jennifer and her friends understand what is happening, but who will believe them? No adult in his/her right mind would. When they do manage to convince a couple of the faculty at Thaler, they are either captured or killed by the aliens. In the fourth book, Skeleton Key, the aliens are close enough to finding the "key" to transforming Earth's atmosphere that they openly reveal themselves to Jennifer, Lee, and their friends.

Now maybe you see why I am waiting anxiously for the next two books. I want to find out what's going to happen.

Jennifer is not a finely drawn character, but she is very likeable and the reader learns more about her and the other characters as the series progresses. The descriptions and scenes are very well done. Some other authors could take lessons from Steven Charles on the economy of words; his sentences convey a lot of information in a few words. Overall, this is a good series for junior high students, particularly girls, considering the main character is female. I would also recommend it for light reading.

I suspect that "Steven Charles" is a house name, or a pseudonym for Byron Preiss, since the copyright page says that "PRIVATE SCHOOL is a trademark of Byron Preiss Visual Publications, Inc." Then again I wonder if Charlie Grant is writing these juveniles. Since he's been writing strictly horror in the past several years, maybe he's trying his hand at light SF now. This is all immaterial to the books themselves, of course, but interesting speculation.

### TWISTING THE ROPE

by R. A. MacAvoy  
Bantam/Spectra, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Although this is a sequel to MacAvoy's enormously popular Tea with the Black Dragon,

it seems to have more in common with her latest, The Book of Kells. Unfortunately, what this means is that she has drifted away from what I liked and into what I am not as interested in (though I can't say I actually disliked it either).

Tea with the Black Dragon had as one of its two central characters Mayland Long. He was an enigmatic Chinese gentleman (in the literal sense of the word) and made Tea with the Black Dragon a truly memorable book. What appealed to me was MacAvoy's use of one of the lesser used (at that time anyway) mythologies -- the Chinese mythology, with its dragons and spirits. The same was true of her "Damiano" series -- set in medieval Italy, it drew upon Christian and Arab mythologies for its characters and story.

The Book of Kells was a step back toward the over-used mythologies -- in this case, the Celtic. While I agree that Celtic mythology may have a certain appeal for someone named MacAvoy, I personally am getting somewhat tired of the current epidemic of Celtic and pseudo-Celtic fantasy covering the shelves in the science fiction/fantasy sections these days. Don't get me wrong. MacAvoy does it well, but I question the necessity of doing it at all these days.

That brings us back to Twisting the Rope. Martha Macnamara and Mayland Long are back, all right, but they're now the managers of a touring Celtic folk group. Seriously. There is a lot of time spent discussing the technical aspects of Celtic folk music and the emotions that it evokes, in fact more time than is spent on the fantastic aspects of the story, which seems pasted on for the purpose of making this a fantasy. It is, rather, a murder mystery that needn't have been a fantasy at all. It's a well-written murder mystery, true, and I'm sure fascinating for those who are interested in Celtic music. But for me, for all these reasons I mentioned, it was a disappointment. My unreserved recommendation for Tea with the Black Dragon and the "Damiano" books still stands, however. I just hope that MacAvoy will return to the not-so-well-trodden ground she began to explore before.

## FILM RESTORATIONS

### and Gance's NAPOLEON

A film commentary by Mark R. Leeper

One likes to think that all of the great films of history have been preserved. It would seem that if a film is great there would be enough people who care for it that someone would have it somewhere. Good films might be lost for lack of interest, but never great ones. Apparently, however, some are not lost completely, but they get edited down and the edited-out pieces get lost. In some cases films are deliberately destroyed for political reasons or even monetary ones. MGM bought up and destroyed all available copies of certain films when they remade them so that their version would be the only one. All our current copies of the Frederick March version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde come from one chopped-down copy that MGM

overlooked. They did a less perfect job with Gaslight -- I recently saw a complete version of the original. I don't really call either of these films great, but they were very good.

Apparently, though, there are people around who remember complete versions of some of the really great films of this century and are willing to take the time to find all existing copies, to painstakingly go from one to another making a new version that is the mathematical union of all version found. This was done very successfully once with Abel Gance's Napoleon. The long and apparently complete version toured the country with a live orchestral accompaniment. Similar restoration efforts have been less successful. The so-called restoration of Metropolis with a rock score is less complete than other versions around, and, while a rock score for Metropolis is not the total failure that was expected, it fails to be particularly good accompaniment.

The restoration of A Star Is Born (the 1954 version), while better-intentioned than that of Metropolis, obviously failed to find some of the missing footage and shows, reportedly, stills in some scenes over the original dialogue. It still runs 11 minutes short of the original release version.

There is a pseudo-restoration of Frank Capra's Lost Horizon currently in release. The original film was considered -- by its first audiences -- to be a real dog. Capra decided that the film simply started too slowly and reportedly cut the credits off the first reel and grafted them on to the second reel. When the credits ended, the viewer immediately found himself thrust onto a chaotic airfield in China during some unknown sort of upheaval. It was considered to be one of the simplest and most brilliant coup's to save a film ever done. Restoring footage that the directly intentionally discarded to improve the film is not my idea of true film restoration.

The one true successful restoration of a truly great film was Abel Gance's Napoleon. This apparently complete, or nearly complete restoration is just short of four hours in length. It was a French silent film made in 1927 and even for those days this must have been a fabulously expensive picture. The film is a portrait of the early days of Bonaparte's career in heroic -- and not entirely unbiased -- terms.

Part of what is amazing about this film is the camera-work. If this film weren't silent, much of it could have come out of the 60s. Gance often splits the screen into three or even nine images, splitting it into thirds side-to-side and sometimes also top-to-bottom. Others scenes draw parallel action between Napoleon fighting to stay afloat in a boat during a storm and a stormy meeting of the Revolutionary Council. Intercut with some amazing scenes of the boiling ocean, Gance has placed the camera on a swing over the meeting of the Council. The ocean of faces wash past just as the ocean does.

The first two hours are one exciting scene after another. The pace slows a bit in the second half but there is still plenty of

spectacle. If the film seems to white-wash or even deify Napoleon, perhaps it is no more biased than Gandhi or A Man for All Seasons.

I am sorry now that I did not see this great film on a big screen with a live orchestra, but for the cost of one night's video rental, Gance's Napoleon outclasses anything you are likely to see in a theater. The restoration of this one film has enriched the world heritage of cinema immensely.

## DARK OF THE MOON

by P. C. Hodgell  
Argo/Atheneum, 1985, \$19.95

A book review by Lan

When I finished reading Pat Hodgell's first novel, Godstalk, I put it down and wanted the next one immediately. Unfortunately I had to wait almost three years for this sequel to come out. One reason is that Pat is also working on her PhD in English, and is presently writing her dissertation, which is taking her a long time to do. (Fortunately she is working on the final draft, which will mean, when she is finished, more time spent writing fiction.) The other reason is that Pat is a slow writer, which is all right, if the results are what I hold in my hands. Dark of the Moon is as good, no, better than the first novel.

It has been several months since I read the novel. I just didn't get around to writing a review of it after I finished the reading. Yet much of it still sticks with me. The world Pat Hodgell has created is a rich fantasy world. She is exploring it as she writes it, and there is so much background already that she is set for several novels just to tie up loose ends. It is a different kind of fantasy, set well apart from the traditions established by Tolkien and his copiers, yet deals with the same theme of Good versus Evil.

Jame, the main character, is searching for her brother Tori. At the same time, Tori is sure that his twin sister is dead, but has other problems to worry about. The Perimal Darkling is on the move, and he tries to organize the feuding Lords into a cohesive force to fight them. Meanwhile, both have their own internal struggles, and problems that beset them along their way to the eventual reunion.

So much for an overall summary. I have many impressions of this novel read so long ago. The biggest is the sense of triumph and positive attitude. The main characters, Jame and Tori, are human. They have their faults and their petty idiosyncracies. But both have ideals and dreams, and work to achieve them. Their world is not a pretty one, but each works to make it better. Even in the worst trouble they get themselves into, in spite of the move of the Perimal Darkling and that its take-over could mean the end of their civilization, there is an underlying sense that Good will triumph. The

tension is still there, that they might not win, but deep down the reader feels that Good will defeat Evil.

Other details and impressions: the "step stones", which will send a person who steps on them back to where the stones originally were set; the bones of the child, whose spirit will not rest until they are properly interred, or ritually cremated; the travels underground; the palace that keeps changing. There is a lot packed into the novel, some of it confusing, some of it explained in detail, all of it fascinating and interesting. You need not have read the first novel to appreciate the second, though it will help to do so. And the reading is slow-going, which is not a bad thing. Pat does not waste words; each is there to tell the story and convey information, not just to fill the pages. I am reminded of Donald Kingsbury's Courtship Rite: dense writing, but very much worth working one's way through it.

In November, 1986, at WINDYCON, I talked briefly to Pat Hodgell. She said that the paperback would be out in the Spring of 1987. That's good news for those who can't afford the hardcover. The Science Fiction Book Club offers the two novels as a package, I believe. And you can always check your local libraries to see if they have it. What I'm trying to say is that if you read fantasy, Hodgell's books are a must. Go forth and find them.

## RACE AGAINST TIME

by Piers Anthony  
Tor, 1986 (1973c), \$2.95

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

I hadn't read any Anthony for a while, but this looked like it might have been an alternate history novel, and I did like some of his earlier works. I didn't realize at the time that this was one of his earlier works.

Well, my recommendation on this is that you pass it up. Aimed (it seems) at a teen-aged audience, it seems to consist of all those wonderful racial and sexual stereotypes that you had hoped science fiction had gotten rid of (at least I hope you hoped they had gotten rid of of them). The message that Anthony is putting out is that racial purity is necessary to species vitality and, by extension, that miscegenation is bad. Anthony apparently thinks that racial lines are clear-cut and that the current racial groups are somehow internally "pure". That is horse-puckey and so is the book.





STAR TREK IV:  
THE  
VOYAGE  
HOME

A film review by Terry O'Brien

I saw the movie on opening day and I will say, by way of a quick review, that it is one of the best of the Star Trek movies. It is also one of the better SF movies produced in the past three or four years. Crisp characterizations and marvelous interplay between the characters, greater emphasis on minor characters, the welcome addition of humor to what had been largely humorless stories, and an interesting though not totally believable plot, all added up to an excellent movie. Three and a half star rating.

A few random notes about the movie. The Klingon Ambassador was played by comic actor John Shuck, who also played Sgt. Enright on McMillan and Wife and also starred in Holmes and Yoyo, while the Starfleet Admiral was played by Brock Peters, who supplied the voice for Darth Vader in the National Public Radio adaptations of Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back.

A film review by Julia Ecklar

Well, it's better than the last film.

They apparently learned a lot in making The Search for Spock -- the directing in The Voyage Home is much better, the sets less claustrophobic, the dialogue infinitely improved. The main flaws with this film, however, are the same as with The Search for Spock: an essentially fine story (although I think Voyage Home was better to begin with) that isn't developed to its potential, and a sense that the people currently making the Star Trek films don't seem to realize these characters are people we know well and love, and not just figures to walk about on a movie screen.

While the basic plot of Voyage Home is disturbingly similar to Star Trek: The Motion Picture, it's a better beginning idea than the "V'ger coming home to roost" concept. But I wanted to know more: Were the whales colonists from this other race, or just pen pals? How did they communicate across the interstellar distance without some way to transmit their songs (or did the space whales send couriers every now and again)? What did George and Gracie tell the probe at the end? This whole concept could have been developed even only a little to

add the depth and richness both Voyage Home and Search for Spock lacked. (The same can be said for a dozen other minor concepts throughout the film.)

Primarily, everything just seems so easy compared to the other things we've seen the crew do. The initial problem is a doozy, and there are minor hurdles scattered throughout the film, but there are no complications to any of the problems. Problem: They discover they need money. Solution: Kirk sells his glasses. Uncomplicated. Problem: They need whales. Solution: They find the Cetacean Institute. No hassles. Problem: They need free photons. Solution: Send Chekov and Uhura to a reactor to collect some. Moderately complicated (we do lose Chekov, after all) but that doesn't slow anything down (Scott's not done with the tank, anyway), and even that ends up having a fairly simple resolution. I don't want a plot so complicated it rivals Dune (the book), but I'd like to feel I wasn't just watching a slice-of-life walk-through for our characters. I want to see them portray the courage, brilliance, and humanity they did in the series, and in The Wrath of Khan. I want to know they're great. I can't feel that way if they don't do anything I wouldn't do in the same situation. (Okay, maybe I wouldn't have jumped into the whale tank with nothing on but my underwear...)

I also found there were too many plot holes for my tastes, especially in reference to why the characters' made things as hard as they did in places. If the ship's transporter can occasionally only send people one at a time, why did they send two people to rob the uranium reactor? Why did they need two people anyway (one to hold the communicator while the other swiped the photons? Seems like a waste of manpower to me)? (And, if you want nit-picking, why couldn't they take photons from the Klingon photon torpedoes? It would have saved a lot of hassle.) Why did they wait to beam out of the hospital until they got on the elevator, instead of leaving straight from the OR, and thus run the risk of being apprehended? Why did they have to be directly over the whales to beam them up when we've already established even Klingon scout vessels can beam things up and down from orbit? (I suppose we can assume they were still conserving power due to their engine damage. But, boys and girls, the first rule of critiquing is, "If they don't give you any reason, and you have to make one up, even if it makes sense it's cheating." On your part, and on theirs. It's the writer's job to make sure you do as little work as possible. If you have to make up explanations for things in a movie or a book, somebody's not doing their job.)

Then there were the pointless time-killers. Quite frankly, poor Chekov's whole encounter with the United States military is little but that (and, boy, was there potential to do neat stuff there!). I'm afraid I was annoyed on several counts with how the aircraft carrier sequence was handled. There are not only the aforementioned questions as to the necessity of the maneuver, but questions like: Do you believe any branch of the



U.S. military would take a Russian caught near a uranium reactor, put him in a room on the same ship where he was caught, with no one in the room but two unarmed CIA agents and two (apparently) unarmed marines, with no one between him and the door, and with two unidentified do-hickies you caught him with within his reach? Then tell me you believe that section of the ship wouldn't be secured, that no one on board would know there was a prisoner (at least, no one makes any effort to stop him), and that the MPs would make every effort not to shoot the bastard the two or three times they got a clear shot at him. (Where the hell did he think he was going, anyway? He doesn't have the communicator! He's going to run all the way from the Alameda Navy Yards to Golden Gate Park?) Since they end up injuring him at the end of the sequence anyway, I'm not entirely certain why they avoided gunfire. Too messy, I guess. In total, the whole thing is taken rather lightly on everyone's part (characters, writers, directors, etc.). If the makers of the movie would have let us believe this sort of thing wouldn't be a "big deal", I'm not sure who they're trying to fool. (They obviously fooled poor Chekov, who walked into it all like a trooper!)

The aircraft carrier sequence is indicative of the plot's damning flaw: suspense. Or, specifically, the lack thereof. A story isn't like a suitcase, with suspense stuffed in wherever it might fit. Suspense has to be built, and it has to be conveyed. Humor can be useful in the tension-release progression needed to make suspense effective, but humor, also, has to be carefully considered and carefully placed. The humor in Voyage Home is very good -- even wonderful in places (lines like "Are you sure this isn't time for another colorful expletive?" and "Mister Scott, now would be a good time!" should go down in Trek history!) -- but the film never seems to take itself seriously, even when it should.

It disturbs me (and detracts from the tension) to see Scotty and McCoy take altering the history of chemical engineering so lightly. (I excuse McCoy curing renal failure, since that was totally in character. I don't excuse the writers passing it off as, apparently, so minor an action that it "doesn't matter.") Chekov seems at a loss to understand what the problem is when the military picks him up at the reactor. The man worked starship weapons and security -- he ought to have a real good understanding of just how serious the situation is! But he doesn't. The writers don't. They seem to have forgotten that the characters don't know everything is going to be okay at the end, even if the writers do. No one really seems worried that maybe they won't succeed -- no one is even mildly farked out that, back home, the world is ending -- or that, less than 6 months ago, 430 innocent people were slaughtered by a 20th century madman. And if the characters aren't tense, why should we be? The adventure obviously isn't very difficult.

The whole execution of the last two films has been adolescently simplistic. We're shown that no one and nothing really dies in

this world, that you never pay for your mistakes or your victories, that injury is clean, and painless, and temporary. Somehow, the original Star Trek premise -- that, in 300 years, mankind will still be mankind, only better than ever before -- has been thrown by the wayside, and we've been left with a boiled-down, prettied-up version of the flawed, scarred, and passionate characters we all equated with our greater selves for 20 years. We used to do more than associate Uhura with her job -- she had hobbies, she sang, and she was wonderfully sexy and strong. Sulu was both the best pilot and the oldest child in the Fleet. Scotty could carouse and design with the best of them, and didn't just trundle between the engine room and the bridge. And remember Chekov, brash and headstrong, even on his better days? Now we have pigeon-holed people doing "their jobs" in simplified, comic book plots intended for people who care less about realism and truth than they do about escapism and sensationalism.

The Voyage Home doesn't improve on the problem, unfortunately. The story is less delicate than the resurrection of Spock and, consequently, is handled more lightly. But the apparent lack of a feel for the totality of Trek (the characters, as well as the universe and the story style) is still a problem. I don't know what would make Paramount change their tack with the films (i.e., away from the escapist sensationalism, and back toward more mature, enduring Trek), although I'd like to see what the final box-office receipts were for The Wrath of Khan compared to the other three films. (If the last two films actually grossed more, I'll turn in my shingle and never commiserate to Trek fans again.) I can only hope Bennet and Company manage to recover whatever it was they did right in Wrath of Khan before it's too late to make a saving play.

## KAETI & COMPANY

by Keith Roberts  
Kersosina Books, \$12.50.

(Available as an import  
through some SF specialty shops.)

A book review by Robert Whitaker Sirignano

The best way to describe this book is: have you ever been in a select group of people and gotten to know them fairly well, and were intimate friends and/or lovers with one or more of them, and suddenly you have to leave the group and go elsewhere -- for reasons of job, or home, or circumstances -- and you find yourself in the new environment after meeting new people, thinking, "that person's a lot like Jack"? Or Mary. Or Joe. Or Arlene.

Keith Roberts' book is pretty much like this. The stories add people as they shift backgrounds and worlds, jobs, lifestyles, and circumstances, but the people remain essentially the same.

Roberts probably writes from an inner need, as nothing about the book is commercial. It follows no trends, is often bleak;

has British dialect that is aggressively thick (years of watching Ealing Studio films helped me a great deal here) and much to read between the scenes. It has been published in a 1000 copy edition. Since Roberts is not overly popular, it may be some time before the book sorts its way into the limbo of the rare book market. I am annoyed with the cover, which has a drawing of Kaeti by Roberts, and is not nearly as good or as interesting as his drawing facing the title page. The cover is unattractive and dull.

I had problems with this collection. I like some of Roberts' work a lot. He seems to be very good at stirring up, with his stories, a melancholy of nostalgic pain for times that do not and may never exist. When he is good, he can be extraordinary. However, Kaeti & Company is a collection of two or three good stories and a lot of little bad ones that are undistinguished and forgettable. A week after reading the bulk of the collection, I sit here and try to reconstruct images and words and scenes and very little comes back. Roberts' characterization ability, the weakest point of all his writing, is a bit better here than it usually is, but it is still too weak to make much difference. And this is undoubtedly the largest problem this collection has, since it is focusing on character. The mood of bleakness, of striving to continue on, is better than the delineation of the people. Kaeti and her dusky counterpart, Kerry, are noticeable and likable, but the others in the book are blanks, voids without much involvement, and mar the book's interesting (and brilliant) concept.

Recommended as a "Rare Book" investment, and to those who like Roberts' work. I cannot suggest it otherwise.

### ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS:

#### THE GREAT SF STORIES: 15 (1953)

Edited by

Isaac Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg  
Daw Books, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Robert Sabella

This series of Best-of-the-Year science fiction stories began with 1938 and is working its way forward at a pace of two-to-three volumes per year. The early volumes in the series did not interest me much. I discovered science fiction in the early 60s and quickly became a child of the New Wave. Over the years I've sampled a lot of pre-60s SF and while some has been to my liking, much has not. Such as Golden Age SF. While I appreciate how vastly improved it was over pre-Campbell science fiction, it was still too plot-oriented for my taste. I like strong plots and sense-of-wonder, but not at the expense of characterization and good writing. It is not surprising that Golden Age SF generally lacked such qualities, considering it was two generations removed from the fiction of Roger Zelazny, Samuel Delany, and Ursula K. LeGuin.

Recently Asimov and Greenberg's series has moved from the 40s into the 50s. Now it is only a generation away from the New Wave and the differences are not as drastic. In fact, most of the roots of the New Wave can be found in 50s science fiction. Boucher and McComas' Fantasy and Science Fiction stressed characterization and good writing. H.L. Gold's Galaxy emphasized satire and the effects of change on society as a whole. So while 50s science fiction is not as sophisticated as modern science fiction, it is both modern enough to be enjoyed by post-New Wavers and pure enough to satisfy most Golden Agers.

Of the seventeen stories in the volume, I only had difficulty finishing one. That's not a bad percentage at all. All the other ranged from good to excellent with four being bona fide classics that should be familiar to most science fiction readers:

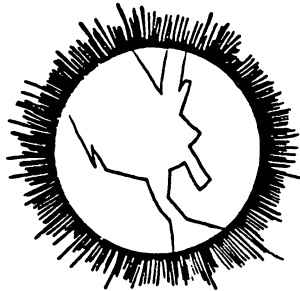
Walter M. Miller, Jr.'s "Crucifixus Etiam" replaces much of the traditional glamour of the conquest of space with a thoroughly-human tale of terraforming Mars. Miller was one of the most advanced SF writers of the 50s (along with Cordwainer Smith). It is too bad he burnt out after writing A Canticle for Leibowitz. I would have loved to see what he might have written during the New Wave era.

Alfred Bester was at his exuberant best in "Time is the Traitor". It begins with the fascinating idea of one man better able to make major decisions than anybody else on Earth. From there it is Bester's famous "strike them in the face until your arms grow tired" pacing. But the story grows from a simple idea into a rich, dual love story that is quite unforgettable.

The other standouts are two of the most famous stories in the history of science fiction: Arthur C. Clarke's "The Nine Billion Names of God" and Jerome Bixby's "It's a Good Life". The former is quietly horrifying while the latter is blatantly terrifying. If you haven't read either of them, this volume is a must for your collection.

Reading this anthology of the 50s has raised a question in my mind. Why did so many of the best SF writers of that decade (such as Walter M. Miller, Alfred Bester, Jerome Bixby, Robert Sheckley, Theodore Sturgeon) either stopped writing science fiction entirely or cut back drastically in the 60s and 70s? Nearly all the major writers of the 60s are still producing regularly. One possibility might be that SF paid so badly in the 50s that a lot of writers burned themselves out and moved on to other, more lucrative fields. Thus Bixby turned to screenwriting, Bester to his work on Holiday Magazine, etc. What a tremendous loss for the science fiction field! It makes me appreciate the current boom in SF. While it has produced a record amount of bad fiction, it has successfully enticed a lot of writers to stay in the field who might have otherwise moved elsewhere. That alone makes me tolerant of eight hundred new versions of Star Wars and The Once and Future King!

VERTEX OF SURVIVAL



### ARC OF THE DREAM

by A. A. Attanasio  
Bantam Books, 1986, \$3.50

A book review by Robert Whitaker Sirignano

This book has good characterization, images, action, plotting (though a little bit too pat, as the ending can be seen at the middle of the pike, but the journey is a lot of fun) and is well written. And it moves. A being from another dimension is picked up from its secured positioning in Hawaii and this rips it open and it begins to collapse into itself (this is a way to describe it briefly. Attanasio has a lengthy explanation as to what was really happening. This is just a review...). The "Arc" of the title is the physical presence of the being in our world. Racked with pain and diminishing senses, and the realization that it, once immortal, could die, it splits itself into four portions and channels its abilities into four people of diverse backgrounds and tries to link itself back together by manipulating the four and reposition its physical body.

The four people the Arc selected find they have extraordinary abilities, and weird visitation from dead people or Edgar Allen Poe. A teenage hood in Hawaii finds great strength, a frail Chinese of advanced age can move boulders with his mind, a compulsive gambler can see the future, and a French woman with schizophrenia can read minds. This capsule description actually sounds

funny, or a plot outline to either a bad "sci-fi" film or Monty Python script. But it actually works, and the four have different and distinct personalities, and the writer instills a dash of cosmic wonder into the whole mettle. There are unnerving scenes as disturbing as anything written by Stephen King or Philip K. Dick. One of Attanasio's gifts is the ability to place himself in the mind's eye view of the people he is writing about, delineating the good and bad of their character (or judging from the interests of Attanasio's, the Tao of their being) and inner conflicts, and this enhances an already well thought out book.

Also enhancing the coloration of the novel are the descriptions of Hawaii that does not flavor it to be an exotic paradise, but a place where people live, work, go to school, get into trouble, enjoy themselves, get put into foster homes, have friends and enemies. This approach is different: it's a "workaday" feeling. It's home to Attanasio, and the feeling is much more real than if a writer from Connecticut were to write something about Hawaii.

Highly recommended.

### DON'T ASK

by Frank Hayes  
Off Centaur Tapes, 1986, \$9.00

A tape review by Lan

If you want some very good entertainment in terms of humorous songs, and no laugh track to prompt you, this is the tape for you. Don't expect great entertainment, and belly-laughs, but expect wry humor and very good lyrics by Frank Hayes, a dangerous opponent on the field of filksongs and parodies.

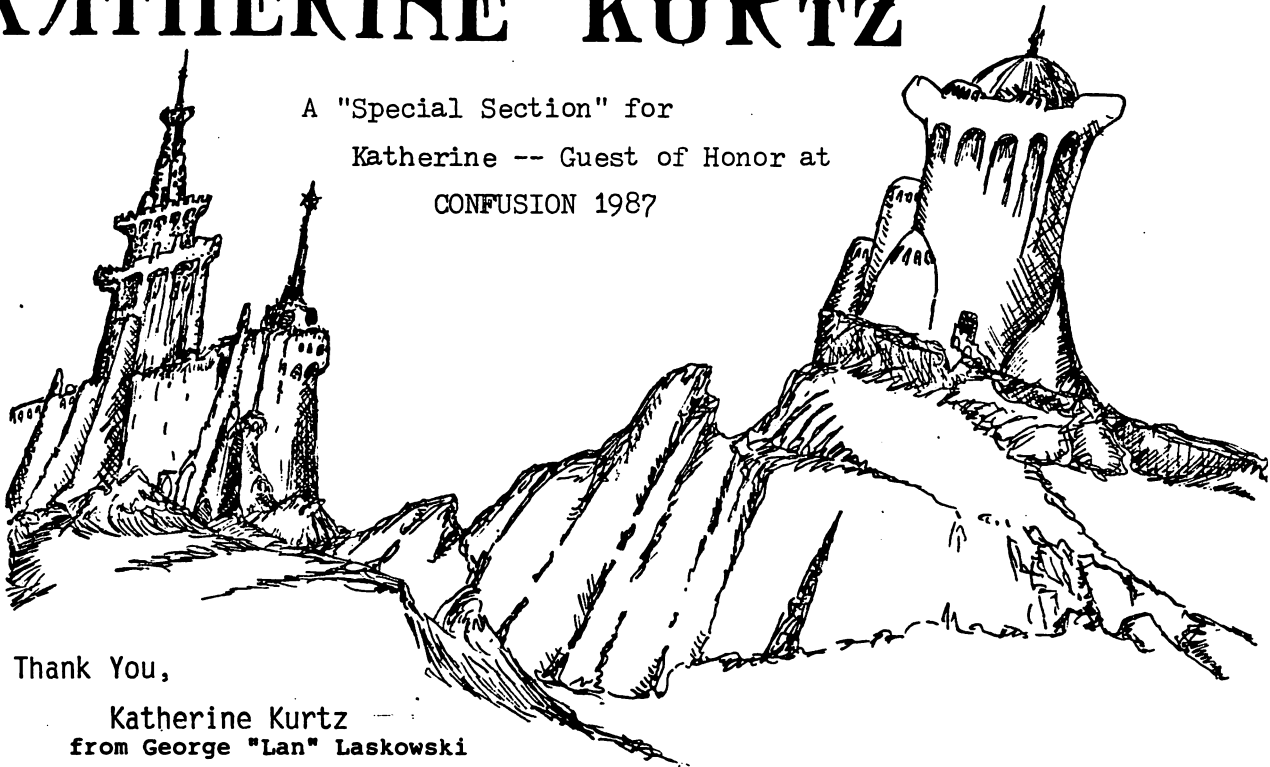
Frank does not have a good voice, but it is passable. He has trouble sustaining notes, but he is clear, and enunciates so that one can understand the lyrics without trouble. His forte lies in his humorous songwriting and singing. He is at his best when parodying other people's songs, and would make a very good entertainer. In a live situation, where he can play off the audience, is where Frank Hayes would shine. Don't Ask might have been better if it were recorded before an audience, not to get a "laugh track", but to get Frank to do the usual bantering with the audience that he is known for among filksingers.

Most of the arrangements are pretty good. Some of them, though, I am not sure are meant to be funny in terms of the off-key vocal accompaniment, as in "3 A.M.", or "Vegetate", or "Cosmos". In others, the instrumental arrangements come off quite nicely.

I found many of the songs extremely funny ...but some people question my taste in humor. In the past couple of weeks, a couple of the songs would pop into my head unexpectedly, which made me pull out the tape again to listen to it. So Don't Ask has a tendency to grow on you. Try it; it might grow on you too.

# KATHERINE KURTZ

A "Special Section" for  
Katherine -- Guest of Honor at  
CONFUSION 1987



Thank You,

Katherine Kurtz  
from George "Lan" Laskowski

I was excited to find out that Katherine Kurtz was going to be the Guest of Honor at CONFUSION this year. I owe her a big "Thank You", and would like to deliver it in person!

It all started back in 1979, when Katherine was the Guest of Honor at MARCON. In her remarks at Opening Ceremonies, the very pretty and willowy Katherine said that she liked to talk to people, so no one should be shy about approaching her. I took that as a cue and arranged to do an interview with her in my room on Saturday afternoon. With other people in tow who were marvelous as both audience and participants, we spent nearly two hours talking about her life and the background of her Deryni world which Katherine shares so generously with her readers. (The interview eventually saw print in LAN'S LANTERN #13 about three years later.)

Katherine's background is widely varied, as any reader of her works would know. Born in Florida where she earned a BS degree in Chemistry, she worked one summer at the Institute of Marine Studies in Miami between her junior and senior years of high school. The paper that resulted was submitted to the Westinghouse Science Talent Search and yielded a full science scholarship at the University of Miami (garnering one of two given out yearly). While at the University, Katherine's interests shifted from science to the humanities, although she did go on into the medical program for a year. When she moved out to the West Coast, she got a job with the Los Angeles Police Department, working as an administrative assistant in

the narcotics division. (Katherine earned a 99% on the qualifying exam, almost unheard of: "I didn't know it was supposed to be hard -- nobody told me!" she said.) From there she became a full time civilian instructor in written and oral communications at the police academy, and developed an integrated multi-media training program.

While doing this, Katherine also took courses at UCLA and eventually earned her MA in English history in 1971. She has occasionally returned to take other courses in subjects that interest her. And, it was during all this that Katherine wrote the first Deryni trilogy.

Additionally, Katherine has been a member and Queen of the Caid Kingdom in the Society for Creative Anachronism, and with some of the Star Trek fans in the Los Angeles area she managed to become an "extra" in Star Trek: The Motion Picture. As is evident from her novels, she is interested in magic, Church and Medieval history, parapsychology and extra-sensory powers, education and learning techniques, costuming, and discreet forms of warfare and intrigue. And who knows what else she has added to this list since I talked to her 8 years ago.

Well, I could add that she has married, has moved to a castle in Ireland, and thus, I suppose, is learning castle up-keep and management. Add to that, then, caring for the castle grounds, maybe some farming, how to get along with the new neighbors, and, and....well, ask her yourself. Katherine still enjoys talking to fans, about her books, about herself, about almost anything

(including the time she worked with the Los Angeles Police Department). As for me, yes, I want to talk to her again...eight years is a long time, and we have a lot to catch up on. But mostly I want to thank her.

At that MARCON so long ago, a new fan attended her first convention, specifically because Katherine Kurtz was the Guest of Honor. This new fan and I met and started a correspondence which continues today, though the distance between us has diminished. About three and a half years after that initial meeting, Maia Cowan and I got married.

So, Thank You, Katherine Kurtz! Because of you, I met my wife. Now you can add "Matchmaker" to your list of accomplishments!

## THE LEGENDS OF CAMBER OF CULDI

### CAMBER OF CULDI

Ballantine/ Del Rey 1976

A book review by Kathleen Conat

The arrival of the third book of the third trilogy in the tales of the Deryni prompted me to re-read the first six. I am one of those people who become highly irritated with "to be continued" stories, and had waited until I knew The Quest for Saint Camber was on the stands before even thinking of reading its two predecessors. I've never known whether the Deryni series came before the Camber series or the other way around, so I started in what seemed the logical progression, the Camber series.

Camber of Culdi introduces the reader to the country of Gwynedd, a medieval society peopled by two "races", the humans and the Deryni. The Deryni seem to be human with advanced Talent and skills in magic. The king is a Deryni of a family which overthrew the previous human dynasty about eighty years before our story opens. This king, Imre, is a spoiled brat of a young man who hasn't the faintest notion of how to govern, but is well-versed in the arts of intrigue, debauchery and drunkenness, with a little incest thrown in just for spice. Truly, a villain you love to hate. He's so bad even his fellow Deryni can't stomach him any longer.

Camber, Earl of Culdi, is a wealthy Deryni landowner who has retired from politics to devote himself to magical studies and being a benevolent grandfather to family and serfs alike. His oldest son is handling the court duties. However, when his second son, a priest in an order of warrior/clergy, and his future son-in-law come up with information of a surviving last heir of the old dynasty, Camber wants a look at the man. Maybe it is time to right old wrongs and get this despot off the throne.

So, far, so good. But the surviving heir doesn't want to be king. He's quite happy where he is, thank you, and doesn't

want his peaceful monk's life interrupted for anything so minor as the good of his country. Not that he has much say in the matter. Camber, backed by his family and a great many other citizens, are going to get their way or die in the attempt.

The rest of the story deals with the intrigue coming to fruition through both human ideals and Deryni magic.

Although the story, at this point, has been fairly predictable, the characters are well-drawn and Kurtz' descriptions of this medieval-type society are vivid. Small details flesh out the reader's vision of what's occurring and where it's taking place. When Kurtz writes bleak and cold, the reader feels bleak and cold. Her efforts are marred only by occasional awkward sentence structure which leaves the reader floundering in confusion.

The reader who hates "to be continued" as much as I should have the second book of the series at hand to leap into immediately. This one does not tie up all the loose ends and leaves one with the feeling of having had the proverbial one peanut. However, it's well worth reading--if you consider it the appetizer of the meal.

### SAINT CAMBER

Ballantine/Del Rey 1978

A book review by Kathleen Conat

This second book is better than the first as it is faster paced. Having so meticulously set her backgrounds in the first one, Kurtz no longer feels the need for lengthy descriptions, and we get more plot development.

King Cinhil, who has now ruled Gwynedd for approximately six months, is still not charmed with the idea of being a king. His wife, who was Camber's ward, has given him a set of twins, but both of them are physically flawed and Cinhil sees this as retribution from God for having given up his priestly vows. He and Camber aren't getting along, because Cinhil blames Camber, rightly, of forcing him into his current role. He is rapidly becoming fast friends with Alister Cullen, leader of the militant order of clergy, the Michaelines. But Alister is due to be made a bishop and sent far from the capital city.

Gwynedd is about to be attacked by forces led by Imre's sister, Ariella, who led during the coup and gave birth to Imre's incestuous child in a neighboring country. And after the recent upheaval due to the change in government, things are rather at sixes and sevens. All is not well with our merry little band of court politicians.

Cinhil's backers go to war against Ariella and her troops. In the fighting, Alister Cullen is killed by Ariella herself, but manages to do her in before drawing his last breath. Camber, coming upon the scene,

Katherine Kurtz



realizes his best link with Cinhil (Alister) is gone, and resolves, through the arts of Deryni shapechanging, to take his place.

The rest of the book is involved with Camber's adjustments to his new role and a close view of the religious structure and beliefs as Kurtz fleshes them out. Although Cinhil's further adjustments to his rulership are mentioned, the focus is not on that, but on the religious community and its role both in the personal life of believers and in the secular community as a whole. This by no means makes it boring to read. On the contrary, it presents a richly woven tapestry of machinations and manipulations with an authenticity of motivation which entraps and intrigues the reader.

Again, awkward sentence structure at times mars the storyline. Not enough of this occurs in one patch, however, to offset interest. The ending is much improved, tying up more ends satisfactorily, even while blatantly announcing there is more of the story yet to come.

## THE QUEST FOR SAINT CAMBER

by Katherine Kurtz  
Del Rey/ Ballantine, 1986, \$16.95

A book review by Terry O'Brien

This is the final book of the second trilogy about the Deryni Kelson and was anxiously awaited by this reviewer.

In this book, we find Kelson dealing with a number of elements carried over from the previous books, the main one (i.e., the one with the most far-reaching effects) being the lifting of the ban against Deryni priests and the re-installation of Duncan. A number of other elements, such as Dhugal's legitimacy and Kelson finding another bride, are also handled. But the majority of the book is concerned with the tragic consequences to Kelson's search for the history of Saint Camber.

During that search, Kelson and Dhugal are swept away in a raging river. Presuming that they are dead, Nigel is made Regent. Conall, Nigel's heir, has for the past few months been secretly training to achieve the Haldane Deryni powers. When Nigel discovers this, Conall attacks him with his new powers, placing Nigel in a coma, thereby becoming Regent himself. Conall, with subtle aid from his powers, then takes Kelson's intended bride for himself.

Meanwhile, Dhugal has rescued Kelson in an underground river cavern. Kelson is seriously injured and it is only through Dhugal's strenuous efforts that he lives. They spend several days searching for a way out of the cavern, and when they finally escape, they encounter a secluded group of surviving followers of Saint Camber who at first mistrust them, then finally aid them.

Kelson returns to Gwynedd and Conall's machinations are revealed. Kelson places Conall on trial, but Conall forces Kelson to

accept a Duel Arcane (mirroring the one that accompanied his coronation). Kelson in the end defeats him, though not without cost.

Not all questions have been answered. The Torenthi question is still open, and could present Kelson with his greatest challenge yet, as if facing down two separate rebellions before he was eighteen wasn't hard enough. He must also find himself a bride, a task made difficult by the presence of his mother Jehana, who would want to save her son from the (in her opinion) spiritually destructive presence of his Deryni blood and powers by assuring that he has a "proper" (i.e., non-Deryni and compliant with Jehana's views) bride.

He is also due for some troubled encounters with the Camberan Council, particularly after the events involving Conall and Tiercel de Claron, his discovery of the followers of St. Camber, and especially after his enigmatic encounter in the epilogue. That encounter has raised far too many questions and answered far too few, if any, and the answers to them could form the basis of the next several books alone.

In this trilogy, and in fact, all of her trilogies, the author has managed to avoid many of the problems in writing trilogies. Each book of the series can almost be read in its entirety alone, except where the necessary background information that the early books contain. The traditional pattern of trilogies is not strictly followed, which adds to the strength of each book and the series as a whole. Major plot elements are not left for the final book of the trilogy for resolution, but are resolved as they are encountered. For example, the Mearan rebellion, which was begun in the first book of this trilogy, The Bishop's Heir, was resolved in the second, The King's Justice. This avoids the let-down normally associated with the middle book of a trilogy.

Throughout her first three trilogies, the author has created the British Isles, country by country. First England, then Scotland, and, lastly, Wales. Given her present residence, would it seem likely that an analogue to Ireland would be in the works for the next trilogy?

Speaking of the next trilogy, the biography in the end notes said that three more trilogies are planned. The next series, to be published late in 1988, will be about Cinhil and Camber's descendants set in the Restoration period, tentatively titled The Harrowing of Gwynedd, Javan's Year, and The Bastard Prince. The second trilogy is about the young Morgan in the court of King Brion, and the third (but hopefully hardly the last) will probably be continuing the present trilogy. I'll be waiting expectantly and not-so-patiently for them.

## THE DERYNI ARCHIVES

Ballantine/Del Rey, 1986, \$3.95

A book review by Terry O'Brien

This book is a collection of short stories based in the Deryni universe, collected

from a number of sources (and with a number of diverse histories: read the author's notes before each and you'll see).

The stories cover a range in time from before the first Camber books up to just before Deryni Rising. Almost every one of the major characters are included in one story or another, and not a few loose ends are covered, notably the first meeting of Morgan and Derry, and the history of Bethane, who figured in the deaths of Bronwyn and Kevin.

The author's notes prefacing each story are also interesting: a rare and fascinating look into the author's mind as she develops each story, and a tracing of the ideas and concepts as they are included in the stories. The reasons behind the stories, from a tribute to Andre Norton to an auction item, are interesting in themselves.

If I had to pick a favorite story out of this collection, it would be "The Knighting of Derry", about the knighting of Sean Lord Derry and his acceptance into Duke Morgan's service. This story shows Morgan through Derry's sympathetic but intelligent eyes. I have to admit that I like Derry, and this story shows his courage and sensibility when encountering Morgan.

There is also an appendix containing an index of characters and places mentioned in the stories included, as well as a partial chronology and an unusual addition: the origins of the Deryni series, starting with rough notes through a short story to the proposal to Del Rey. Given the complexity of the world, the inclusion of such an appendix (a tradition started, I believe, by Tolkien) aids the reader in understanding and placing the events and people in the books (as well as aiding the author) and is most welcome. It also helps negate the feeling that some stories develop where the author is so wrapped up in a particular character or area that she ignores the rest of the world, leaving the reader feeling that he or she is looking at the world through a very small window: Called the "Kent County Syndrome" by Barry Longyear.

This book is required reading for any fan of the Deryni series, and is recommended to any other reader as well.

### THE LEGACY OF LEHR

Byron Preiss, 1986, \$15.95  
(Interior art by Michael Kaluta)

A book review by Terry O'Brien

This book is a departure from the author's normal haunts, being a science fiction novella rather than her previous fantasy or more contemporary novels, but it is a welcome departure because it shows that she is a very capable writer who can turn her word processor to most any genre.

The story is a 30's-style whodunit (the author's own terms) starring a Nick and Nora Charles-like husband-and-wife team of Imperial agents, Mather Seton and Wallis Hamilton. They are on a mission for the Emperor to ferry four, blue, fierce, Lehr cats that are a pawn in an interstellar peace treaty. Soon after the agents, their Ranger squad, and the Lehr cats are on board a conscripted

starliner, one of the starliner's passengers is found clawed to death and holding a tuft of blue fur. All evidence points to the Lehr cats, but the agents believe someone (or something) else is responsible, and must track down the real killer before they kill again.

Adding to the problem is the starliner captain who is not at all pleased with the events or the agents, and who acts as the officious distraction to the investigators. Other problems include the various disquieting signs and portents, such as the absence of blood from the victims, and a mysterious attack on the cats themselves.

As with any mystery, the agents must discover the real killer before the starliner's next stop, but that mystery becomes further unravelled as the killer attacks again and again. Only through a mistake on the killer's part is the killer revealed, and it comes almost too late to save the agents themselves.

This book is an interesting read. The plot and mystery didn't hold my attention as much as the major and minor characters did. I liked the interplay between the characters, and I especially liked the ship's doctor, Shivaun Shannon: she had a great deal of responsibility in this situation that was totally out of her training and she handled it quite competently.

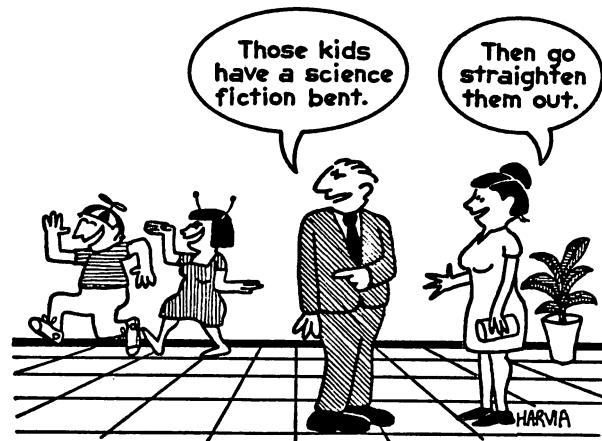
My main objection to the book is that the main characters seemed too competent. Their surroundings and personal characteristics made them interesting characters (Mather Seton, the tough ex-space Navy commodore, afflicted with hyperspace-jump sickness), and the mystery they were faced with severely tested them, but they seemed to have their way with people around them, except for the villain of the piece, and that only until the final confrontation. I would have been able to appreciate the main characters more if they had been challenged more by the supporting cast. That is not to say that I didn't like them; I would like to see more stories concerning these two, but I would like to see them face a crisis more worthy of their talents. Perhaps a story where they couldn't use their considerable authority to back themselves up, leaving only their own resources to resolve their problems.

The cover and interior art is by Michael Wm. Kaluta, one of the lesser appreciated, but no less talented, artists in the field today. His fine artwork has graced such titles as DC's "The Shadow", and "Starstruck" for Marvel. In this book, his atmospheric pen and ink drawings preface various chapters, and a colored version of one forms the front cover. He does have a problem with proportion in places, though: the figure in the foreground on the back cover appears vaguely disconcerting, and there is a tendency in a few other drawings to distort the characters, but for the most part the drawings are at least equal to interior art of any other book.

The Legacy of Lehr is a very good read... a trifle short, but I don't hold it against the story. I would recommend it, and would like to see more in this vein from the author in the future.

# MY FIRST WORLDCON

A report by Elizabeth Ann Osborne



This trip report is a simple story of my first Worldcon, CONFEDERATION, in Atlanta from August 29 to September 1, 1986.

I had been wishing to go to a Worldcon since I found out that they existed, but being a student, both time and money to travel were in short supply. My urge to go only increased as I met and read about people whose "first con had been a Worldcon back in wherever" while the best I could do was a one-day visit to a nearby Star Trek event. In 1984, the Worldcon in LA picked Atlanta as the spot for 1986, and I set my sights on going there.

Or at least I hoped to go. I realized that 1986 would be my best opportunity, and for the next two years kept up with news of the convention, which sometimes existed only in rumors. Sometime in late 1985 I picked up a copy of the registration form, sent for my Worldcon membership in March, and waited for my Progress Reports and other information.

As time progressed, I began to have troubles at my job, and changes in the vacation policy caused problems in the travel arrangements I had made. I had to make expensive changes in my travel plans as a result. As the Worldcon came closer, I was kept busy with concerns at my job, which eventually made me make plans to quit. A week before my departure for CONFEDERATION, I went to the doctor's office with what turned out to be a severe ear infection and what might have been an early case of mono. I later tested negative on the mono, and the ear infection started to clear up. Occupied with these problems, it was not until late that week I realized that I had not made any preparations for the trip. I bought some new clothes and packed up two suitcases. Fortunately, I had arranged to stay with friends I had met at other conventions.

On Friday, after work ended at five, I drove to the Dayton Airport for my flight to Atlanta. The trip in was uneventful except for the muffler giving out halfway to Dayton. I got there early enough to get a seat on the plane which had been overbooked by the airlines. I arrived in Atlanta without

incident and got a ride on the Atlanta downtown shuttle, and nearly ended up at the wrong hotel. I didn't know that there were two Marriotts in the downtown area. I was saved by the other passengers in the shuttle who were also going to the convention; they showed me the correct hotel.

My next job was to find the people who I was to stay with at the convention. This proved to be my biggest problem. They were not at either Marriott hotel, the Hilton, in the art room, or (as I later found out) in the dealers' room. These "friends" decided not to come, and forgot to tell me. So I dragged my suitcase up to the Cincinnati-in-88 party room and left them there with the staff for safe-keeping. I ate, drank, and went looking for my friends. Not finding them, I returned to the party room and tried to get some sleep on the couch, but was asked to leave around 4 AM so they could close down the room. I went to the only other place still open: the filkrooms.

I spent the next four hours there filking. About 8 AM we broke up and walked to a nearby diner for breakfast -- a huge Southern-style meal with Army-rust-remover coffee. By then, the more than 24 hours without sleep was beginning to take its toll on me and I remember singing "Dorsai Mouse" with these guys at the top of our lungs in that diner.

Afterward, when I again checked about my friends with no luck, I broke down and got a room by myself in the Hilton. After a quick nap of 45 minutes, I made my way back to the Cincinnati-in-88 party room, picked up my luggage, and returned to my room to wash and change clothes for the first time in about 30 hours. Only after this could I really start enjoying the con -- my first Worldcon!

I met a real nice guy and we started going to panels together. At 3 PM, we ended up at a panel run by the editors of Starlog, Terry O'Quien and Carr D'Angelo. They opened by talking about upcoming issues, like a special "20-Year Star Trek" issue and some of the new publications they have coming out, including Stephen King at the Movies.

They took questions from the audience and answered what they could.

After the panel I went through the dealers' room and had dinner. At six there was a meeting of Pern fandom. This involved leaders of the various Pern groups around the country, each talking about their organization. There was a Trek meeting similar to this that took place on Friday before I got there. I also missed the Elfquest meeting. At seven I prepared for the Hugo Award ceremonies at eight.

The Hugo Awards are voted on by fans who are members of the Worldcon for the best creations in SF. When I arrived at the con, I looked for the place to vote for the Hugos, since I had worked hard trying to read the novels and other items for the award. Finally, I asked at the information desk and they looked at me funny. One person asked me:

"Didn't you receive your ballot in the mail?"

"No," I replied.

"How long ago did you register?"

"In March," was the answer.

"Did you get the progress reports?"

"Yes," I responded. I finally learned that I should have received a ballot during May, something I never got. The impressive SNAFU department struck again!

The Hugo Awards ceremony was hosted by Bob Shaw, a well-known British fan and author. The program was very well-run and interesting, much more interesting than many award shows. The winners of the Hugos were:



*...and here we  
have the Hugo results...*

Best Novel: Ender's Game, Orson Scott Card  
Best Novella: "Twenty-Four Views of Mt. Fuji by Hokusai", Roger Zelazny  
Best Novelette: "Paladin of the Lost Hour", Harlan Ellison  
Best Short Story: "Fermi and Frost", Frederik Pohl  
Best Non-Fiction: Science Made Stupid, Tom Weller  
Best Dramatic Presentation: Back to the Future (This was a bit of a surprise. Many people believe that a split in the votes between Brazil, the favorite, and Enemy Mine caused everyone's second choice to win.)  
Best Pro-Editor: Judy-Lynn Del Rey (Another surprise: a friend read Lester Del Rey's letter refusing the award, claiming that the Hugo should have been given to Judy for her work while she was still alive, and not for her recent death.)

Best Pro Artist: Michael Whelan  
Best Fan Artist: Joan Hanke-Woods  
Best Semiprozine: Locus, Charles N. Brown, editor  
Best Fanzine: Lan's Lantern, George Laskowski, editor  
Best Fan Writer: Mike Glyer  
John W. Campbell Award (for best new pro-writer): Melissa Scott  
First Fandom Award: Julius Schwartz and Donald Wandrei  
Big Heart Award: Rusty Hevelin

After the awards ceremony, we tried to get to some room parties, but the elevators were not cooperating. We did manage to get to the New Orleans-in-88 bid party, and to the con suite (which took up the entire 10th floor of the Marriott), but after that we gave up on that hotel and went across the street to the Hilton and its parties. The visits there included a group of friends from Canton whom I had met in the Hilton lobby that afternoon. After hearing my story, they invited me to move in with them. I said that I would think about it.

The next morning, I checked out of my room and moved in with my Canton friends, who got another key for me. Surprisingly, they were not only in the same hotel as I had been, but also on the same floor. As soon as the luggage transfer was made, my friend and I went to the Downtown Motor Lodge down the street to attend a SF Mass held by a group from Arizona. It was done very well and was popular enough to fill at least two hotel rooms with participants. We returned to the Hilton and I went to some panels: "SF in Mundane Literature", "The Impact of SF/Fantasy on Children" and "European Fandom" which was very good.

In the afternoon I went to the Ranquet at a nearby McDonalds where the annual Hugu and Blackhole Awards were given out. These awards are half-fun, half-serious, and given to a wide variety of people and groups. Awards were given to: the person who had done the most harm to Science Fiction in the last year (author John Norman); the best Has-Been Award (NASA management); best Dead Writer -- must be living to qualify -- called the Battlecrock Glacktia award (Charles Platt). Other awards were given to various figures in fandom and political life.

The next few hours were filled with panels and wanderings through the hucksters' room and art show. The art was wonderful and there was so much of it. They were having the auction at the time, but what was left was more than I could see in an hour. Of the panels, "Good/Bad/Ugly: '85 SF & F Books in Review" was good, but "Writing Star Trek Novels as a Change of Pace" was excellent. Writers such as Joe Haldeman, Ann Crispin, Diane Duane, J. Dillard, and Brad Ferguson talked about how they got involved in writing ST novels, the problems they encountered, and gave advice to the room full of ST fans.

The last panel I attended, before eating and getting seats in an overflow room for the masquerade, was called "The Role of Catholicism in Fantasy". I went to it be-

cause it sounded interesting, and the priest who said Mass earlier that day was the moderator. He was very good and worked hard to keep the panelists on the topic.

I won't list the people involved in the Masquerade, but it took three hours to show off the costumes. Any one of those costumes would win first prize at any other convention I've been to. They were just wonderful.

We didn't even try the parties in the Marriott, but went straight to the Hilton. The parties we attended included a BATS (British-American Television Society) group, a Star Trek party, a local SF group's party, and finally a Dark Shadows group where I nearly dropped off to sleep.

The next day was Monday, the last day of the convention. After getting my stuff together, I went to see a panel called "Regional SF - Local SF Movements". It was made up of writers (including Ann Cripsin) and one artist. They talked about writers' groups they belonged to in different parts of the country, but were unable to give a good picture of their local fan groups.

At noon I went to "Fannish Fanzines: Are They Relevant Today?" It was a good panel that did not, as panels often do, really deal with the subject matter. They started out talking about the sad state of SF fanzines in general, moved to talking about media zines, especially Star Trek, and ended dealing with the question of SF fandom versus ST or any other fringe fandom. Basically, I think ST and its fans were well-treated at the Worldcon and most ST fans behaved well in return. I found a group from Boston who were promoting their ST convention (The Platinum Anniversary Convention) especially well.

I moved my luggage out of the room, tracked down my new friend and moved the luggage to his car, and caught the last few minutes of a panel called "The Golden Age of Fandom", and one called "The Corman Syndrome -- Little Films and Behemoths", a good panel about the made-for-video-cassette market. I planned to attend the closing ceremonies but after ten minutes I left. I found my friend in the video room, had a wonderful dinner with him, and got a ride to the airport.

All in all, my first Worldcon was a success. The con itself seemed well-run and very well organized. The Articles of Confederation, a twice-daily newsletter, helped keep everyone informed of changes. Aside from the Hugos and Masquerade, most events seemed no different from the events held at even a local convention. One of Worldcon's drawbacks was that you almost never saw the official guests. It wasn't like many smaller cons where you can end up sitting as a table next to your favorite big-name author. Problems getting to the parties were the same as at any large regional. I was very unhappy with the film and video programs. I was even a little disappointed by the dealers' room. The one thing that did stand out was meeting people, other fans, from other places, other countries. That's what I enjoyed most, and what going to the Worldcon might mean most of all to me. While events like the Hugos are unlike anything else in fandom, other events can be found at smaller cons. It is in meeting the vast variety of people that made going to the Worldcon such a nice experience for me.





# Convention Etiquette: A Primer

An addendum by Alan Dean Foster

## APPROACHING PROS

This is one item fans occasionally ask me about that Mark Bernstein neglected to include in his excellent article. Herewith, therefore, some suggestions and personal reminiscences.

My first con was the 1968 Worldcon (BAYCON), at which I quickly learned the cardinal rule for getting to meet the writers I'd read all my life. To wit: if you keep your mouth shut, you can't say nuthin'.

I soon discovered that the majority of pros were at least cordial and some downright talkative, but you won't get to chat with anyone if you don't open the conversation. "I love everything you've ever written, Mr. Trout" is not a very good opening. While it may be true, it sounds phoney. Try for a little more depth. Sometimes the best opening has nothing to do with a writer's writing. Like plumbers, writers often get tired of talking shop. You might ask an opinion about a current world problem, or something of historical note. Politics, film, food, the weather --- anything but writing. You might not get a good answer, but you will provoke thought. Too many fans are like sponges. They absorb everything a writer turns out but offer nothing in return. Sponges are lousy conversationalists.

Don't be afraid to differ with a pro. I spent an hour at BAYCON arguing about Vietnam and government with an absorbing old chap whom I only later found out was John W. Campbell Jr. Campbell apparently loved to debate and argue. Many pros do, and don't like yes-men on the other side of the table. Obsequiousness is not stimulating.

Don't be afraid to express surprise, delight, or whatever at a new discovery, be it a new book, film, or whatever. Just because some older fan has seen a film forty times doesn't mean it can't be exciting to you. You don't have to pretend to a pro that you know or are conversant with everything (that's the pro's job).

Do not interrupt a pro when it is feeding. Pros tend to become testy at such times, as does any caged creature. Most especially do not interrupt a pro when they are dining with a younger, attractive member of the opposite sex. The result can be scratches, deep bites, and occasional dismemberment.

If, however, you spot a pro dining alone and want to chat, approach the feeding area cautiously, ascertain that the pro in question is reasonably tame, and begin talking. An offer to buy the meal in question will often produce a lengthy discourse and dis-

cussion on any subject of your choosing (alternatively, you may remove any thorns from the pro's paw).

Do not approach a pro while smoking. Many pros have abandoned smoking altogether and many never took it up. Smoking in the presence of the converted can cause them to become incensed (as opposed to burning the stuff).

Laugh at a pro's jokes. Most pros think they're hilarious wits. Some are. However, it never hurts to laugh at the stories of those who are not. Just be sure that the story the pro happens to be telling is supposed to be amusing.

Pros with children. Make friends with the kids. The parents will appreciate the attention you give them. Besides, such pros are rare and always worth meeting anyway (pros, like cheetahs, seem to have trouble breeding in captivity).

Giving pros gifts. Many fans like to express their appreciation to certain pros for the enjoyment they've provided over the years. Money is gauche. Books are always appreciated, preferably non-SF. Cookies and candy likewise (pros burn a lot of calories). Craft articles also, but only if well-made.

Do not spend time telling pros your troubles. Most pros have more than they can handle already. Do not spend time telling pros your great ideas for a story. Most have more than they can handle already.

Do not ask:

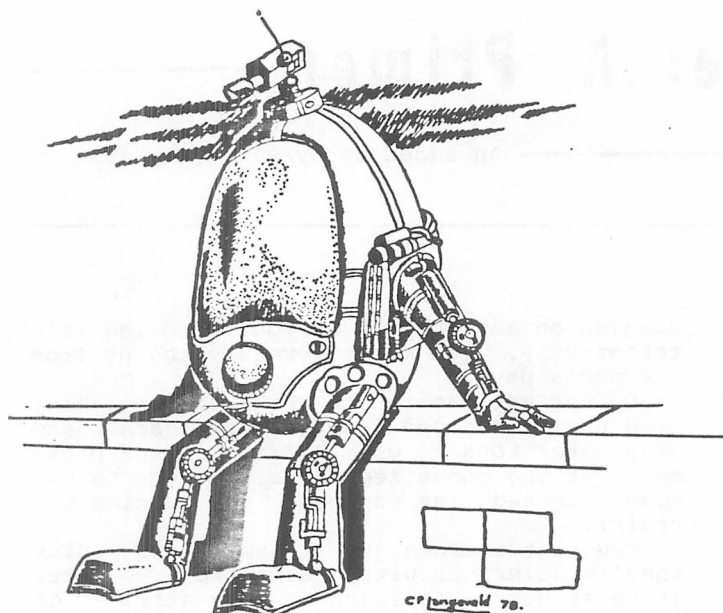
How to turn a short story into a novel.

Where you can get an agent.

If you can come visit your favorite pro at home (since it's widely known that writers do nothing but sit around and drink beer all day, bored out of their skulls, just waiting for someone like you to drop in on them).

Most important of all, do not look upon pros as some kind of literary gods. They're all just human beings like me and thee, with more foibles and idiosyncracies than most. So don't be crushed when one of them acts like an idiot, or says something stupid, or acts rude or boorish or arrogant. Many pros are fine, decent, polite human beings who will go out of their way to make you feel comfortable and to talk with you when they are able. But not all, not all. Don't let such incidents bother you. Don't even let them put you off somebody's writing.

Do have a good time.



# Ask

## Doctor

## Science

## Fiction

by Doctor Science Fiction, Ph.D.

Yes, friends, it's time once again to Ask Doctor Science Fiction. All those apparent scientific improbabilities, literary anomalies, plot contrivances, and fascinating but unlikely inventions can be made as clear as a Denebian sklat-groveller by Doctor Science Fiction's hubristic elucidations. Remember, he or she knows more than you do, or at least puts on a better show of it.



"What is a space warp?"

Space warps thread their way through the universe, creating shortcuts through which we can shuttle between distant points. Although no space warps have been discovered yet, scientists expect to find them looming in the vicinity of black holes. Being up-right idealists, they are less interested in harnessing the travel possibilities than in getting a handle on the hypothetical space weft, which they believe holds the fabric of the universe together.

Some scientists speculate that space warps are created when parts of the universe get wet and then are left to dry too close to a sun or other source of heat.



"Who is doing 'Ask Dr. Science Fiction,' anyhow? I have a question. Why do all those beauties from SF's earlier eras wear brass bras? Don't they pinch and chafe? Aren't they cold and uncomfortable? And do men find them sexy? Please, Dr. Science, clear this up for me."

What appear to be metallic foundation garments are, in reality, force field generators.

If you've read those old SF stories, you are probably well aware that certain intimate interpersonal activities were at best only hinted at; indeed, a story with any trace of an adult relationship between men and women would never be published. Women had a hard enough time getting written into SF stories without getting written right back out again because the "heroes" couldn't control their vile animal lusts. The force field generators were the answer. While the women wore them, they were safe from both rape and editing.

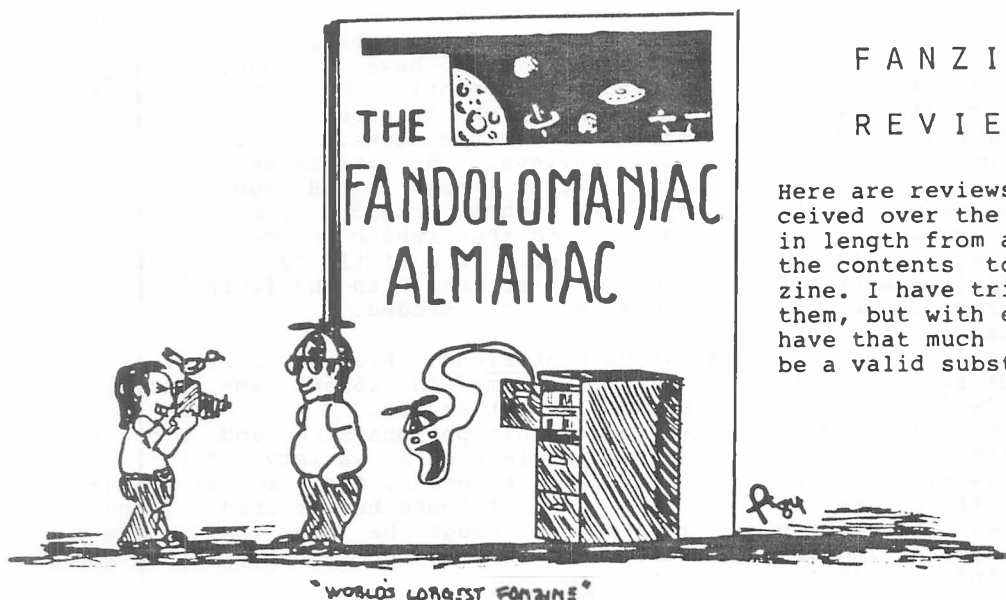
The shape of those "brass bras" maximizes their efficiency. They are indeed awkward, but given the design, wearing them anywhere else would not only be far less comfortable but far more ridiculous. Besides, their apparent function as support and/or decoration keeps men fooled as to their real purpose. Those bozos in the stories thought they were avoiding the women because of their own nobility, not because the women had advanced physics on their side!

As to your question about the identify of Dr. Science Fiction: Because of space limitations we can only answer one question per querent. Thank you for your interest in the fascinating world of Science Fiction.



If there is anything in the known, or especially the unknown, universe that you want to know, send your questions to Doctor Science Fiction c/o This Publication. Remember, he or she is a real doctor, in a different time continuum!

Ask Dr. SF



## FANZINE REVIEWS

Here are reviews of the fazines I have received over the past few months. They vary in length from a description and analysis of the contents to just a few words about the zine. I have tried to write locs to a few of them, but with everything else I do, I don't have that much free time. I hope this will be a valid substitute.

Fanzine reviews by Lan

Anvil: Charlotte Proctor, ed., 8325 7th Ave S., Birmingham, AL 35206. The usual or \$6 per year.

#41 -- This is the special Worldcon issue, with all contributors, especially Charlotte herself, talking about the Worldcon. Some very interesting and humorous behind-the-scene stuff.

#42 -- Back to the regular zine with this issue. Articles by Buck Coulson (as usual), a Dave Langford speech transcription (from NOVACON 14), Dan Calvert with comments on weapons' policies at various cons, and more. Some good stuff from a Hugo Nominee.

BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS: c/o Baton Rouge SF League, Inc., PO Box 14238, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4238. Bi-monthly. For the usual or \$3/6 issues.

#44-46 -- Typical clubzine, with some interesting personal stuff, particularly the column "Brain Show" by Robert Crais in #46. Lots of reviews (book and fanzine), conreports, and some letters.

Cri de Loon: T. K. Atherton, 3021 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. Mostly whim, encouraged by trades, locs and art (though he does most of that himself).

#8 -- A minizine/cartoon strip about one of the first answering machines. Uh, well... interesting.

#9 -- Mostly letters, with replies in the usual insanity TK employs in his regular (?) writing. Fun to read.

Crystal Ship: John D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks, MK16 9AZ, United Kingdom. Whim only.

#10 -- Lots of good, interesting fannish stuff. A perzine, with some contributions by Skel, and nicely reproed art.

#11 -- The bulk of this issue is a lengthy article on William Morris by Ian Covell. It's a rather interesting essay; I only wish I had time to read it more closely. Very nicely done.

Defenestration: David Singer, 165 Westchester Drive, Los Gatos, CA 95030. The usual, or extreme flattery.

#8 -- Locs interspersed with other material by David. An interesting approach and interesting reading.

Dementia: Roger W. Reuss, 9412 Huron Avenue, Richmond, VA 23229. \$3/copy (\$4 foreign).

#1 -- A horror fanzine, beautifully produced and laid out. The art is superb, if you like horror. Excellent first issue.

Desert Sun: Craig Chrissinger, 1613-D Hazeldine SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106. Accepted contributions and trades, \$2/copy.

#1 -- A fanzine filled mostly with fiction of all sorts (fantasy, horror, SF), with some fannish stuff, articles (nice one on Costumes in Star Wars), and reviews. Good repro and art, though the reduced print font is a little rough on the eyes.

Erg Quarterly: Terry Jeeves, ed., 230 Bannardale Rd., Sheffield S11 9FE, England. Available for the usual, (trades for old magazines, check with Terry about needs; no fanzine trades unless cleared with Terry first); \$1/issue, \$5/6 issues (send cash, not cheques). Mimeographed.

#95 -- In spite of being ill and hospitalized for an inflamed gall bladder which was subsequently removed, followed by two additional operations to clear up complications, Terry managed to get this issue out -- late. But having the energy to do anything after 3 operations in 2 months is a near miracle in itself. Terry also adds that he would be going in for a prostate operation around September/October, and asks that people be informed of possible delays in fanac and responses to mail.

These news items only occupy a small portion of the 32 pages of Erg. Terry fills the rest of the zine with book and fanzine reviews, a short story (very clever), comments on "The Good Old Days", another

installment of his "Down Memory Bank Lane" in which he reminisces about the clubs and organizations he has joined in the years he's been a fan. The final page is a crossword puzzle (something which has not appeared in LL for a long time), presented as a contest. The first three correct ones chosen from a hat will get "a 15" x 12" colour reproduction of the Killashandra jacket illustration...without any lettering, but signed by author Anne McCaffrey and artist Steve Weston." Some fun stuff and highly recommended.

- #96 -- In spite of the illness and shunting in and out of the hospital, Terry got this issue together and put Erg Quarterly pretty much back on schedule. Terry says that the number of locs on #95 was down (mea culpa, I didn't write...) and is hoping for more on this issue. Could be some people were holding off in view of his hospital stays. Maybe. This issue has a couple of extremely interesting articles, both by Terry. "Indexes and Indexing" talks about...well, indexes of and indexing SF collections. The other is his continuing series, "Down Memory Bank Lane", this time reminiscing about "Aliens and Monsters". He rounds out the issue with reviews, letters, an essay and a short story. Still highly recommended.

Flashpoint: Patrick Nielsen Hayden, 75 Fairview #2D, New York, NY 10040. Editorial Whim and some trades.

- #7 & #8 -- Of the pure personalzines I've received, this is one of the two most interesting. I had forgotten how good a writer Patrick is, and I am glad to be reading his stuff again. He deserves to be more widely circulated. Highly entertaining and recommended.

Fosfax: Joseph T. Major, ed., PO Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281. This monthly club/fanzine is available for the usual, \$1/issue, \$9/year subscription. Photocopied.

- #108 -- I envy the FOSFA (Falls of Ohio SF Association) people in their ability to produced a monthly publication. Having the club work on it as a group certainly helps. The majority of articles are reviews of books and movies, with an occasional convention report (as Tim Lane does here with DEEPSOUTHCON) and an expansive article on a topic or author. Lawrence Watt-Evans continues his series on the history of comics, covering "Horror" this time. Some very good stuff here, and well worth getting if just for the reviews. Highly recommended.

- #109 & #110 -- More reviews, and an article in each issue by James S. Dorr about the writing-oriented panels at the Worldcon. Frank Bynum talks about the Space Shuttle in #109, and real science in #110. Some letters of comment, too.

Galactic Dispatch: Joe Sokola, 726-1/2 Duclo Ave., Manitou Springs, CO 80829. For the usual.

- #76-#80 -- I wish I had enough time to give this clubzine the attention it deserves.

I scan it quickly when it arrives, but have not located an issue since last summer (and I even have a couple things marked for comment!). GD has a regular following in the lettercol, and a steady stream of contributions, mostly book and movie reviews. The zine is small enough (the longest I have is 28 pages -- 5-1/2 by 8-1/2 inches, reduced type) to read easily and thus invoke response regularly. The repro is a little "dirty", but it doesn't interfere with the legibility of the zine. Recommended.

Hardwired Hinterland: Richard Jervis, POB 743, Notre Dame, IN 46556. The usual, I suppose -- not stated.

- #2 -- This is his personalzine and Richard gives his views on a variety of topics, from music to books, from movies to Jap animation. I found no art credits, but it seems as though he does the art himself. He is hungry for letters, feedback, etc.

Hi-Tech Terror: Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325. Bi-monthly, for the usual.

- #14-#17 -- Craig is back editing the reviewzine of horror videos that he started a year and a half ago. Tim Ferrante did an excellent job of keeping it going while Craig was looking for a new job. Now Craig takes over once again and fills #17 with his own reviews. Most of what appears in here are reviews of films that never made it as theatre releases, and from the descriptions, it's easy to see why. For the movie buff who enjoys watching grade-B films, this zine points out some videos that may be of interest to you.



Hoaxerama: Elst Weinstein and Mike Glycer, editors. Mailing address: Elst Weinstein, 859 N. Mountain Ave., #18-G, Upland, CA 91786. Contribution or GENZINE trade, \$3/copy, or editorial whim.

A genzine filled with hoax speeches (which may even be real), fake conreports, etc. Very funny and good for a couple hours' diversion (it's almost 100 pages).

Light in the Bushel: Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912. The usual and oddities (like obscure quotes, newspaper clippings that may appeal to him, convention program books of cons he's missed, dead presidents, etc.).

#2 & #3 -- A personalzine with some interesting comments about the conventions Richard has attended, which includes the Worldcon, and books/stories he's read.

The Metaphysical Review: Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria, AUSTRALIA. For the usual, \$A25 for 5 in Australia, \$US25 for overseas airmail, \$6 per number (internal or surface mail).

#5/6 & #7/8 -- This is an excellent magazine of critical reviews (as opposed to most of kinds of reviews that appear in LL) and a lot of personal material by Bruce. #5/6, which won the Ditmar Award for Best Fanzine (the "Australian Hugo"), features long interesting articles about LeGuin, Gibson's Neuromancer, Aldiss' Helliconia Winter, and Auel's Clan of the Cave Bear. #7/8 contains articles about Garrison Keillor, E.B. White (Charlotte's Web and other books), and AUSSIECON II. Both (all four?) contain essays on music and record collecting. Greg Egan has the slot in #5/6, while editor Bruce writes a lengthy article about his favorites. Highly recommended.

The NASFA Shuttle: PL Caruthers-Montgomery, ed., NASFA, PO Box 4857, Huntsville, AL 35815. \$10/year, or the usual (I think-- it's not stated.)

Oct '86-Jan '87 -- The Shuttle is the clubzine of the North Alabama SF Association, Inc, and is full of club news, reviews, conreports and letters. The NASFA Shuttle has a good following, so letters tend to dominate each issue. This is fine, as they are very lively and interesting. I envy the editor, like I envy the editors of Fosfax and Galactic Dispatch; with the club behind them they are able to produce these monthly zines. In the January issue is a letter from Ann Crispin who was the first person to collaborate on a novel with Andre Norton. Ann describes how this collaboration came about. (The original manuscript was donated to the Manly Wade Wellman auction at Worldcon this year, and brought in \$3,000.) The Shuttle also has occasional art by Ron Lindahn and Val Lakey Lindahn.

Neology: ESFACAS, Box 4071, Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA T6E 4S8. For the usual, \$8/year for out-of-towners, or free if you help collate.

Vol. 11, #4 -- The clubzine for the Edmonton SF And Comic Arts Society, with reviews of books and fanzines, stories, and all

the usual stuff a clubzine has. There is some nice art in this issue, and a cartoon strip called "Future Shock" by John Rosenman and Adrian Klewbergen. Easy reading and mildly interesting.

Niekas: Edmund R. Meskys, RFD #1, Box 63, Center Harbor, NH 03226-9729. The usual, or \$2.50/copy, \$8 for four, money goes to Todd Frazier, RFD 8, Morrill St., Gilford, NH 03246.

#33 & #34 -- This 1967 Hugo winner for best fanzine is similar to the 1986 winner. It has lots of articles, reviews, art, and locs like LL, but is triple column and has smaller reduced type. Good reading.

The Notional: Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown, PO Box 433, Civic Square, ACT 2608, AUSTRALIA. Subscription: \$A15/12 issues in Australia, \$US20 (surface) or \$US28 elsewhere.

#11 & #14 -- A monthly newsletter with "All you need to know about SF in Australia". Interesting stuff, especially if you are interested in Aussie fandom.

Novoid: Colin Hinz, 1118 College Dr., Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 0W2 CANADA. The usual.

#4 -- Colin did a switch to mimeo (from photocopying) with #3 which did not turn out very well. This issue is much better, with color and fine repro. His writers (he is building up quite a number of regular contributors) cover all aspects of fandom: from books to poetry to comics, from conreports to trip reports (a nice one here by John Berry on his visit to Romania), from movies to fannish silliness. And artwork is generously spread throughout. Good, and getting better.... fast.

Pablo Lennis: John Thiel, 30 N. 19th St., Lafayette, IN 47904. FAPA and APA-H mailing, and editorial whim.

#6 -- Stange and wild art and writing.

Pyrotechnics: Gail & Jamie Hanrahan, PO Box 261687, San Diego, CA 92126-0998. The usual, especially trade.

#38 -- "Pyrotechnics purports to be a general-interest fanzine focusing on (but not exclusively devoted to) hard SF and real-world science and technology. It also serves as the newsletter of the organization club mob of tech-minded fen known as General Technics...." I've enjoyed what I have read here; you might too.

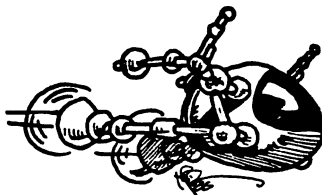
Riverside Quarterly: Leland Sapiro, PO Box 833-044, Richardson, TX 75083. Subscription: \$5/4 issues.

#28 -- A fanzine of critical articles, poetry, interviews, and a lettercol. Sercon, and very good.

Robots and Roadrunners (Formerly SASFact/Fiction): Alexander Slate, 5502 Timber Jack, San Antonio, TX 78250. Irregular, but at least four times a year. (The usual, I suppose -- not stated.)

SASfact/Fiction - August '86 -- A typical clubzine with clubnews, reviews, fiction, articles, art and an interview with Warren Norwood.





Robots and Roadrunners: The same clubzine with a different name. The club changed it because: "When a few of us attended Worldcon in Atlanta, we looked at the fanzines that were being nominated for the Hugo and decided that our name just didn't cut it." This has the same club-news, reviews, etc., and an interview with Lilian Stewart Carl.

Shards of Babel: Roelof Goudriaan & Lynne Ann Morse, Noordwal 2, 2513 EA Den Haag, THE NETHERLANDS. They aim for hexaweekly, for news or \$5 for 6 issues.

#21 -- This is a newszine which prints European SF news. I met Roelof and Lynne at Worldcon, had a great hour or so conversation with them (if only I could remember what we talked about -- Saturday afternoon was not my best time for remembering; wonder why...). Interesting to get this slant on SF Fandom.

The Space Wastrel: Mark Loney, Michelle Muijsert and Julian Warner, PO Box 545, South Perth, WA 6151 AUSTRALIA. Quarterly, the usual, or \$A6/year.

Vol. 2 #1 -- Editorials by the three eds., lots of letters, and some reviews.

Vol. 2 #4 -- A much better fanzine/genzine than #1 of this volume, with lots of the usual stuff I like to put in LL (art, articles, reviews, locs).

Starship Troupers: Sourdough Jackson, 31 Rangeview Dr., Lakewood, CO 80215. The usual, I guess.

A filkzine for and about filking and performing. Nicely put together, and illustrated in a variety of styles by Gail Barton. Reduced dot-matrix, but easy to read.

Sticky Quarters: Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224. For the usual, and even money. Mimeograph.

#15 -- A somewhat interesting fanzine by Brian, one that I've had less trouble reading than many in the past. His mimeography has improved, after a drastic decline a few years ago. The bulk of the contents is a lettercolumn on previous issues, though the most interesting item in the zine is Taral McDonald's interview with Gene Wolfe. John Berry also writes about his "Army Daze".

#16 -- The repro here has improved tremendously over #15, and Brian explains why as part of his editorial. He uses color in the artwork, and the issue reminds me of the "look" of the zines he used to put out. The second part of the Gene Wolfe interview is included, part two of John Berry's "Army Daze" (and it looks like there will be more), and Lynn Hickman writes some of his "Fannish Memories". A nice lettercolumn rounds out the issue.

Tales of the Unanticipated: Eric M. Helde-  
man, PO Box 8036, Lake Street Station,  
Minneapolis, MN 55408. \$2/copy; \$7.50/  
four issue subscription.

#1 -- "A magazine of the Minnesota Science Fiction Society" is the billing on the cover. Set type and slick pages, this zine is the literary magazine for the MinnStF Club. Some good art, stories, essays, and poetry.

The Texas SF Inquirer: Pat Mueller, ed.,  
FACT, PO Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766. The  
usual or \$6/6 issues; sample copy: \$1.50.

#16 & #17 -- Mostly news about Texas cons, though #17 has conreports from all over the US. Some interesting stuff, good current news (though #17 is dated June, '86, and I have not seen another issue since), and nicely laid out.

Time and Again: David Locke, 6828 Alpine Ave  
#4, Cincinnati, OH 45236. Trades & let-  
ters; \$3/one sample copy.

#2 -- Personalzine of David Locke with some witty articles by Al Curry and others. I found it good, but not as interesting as other personal writing I've read. Most of the artwork and all of the repro is excellent.

Torus: Lloyd Penney, Keith Soltys and Michael Wallis, PO Box 189 Stn. M, Toronto, Ontario, M6S 4T3 CANADA. The usual, I suppose -- not stated.

#1 -- The editors are experienced faneds and they certainly got off to a good start with this first issue. Using MicroSoft Word and FancyWord, and a Panasonic dot-matrix printer, they've put together an eclectic zine with articles by Mike Glicksohn, Heather Ashby, Garth Spencer, Paul Stockton, Karen Wehrstein and others. One highlight of the issue is the interview with Judith Merrill. Another is Glicksohn's "Bicentennial Cerebrations" (no, not a typo). Karen Wehrstein's article talks about the Toronto writer's group, and the stories/books that they have had published. I'm looking forward to the next issue.

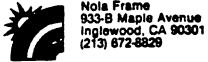
Undulant Fever: Bruce D. Arthurs, 5316 W.  
Port au Prince, Glendale, AZ 85306. By  
whim, which is encouraged by the usual.

#10 -- It's been more than a year and a half since his last issue came out, and another half a year before it surfaced from my fanzine pile to be read/reviewed. Personal happenings (of that year and a half) and a catch-up lettercol.

Worlds of Wonder: Robert Cooke, ed., 414 5th  
St. West, Birmingham AL 35204. Loc, con-  
tribution, or \$8/year. This is the publi-  
cation of The Magic Fantasy Club.

#4 -- The purpose of the Magic City Fantasy Club is "the study of myths, legends and fantasy in literature and other forms of art", among other things. There are some fact articles, fiction, and an interesting analysis of the scientific basis for the speed of DC's The Flash.

# A LETTER FROM NOLA FRAME



Nola Frame  
933-B Maple Avenue  
Inglewood, CA 90301  
(213) 672-8829

Lan Laskowski  
55 Valley Way  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

October 20, 1986

Dear Lan,

Really enjoy your issue 20. (Maybe if I'm lucky, I'll find out where I buried \$19.

Just finished checking out THE STARMAN. His chief gimmick seems to be a psionic marble. It works better than the Doctor's sonic screwdriver and is twice as implausible. It's too bad that this show is so silly. I really like the way that Robert Hays is handling the alien. His character may not know certain (do aliens always have to speak perfect English with flawless dictation but no contractions?) things, but he does come across as intelligent.

About the cartoons.

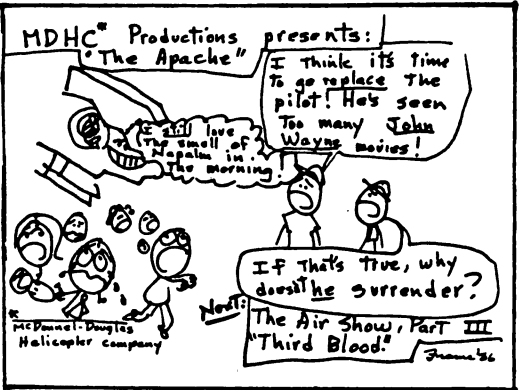
Had an argument with the public phone today, which means that I didn't have extensive use of Da Machine, which added to my frustration. However, this did inspire me to draw some more 'toons as David Heath likes to call 'em.

Last Sunday, yesterday, my technophile boyfriend, Louis, dragged me off to his company's open house. McConnell-Douglas, formerly Hughes Helicopters, makes the same flying beastie that we now associate with the TWILIGHT ZONE Trial.

Well, you did say that you liked to use a little of everything. Blame me sending you the 'toons on that statement. Speaking of which, here is my final 'toon for now, inspired by your comment about putting wings on toasters. Speaking of which was your crack about the humble toaster inspired by "The Little Toaster That Could" that was the cover story for P&SF a few years back...?

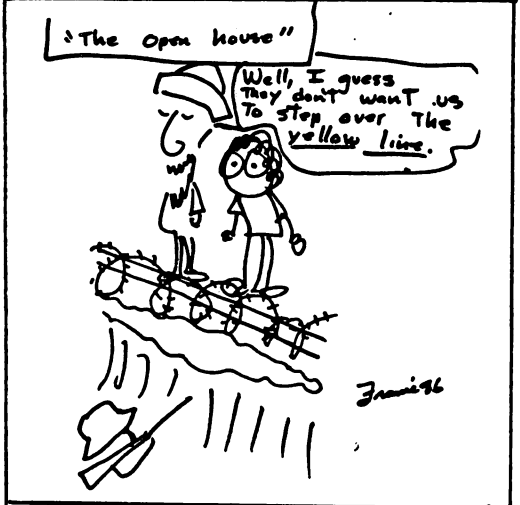


Frame 86

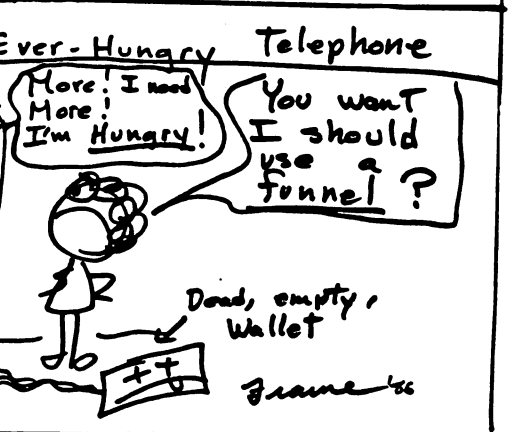
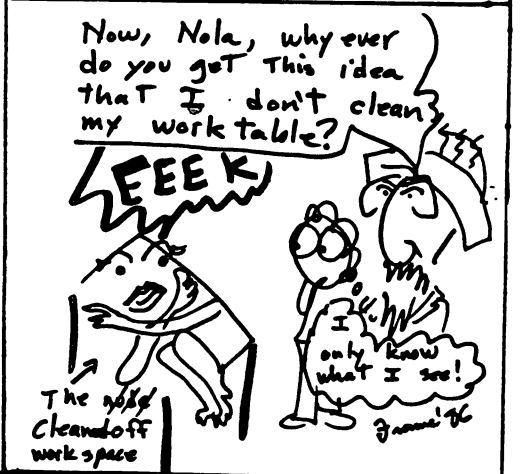


MDHC Productions presents: "The Apache" I think it's time to go replace the pilot! He's seen too many John Wayne movies!

If that's true, why doesn't he surrender? The Air Show, Part III "Third Blood."



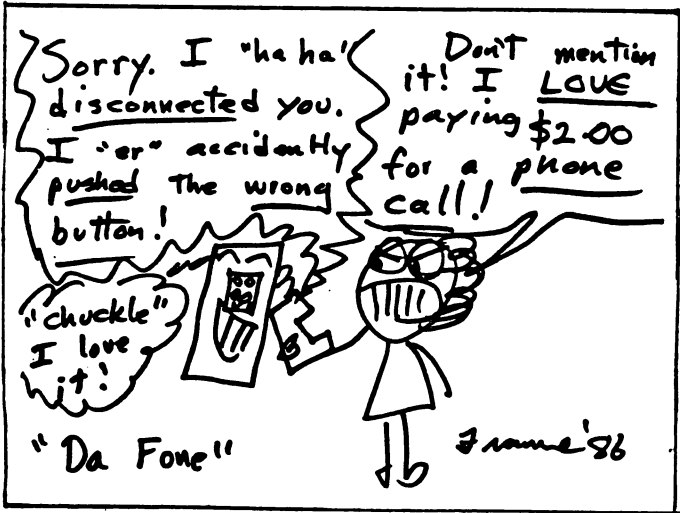
Now, Nola, why ever do you get this idea that I don't clean my work table?



\*Moan\*

Dead, empty, Wallet

Frame 86



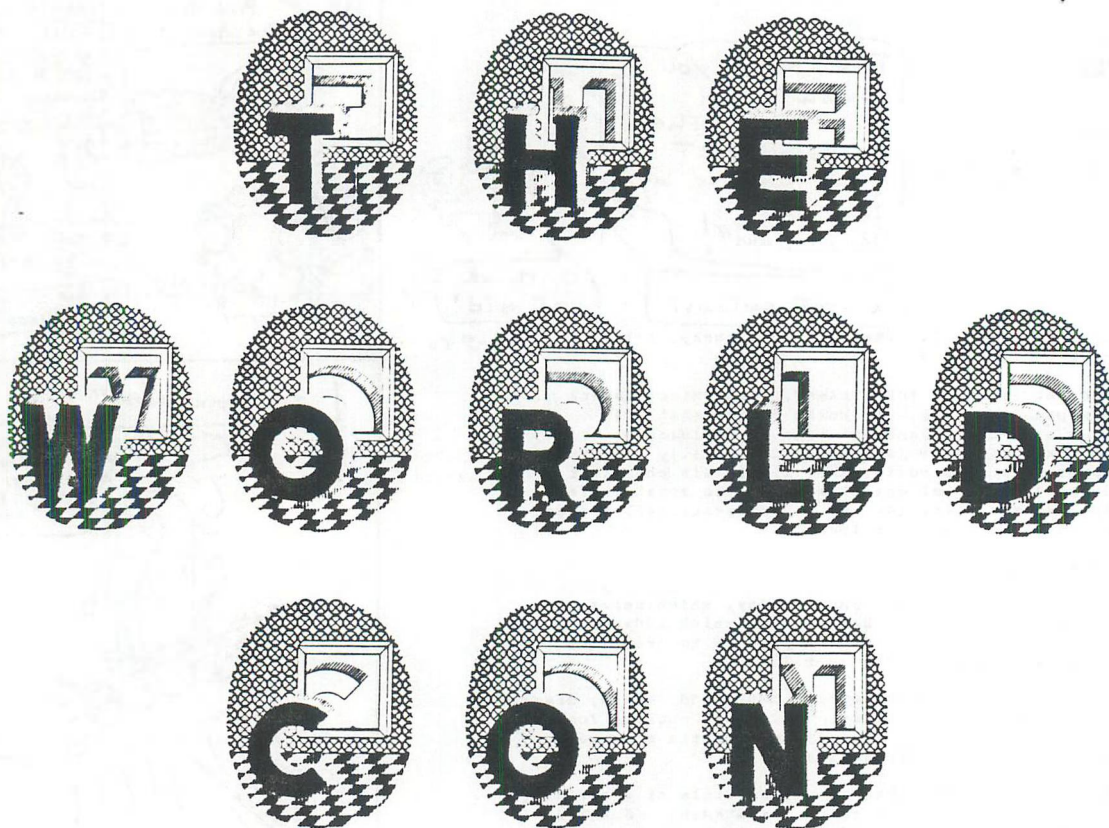
Sorry. I "ha ha" disconnected you. I "er" accidentally pushed the wrong button!

Don't mention it! I LOVE paying \$2.00 for a phone call!

"chuckle" I love it!

"Da Fone"

Frame 86



## SOME MEMORIES

by  
Lan



The alarm went off at 6:30, and I quickly quelled its incessant buzzing. Stretching my limbs to ease the cramped muscles, I realized that it was Tuesday morning, and I had a couple of hours or so before the meetings started. Time for the new school year to begin! Oh well....

I rolled over, kissed Maia, and padded off to the bathroom. I entered the living room to get dressed (rather than disturbing Maia's slumber) and saw the sun glinting off the chrome rocket sitting on its marble base atop the floor speaker. And I smiled.

Yes, I had done it. Rather, my readers had done it, voted me the award. I smiled, remembering....

David and Diana Stein picked us up on Thursday morning, with Richard Tucholka along to take their van back home. We piled into the vehicle headed for the airport, and were soon winging our way to Atlanta for the World Science Fiction Convention.

There were no real hassles at the Atlanta airport, but instead of taking the train from our gate to the main terminal, we walked...and walked. It wasn't until we got all our baggage and were heading for the shuttles that David said, "I forgot my camera...on the plane."

We found a comfortable concrete bench and waited until he returned, fortunately with his camera. David said that he didn't walk

all the way back, but decided to take the train. "They're really neat. The trains talk to you. They sound like 'Cylons'."

While he was gone, we looked at the prices of the shuttles and the cab fares, and figured that we might save a couple of dollars going by cab. And they were available immediately, rather than waiting for the shuttle to come back. So we piled into the nearest cab and let the driver find his way among the open and closed freeway roads to the Hilton and Marriott hotels.

I was impressed with the Hilton. Looking up through the atrium I could see nearly to the top, my view broken by the "space lounges" about every five floors. David and I stood guard over the luggage while Diana and Maia checked into the hotel, since the reservations were made in their names. Several fans passed by to whom we said hello, and I spotted Terry Carr, the Fan GoH, walking through the lobby. I stopped him and handed him a LoC on a zine he had sent me. "Since I saw that you would be here, I thought I would save a little postage." He smiled and thanked me. Later he would give me a verbal reply to a question I had asked him in the letter.

The Steins went up to their room while we went to ours, and found someone else in it already. I played sentry to our luggage again while Maia went to the main desk to get the mix-up straightened out. She returned a few minutes later with new keys and a room higher up. "They had given the room to Andy Cowan. I guess they thought he was related to me!" Maia said.

We dumped our stuff, refreshed ourselves, and headed for Registration. Since we were program participants, we had a special registration in the Green Room. There we saw Kathy Nerat who was working registration, but still had some trouble getting our badges because of some mix-up with Maia's status. This was quickly straightened out, and we hung around there for a short while, looking at the maps, talking to various people, and checking to see when our various panels would be.

The fanzine room was quite active, though I did not spend a lot of time there. With so many people I wanted to see, and so many items on the program that I wanted to go to, I didn't stay in one place too long. It went on like this for the whole convention. I think the longest I sat in any one place (other than our Room Party and sleeping at night) was the two hours for the Hugo Ceremonies (even then I had to leave to go to the bathroom).

Once Maia and I had established our bearings in the Hilton, we went across the street to the Marriott and gaped at the interior. Except for the elevator towers and the ramps to the side walkways, there was a clear opening from floor to ceiling, 45 stories up. The rooms were around the perimeter of the structure, and it truly looked futuristic. The tenth floor was completely open, and was designated the "Consuite" for the duration of the convention. The tenth floor was also the place that the "Meet-the-Pros" party was going to be later in the evening.

Food. Maia needed it, and I was getting rather hungry myself. Referring to our maps,



we looked at a few of the nearby places and they were all crowded with people lining up outside the door. We ended up in the Peach Tree Shopping Mall and got our orders in just before they closed. By the time we got back to the hotel, I had missed both Orson Scott Card's "1000 Ideas in an Hour", and Tim Zahn's "Question and Answer Session". I have been involved with Scott's "Idea" session several times, and they never cease to amaze me. And I see and communicate with Tim several times a year, so I get to ask him questions frequently. I suppose I didn't miss much because of my involvement with them, but I had wanted to show my support for some of my favorite people in SF. I did get to talk to them throughout the convention, though. Likewise with Mike Resnick (I missed all of his panels, but saw him frequently during the four days we were in Atlanta together).

The "Meet-the-Pros" party was crowded when we got there. Maia and I quickly separated to follow personal interests and conversations. I hooked up with David Shea and we talked about many things, but in particular about his apology to Gordon Dickson which would appear in LL #21. He introduced me to Ann Crispin, a friend and collaborator of Andre Norton. Many other people wandered by to whom I said hello, hugged, kissed, made puns with and double entendres at, and generally had a good time. More people approached me than I approached. I was wearing my trademark -- Arak, my coonskin cap.

I chased down Lois McMaster Bujold to get her address, and later in the convention she and her husband came up to our room to get copies of Lan's Lantern that I had brought with me. I was very much looking forward to seeing her again at some of the Midwestern conventions.

I met Charlotte Proctor, editor of Anvil, one of the Fanzine Hugo nominees, and talked a bit. She introduced me to Bob Shaw, to whom I gave copies of LL that I had brought for him.

My meanderings from there became a confused sea of faces and names. Eventually I hooked up with Maia again, and we wandered



off to some parties, then down to the Disco that Baen Books was sponsoring. Not being much of a dancer, I didn't go inside to ballroom, but sat outside and watched people come and go, enter fresh and exit sweating and tired. At one point, Shelley Frier of Analog stopped by to rest and we talked for a while.

The first night in the room came as a welcome relief. Maia and I had been on the go pretty much the entire day, even though we spent time sitting. Yes, I slept well. I knew that the Hugo ceremonies were coming up in a couple of days, but I tried not to think about it. Saturday evening would come soon enough, and I didn't want to get excited...yet.

### Friday

In spite of being exhausted, we got up early, as is usual for us. We were definitely in "con mode", and 5 hours was sufficient sleep for me. Maia I knew would take a nap or two during the day, and probably crash earlier than I would. However, we would get up about the same time, and wander off to breakfast together. We tried a few places outside the hotel on Friday morning, but without luck. Either the restaurants were too crowded or too expensive. We ended up back inside the Hilton and pretty much had our meals there the rest of the con.

Much of the morning was spent running around talking to people, wandering through the hucksters' room, and sort of preparing and waiting for my first panel at 1 PM. I saw Mike Goodwin at his huckster table and picked up my copy of the Commonwealth Supplement. He and Robert Teague had put together a concordance of the Commonwealth of Alan Dean Foster called Guide to the Commonwealth. One of the dedications of the book was to me. A supplement was done to add corrections and new material on the books that Alan had written since the Guide came out. Mike contacted me to get permission to reprint an essay I had done about the Commonwealth and Alan's writing which was first published in Robert Teague's fanzine, Pana-zine (his Alan Dean Foster special issue). I agreed; I was happy to see it reprinted. In return, I got a free copy of the Supplement, and Mike said that he would draw something based on the next Commonwealth book Alan would write to accompany the review I would do of that book. I thought I got the better of the deal; I think Mike thought he came out ahead. I did have Mike autograph my copy of the Guide; likewise Robert Teague, when I finally caught up with him, and Alan.

I did talk for a while with Alan Dean Foster. I asked about his novel, Into the Out Of, which he researched during his trip to Africa the year before. He said that it was due out in September, but not in time for release at Worldcon. This was to be his first, first edition, hardcover release (the SFBC hardcover books have not been first-releases). He was excited, and later in the convention showed me a copy that his publisher had brought to him. I was looking forward to getting a copy for myself.

While in the hucksters' room, I bought quite a few things -- the latest "Spell-sing-

er" book, which Alan was delighted to autograph, and lots and lots of other books. I picked up Julia Ecklar's new tape. This I had been waiting for. I had heard about this tape from the Steins, from Julia's friends, but only a little from Julia. I was anxious to hear it, but was too busy at that time to listen. I had a panel coming up.

Mike Glycer had called me sometime in July asking about being on his panel, "The Care and Feeding of the Fan Hugo". I accepted, as did several other past and present Hugo nominees. Patrick Nielsen Hayden, with whom I had had differences a long time ago, and I talked before the panel. There had been a lot of changes in both of us over the past ten years, and I found him fascinating to talk to. He was one of the people who had signed the infamous ad in Science Fiction Chronicle (to vote No Award for the Fanzine Hugo), and in our discussion he assured me that there was nothing personal involved; he was just expressing his opinion. Several people I talked to said the same thing. Each had a personal reason for signing the ad but generally they wanted to express the opinion that the Fanzine Hugo is slowly being shunted into obscurity because of the size of the Worldcons. Few people know enough to vote intelligently about it. Some of the signers actually thought that none of the nominees were worthy, though after seeing what I have been doing with LL for the past few years, said that they were surprised at how much it had improved.

The success of the panel was about 50-50. There were some good things and some bad things that happened. Overall, from my point of view, I thought it went well. Having some people walk out in disgust over a few of the comments about a couple of the fanzine nominees, The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumer's Guild Newsletter and Universal Translator, was a low point. Teresa Nielsen Hayden was driven to anger by some remarks, but carefully held her temper. One of the things I was particularly concerned about was the number of people who had signed the SFC ad who had not registered for the Worldcon, and therefore could not vote. Teresa explained that in her and Partick's case, coming to Atlanta was a last-minute decision; personal money problems were resolved that allowed them to go. (Believe me, money problems I understand!) So they had not registered beforehand. The more people I talked to about this, the better understanding I had of their feelings.

I was particularly taken with Teresa; we were in an apa together several years ago, and I enjoyed her writing then. I had never met her until Worldcon, and wished I could have spent more time talking to her. Maybe at another Worldcon.

After the panel, I wandered around and talked to other fans...and missed the phone interview with Andre Norton, and the "Introduction to Apadom" panel. They were scheduled for the same time, and I got wrapped up talking to others that I forgot about them until later in the afternoon.

One question that was asked of me several times during the con was: "What do you think your chances are of winning the Hugo?" I felt pretty confident, and claimed that I





was 75% sure I had it. As I talked to many fans who said that they supported LL, I felt even more confident. Again, I tried not to think about it too much --- save the excitement for Saturday evening!

I did hit a panel (either Friday or Saturday afternoon) which had Susan Shwartz on it. Susan sent me a copy of the paper she was going to read on a Sunday panel, and offered it for publication in the Lantern. I told her "Yes, I want it!" (see page 4.) We talked then, and in the Green Room several times during the convention.

In the late afternoon Maia and I and several other Michigan fans trooped down to a local party store and bought supplies for our respective parties. Maia and I are in two apas together, APALOGIA and MISHAP. I am also a member of D'APA. We decided to have a party for all members of these apas -- past, present and future members. While we bought some soda-pop and munchies, David Stein, Don Wentzel, Jeff Matthews, David Jordan, Mitch Radelt and several others stocked up for the Pluto in 87 party. By the time we got back, I had to run to the N3F meeting which started at 6 PM.

I walked in late, sat next to Martha Beck, and found that the person running the meeting was Lola Andrew. Again, this was another first, face-to-face meeting. I was told to introduce myself, and several other Neffers who were only names became faces as well. Nola Frame, Janie Lamb, Pat Diggs, and a few others introduced themselves. I found the Louis Gray, whom I had met nine years ago at B'HAMACON on my way to the Worldcon, SUNCON, that year, was the Louis that Nola

referred to in her letters. And I had a chance to talk briefly with Pat Diggs before the MISHAP party that evening, and look at the pictures she took while on the set in San Francisco where they were filming Star Trek IV.

After a quick dinner, Maia and I set up for the party, and waited for people to show up. We set a time limit so that everyone could meet and have a good time together, then be free to wander about and hit other parties. People began to show up pretty much on time. From D'APA, I got to meet Fred Cleaver, the OE, Sourdough Jackson, and renew my acquaintance with Don Thompson (who was the one who got me to join D'APA). From MISHAP there showed Danny Low, Pat Diggs, Brian Earl and Denise Brown, Kathy Nerat, Deb Hammer Johnson (so nice to see her after 7 years), Gregg Trend, Chip and Janice Morningstar, Charlie Terry and Sherri Kline. From APALOGIA there were David and Diana Stein, David Singer and Diane Goldman, and Kathleen Conat. Other friends and former members included: Mark and Evelyn Leeper, Dale Skran, Ann Cecil and Ben Schilling. There may have been others, but I was kept pretty busy talking to some and not talking to others. I did encounter some of these people later during the convention.

The "Pluto in '87" party was a smash. Our group of friends put a slide show together to promote the Worldcon for '87 of some century on Pluto. Pay your membership and leave a cell sample for a clone. The clone would be sent to the convention, while you stay on Earth, then the memories of the four days (12+ Earth years) would be fed to you so you can find out how much fun you had at the con (or how much trouble you got into). It was a nice set-up, and I heard nothing but good things about it from people afterward.

I stopped in at several other parties, the "DeepfreezeSouthCon" bid, "Columbus in '88", "New Orleans in '88", and others I've forgotten. I was late getting into bed (what else is new at a con?), and had little trouble falling asleep. I did recall that I had not yet heard Julia's tape, and as I drifted off, I told myself that I would listen to at least some of it the next day.

### Saturday

After breakfast Maia and I headed for the Green Room to talk to people and eventually meet the people who would be on our panel at noon. Many of the program participants stopped in to talk and avail themselves of the refreshments set out for them. I talked to several people, including David Brin, Alexis Gilliland, Michael Kube-McDowell, and others.

I did mention the special Golden Anniversary issue of LL coming up to Fred Pohl and Catherine Crook de Camp. Fred and I made tentative arrangements to do an interview at WINDYCON (though I was to contact him later about it), and Catherine said to write her and Sprague, and they would send some material to me. Many fans have praised me for honoring authors who are still alive, especially those celebrating 50 years of writing. Fred Pohl and L. Sprague de Camp who will be celebrating their Golden Anniversaries in

1987 have a large following of fans. I hope that these fans will contribute to the issue.

I also spent some time talking to Reolf Adriaan and Lynne Ann Morse. They were interesting people and we talked for about an hour, but I don't remember what we said.

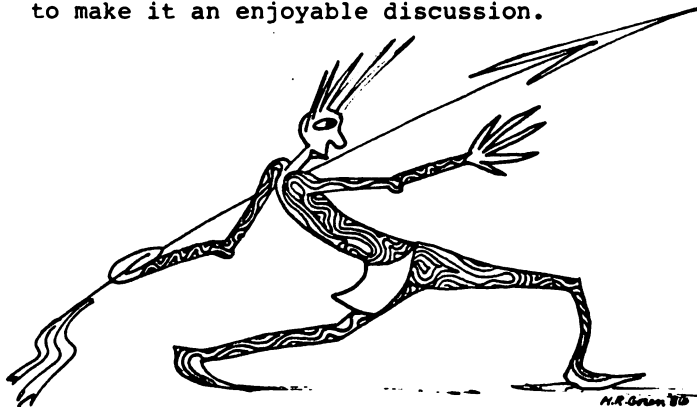
Joe Green mildly berated me for not taking advantage of the teachers' workshop sponsored by NASA. It was nice to meet him after corresponding with him for so long, and I took his comments with humor. Teaching was the last thing I wanted to think about on this final weekend of my vacation. The coming Tuesday I would be at school again. First, I wanted to enjoy my last days of freedom.

Again I missed a few panels I had wanted to see -- Brian Earl Brown's "Who's Afraid of Publishing Your First Fanzine?", Sarah Clemens' "SF Art" presentation, Ed Bryant's "We Control the Vertical: SF on TV", and Alan Dean Foster's "Turning a Book into a Film". (The first two were one-person shows; the others were moderated by the persons named.) I did, however, make it to Maia's panel, "The Many Faces of Fandom".

Maia proposed this panel to the programming committee, they accepted it, and she got to fill it with her friends. I was one choice; David and Diana Stein were two others; and Kathy Nerat balanced out the table at the front of the room. All of us were convention goers and readers of SF & F. But we all had other interests. Maia, David and I were into comics; everyone except me was interested in running conventions; Diana does art and is the president of the national Elfquest fan club; David is into Japanese animation and films; Maia and I enjoy doing panels.

Kathy said that her motto is "FIAPOL" -- Fandom Is A Part Of Life. She doesn't hide that she's a fan, nor does she push it on people, her colleagues at work, her family. She doesn't get so wrapped up in fandom that it consumes her life; she incorporates it into her everyday activities. We all pretty much agreed that FIAPOL was probably the best course to take. Sometimes I get wrapped up in the fanzine that I let it dominate my free time for weeks. I do try, however, to keep things in perspective.

Deb Hammer Johnson was in the audience and offered some good comments. Nola Frame, David Singer and Diane Goldman, Charlie Terry, and many of our friends showed up to offer comments, advice, and general rowdiness to make it an enjoyable discussion.



About mid-afternoon I went back to the room to "work" on my acceptance speech, just in case I won the Hugo that evening. I had actually rehearsed parts of it in my head at various times during the past few months, but I thought I had better jot down a few notes in case I do win, and I freeze at the mike.

As I thought through what I was going to say, I got very excited and apprehensive. I had pushed the feelings of elation aside for a long time, trying to be humble, and trying not to float high with the excitement. For about a quarter of an hour, I let the feelings flow, then grabbed hold of myself and came back to Earth. I put on Juila's tape, Divine Intervention, sat back to relax, and to listen to one of my favorite singers.

The flutes started the overture, underscored by the strings. An oboe took the theme, passed it back, then to the piano. The rest of the orchestra came in. I sat stunned as I listened. The music painted an outdoor scene with dawn coming over the horizon and a rising hawk floating in the still morning air. The music segued into Julia's guitar and her song "Ladyhawke". It sounded so perfect. The accompaniment supported her voice, they blended, and the whole came out greater than the sum of the parts.

I couldn't stop my eyes from watering. Here Julia had reached a plateau in her singing career. I drew a parallel to my own pinnacle of success in fandom with the Hugo nomination, and all those emotions I had shunted aside came flooding back. Tremendous joy pulsed through me as I listened, and realized how happy I was for Julia...and for myself. But I knew she could, and would, do better.

The second song started with a quiet guitar solo which eventually built to a screaming rock finish. Exhausted after listening to "Crimson and Crystal", I turned off the tape player. The rest would have to wait until after the Hugo ceremonies that evening. It took me a few minutes to compose myself. Then I went to find Maia and take in the art show.

Rows and rows of pegboard were stationed in the Marriott Exhibit area. Almost every one of them was covered with artwork, too much to see with one pass. While wandering through aisle after aisle of some superior work and some mediocre stuff, we met Chris Clayton and Becky Price. Somehow Maia arranged for the four of us to have dinner in one of the more expensive restaurants in the Hilton. She set up the meeting time, and made sure I got there.

The dinner was good, the service very good, and we attempted to ignore the man who tried to serenade us. I had known Chris for about ten years, though we never really talked much seriously about things other than books. I hardly knew Becky, though I had known of her for several years. Maia knew them both quite well. By the end of the dinner I felt more comfortable with them, and was looking forward to spending more time together in the future.

#### The Hugo Awards

Maia and I got back to our room and rapidly dressed for the Hugo Awards Ceremony. I wore my tuxedo jacket, white shirt with a

ribbed front, black bow tie and black corduroy slacks, and the coonskin cap. I had asked my friends if I should wear the cap with the tuxedo outfit. The answers ranged from "Yeah", "Sure", and "Of course you should", to "You don't have a choice!" So I did.

There was a lot of excitement in the air as we walked into the hall. As a nominee I got to sit near the front with one guest. Maia suggested we auction off the seat, or sell raffle tickets for it, and use the money to pay for publishing the fanzine, but I wouldn't have anyone else with me for this. We finally settled in next to Arthur Hlavaty and Bernadette Bosky, with Maia seated on my left between me and them, and waited for things to begin.

In spite of the excitement, I tried to remain calm. One thing I knew for sure, even as I walked into the hall.....I had to go to the bathroom. I didn't want to fight the crowds then, so I waited.

The lights dimmed and after the laser-light opening ceremony, Bob Shaw, the Master of Ceremonies walked on amid the vapors and began. He told stories about his life, from draftsman engineer to becoming a full time writer. Periodically he would stop his life story to hand out an award.

I had a short wait compared to those professionals nominated for the best writing awards. As soon as Bob said, "And now the Hugo for the Best Fanzine," my heartbeat accelerated. Bob then broke off and started another of the humorous episodes in his rise to SF writing prominence. And for that I was glad. It calmed me down enough so that I could hear something other than my pulse hammering in my ears.

"Now for the best fan artist," said Bob when he broke off his narrative. Someone shouted that he hadn't given the Best Fanzine Hugo out yet. "Oh, you caught me. I just wanted to see if you were paying attention." He read the list of nominees and opened the envelop.

"And the winner is, Lan's Lantern, edited by George Laskowski."

Well, I think that's how he ended up. As soon as he said "Lan's Lantern", there was this shriek in my left ear from Maia. She grabbed me and nearly squeezed the air from my lungs. I got up and walked out of the aisle and to the stage. I think someone assisted me up the stars, but I'm not sure.

"Congratulations, Lan," Bob said to me as he handed over the rocket on its marble base. It was heavy, but I sure didn't mind. I stepped up to the podium, looked at the award, and said, after the applause had died down, "So this is a Hugo. I thought I was getting a car!" After the laughter dissipated (at least I hope SOME people laughed at the joke!), I continued.

"I had to tell that joke. I told all my friends that I was going to tell it if I won, so...." I let it hang there. "First off, I want to thank the Worldcon committee and all those who voted for me. You're the ones who gave it to me. I also want to thank all those who have contributed to the Lantern these many years. Someone suggested I thank every contributor by name, which would give everyone time to go get a cup of coffee, go to the bathroom, walk around the

block.... But I won't. I DO want to thank them all; they've made LL what it is today.

"I want to thank my family and all my friends who have supported me. And I want to thank Maia, my wife. She's done more to help me than she knows.

"Thank you."

As I walked to the stairs, one of the ushers came to help me. I said I was fine, and she congratulated me. I walked back to my seat amid handshakes and congratulatory remarks. David Brin leaned over Ray Beam who sat between us to look at the award. Orson Scott Card clapped me on the shoulder. I was all smiles. Maia was crying. We were both happy.

I waited until after Mike Whelan accepted his Hugo for Best Professional Artist, had all the other nominees stand up and receive applause, and withdrew himself from the running for next year, before I left to go to the bathroom.

Outside, after I hit the men's room, I saw Teresa Nielsen Hayden and we talked for a bit. She said that what LL has become is valuable to the work she has been doing. The more seriously oriented stuff of SF is what she is cataloguing (forgive me, Teresa, if I'm getting this wrong). She congratulated me for the win. Gay Haldeman overheard Teresa as she walked by, and gave me a hug.

I returned to my seat and expressed joy, surprise, and astonishment at some of the winners. I was sure that George R. R. Martin would have won, and Kim Stanley Robinson. But that's the voting process. And I cheered loudly when Rusty Hevelin got the Big Heart Award.

I screamed when Scott won the Best Novel award. "I am thrilled to get this. The Best Novel category has never been won before by a clear majority...." and he trailed off amid thunderous applause. When I talked to Scott later, he explained that he knew what he said had come out wrong. He had not prepared anything in the way of an acceptance speech, but what he intended here was that there has never been a majority winner on the first round of voting ever in the Best Novel category, and this time was no exception. Given a chance, Scott would have continued to say that there were so many excellent novels up this year that it had to have been a tough decision for people to make.



And he was right. I anguished over my decision, and placed Scott Card's Ender's Game in first place. It was tough deciding between him and David Brin's The Postman.

I got hugs. I got kisses. I got my picture taken a lot. Bill Waldroop, a friend from Detroit who works for The Detroit Monitor interviewed me both before and after the ceremonies. Yes, I was indeed happy. I got remarks like, "It's a good thing you have that heavy paperweight to keep you from floating TOO far off the floor."

Jim Gunn met me going back to the Hilton from the ceremony, and said, "Look, one of my students won a Hugo."

The rest of Saturday evening I spent wandering around showing the award to everyone. I did it not to show off (well, maybe a little), but more to share it with the rest of the convention members. Very few fans see a Hugo award up close, and even fewer get to hold one. I was willing to share. And I went from party to party letting people see it, touch it, hold it. Some ignored me, obviously ones who had wanted No Award to win. But the majority of people smiled, offered congratulations, and caressed my silver rocket.

I ran into Vernor Vinge. I enjoyed his novel The Peace War and was looking forward to reading its sequel, Marooned in Real Time. I wished I could have spent more time talking with him, but we were both busy that evening.

Mike Glicksohn beamed at me at one of the parties. He gave me a bear hug and said that he was very happy for me. Mike hefted the Hugo and marveled at its weight. "Mine only had a wooden base," he commented.

I had not seen Wendy Lindboe for a couple of years. She looked as good as ever, and signed up for a copy of the Lantern. She promised to do something for me.

Ed Meskys, editor of Niekas, was sitting in one of the parties with his seeing-eye dog. I stopped to talk to him, described the Hugo and read him the plaque. He too marveled at the weight. He won his in 1967. We had a nice conversation before I moved on to see other people.

Arlan and Joyce Andrews stood grinning at me in another party. "I told the INCONJUNCTION committee that you'd be a good GoH at the next con. And I was right, another Hugo winner, like our Guests this year -- Mike Whelan and Orson Scott Card."

Susan Schwartz held the award in her hands and smiled sweetly, fondling it. "Freud was wrong. It's Hugo envy!"

Jo-Ann, Mitch, Charlie, Don, Kathleen, Halina, Jamie, David, Diane, Sandy, Kathy, Jeff, Isabel, Julia, Ann, Danny, Bill, Mike, and so many others of my friends expressed their congratulations on my winning.

#### SUNDAY

The Hugo sat gleaming on the desk opposite the bed. It was hard to believe it was sitting there, but I was happy to trust my senses. After a quick breakfast, Maia and I headed for our 11 AM panel in the Clayton/Cobb room.

I was surprised at the number of people who showed up that early for the panel. Bernadette Bosky organized this one, filling it

with three fannish couples: her and Arthur Hlavaty, Bruce and Elayne Pelz, and Maia and myself. The title was "How to Survive in a Two Fan Family." One topic covered was the loss of a partner's individual identity. Some couples are seen as couples with no independence. Most try and usually manage to maintain individual fannish lives. Mark and Evelyn Leeper were in the audience and several other people who made good comments. Someone suggested that there should be a panel, "How to Survive in a One-Fan Household." Another asked about kids who grew up in fannish households. But those would have to be left for another convention. Lola Andrew approached me right after the panel and offered congratulations on winning the Hugo. I might have still been floating then. I caught Danny Low there as well, and asked about another article about photography for the Lantern (see page 32).

Sunday was total relaxation after the panel. Maia had one more obligation -- seeing David Brin and getting an introduction for Greg Bear from him for the CONCLAVE program book. I wandered all over the convention area talking to fans, accepting congratulations, and hugs from my friends. Julia Ecklar beamed at me when she came to give me a hug. I told her that I had started to listen to her tape but could only get through the first two songs. I was too overcome by emotions to continue. Her smile grew larger.

Several "ad-signers" said again there was nothing personal, and were happy to see me win. Many of them, and others like Joel Rosenberg, asked how they could get on my mailing list. I took their addresses and said they'd get the next issue. When I saw Liz Schwarzin and Jeff Copeland, the two who had counted the Hugo ballots, I said, "You never even gave me a hint!"

"That's right," replied Jeff, grinning. "You weren't supposed to know."

The Warlock in Spite of Himself is the only book by Christopher Stasheff I have read, though we have all of his novels (and Maia has read every one). I met him and we talked briefly about his work. I told him that he has a rather large following in the Southeast Michigan area where his parents live, and they might ask him to be a Guest of Honor one of these days. He smiled broadly when I mentioned this. "It'd be great to take an extended vacation there, and be the Guest of Honor in the place I grew up."

In the hucksters' room I ran into Janice Gelb who I had not seen for four years. She looked as good as ever, and said that she was working in California. One of the things she has done at Worldcons is pick a "Best T-shirt" of those she sees that are new that year. For 1986, she picked a t-shirt with a drawing of "The Thinker" under the foot of a large Tyrannosaurus Rex which was titled: "Godzilla Meets Rodin".

During one of my wanderings I encountered Jodie Offutt, who was there without Andy. She gave me a kiss and a hug of congratulations. "Andy was just so happy that you won. He said he just couldn't believe it, and was so happy for you when I called him last night to tell him."

"Isn't he going to be at INCONJUNCTION next year?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied. "Aren't you the Fan Guest?"

As I nodded, I noticed Jack Williamson coming towards us. "And Jack here is the other Pro Guest of Honor."

"Congratulations, Lan," he said in his easy-going manner, holding his hand out for a firm grasp. "It's quite an honor to get the Hugo."

Jodie said, "Jack, you have to hear this. When Andy was contacted about being the Pro Guest for INCONJUNCTION, he was told that they normally have two Pros, and asked if he minded sharing the position. He hesitated, and asked who the other writer was. When Andy found out it was you, and said he would feel doubly honored to be the Pro Guest with you."

"Well, I'll be delighted to be there with him, and you too, Lan," Jack replied.

That is one convention I am looking forward to. Jack Williamson has been writing for almost 60 years, and his writing now is as good as the newer writers. He has kept up with science, and his writing techniques have evolved as well. He is not writing the stories he was back then. I too will be honored to be on the same stage with him. And with Andy? Yeah, Uncle Andy tells one hell of a good yarn. It's gonna be a fun convention.

I did try to find Mary Hansen-Roberts, a friend of Andre Norton and the artist who is doing a line of Witch World pieces for her. I found her at her table in the hucksters' room and marvelled at the art, the jewelry, and the three-dimensional stuff she was doing. I just wanted to say hi, and asked her to give my best to Andre the next time she saw her.

Maia and I had dinner that evening with Jim and Laurie Mann, and Mel White. We ate in the Polynesian restaurant of the hotel, and just relaxed and enjoyed ourselves. Jim and Laurie were working the Worldcon, and needed to get away from things for a while. We all kept each other amused with stories about conventions. Mel told us that she had been working with Bob Asprin on a graphic novel called Duncan and Mallory which was almost done (see page 64). An hour later we left, ready for another night of party-hopping.

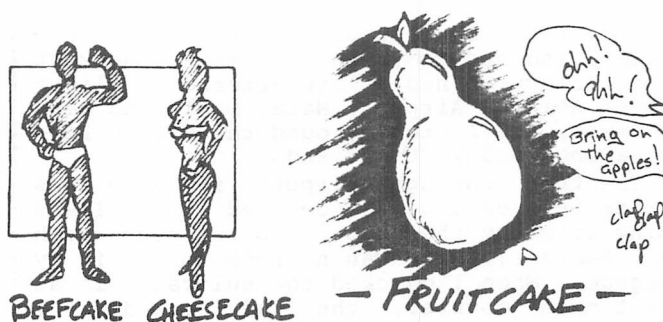
Jim Frenkel was at the con promoting Bluejay Books. His wife Joan D. Vinge stayed at home to do some writing, and to help her brought their youngest child to the Worldcon. Maia had lunch with him to talk about the Heinlein Concordance that she had put together. When he saw me, Jim invited me to the Hugo Loser's Party which Bluejay was sponsoring that evening. I told him that I didn't lose.

"I know you won this year, but you've been nominated before, haven't you?"

"No," I said. "This was my first nomination."

"Oh. It's unusual to win the first time out." He paused. "Well come anyway. We'll say you're a journalist. And bring Maia."

The party was fun. The Masquerade was on TV and we watched part of it. After seeing some of the costumes, I wished I had tried



to get a seat inside. Mike Resnick had been one of the judges for the hall costumes. I don't know if he was partially responsible or not, but friends Sandy Schreiber and Isabel Corcos received an award for their "Birds of a Feather" ensemble.

While at the Bluejay/Hugos Loser's party, I saw another fan I had not seen for several years, Barbara Geraud. She was still living in Texas, and has only recently gotten back into fandom.

From that party I stopped off in the Minneapolis in '73 party. There I saw several Minneapolis fans I hadn't seen since I stopped going to MINICON (for financial reasons). Gerri Balter was there and we had a very long talk about her writing career, my teaching career, and fandom. I said I wanted her to write another article or two for the Lantern.

### Catch-up Encounters

I had talks with many, many people, a lot of whom I haven't mentioned, and in many cases have forgotten. Also, when these took place. Greg Ketter, Dick Francis, Dick Spelman, Donald and Elsie Wollheim, Melissa Scott (who won the Campbell award for New Writer), Karen Joy Fowler, Scott Merritt, Andy Porter, Charlie Brown, Carolyn Cushman, Fran Skene, Richard Brandt, Tim Lane, Bill Bowers, Pat Mueller, Marty Cantor, Bill and Alexia Hebel, Neil Rest, Rob Chilson, Donald Kingsbury, Elizabeth Osborne, and many, many others.

### Monday

Monday was somewhat hectic with many people leaving the convention. Maia and I had lunch with David Brin, Jo Anselm, and Don, a friend of David's. While waiting on our order, David recorded the introduction on Greg Bear for the CONCLAVE program book. The waitress we had was a real stitch, and she said that she enjoyed having the fans at the hotel. "Y'all are about as good as the Baptists we had here a few weeks ago." I'm not sure HOW to take that, but it was obviously a compliment.

David congratulated me and said he was somewhat happy he did not win. His suitcases were full and he was already at the weight limit for his overseas flight to England. The extra weight would have meant an extra charge. He'll be staying in the British Isles for a year.



We got out from lunch later than we expected, and had to rush to make checkout time. Since we had a late-afternoon flight out of Atlanta Airport, Maia, David and Diana Stein, and I stood around the Hilton Lobby saying goodbye to friends.

The trip through airport security was rather interesting. I decided that I was going to carry the Hugo onto the plane with me. Besides, there was no room for it in my luggage. When I checked the suitcases in at the ticket counter, the lady asked if I could put the rocket inside the luggage. I told her I had no room in the suitcases, and would rather carry it with me.

"I don't know if security will let you take it on board. Someone could take it away from you and use it as a weapon."

I looked her straight in the eye and said, "No one is going to take this away from me!"

Behind me, David, Diana and Maia were laughing and saying in chorus, "Nobody is going to take that away from him!"

When we got to the security checkpoint, I laid the Hugo down on the conveyor belt and my carry-on bag next to it. On the other side of the X-ray machine, the lady asked me to put it inside the bag. Since I had passed the checkpoint, I acceded. As I walked away, I heard David answering her, "It's like an Academy Award for Science Fiction." She nodded her head in understanding.

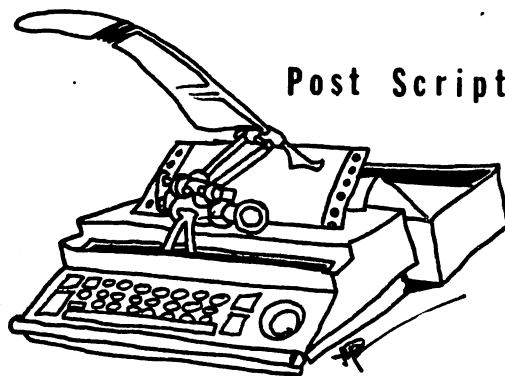
The flight home was relaxing. The pickup at Detroit Metro took longer than we had anticipated, mainly because I forgot what color Russ Conner's van was. He's a teacher at school, and I had made arrangements for him to pick us up. He was there at the correct time, and kept circling the terminals until I saw his face and flagged him down.

Once we got home and unloaded Russ' van, I still had a few things to do. David and Diana still had to be taken to their place, but before driving them home, we all went upstairs to our apartment and I ceremoniously deposited the Hugo Award on the floor speaker in the living room. Cheers, applause, hugs and kisses.

\* \* \* \*

It was Tuesday morning. The Great Weekend was over. I walked over to the Hugo and touched it, fondled it, to make sure it was real. It was mine.

I got dressed and drove over to school. Time to think about teaching. But I couldn't completely get the Worldcon out of my mind.



## Post Scriptings

GENERAL COMMENTS  
&  
FANZINE COMMENTS

Mary Manchester: Despite my silence, you have continued to send me Lan's Lantern. To express my appreciation: It is my only contact with SF and SF fandom, yet I find it unfailingly interesting, cover to cover. For all that, thanks.

[[Mary, you have sent me some nice notes, such as this, and stamps. That's good enough to keep you on the mailing list.]]

Sharon Porath: I was planning to write you a nice loc, full of lucid and scintillating insights. However, you'll have to settle for general snark n' garble, because my son threw up on the last Lantern before I had a chance to read it. This is not to be construed as literary criticism, however -- for one thing, he had a tummy virus; and for another, he can't read.

[[I can't wait till he does learn how to read; I want to find out what his real method of criticism will be.]]

Jan Story: While you're considering buying a modem (and thinking about what a pretty fanzine one can produce with a laser printer), you might consider investing in a spelling-checker program. There are some excellent ones on the market for quite reasonable prices -- the ideal solution for an editor who doesn't have time to proofread.

[[I have a spell-checker program, but that only calls attention to words that are misspelled, and not if the wrong words are used. For example, if I type "of" instead of "if", the word is spelled correctly, but it's not the word I want to use. I still have to proofread to clear up those mistakes. But I am working on it.]]

I know that, years ago, there was a fan in Florida doing a "zine" on cassette tape; someone was experimenting with video technology for a while. Are there "fanzines" that exist only electronically? (Work better in an apa format, I would think.) Are people doing their zines on computers? And is anyone still spouting the tiresome bleat one

heard years ago, that a True Fanzine is produced on a hand-crank mimeo and not even electrostencilling is allowed? (Remember electrostencilling? Anybody want a cheap Gestafax and three mutually-incompatible and non-working AB Dick mimeos?)

[[I don't recall the fan from Florida who was doing a cassette fanzine, but Larry Tucker did a few, then switched to doing a fanzine on video. Meade Frierson also did a video fanzine, as I recall. // I have heard some people say that mimeo is the only way to produce a tru-fanzine -- but have dropped the argument about not using an electro-stencillor or it having to be hand-cranked. (Some fans get old, you know, and want to save SOME time and energy.) // I'm not interested in mimeo, but maybe some of the readers will be. Get in touch with Jan if you are.]]

David Thayer: I read LL #21 cover to cover the moment I received it. Actually, I read the text on the inside cover and followed it through to the back cover, skipping the pages in between. I'll get to the rest a little at a time.

[[Someone sent me this from PC World, Sept, 86, p. 231.]]

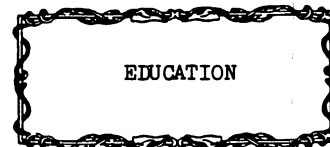
"A truly irascible LAN may demand 10 to 12 hours of babying each week, even after the usual shakedown period."

Tom Digby: Even if you don't get a modem, you can save typing by having people send you articles and such on disk. There's a program called "Uniform" that lets most machines read umpty-leven different disk formats so that even people whose machines are not compatible with yours can send you stuff. If the person sending you an article, whether on disk or by modem, doesn't have the same word-processing software you have, the special-effects codes (underline, slash-out, etc.), won't be right. This just means that you'll have to ask for a standard ASCII file (which most software can create but which won't have the special codes in it and will have all the carriage returns as "hard") and go through the file and fix up margins and paragraphing and such, which is work, but not near as much work as re-typing the whole article. Postage on a floppy is more than on a short manuscript because you need a heavy cardboard mailer, but it's about the same as a long-distance phone call without the worry about what your bedtime works out to be in my time zone.

Sam Long: LL is a very eclectic fanzine (do androids dream of eclectic sheep?), with its foundations firmly in SF. I like that. I've not said much about the strictly SF-oriented articles in thisish, because I've usually not read the book or seen the movie. But I am better informed about both for having read your reviews.

Craig Ledbetter: The fanzine review column is most welcome by me. I'm always on the lookout for new and different zines so I appreciate being exposed to them.

Mark Bernstein: I was stunned by the number of people who commented to me at CONCLAVE that they'd read or scanned my etiquette article in LL #21. I should mention, for the sake of the readers, that you had just distributed issue #21 over the course of the convention weekend. People were actually taking the time to read LL while they were at a busy, lively con. That may constitute even higher praise than that ten pound paperweight you just picked up at the Wordicon.



Hal Hall: If I ever get caught up entering material for The 1985 Science Fiction Book Review Index, I want to carefully read all your comments on education and perhaps respond. As a former teacher and university librarian, I have an opinion or two! For example, when we start barking at the failings of public education, we've treed the wrong coon! Certainly there are problems in public schools, but they are symptomatic, not causal. The core problem is our society and its perception of education and its value. It appears (i.e., I hypothesize, or, I think) society places a low value on education in general, and on quality education in particular. If that is the case, then a long-term, intensive public awareness and education campaign is required before overall change in public education can be successful. As a generality, the key is the parent, not the child or the school.

[[I agree with you. A friend taught biology in a blue-collar school system, and one parent told her that biology wasn't important. Another said that if she had any talent, she wouldn't be a teacher. In the system I'm in, we teachers have been told that we are valued highly, and in the past three years the demands on our time have increased greatly, while the compensation has increased very slowly. The administration is now trying to rectify the situation, but because of this (and other matters) the system has already lost several good teachers. Since this is an upper-class school, the parents and students know that a good education is important, and good teachers are a part of that. Most were unaware of what our salaries were, and have put some pressure on the administration to correct the situation. I'm waiting for my next contract.]]

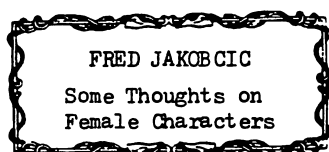
Jerri Swinehart: As to someone's comment about a biology course he took, and apparently felt was irrelevant, never fear, you aren't the only one who has to take irrelevant courses. I am a Middle Eastern Studies major, but I had to take both American History and American Government & Politics. Neither of them has any connection, the way they're taught, to the major I have. Yet the University said I HAD to take them because American high school teachers don't teach them properly. In the college history course

there was only one difference in the teaching methods -- we were taught to critically judge history.

Tom Digby: "The main disadvantage [to the Canadian method of teaching math] is having to keep everything they know active..." Is this really a disadvantage? I think many people's problem-solving skills suffer from keeping only one area of knowledge active at a time. Sort of "Method A alone won't work on this problem, and neither will Method B alone. If it were possible to somehow use a combination of the methods it would be easy, but they were taught in separate math courses so I can only think about one method at a time, so I guess this problem can't be solved."

I do consider plane geometry useful in getting across the concepts of "proof" and "axioms and postulates" and related stuff which can be useful when thinking about other kinds of math and the world in general and philosophy and life and the universe and everything, although perhaps it could get by with fewer examples.

[[Again, I was not clear. I think the disadvantage is for most of the students who pass through my classes (since I usually teach the slow algebra students), and trying to get them to integrate material is very difficult. The one method at a time is good for them. For the brighter students, I think the whole integrations method is much better. The main disadvantage for the teacher is thinking up good problems that will incorporate all such material.]]



Fred Jakobcic: I was surprised when I saw "Some Thoughts on Female Characters" in LL #21, amused when I read it and chuckled over it. Did I really say that in my last letter all too long ago?

[[You sure did. And it wasn't THAT long ago, only about 9 months.]]

Jan Story: How long did Fred Jakobcic's "Thoughts on Female Characters" sit in your files?

Dempsey and Makepeace certainly sounds like a neat show, and I wonder why American TV didn't steal it while it was stealing sitcom plots. Police Woman sounded like dreck; I was busy watching the competition. (At one time it was opposite Lou Grant.) But complaining about it smacks of equi-necrosado-bestiality; it's been out of production since 1978. How about, instead, comparing Makepeace to Chris Cagney or Mary Beth Lacey; to Lucy Bates of Hill Street Blues; or even, in a less serious and more violent vein, to DeeDee McCall of Hunter. Was this article a current submission, or have you been saving it for an appropriatesize space?

Other types of shows have other strong female characters, but the article was about

cops. Incidentally, both Dempsey and Makepeace and The Avengers turned up as answers on Jeopardy last week. I think the category was "British TV."

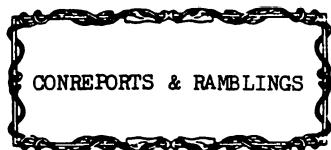
[[I pulled this from Fred's LoC which he sent to me in Spring of last year. I sent out a couple of inquiries for responses to it so I could have a "cut and paste" conversation in print. The response was nil, so I ran it as a regular article, hoping for a large (semi-large? moderate?) reaction from the readership. And I did happen to have an appropriate-sized space for it last issue!]]

Mary Kay Jackson: Er. I'm afraid I have to disagree rather fiercely with Mr. Jakobcic, especially in his next-to-last paragraph. I do not believe the reason men have kept women out of, for example, combat positions is "male lust for women". In fact, the paragraph that phrase occurs in is one of the dumbest things I have read in years. If that is true, how does Mr. Jakobcic explain society's penchant for putting all those adolescent males, whose hormones are at peak levels, in the care of women, i.e., school teachers, for large portions of their day? If men are so afraid of females inciting them to uncontrollable lust, why are women accepted in most workplaces with complete confidence?

I believe the specific example he uses of keeping women out of combat is much more complex than that. At one time, women were a very precious commodity, far too important to be wasted in war, although one must point out societies where women did fight along side their men, such as the very ancient Celts -- before they left the continent. I think the rationalization has two bases: that women need to be protected, and that women are not as good as men at the manly art of killing. Notice that the two are interrelated. I think there probably is an element of fear in here, though not the one that Jakobcic cites. I suspect that men are afraid of women might do in combat. The experience of the Israelis bears this out. They have found women soldiers far more ruthless and merciless than males. And, of course, when the Apaches were really pissed at enemy warriors, they turned them over to the women. It has been my experience that women are far less idealistic and sentimental than men, all stereotypes notwithstanding, and that's what they (the men) are afraid of. Not their uncontrollable lust (which I strongly doubt occurs at all frequently) but women's pragmatism, ferocity and mental strength.

[[I would agree with most of what you said. There are still too many jobs in which women are NOT accepted as equals. And in jobs where there are women working what used to be traditionally men's jobs, they are not accepted in full confidence. Most construction jobs are like that. The maxim that a woman works twice as hard and accomplishes twice the amount of work in half the time so that her male boss will think she is half as good as a man is very true in too many places. The rejoinder

that "Fortunately, this isn't very difficult", is also true. Personally, I would hate to be at the wrong end of a woman's temper. I have seen, and sometimes experienced, what can happen. It isn't pleasant.]]



Robert Sabella: This made me shake my head in amazement. Where do you find the time (and money) to publish Lan's Lantern on such a frequent basis, belong to several APAs and attend so many conventions? I'm surprised you haven't either burned out or gone broke years ago. You're a better man than I am, Gunga Lan.

[[It is not easy doing all the fanac I am involved in, and certainly I have not saved very much money, but I am enjoying myself. Burn-out? If that happens, maybe I'll start catching up on all the books in my library I haven't read yet. But I don't see that coming.]]

Sheryl Birkhead: Several authors have been through the alphabet several times with their book titles. Have you been keeping track of your con attending to see if you've managed to hit each letter? Just wondered.

[[I've sorta been keeping track, but the place I have been putting all my name badges in needs to be organized. I don't think I've hit the entire alphabet, though I've been to about 140 cons. I can't recall one beginning with "Q".]]

Arlan Andrews: So at RIVERCON I was saying I'd do something different for Das Lan-tern, was I? My dear boy, you simply must not spring such surprises on me when I am totally sober (as I was today, while standing in the 20-degree wind at the mailbox, searching your fanzine in near vain for my name!). I should have to return to that same state of inebriety to recall a commitment made in said state, and as I have no con plans for four months or so, such state would be nought near impossible.

Different, eh? Such as writing a letter of thanks for all the freebies over the years? (Well, THANK!) Such as admitting in print, for the first time, that I (moi, ya, yo) pressed for your selection as INCONJUNCTION FGcH in 1987 because I foresaw the future and knew you'd radiate your Hugo glory in a bright Circle of Janus? (Laugh not, lad -- we also had Scott Card and Michael Whelan this year. What goes on in the infamous Circle? On'y pen umbra knows!)

Different, huh? Well how about this promise: I have just sent in the shortest SF story ever written to the SFWA Bulletin. If, Ghod forbid, they turn it down, then I will submit it to you. (As a pro, of course, I shall demand payment, but...how do you pay for zero words? Think upon that and I shall share the secret with you, next con. Shux, I'll give you the story even if they do publish it; are there second serial rights?)

[[Zero words? Okay, let me think. After reading the humorous stories you've had published in Analog and the serious one that appeared in the Mid-December issue of 1986, it could be anything, or nothing. // I am indeed looking forward to the FGcHship at INCONJUNCTION with Andy Offutt and Jack Williamson. It is going to be fun! Thanks for pulling for me, Arlan.]]

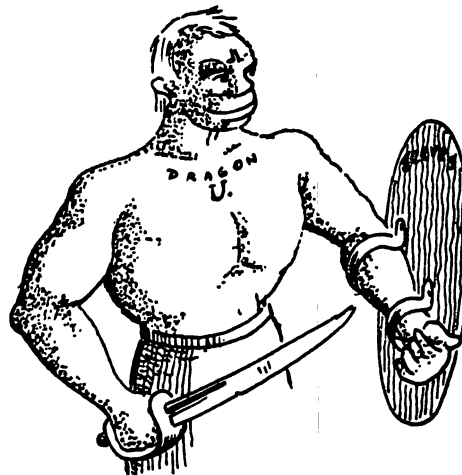
Buck Coulson: Mitchell's full name is Mitchell Clapp. The Off-Centaur people were very impressed by him at OVFF. I didn't ask Bob Laurent, but I suspect Mitchell will be on the Wail Songs tapes of the con.

Craig Ledbetter: I enjoyed "Conreports and Ramblings", mainly because we get a bunch of your writing. CINCLAVE may have been a bad convention but you were rather closed-mouth about it. I guess you didn't want to step on any toes.

[[True, I do have friends on the CINCLAVE committee, and so was reluctant to say anything further. However, as the next letter shows, they want criticism, so they get it.]]

Paula Robinson: I'm writing in response to your review of CINCLAVE I in "Conreports and Ramblings" of Lan's Lantern #21. The CINCLAVE concomm met to discuss the issues you raised and wished to respond to your comments.

Your statement that "CINCLAVE was a lousy convention" struck all of us as rather nebulous. Your only actual complaint was about the overabundance of "Dorsai Irregulars" working security. We had to agree that you were right about the excessive security measures for the small turnout. Unfortunately, CINCLAVE encountered several unexpected problems shortly before the con which hindered our ability to properly publicize and promote the event. For one thing, certain guests had to cancel at the next-to-last minute due to illness, requiring a quick revision of the fliers. Next, bureaucratic (red tape) confusion arose due to our affiliation with the University of Cincinnati Science Fiction Festival II -- Artificial Intelligence, causing several headaches that demanded concomm time and effort to soothe. And finally, above and beyond all this, we suffered a loss of local writers' attendance



due to the independent scheduling of a writers conference by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission on the same weekend as the con. Obviously con attendance was below our expectations, and as a result most of our security personnel really weren't needed.

The concom's greatest concern about your review of CINCLAVE was the lack of useful, constructive criticism it contained. True, CINCLAVE needs improvement; however, how are we to determine how and where to make changes if we are told only that the con was "lousy" and had too many Dorsai? Based on what you wrote, it seems your resolution not to attend CINCLAVE II "unless [you] win the lottery or something" is more a personal decision than a comment on the con.

The next CINCLAVE is planned to occur in 1988. The concom agreed that time is needed to work on problems, provide adequate promotion, and ensure better overall organization and attendance. CINCLAVE II will be run independently of other (university) functions in order to avoid mismatched expectations between fen, the concom, and other groups. Security will consist of con personnel and volunteers only and will be adjustable according to need. Other changes will also be made as necessity dictates -- as far in advance as possible.

Your interest in CINCLAVE is not unappreciated. Any comments you or other con attendees would like to send to help improve CINCLAVE II are very welcome and may be sent to my address.

[[All my conreports are personal comments, and I usually do not make detailed criticisms. Besides, knowing some of the behind-the-scenes squabbles, I didn't want to bring things like that up. However, since you want more "constructive criticism", you asked for it.

[[The association with the University caused major problems in scheduling flights for the attendance of out-of-town guests. Given that the person in charge of finances rarely if ever returned calls to Maia who was supposed to be making those arrangements, she reluctantly, but understandably, quit the position. Lack of that kind of cooperation had further repercussions, mainly why several possible attendees cancelled out. Reservations and travel arrangements should be made more than three weeks before the con. Also, the con was opposite the Nebula Banquet, something which, I realize, you didn't know when you originally scheduled the con. In addition, I heard that your committee waited until the last minute to invite some of the local writers, and some never received an invitation at all.

[[Having a first con at a downtown, expensive hotel was a bad move. The function space, one track of programming, and the widely spread facilities were not conducive to a first con which you, as experienced con-going people, should have realized. You should also have understood that you would not have a large attendance. Putting the Huckster room and art show in the same room would have been fine, but closing the hucksters room before the art show was not, since one had

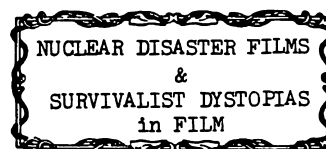
to walk through the hucksters area to get to the art show. The main function room was too large for the panels -- one had to walk about a hundred feet before reaching the chairs. And the program book did not list the panel participants.

[[CINCLAVE is the second convention in two months in the southwestern Ohio area, following another new con in Dayton. Add to that the two other conventions in the same area in June and July, and you find that the place is saturated with conventions, four in a five month period. You may find yourself with fewer con attendees because of this. Money will stretch only so far, and this is the main reason why I probably will not attend the next CINCLAVE. My resources are not unlimited, and I would rather spend them for a con I am sure will enable me to enjoy both it and myself.]]

Mary Kay Jackson: Glad you enjoyed MARCON. You might mention to your readers that the dates for MARCON XXII have been changed. IT'S NOT OUR FAULT!!! (And it's a very long story.) The dates are now May 8-10. GoH is Michael Kube-McDowell, TM is Juanita Coulson, FGoH is Bill Roper.

Re: RIVERCON: Mitchell Clapp grew up in Australia, not New Zealand. He was born in America and went to school here from high school on but spent the intervening years in Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia. His songs are very amusing. Have you heard the one about ESPN or mattress tags which say "Do not remove under penalty of law?" (He does serious stuff too, and is an entirely delightful and charming fellow.)

[[No, I haven't heard either of them. Maybe next time at the next con...]]



Jim Thompson: I liked the "Survivalist Dystopia in Film" article. I had some survivalist feelings in my adolescent years, and felt that anything was survivable, given enough big guns and a powerful car.

Steven Fox: The article on "Recent Nuclear War Films" was a real good read. The movie Defcon 4 was really dumb. I did wonder why the writer decided to include this film since to my eyes it did not try in any way to deal with the real issue of nuclear war. Just another Grade-Z SF movie. The movie Threads was of course excellent! It's main strong point is showing the real damage done by atomic warheads on people, property and so forth; not much on character, but developing character was not necessary here. Giving us real deep characters has a tendency to blunt the main thrust of this issue when you're using the medium of film. Threads is now available on video cassette at your local video store.

Rob Rodgers: I was living in Lawrence, Kansas, when The Day After was filmed and broadcast.



I've heard that the rumor is true that it was originally made as a two-night mini-series, with the break at the point the war occurs, but they then decided that people wouldn't tune to watch the second part, so it was cut to a two-and-a-half hour one-parter.

The effects of the radiation weren't shown realistically. The vomiting and diarrhea weren't even hinted at. What was more disturbing was that gross liberties were taken with the geography of Eastern Kansas. The KU Med School is in Kansas City, not in Lawrence. There was one scene showing missiles being launched from behind the South Park Gazebo. It is fifty miles to the nearest missile silos in that direction. They had some of the accents wrong for eastern Kansas.

"Nuclear Winter" first hit the media only a few weeks before the movie was aired, much too late to make it into the script.

On the whole, it was a lousy movie. But it seemed that for a couple of days, the eyes of the world were on Lawrence KS. On the day after The Day After, they did a Nightline episode from the KU Student Union. Previously, the only movie ever made in Lawrence had been Linda Lovelace for President. (I'm not kidding.)

[[A couple of my students came up with all sorts of jokes about the spin-offs of the film. A new series, with a different city bombed every week. The "Day After Dolls", with hair that falls out. I agree it was a bad film, but whoever hyped it sure did a good job of getting people to watch it; I don't think it was as bad a financial loss as it might have been.]]

Craig Ledbetter: Dale Skran, Jr., contributed a lot of fine material this go-around, and his "Survivalist Dystopia in Films" made for a different look at SF films. His discussion of such titles as Ladybug, Ladybug and Massive Retaliation were refreshing because you rarely find any mention of them elsewhere. It was a little jumbled in parts (the Massive Retaliation synopsis, for example), but it didn't detract from the overall article. His companion piece on "Recent Nuclear War Films" was also well written and I enjoyed his opinions. Unfortunately, I've not seen any of the titles he mentioned.

Tom Digby: This may have something to do with titling a movie "Defcon 4", or it may not, but according to the book version of War Games, "DEFCON" is an indication of U.S. military alert status (maybe from DEFense CONdition or some such?). DEFCON 5 is peace, DEFCON is total war, and in-between numbers are states in-between states of uneasiness. It also may also be that someone has the meanings of the numbers garbled.

[[Yes, I think so. See next letter.]]

Jerri Swinehart: Someone did not understand what DEFCON 4 was. Well, it is my understanding that, in the military, there are 5 levels of alertness. DEFCON 5 would be all out war, while DEFCON 1 would be peace. In 1973, as an example, we were at DEFCON 3 for a short period of time during the Yom Kippur

War, because Russia said she was sending her own troops to the Middle East. Fortunately, when we countered by putting our own troops on alert, Russia backed down.

Cy Chauvin: I have also been very interested in "Survivalist Dystopias", as Dale Skran puts it, in films or books. In fact, I've thought about writing about it myself. I've noticed that I like Robinson Crusoe-type adventures for much the same reasons I like these disaster stories. I've also wondered why other people like watching or reading about our civilization being destroyed. Do you suppose most don't like it very much? There's an article lurking there somewhere.

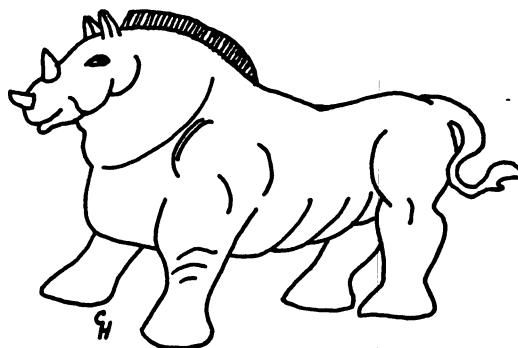
[[I would be delighted if you would write it, Cy. Get it to me by mid-March? Or anyone else who might want to try?]]

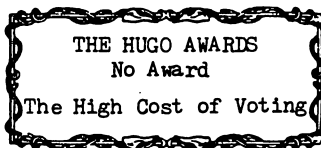
Mary Long: Of the nuclear films, the best yet is Threads, which did a fair job of showing what it might be like, although of course it was still a bit "glossed over". One of the things I thought was a clever touch was the sort of fractured language which, a few years later, people communicated in. Though I'm still not too convinced that the last bit was not cut. You recall, the girl gave birth, and was horrified. Was the child deformed (which I think it would have been, even given she could carry to term in view of the radiation which was around), and who was that man they showed so (apparently) significantly? I'll have to see it again when they rebroadcast.

The Interview  
with  
FRED OLEN RAY

Steven Fox: The interview with Fred Olen Ray was entertaining. I'll look for some of his stuff next time I go to pick up vidces.

Elizabeth Osborne: I couldn't believe that interview with Fred Olen Ray. I just watched The Tomb a few weeks ago and could not believe how bad it was. This is certainly Golden Turkey Award time stuff. I thought that it was something put out by a film school as a class project. How else to account for the no-budget storyline. I hope to show it soon at a meeting of my friends and I expect to have them rolling on the floor after a few scenes. In fact, I wrote a terrible review about it for Vampire Quarterly, a horror fanzine.





Howard Devore: I suppose I might as well get into the argument. I'll stand back here in the corner and, as the combatants circle past me, I'll try to get a blow in from the back.

What, you'll ask, is my position on NO AWARD? Well, I'm one of the people who created it, and we're going to have a two-minute history session right here. Way back when, someone created the movie category for Hugos and everyone went along with it. Then in 1958, Detroit won the bid to put on the 1959 Worldcon. We established the principle of letting fans do their own nominations -- instead of having the committee select the contenders and having fandom select the winners from that lot.

We got some nominations for "Best SF or Fantasy Movie" -- not many, but a few. And what were these epics? We listed The Fly, The Horror of Dracula, and The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad, but it was the opinion of the committee that all of them were pretty lousy. On our own initiative we added "No Award" and told people we really were not happy with the selections. When the Hugos were announced, No Award had won by a huge majority and it's been listed much of the time since then. I still think we did fandom a service, and for the record I'd like to note that the committee consisted of Roger Sims/Fred Prophet (Chairmen), Mary Price, Dean McLaughlin, George Young, and myself... yeah, six of us, and we did the whole damned thing without 400 staff people. The entire committee is still active, attend conventions, etc., regularly. "The Misfits" are a hardy buncha bastards!

Someone commented that ERBDOM, a Burroughs fanzine, once won a Hugo and thought that inappropriate. I have some knowledge of that particular instance since I was the Co-Chairman that year. It was 1966 (Cleveland) and the editor of ERBDOM urged his readers to join and vote...as solid a case of block-voting as you could want. Burroughs items took two Hugos and competed for a third that year. As Co-Chairman I didn't approve of the situation, but it was sort-of legal and we let it pass. It's never been illegal to block-vote; just a sign of piss-poor taste!

[[I urge my readers to nominate and vote -- and I hope they understand that I DO NOT mean to nominate and vote for Lan's Lantern. I want people to participate in the whole Hugo process; read, think about it, nominate, and vote!]]

Now, speaking of Quality Fanzines, I'll run down the list of fanzine nominees in 1959: Cry of the Nameless (F.M. & Elinor Busby, Toskey, Weber); Fanac --the winner-- (Terry Carr, Ron Elik); Hyphen (Walt Willis, Chuck Harris); JD Argassay (Lynn Hickman); SF Times (Taurasi & Co.); and Yandro (Buck & Juanita Coulson). Any one of those earned and deserved a Hugo, and not one of them published the crap that is so popular now.

People keep saying that the way to avoid block-voting situations is to join the convention and vote, thereby making it impossible for a fanzine or an individual to win on the basis of a handful of votes. So I ain't been doing my duty. The cheap way to vote is to get a supporting membership and then non-attending membership. To be sure you'd better buy supporting memberships for all three contenders (\$5 to \$10 each), plus another \$15 to \$25 when one of them wins.

At this point you've invested from \$30 to \$50 and what will you get for it? A chance to vote plus a Program Book and a few Progress Reports. I can think of a lot of things I can buy for 30 to 50 bucks that will last a lot longer than a Hugo vote.

I have contended for a long time that the committee is making a fortune on non-attending members and that it could be held down to \$5-\$10. A voting but non-attending membership could be sold for \$5, with perhaps another \$3 if they wished a copy of the Program Book. Then, to avoid someone buying memberships (to win a Hugo), you might add a restriction that they must have been a member of three out of the last five Worldcons -- attending or non-attending. Since these would be cut off about July 1st, it would be simple, using computers, to check out previous convention lists. However, I don't expect anything like this to go into effect; every committee is now determined to take in a quarter of a million dollars and to be bigger and better. (I've got some thoughts on that situation, too, but we'll leave them for another time.)

Jan Story: The individuals who complained about the high cost of a supporting Worldcon membership caused me to do some homework. I couldn't find prices of supporting memberships for 1984-1986, but in 1983 it was \$15, and in 1987 it is also \$15. While that may be expensive compared to the prices of 10 years ago, it still amounts to 29c a week. This is prohibitively expensive? I'm not sure Mike Glicksohn's fears of vote-buying hold water, but in view of how cheap a supporting membership really is, a voting-only membership seems unnecessary. It might even increase costs by creating additional paperwork for Worldcon staffs.

Sheryl Birkhead: Your Guest Editorial took a bit of fortitude to run. It seems to me that there is a bit of a problem with definitions. Does "best" mean best compared to others RIGHT NOW, or best in an absolute sense? If it is in the absolute sense, then perhaps it cannot be voted upon until some unspecified time in the future when all runners are identified. It just happens to be true that some winners in the past appear to have fulfilled both definitions quite admirably. I personally feel satisfied with the way I vote -- and if everything nominated was what I felt to be crud, then I would have not felt any remorse voting No Award. Luckily, I did not feel that was the case, and did not so vote....

Tom Digby: I feel, as some of your other letter-writers, not qualified to vote on the hugos.

I tend to wonder if nowadays, what with the giant Worldcons and zillions of sub-fandoms, the phrase "generally available fanzine" is a self contradiction. If the circulation of a zine is smaller than the number of final ballots turned in (total, not just those voting in the fan categories), then maybe that zine should be ruled ineligible. How many of the fanzine entries would qualify under that rule?

[[Off-hand I don't recall how many voted this past year, but I'm sure there were more than 500. My circulation is fast approaching 600 again, in spite of some efforts to reduce my mailing list. LL and Universal Translator might have been the only ones to qualify under that condition...maybe.]]

Elizabeth Osborne: I was upset to hear about the attempt by people push No Award for fanzine Hugo. Everyone has a right to an opinion, but the ad in SF Chronicle was low. Of course, the new little rocket ship you now have in your home is worth it, and you're the one laughing all the way home. Universal Translator was not as lucky. While it wasn't good enough to win a Hugo, it was by no means a bad fanzine or catalog. I've read enough of the latter to know them, and UI was the best at what it did -- as a catalog and news-source for media fanzines. It was especially good for those who couldn't get to conventions or have the personal contacts that one seems to need to get on a fanzine list. It was not junk, nor deserved to be treated as an "uppity" media fanzine. The people who put out UI did so for seven years and published a good product. I can't help but think that the real reason the editors of UI quit was that they were so badly treated by "truefans" that they decided to throw in the towel.

[[You did write me earlier about the stated reason the UI people decided to call it quits, that it was no longer any fun for them, and they had decided when they started that once it no longer was fun to do, they would stop. While the SFC ad might have contributed to the reason (and likewise any feelings they may have picked up from "truefans"), I hope that this was not their real reason for stopping publication. There's room enough in fandom for their zine.]]

R. Laurraine Tutihasi: I can't agree with Terry Jeeves about the Hugos. If he's unhappy with the nominees, why doesn't he participate in the nominations? And I'm getting a bit tired of people complaining about the nature of the Hugos. Every award is like that; whether it's the Hugo or the Nobel Prize, it's basically a popularity contest. As long as people are human, this will not change.

#### Hugo Congratulations

Jean Weber: Congrats for the Hugo, even though I am not in favor of fan Hugos. No reflection on the nominees or the winners, I just think the whole thing's a farce, especially since few Worldcon members even know

about fanzines, fanwriters, etc., much less have enough knowledge to make a choice between them. Hell, even I don't know who many of the nominees are.

That aside, I think LL is a good zine -- the so-called "fannish" ones usually bore me (unless I know the people involved). I like sercon, as you might guess. Keep up the good work, OK?

[[Okay! I hope I offer enough variety to keep people of a lot of different interests happy.]]

Sheryl Birkhead: I really look forward to the Worldcon Report nextish -- it should have a lot of behind-the-scene stuff from an honest-to-goodness Hugo Winner! Did you build a new mantelpiece for it or what?

[[We didn't have a mantel to begin with and I've had no time to build one. The Hugo sits comfortably on a floor speaker in the living room; we don't have a shelf tall enough to accommodate it. // The Worldcon report is in this issue. I hope you enjoy it.]]

Harry Andruschak: I should say congratulations for winning the best fanzine Hugo, even tho I still wish Niekas had won it.

Your comments on page 71 are....sad. "In fact, after seeing what I had been producing the past year, some apologized and said they wished they had known how much I had improved." Well, if that isn't really white of them. Ye House Nigger actually showed a little improvement, and Massa wants to pat you on the head!!!

Yes, feel free to quote this snide comment in the lettercol....such childish arrogance that only they are "faaaanish" and know what is best for fandom! The more I hear and read about that "No Award" ad, the more I am convinced that we have some really petty spite.

And the spite is based on the fact that those who can...do, and those who can't, run ads. I mean, I have not seen, in the last 5 or so years, one single fanzine by any of the signers that in any way measures up to Anvil, Holier Than Thou, or Ian's Lantern. Not one single competent fanzine from the lot !! Not one!!!!

It almost makes me sad that LASFS has discontinued the "Fugghead of the Year" awards. That group of signers would certainly merit.

[[I am a bit kinder than you, Andy. I took their comments as saying that they based their opinions on my past efforts, which, I admit, were not as good as what I have been doing recently. My more recent zines have not only improved in looks, but in content.]]

Marty Cantor: I am in complete agreement with Milt Stevens: the Best Fanzine Hugo exists solely to bestow egoboo.

I have a basic philosophical difference with you as to the reasons why fanzines exist. Sure, we were all initially drawn to sfandom because of our love for SF. Most fanzine fans I know, though, have found that fandom (in, of, and by itself) is even more

fascinating a subject than SF -- and we get pleasure out of participating in fandom with our fanzines.

Many of us still enjoy SF and SF topics -- at times these themes will surface in our zines. In my case I will touch upon SF themes at times in Holier Than Thou, but it is not major to why I put out the zine. At one point (issues #8 through #16 (if I am remembering correctly)) there was a very heated discussion (Darrell Schweitzer, Joseph Nicholas and I contributed articles about the subject, and there were many locs besides) on Old Wave versus New Wave. It all started with a review I wrote of a Gardner Dozois anthology (I think that I was happy when I finally found a story that was vaguely science fictionish in an anthology that was supposedly all SF -- mostly I was annoyed with the non-SF which still, often, passes for SF today). Anyway, the point here is that SF may inhabit some of the pages of a faaanish zine like HII, but it is not only not integral to fannish fanzines, it is not even necessary for these zines to pay attention to SF. These zines are about SF fandom, not SF. And, as it is SF fandom which puts on Worldcons, and administers the Hugos (and presumably provides the bulk of the voters), there is no way that a faaanish fanzine should not be as qualified to win an award voted on by its peers. In this way I feel that a faaanish fanzine like HII (which may never again mention SF but will ALWAYS be concerned with sfandom and related things) is just as qualified to be on the Hugo ballot as is LL (a zine much more serconish than HII).

Anyway, congrats on your Hugo.

[[I see your point, and you've said it much more clearly than many others who've tried to explain this to me before. We still have a basic philosophical difference behind our fanzines, but at least there is some understanding between us. Thanks, and good luck in the nominations race next year!]]

Dale Bishop:

Paula Gold Franke: Just got the latest issue of Analog and saw the announcement for the Hugo winner.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Great feeling, huh?

PS: Do you think Glicksohn's editorial had anything to do with it?

[[Yes. Some people told me that they read Mike's editorial, thought about it, and voted for me anyway. Mike's comment was, "As long as it made you think!" Mike himself was very happy that I won.]]

Dave & Carol Yoder: You hung in there real well: Congratulations on your Hugo! We were very pleased to see you get this richly deserved recognition.

Does this mean that now you can relax a bit, having achieved a goal, or that you now have the pressure of trying to maintain or improve upon this level of performance?



Should think that it'll at least draw broader attention to your future projects and plans. (And maybe you can repeat -- even start a dynasty!)

[[I am going to try to improve -- not that I am under any outside pressure to do so, but from myself. As for my other projects, I do hope that people will contribute to my Special Issues. And a repeat would be nice!]]

John Thiel: I was expecting another Lantern shortly after reading the news about what fanzine had won the Hugo in Analog. I'm glad to see there is a lot of material in this issue about that award. And Congratulations! It is nice to see a more known-to-me fanzine making it, and I surely think you deserve it after all those Specials, in addition to the usual cross-section of articles.

Paula Robinson: HOLY SOCKS, LAN, YOU GOT IT!!! Congratulations on the well-earned Hugo Award, Mr. Laskowski, Sir!

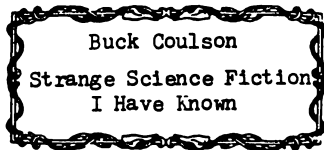
I learned about your accomplishment last week from a friend who, unlike me, was able to get down to Atlanta. "Oh, by the way, Paula," he said casually, "Lan got the Hugo."

I whooped. I'm really happy for you, Lan! (Besides, anyone willing to let a frequent FGOH explain on his own inner cover about why LL "shouldn't" get a Hugo deserves the award twice as much.)

Other congratulations recieved from:

Joyce Jensen, David Thayer, Al Salyer, Charlie Terry [[addressed to "The Great and Powerful Wizard of Fanzines]], Sam & Mary Long, Cathy Howard, Patrick Nielsen Hayden (Despite having put my name on That Ad, I'm glad there are fanzines like LL, and wish there were more of them.), Mary Manchester (I cannot believe that No Award would have appreciated the honor.), Roger & Sandy Reynolds, Greg Frederick, Kathy Nerat, Martin Morse Wooster, Jim Thompson, Colin Hinz, Brad Foster (green-green-green-green-green----). Roland Green, Frieda Murray and Violet, Meredyth Carter, Rick & Paula Morgan, Keith Soltys, T.K. Atherton. Mark Schulzinger (I heard you had a visit from HUGO! [[And congratulations to you, Mark. I enjoyed your first published story in Analog this past year!]], Bruce Burdick (Gee, I know a real HUGO winner!).

And many more....



Mary Kay Jackson: I enjoyed Buck's article. It seems logical that nobody would know much stranger books than Buck. Half-Gods sounds particularly interesting but god (or half-god) knows where I'd ever find a copy.

John Thiel: Coulson has always been good on unusual SF, and he is good in this issue, too. He didn't miss a one of the books he had. [[Uh, ...right.]] I enjoy his style, and it is rare to see him write an article.

[[Buck writes a regular column for Anvil, and occasionally appears in other fanzines -- but, true, mostly he writes locs.]]

Sheryl Birkhead: Buck Coulson can ramble on interestingly on such diverse topics. "Strange SF I Have Known" -- he's the first person I've seen actually put such thoughts into writing.

Cy Chauvin: I found Buck Coulson's article disappointing. His very premise discouraged me: "There are occasionally some items of interest among the rubbish; not gems, but readable books." Are readable books so few and far between? I have so many books to read I can't find time for them; but I'm always interested in finding out about books I might enjoy more. But just more obscure books that are only readable? Maybe Buck has higher standards than I do, and one he'd only say was "readable" I'd call a "gem". Otherwise the whole point of the article is rather weak.

[[I took the article to mean that there were some readable books among those that other people have thrown out; among those books discarded are novels that are pretty good, but forgotten.]]

Martin Morse Wooster: I'm glad you published Buck Coulson's article. Coulson has a wealth of curious learning; the last four books he mentions are new to me, and he writes about these obscure books in such an enthusiastic manner that I'd like to read them. I wish in the future he'd give some publication data with each title; it makes a world of difference to those of us who use interlibrary loans whether a book was published by Doubleday or Full Court Press.

[[Since I do publish the addresses of the contributors, you can get in touch with any person and ask for more details, such as you want. However, it is a good practice to provide such publication data as you suggest, and I will keep it in mind for any upcoming article.]]

Robert Sabella: This totally floored me. I got the impression Buck spends endless hours scavenging through bookstores looking for every obscure science fiction book in existence. For heaven's sake, why? If the ones he discussed are actually the best of

the lot, I can't imagine all the trash he had to read finding them!

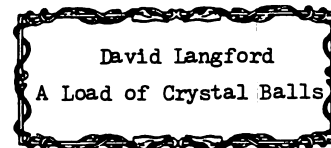
Bob Rodgers: Groff Conklin did an anthology, Science Fiction Oddities (Berkley, 1966). Some of the oddities were pretty odd.

Elizabeth Osborne: A note to Buck Coulson about his comments about miscegenation and the present day laws on the books. Two Supreme Court Cases, McLaughlin v. Florida (1964) and Loving et ux. v. Virginia (1967) struck down miscegenation laws in this country. The first struck down the one which "prohibited cohabitation between unmarried whites and blacks." The second case struck down a Virginia law barring marriage between blacks and whites by saying such laws were violating the equal protection clause of the Constitution. My source was the 5th edition of The American Constitution: Its Origins & Development by Alfred H. Kelly and Winfred A. Harbison.

By the way, I loved his article.

Craig Ledbetter: "Strange Science Fiction I Have Known" begs for a sequel. I love this type of article that's done in film fanzines, and seeing it done to novels is just as much fun. Also, while I'm at it, let me through a few kudos Buck Coulson's way. His writing I've enjoyed for years and I follow his column in The Comic Buyer's Guide (Year of Jubilee) every time it appears. I hope there is always room for more articles by Mr. Coulson.

[[Sure there's room for more articles by Buck Coulson. All he has to do is write them.]]



Martin Morse Wooster: The high point of LL #21 was, of course, the Langford talk. I've seen several Langford speeches, and they deserve to be collected; he writes with a wit and flair that few of us in the US can match. Yet I'm surprised that Langford, in explaining the numerous Tuckerisms that dot the text of The Third Millennium, somehow overlooked his funniest line. According to Langford and Stableford, the first genetically engineered "ectogenetic" child was one "Cesar Bergeron," who "spent his early years besieged by researchers and Peeping Toms eager to know whether he lacked some essential humanity. His neurosis in later life can be ascribed to this inquisition, rather than being an answer to it." Comparisons with certain Puerto Rican fans are, of course, coincidental.

[[Langford was delivering his speech to an British audience who probably would not have been interested in that particular Tuckerism.]]

The Third Millennium is good, by the way, not just for its Tuckerisms, but also for its extrapolation. It's an excellent book,



I THINK THE EDITOR NEEDS  
MORE THAN JUST A BLUE PENCIL....



far more deserving of a Hugo than Science Made Stupid.

Robert Sabella: Basically this was a rather lengthy advertisement for his book The Third Millennium. As an article it was interesting (if occasionally infuriating with its frequent smug barbs), but as a Guest of Honor speech, it raised my eyebrows. I wonder if any NOVACon attendees felt cheated that they went to hear a speech and instead heard an advertisement. It reminds me of the flack Harlan Ellison took at the 1967 Worldcon (NYCON 3) when he used every opportunity to plug his new volume Dangerous Visions. Of course, if Langford is a good speaker (personally I've never heard him), he might have amused the audience enough to overcome his topic.

[[I didn't read this as an advertisement, rather, it was more the amusing things that happened on the way to getting the book published. From all I've heard, Langford is a very good speaker, and his writing is well received among British fans. American fans, too....]]

Cy Chauvin: Dave Langford's speech was funny and sensible (as usual).

Sheryl Birkhead: It sounds as if Dave Langford's first con made a rather lasting impression on him. I THINK mine was PHILCON in '68 or so -- shows how much of an impression I carry with me.

Jim Thompson: I liked the Langford talk on the failures of predictive fiction. A while back I had read John Brunner's work surrounding The Sheep Look Up. The resulting blue funk I developed almost convinced me that regeneration of the species of human being was a truly bad idea. In the thirteen years that separate the reading and now, the cozy cocoon of common worries have insulated my consciousness from those dire predictions, though I get the uneasy feeling that more than a few have come to pass in one form or another. So it goes.

Craig Ledbetter: David Langford's NOVACon speech was a delight to read, filled with dry humor and wit. I only wish I could have heard it in person (talking about a snowball's chance in Hell). Glad you set aside the space to print it.

DICKSON & SHEA

Public Statements

Martin Morse Wooster: Gordon Dickson certainly had a right to be mad at David Shea, but why did he have to put on his ten-ton boots and say that he has never ever touched alcohol? Good Lord, I remember back when I was a Midwest fan (in the late 70s) how giving Dickson bottles of Tullamore Dew was the Thing To Do; I can hardly imagine him pitching all that expensive whiskey out the window.

There are also several "cutesy songs" about Dickson drinking; I don't remember the words, since I'm not a folksinger, but they certainly do exist. In short, Dickson's letter is a perfect model of how not to reply to misinformation; he should have learned a lesson L. Sprague deCamp taught a generation ago -- keep your replies to fanzines as short as possible, and only respond to matters of fact.

[[You did not read Gordy's statement carefully enough. Yes, he used to drink (I saw him do so with my own eyes, several years ago), but he is unable to consume alcohol NOW, and has not done so in the past few years because of his health problems. // Yes, folks I know have confirmed the "cutesy songs" about Gordy's drinking, but as with most songs of that type, they exaggerated his alcoholic consumption. // I thought a short reply would have been better, but I let both David Shea and Gordon Dickson decide how to approach their statements and apologies.]]

Sheryl Birkhead: On the Dickson comment: I never gave it a second thought, but I see how others might have interpreted it -- an unfortunate problem.

Craig Ledbetter: I'm not big on all the in-jokes of fandom, but I think the space devoted to Shea's "harmless" comment and Mr. Dickson's reply was space well spent. In today's society "recreational drugs" does have a disreputable sound to it. Things need to be explained for all to see. Fandom has a way of emphasizing "trivial" comments. Good move on your part.

PULP and CELLULOID

Buck Coulson: Your fanzine is intimidating, you know that? 100+ pages to be looked over before one can even start to consider a loc. Of course, getting into it makes it easier, because so much of it is book reviews and I try to avoid other people's book reviews. I mean, reviewer A says that Eat Durston, Computer Cowboy is dull, derivative and so filled with typos as to be almost incomprehensible, while reviewer B calls it "A refreshingly original example of the newest wave of sci-fi", while I never heard of A or B before, and suspect they're both bubbleheads. Or worse, I have heard of them, and

know they're both bubble-heads. So I read Budrys' reviews for his anecdotes about publishing, and listen to my friends' opinions, and ignore the rest.

Steven Fox: The book reviews once again found me some new reading material. Your review of Highway to Eternity has me now looking for it. Simak's other books are excellent also.

Craig Ledbetter: As always I look forward to a long "Pulp and Celluloid" section, so it's nice to see the tradition continue in the latest LL. For the most part your book reviewers are able to discuss in some detail the plot (without giving away too much) of the novel and this, along with their critical commentary, adds up to a better than usual results (compared to other review-oriented publications).

Tom Digby: Regarding biased reviewers, I remember the L.A. Times had a militant atheist review a book pushing atheism. Most of the review consisted of "I'm an atheist and religion is stupid and you should buy this book because it tells you how stupid religion is." I think they'd have done better with either an agnostic, or else a pair of reviewers with opposing biases.

One sometimes-effective way to show how far away (in time or space) a story setting is from us is to have character try to explain to each other things that are obvious to the reader, but have them get the explanation wrong.

Clifton Amsbury: As to Classics (p. 52), the quote is an understatement. Actually, a classic is any creation which despite the passage of time can still be considered very good. If it is not "older than one's self", the title may be a prediction (as when I apply the term to Carolyn Cherryh's 40,000 in Gehenna), but there are many stories younger than myself which are old enough for this title to be retrospective, like Princess of Mars, and Tarzan of the Apes, or The Air Trust and City of Endless Night.

Spider Robinson: Callahan's Secret

Robert Sabella: Some well-written reviews here that either made me want to run out and buy some books or deliberately avoid them. I only disagreed strongly with the twin raves about Spier Robinson's Callahan's Secret. His Callahan's Bar stories in Analog always turned me off. Robinson comes across as extremely holier-than-thou while trying so hard to win the reader's love and respect. Ugh.

Greg Bear: Blood Music

Craig Ledbetter: Just when I thought I'd read all the reviews of Blood Music I could stand, along comes Laura Todd's excellent essay. If I'd read hers first, I would have rushed out and bought the hardcover.

Steven Fox: Greg Bear's Blood Music was excellent! Not your run-of-the-mill runaway plague story.

Orson Scott Card: Ender's Game

Cy Chauvin: Mark Leeper makes some important criticism of that vastly overrated and sadistic novel, Ender's Game. I agree that Ender is never presented as a convincing child (and he starts the novel as a six year old!); neither are his sister or brother. There is also no relationship between what Ender learns in his training school and what would be necessary for him to know in a real space battle, even under the conditions Card sets up. Most of the training is in hand-to-hand combat, but this is never used in the real battles. Much is made of the fact that the Buggers are a novel and unique alien invasion force, operating for mysterious motives. What is the explanation the author finally offers? "The buggers are bugs. They're like ants and bees. A queen, the workers" (p. 294). The sophistication of SF has just taken a giant leap backwards by awarding this the Hugo and Nebula.

I also object to the novel's sadism. It is hard otherwise to explain the arbitrary cruelty of Mazer Rackham his last teacher, who trips and tackles Ender, which is sort of offered as zen wisdom. Or the cruelty of the teachers, his brother and other students. The explanation offered is that if Ender is out there surrounded by an enemy fleet, there's going to be no one he can call for help. This flimsey premise is never put to the test since Ender is never put out in a spaceship all by himself, or even with crew, but instead fights the battle all by remote control, and with the assistance of fleet commanders. This novel makes no sense. It only seems to exist to provide a reason for the description of physical and psychological torture of children. I might be more hesitant about leveling this charge but for the fact that "The Fringe", a novelette by Card also nominated for a Hugo this past year, has the same sort of sadistic streak in it. I find them both repulsive, and finished them only because I wanted to be a fair and knowledgeable Hugo voter.

[[Scott's basic premise in writing is to find the character who is in the most pain and concentrate on him/her. // There was some exaggeration, but kids do treat each other the way Scott described them. Kids also treat their teachers in somewhat the way as described in "The Fringe". //Ender also learned ship tactics by computer. Even so, some hand-to-hand techniques, especially when organized for space, have applications for ships to ship battles.]]

The John W. Campbell Letters: Vol. One

Clifton Amsbury: Maia reports that the introduction to The John W. Campbell Letters: Vol. One "reports that Campbell often said, 'I don't care what people think, just so long as they, by God, think.'" Assuming this reference is to JWC, Jr., it is, like much of what he said, either self-delusion or hyperbole. He cared passionately what people thought and spent much time trying to shape those thoughts.

One of the striking differences between the letters I received from Dear John and those from his successor Ben Bova is that

John tried to convert me to his ideas while Ben would loftily let me know that such ideas as I had which differed from his were therefore inconsequential and of no value, not worth having.

Pamela Sargent: Venus of Dreams

Tom Digby: The review of Venus of Dreams mentions "one of the finest women writers of science fiction today." Does that mean that the same output from a male writer would've been just ho-hum normal stuff (which seems to put down women), or maybe there's a separate sub-genre of stuff "women writers" write? If the latter, could a male hope to become a "woman writer" by studying the genre and taking sensitivity training?

Sherri Tepper: Blood Heritage

Jerri Swinehart: I've read an awful lot of horror in the past few years. Some has been very good, and some has been gosh awful bad. I decided after reading Blood Heritage last summer that it was not a very good book. After reading Maia's review of Blood Heritage, I decided that the book was probably the author's first attempt (I hope) at horror writing. This would explain some of the things I didn't like about it.

Alison Utley: A Traveller in Time

R. Lorraine Tutihasi: Evelyn C. Leeper asks in her review if the double "l" in "traveller" is the British preference. It is, and it is also absolutely acceptable in American English as well.

Robert Sabella: "Adventure Science Fiction"

Steven Fox: Robert Sabella's article on "Adventure Science Fiction" was enjoyable. I wished he had given a list of other books he liked. It would have helped. Anyway, he is correct: Varley's books are quite creative in that he has managed to create a wholly alien world. My own list of adventure SF is as follows:

Jack Chalker: "Well World" series, "Four Lords of the Diamonds" series, River of the Dancing Gods, Vengeance of the Dancing Gods, Demons of the Dancing Gods.

Arthur C. Clarke: City and the Stars

Alan Dean Foster: Icerigger, Mission to Moulokin, Voyage to the City of the Dead

Keith Laumer: Dinosaur Beach

Gerard Klein: The Mote in Time's Eye

Clifford Simak: Special Deliverance

Piers Anthony: Mute, Thousand Star, Battle Circle

That, Lan, is of course a very small list, but why go on.

#### TV Anthologies

R. Lorraine Tutihasi: It looks as though Saturday night was not any better than Friday night for Twilight Zone. I know that I personally tend to be out as much on Saturday night as on Friday night. Thursday night

wasn't any good either, as the LASFS meets then. To date, I have not seen any of this season's episodes. My sister taped all but one, however, so I should be able to see them sometime.

On the other hand, Monday night for Amazing Stories is a great improvement. I've seen many of this season's episodes. It's not a bad show. It's just too bad it was up against Murder She Wrote last year.

#### Space Camp

Mark Bernstein: While I'm not one to get into arguments or feuds, a couple of things said by Martin Morse Wooster in his comments on my review of Space Camp have annoyed me sufficiently to spark comments to him.

First of all, Mr Wooster, you have stated that "all films are manipulative" (emphasis yours). We obviously have far different definitions of the word, and I feel I should clarify the definition I prefer in order to put my review in a context more understandable to you. Some films (a minority, unfortunately) are made because someone had a story they wanted to tell, and everything in the film (writing, directing, acting, lighting, music, etc.) is shaped to tell the story, to communicate to the audience. When it works, the results can be awesomely moving. As a recent example, I cite Children of a Lesser God. Unfortunately, when it doesn't work, these films are dismissed with adjectives like "murky", "obscure", or "self-indulgent", and they end up being financial failures. As a result, most films these days take short-cuts -- they play on stereotypes, symbolism, and melodramatics to force the members of the audience to feel a particular way. These are the films I refer to as "manipulative". Yes, there are "good" or "successful" manipulative films, but even the best of them falls short of true artistry.

What bothers me far more, though, is your use of the phrase "I don't mind disagreement, but...", followed in the next paragraph by "...the viewer should be disgusted by Space Camp...". These phrasings imply an attitude of "When I'm sure I'm right, there's no room for argument" that would do Brother Falwell proud. I shan't drag this out. I merely note that as long as there is life within me I intend to say what I please, I intend to write what I please, and I DAMN well intend to feel and think what I please. (I also intend, of course, to defend the rights of others to do the same -- you have just as much right to the opinions and word choices that shaped your letter as I do to those that shaped mine.)

Back to Lan: regarding your inserted editorial comment, it may well be that "we technological literati", as you put it, do have some sort of responsibility to keep films as technologically honest as possible on a factual basis, although I personally have neither the credentials nor the inclination to take on the task. (Side comment: I may be a bit different from most fans in that I care more about whether the movies I see are good movies than about whether the science makes sense. At that, I care a lot more about the technology than the majority of moviegoers, who are, let's face it, completely technologically illiterate.) When

you get into phrases like "...the influence they have on popular conceptions of science and tech", however, I hesitate. A true story: In the fall of 1976 I read two articles within a week of each other. The first, which I believe was in Newsweek, criticized the first Star Wars film for being too pro-technology, "sugar-coating" all that nasty hardware as likeable robots and such. The second, an editorial by Ben Bova in Analog, criticized the same movie for being anti-technology, in that the good guys were personified by the mystical, nature-based Force, while the bad guys were personified by technology taken to its ultimate form, the Death Star. Judging the effect of any thing on the public's perceptions is a messy, tricky business.

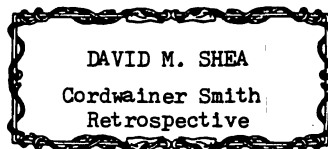
Craig Ledbetter: Much like Leeper, I too have a sour taste in my mouth for John Badham's films. Wargames represented the absolute pits in the kids & science genre of SF films. Yet it was so successful it ended up opening the gates for many more such efforts (most of them crashing and burning in the summer of 85). The two viewpoints on Aliens is something I'd encourage in the future. When I read nothing but raves or pans, I get suspicious about just how good or bad that film could be. The two reviews act as a balancing act which is a help in my deciding to see the film or not.

Leeper's comments on the best kind of sequel definitely bring to mind the finest one ever produced: The Godfather, Part 2. Would that even a tenth of those released and currently in production could approach such an ideal. Julian Beck's skull-like features were due to terminal cancer and unfortunately he died soon after production. He was responsible for a lot of experimental theatre and there is even a videotape out containing some of this best work in that field. Terry Bohman's review of The Fly was one of the more perceptive write-ups on that film. He nailed it when he discussed Cronenberg's attention to the Human relationships. If the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences wasn't so biased against horror films, Goldblum would receive a best actor nomination.

I've not seen Howard the Duck but will catch up with it on cable. At least there, scrunched in with the other films, I won't feel cheated if it turns out as bad as all the reviews would have us believe.

Mary Kay Jackson: "Labyrinth is one of the finest and most imaginative pure fantasy films ever made." YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING!!! There was absolutely nothing believable about that movie. David Bowie never ceased being David Bowie and become threatening or truly seductive. That little twit Sara was an obnoxious and selfish child. I could not sympathize with her, nor could I believe her transformation into a loving trusting person in the labyrinth. There was no reason for it, no basis provided for it happening. The movies makers seemed unable to determine if they wanted to be suspenseful and scary or cute and funny and ended up being neither. And how can Leeper say in the first paragraph that it's the most imaginative and in the very next say it's a bit derivative? I thought Bowie's songs the only

redeeming feature of the movie, but did not find him at all good at portraying the seductive evil persona. You want seductive evil? Go look at Tim Curry in Legends (a really sappy movie but Curry is great). I didn't find anything in this movie believable, engrossing, or wonder-full, and very little entertaining. Excuse me while I go out and buy the new cassette of Disney's Sleeping Beauty. Now there's a fine, imaginative pure fantasy.



John Thiel: Outstanding in this issue is David Shea's article on Cordwainer Smith. I thought Zappa's list was interesting too, and I was wondering if SF fandom would ever mention it. Yes indeed, Cordwainer Smith was intimately involved in the evolution of modern SF; he was there right when Galaxy was in the state of change, getting larger, bringing in any number of new artists, and making a new cover format. If I'm not mistaken, his first SF story was "The Game of Rat and Dragon" in Galaxy; that's the first story I saw by him. It struck me as avant-garde on top the other qualities it had. As for the rest, I accepted Anthony Boucher's and McComas' view on whether a story was trend-setting. Vance Aandahl, for example. They'd ask F&SF, "Can you come up with anything new?" and they'd say, "Yes, I think we can Aandahl it."

Mary Kay Jackson: I enjoyed reading Shea's brief article on Cordwainer Smith, who has long been a favorite of mine. I would have to disagree, though, that Smith will never achieve the fame within SF that he deserves. It seems to me that Smith is quite well-known by SF aficionados. Most of the folks I know seem to have read him and I have never seen Smith mentioned anywhere with less than fulsome -- at times nearly fawning -- praise. Just what is it Shea wants anyhow? A special posthumous Hugo or what?

[I think that David's fear is that Smith, since he is no longer alive and producing new work, his writings will be lost among the novels and stories of the newer writers. This has happened with a number of writers already. Donald Wandrei and Carl Jacobi were/are excellent writers, but much of their work is no longer in print and many of the new fans and readers have never heard of them. David does not want this to happen to Cordwainer Smith. Articles such as his, and interested fans such as yourself, can insure that this won't happen.]

Steven Fox: The article on Cordwainer Smith was excellent! He is one SF writer that seems on his way to an odd type of obscurity. Not because his work is bad, but because his work gets little attention in SF reading fandom. The author of the article should have made a list of his works. Since I have read all of his works, here is a list:

Quest of the Three Worlds

Norstrilia (also published under the title The Planet Buyer)

SpacelordsThe Best of Cordwainer Smith

Cy Chauvin: I'm glad to see that people like David Shea are still reading Cordwainer Smith, who wrote some of my very favorite SF stories. He doesn't tell me anything new, but other fans might become interested in Smith's stories from his article.

Sam Long: I'm rather a fan of Cordwainer Smith, so I read David Shea's article with interest -- but with disappointment, because it was so short; he didn't have time to get into the subject.

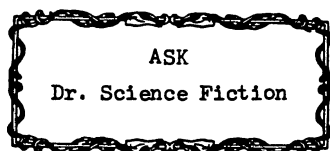
Robert Sabella: This was actually a brief outline of an article, barely scratching the surface of Smith's importance to Science Fiction. I just finished reading Smith's Casher O'Neill book Quest of Three Worlds which was minor compared to Norstrilia and much of his short fiction. Still it contained the same mythic quality as much of Smith's work as well as his strong philosophical bent. Worthwhile reading for comparison purposes.

Bob Rodgers: A good retrospective. As influential as Smith has been, he didn't write very much. With the exception of one posthumous story finished by his wife ("Down to a Sunless Sea", F&SF, Oct. '75), Ballantine had all of his science fiction in four volumes.

Smith's Instrumentality makes a lot more sense in terms of Chinese culture. His Lords and Ladies had a Confucian set of ethics. In other places, he seems to be borrowing from Stalinist Russia. The religions in his future seem to be an eclectic mixture of Christian and Buddhist. (The E'telekeli has an almost exact quote from the Buddha on page 210 of Norstrilia.)

Stylistically, Smith seemed to borrow from everywhere. He admitted borrowing from The Romance of the Three Kingdoms and The Divine Comedy. He also borrowed from grand opera and Broadway musicals.

[[John Varley has done some borrowing from movie and Broadway musicals; so far as I know, no one has done any study on either of them on that topic. How'd you like to do me an article, Bob?]]



David Singer: I particularly enjoyed "Ask Dr. Science Fiction."

Clifton Amsbury: I disagree with Dr. Science Fiction about why the BEMs carried off "all those beautiful women."

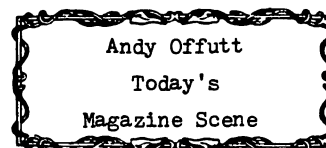
Actually, the BEMs had contracts with artists to pose for magazine covers. Of course, the mags wanted the covers to "sell" the issues and that meant female (humans) come-ons, since the pulps were mostly bought by "human" males. But at the rate the mags

paid, they couldn't hire barish models, so they had to shanghai them. And during the posing the gals were still fighting and had to be restrained.

[[That sounds as equally valid as Dr. SF's explanation.]]

Mary Kay Jackson: I LOVE "Ask Dr. Science Fiction!!" Who is this anyhow? I have a question. Why do all those beauties from SF's earlier eras wear brass bras? Don't they pinch and chafe? Aren't they cold and uncomfortable? Where on Earth did they buy them (or is it someplace off of Earth)? And do men find them sexy? Please, Dr. Science Fiction, clear this up for me.

[[Dr. SF answers some of your questions on page 84. As to the identity of Dr. SF, he/she/it prefers to remain anonymous for the time being.]]



Sam Long: There are some really specialized magazines out there, as Andy Offutt notes. My favorite title is Sludge, the magazine for people whose job it is to oversee the disposal of sewage sludge (operators of sewage treatment plants have their own magazine, whose title I forget). The Illinois EPA where I work has a subscription to Sludge.

Robert Sabella: I suspect that many LL readers are, like me, compulsive subscribers. Many is the time I've gotten unsolicited flyers from such places as Publishers Central Bureau and had to restrain myself from subscribing to a half-a-dozen parae-avcs. Besides my basic subscriptions to SF and math journals, I limit myself to one off-beat magazine per year. 1985 was the year of National Geographic Traveler even though I rarely travel farther than Utica, New York. 1986 was the year for Country Journal, even though I live in the heart of suburbia. This year? Lefthander Magazine sounds pretty good for 1987.

Bob Rodgers: My own favorite (real) magazine title is Concrete Abstracts. It is a collection of one-paragraph summaries of technical articles dealing with Portland Cement Concrete. I don't know if the title was chosen by an engineer with absolutely no feel for the English Language, or if it was chosen by an engineer who was warped and twisted. I've known both kinds.

Mary Kay Jackson: The reprint of Andy's speech was an interesting bit of synchronicity. I had just had a conversation with a friend of mine on that very topic. Mitchell subscribes to 9 different magazines, as diverse as Atlantic Monthly and one, whose title escapes me, on home-built small aircraft. Now Mitchell is a pretty unusual fellow, but I, when I stopped to inventory, have some pretty weird stuff myself. As it happens, I am a serials librarian, and magazines and related publications are my work.



Andy missed some good titles. For instance, there is the Journal of Irreproducible Results which is sort of a scientist's hoax. JGIR and Worm Runner's Digest are full of fake articles and reports, where Asimov's "The Endochronic Properties of Resublimated Thiotimeline" might be published. I could write for days on the weirdness of magazine/journal publishing. Trust me, I know far more than any of your readers would ever want to hear, dealing with the area as I do 8 hours a day. (You might also mention to Andy that his musical hobby for which he says there is no journal might be covered in a musical APA that a friend of mine belongs to. There is also, or at least used to be, an APA for VCR owners.)

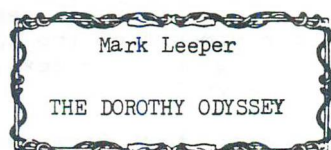
[[Any idea what the names are?]]



Craig Ledbetter: Top Secret can only improve under a new publisher. All the wit and charm of With Umbrella, Charm and Bowler vanished when they went big time.

Mary Long: As no doubt your English (or British, even) loccers have rushed to point out, the first volume of Steed's biography is now out, by one Tim Heald, over in the UK. Note that it's the first volume -- so it may not have yet got to Mrs. Peel. Should be interesting to find out, in due course, whether her missing husband ever met the intrepid lady whom (in the same waters) James Oredin found drifting off the coast in a small rowboat, in one of the earlier (middle period) episodes of that Victorian soap opera, The Odedin Line.

[[No, I hadn't heard about it. But I am looking for it now!]]



Ben Schilling: Regarding "The Dorothy Odyssey", the last time I was in Kansas, I managed to find myself flying through a huge storm as I left. Of course, I was on a DC-9 at the time, but I wasn't sure if I was going to end up in St. Louis (my intended destination) or the Emerald City for a few fairly strange moments right after take-off. Not a fun experience.

Mary Kay Jackson: I found Mark Leeper's comments on the re-creation of ancient voyages offensive. I strongly doubt that the folks re-creating the voyages he mentions did so for the money. Some people like to do things for the sheer joy of doing so. Or to see if they can. Or to prove it could be done at all. Rather nasty cynicism he displays here. I don't believe he'll ever make it to Oz...

[[Mary Kay, this was a joke. It was not meant to be taken seriously.]]

Mark Bernstein

CONVENTION  
ETIQUETTE

{{Hi, this is Mark Bernstein, taking a temporary hand in the Post Scriptings. I wanted to get the discussion on Convention Etiquette moving along as quickly as possible, so I asked Lan for permission to answer your letters on the subject in this issue. Gentleman that he is, he agreed. Lan's comments will be enclosed in double square brackets, as usual. My comments will be in double braces, as show here. My thanks to everyone who wrote. I think the Primer will be much improved by your input.}}

Mary Long: "Con Etiquette" was excellent, and hear hear from here, I say! Should be printed in every con booklet from sea to sea. But one thing I'd add, so far as drunks go, is if you don't take note of what the wise man said, for heaven's sake consider the non-drinkers (such as myself) who seem to get lumbered with looking after the drunks who pass out, throw up, or fall down. I mean, you can't just go and leave them lying in the hall, can you? Not to mention the maid's distasteful job of cleaning up. Should make the ones who make the mess do it, I say, and maybe next time they will exercise a bit of common sense and good manners in their imbibing. Besides, it seems sometimes that people regard how many times they got drunk and threw up on the GcH's shoes as vital information which they are ALL dying to share in their correports, whereas, of course (rite of passage though it almost seems to be regarded as), no one really cares. If anything, it advertises their own failure to hold their liquor. Is this really what they want?

But one thing I didn't see mentioned is crashing. (I'm talking here of the crashing overnight, rather than a non-resident of the hotel visiting, of course.) I view this as a part of the "don't steal" bit. Oh, people complain about the cost of hotel rooms and thus try to justify their crashing. To that, I say, food is expensive and so are books, but you don't go around shop-lifting, do you? Thus I see crashing as stealing. But it does seem to be widely accepted among fen. I wonder if this type of thing is not responsible in part for the high cost of rooms?

{{Thank you for the kind words. I'd like to use your comments on drunks as a part of an explanation as the why drunks are obnoxious and unwelcome. Other reasons might include the tendency to stumble and break things, the inability to carry on a coherent conversation (face it, gang, drinking makes you less interesting, not more), and the growing attitude in both fandom and mundania that running naked through the halls cannot be legitimately excused the next day with "I'm sorry, I was drunk." What do you think?

{{As to crashing, I generally agree with you, and would indeed put the concept in as an extension of "don't steal from the

hotel", but I'd qualify it a little. I would certainly recommend finding out in advance what the hotel policies are, and staying within them. Some cons these days negotiate a room rate that is constant no matter how many people are in the room. I'd feel easier about including this one if it could be backed up by documenting the actual problems it has caused. Do any of you present or former committee members out there know first-hand of case where the hotel has complained to the committee about crashers? Or cases where room rates have been raised because of crashing?}}

[[I think Mary was talking about the ethical considerations behind "not stealing from the hotel." I'm not sure how legal one's signature is on the hotel registration form that you are staying so-many nights with so-many people in the room, but I feel that one should think of it that way. The hotel would probably be within its rights to charge extra for a room which has been used for the night by more than the number signed for at registration.]]

Sam Long: Mark Bernstein's article on "Con Etiquette" was good, and true, and all that -- but seemed to be very pedestrian; it could have used some more wit, 'cause it sounded Dutch-uncle-ish, if you know what I mean. Not but that it's difficult to sound otherwise in the circumstances, as I've discovered when I have to explain rules of conduct to my young son David.

Cy Chauvin: I wish Mark Bernstein had been a little more like Miss Manners -- she's a great wit, and comes up with some classic lines! Fannish etiquette is really a subject that deserves a full-scale, humorous parody. (No, I can't do it; I'm retired. Leah Zeldes Smith would be a good choice, except she would be certain to fall into the same trap as Mark, and take her subject too seriously.)

{{I adore Miss Manners. I didn't try for her style for a few reasons. First, I don't think I can do it all that well. Second, this is a primer, aimed at neos. Many of them would be too young and/or unsophisticated to appreciate such a style. (Gentle readers -- am I being condescending or realistic here?) Third and most importantly, writing a parody was the last thing on my mind. I do consider this a serious subject and want it all to be taken seriously. This is both for the sake of the older fen, who have to deal with the behavior I warn against, and for the neos themselves. My hope is that these guidelines will be read and used, thereby sparing some people the pain of overcoming a bad reputation.}}

Buck Coulson: Mark Bernstein's comments on etiquette were all excellent. I'd add a couple to his filksing notes. When you enter or leave a sing, you do your best to close the door quietly. People are not only listening, they're taping. And if you're one of the people taping, you do not ask the singers to move so they're closer to the microphone, or demand that they sing something that they've already done before you've

arrived. It is proper to request a specific song, especially later in the evening -- or earlier in the morning -- when the songs aren't coming quite so thick and fast. It is also proper for the singer to turn you down if he/she doesn't want to sing that one, although most singers will honor polite requests. Of course, if you're taping and someone sits down on your microphone (yes, it's happened), it's permissible to ask him to move, after the song is over. It might also be permissible to cut his throat, but do it outside the filk room; blood gets the tapes all sticky. And the note about not talking should be emphasized. If you want to talk, there's the rest of the hotel to do it in. You're in a filk to perform and/or listen.

{{Thank you, thank you, thank you. All of your additions are right on target. May I use them?}}

Jan Story: Mark Bernstein's article on convention etiquette reminded me strongly of a Jodie Offutt piece that used to appear regularly in con program books. In brief, keep your eyes and ears open, your mouth shut, your hands to yourself, and never get into a poker game with any bearded male. I might add a few corollaries for female newcomers. Cons are a great place to get laid. However, you will attract geeks in directly inverse proportion to the number of square inches of skin you show. And, while fen tend to be more tolerant of the generously-proportioned figure than mundanes, it is best to leave scantily-clad barbarian princesses to slimmer women. The other thing to remember is that you won't get anywhere in fandom, in the long run, on mere looks or sex. You get out of fandom what you put into it -- time, effort, yourself.

{{Um, didn't you mean direct proportion? Inverse proportion would mean that the more skin you show, the less geeks you attract. Your comment on the long-run benefits of using looks or sex is great. I'd like to use it.}}

Sheryl Birkhead: Mark Bernstein's Primer -- great. It is unfortunate that neofans don't get a chance to find out about cons before attending one (but that might remove them from the definition, mightn't it?). Also unfortunate is that many fans don't know how to read the signs and many false impressions or hurt feelings are created. We like to think that fans are (among other "-iers") smarter and more sensitive than "mundanes", but perhaps thicker and more fuggheaded can also apply -- putting us all back into the same pigeonholes as everyone else!

Mary Kay Jackson: I read Mark Bernstein's article with great interest. I have been on panels aimed at easing neos into fandom several times now. We give survival and behavior tips mostly. I notice that most of Mark's comments were aimed directly at males, however. There are an increasing number of women coming into fandom (darn it) and the area really deserves less slanted treatment. Some specific comments:

In conversational basics: One should, of

course, avoid one-upsmanship. And yet, the story being told may genuinely remind you of something you think the others might enjoy. One must use one's judgement and sense. Which is one reason articles like this might be considered useless -- those with sense and judgement probably don't need them and others may not be able to use them. But that isn't what we're discussing. Also, there's a difference between lying and embellishing. Tinkering with the details of a story in order to make it a better story is something storytellers have practiced since they sat around fires in caves. One must, of course, make the distinction between telling a story and relating information or news.

Re - dealing with women: As I said before, how about dealing with men? And perhaps the section on dealing with each sex ought to be written by that sex as they have a better idea how they wish to be dealt with. I might also take issue with his sentence that cons are a lousy place to get laid. Of course, the idea of being out to get laid is not really a very good attitude. I have nothing against recreational sex but find attitude to be very important. Somebody just "out to get laid" doesn't have much of a chance anywhere. At least not with me. On the other hand, most of us are at a con to have a good time, and sex certainly is that. The real problem with sex at cons, for those so inclined, is privacy. Room stuffing and leisurely romps are pretty much mutually exclusive.

I would like to see the paragraph about "not touching unless you ask or are sure" printed up and handed out at all registration tables with all memberships. I am a very physically affectionate person with my friends, as well as those closer. This has led to some unfortunate misunderstandings. I mean, some of these folks I have known for ten years and have been through lots of things with them. Because I hug, kiss, and generally snuggle up next to them does not mean I do that with everyone. You would not believe how many times I've had to get, uh, forceful about this.

Mark's section on Filking seemed to me to be missing something important. Most of the tips were aimed at performers. The audience needs etiquette just as much. I wrote an article for the MARCON program book about filking. The main point of audience etiquette seems to me to be: These folks are performing for your pleasure. Be polite!

He does touch on one of my pet peeves -- the sing-alongs. Lately it has become almost accepted for the audience and other singers to sing along with anything they know the words to. I think this really sucks. "Mary O'Meara", for example, was meant to be sung by a single voice. I remember hearing Bill Sutton singing a truly wonderful song and admiring it extravagantly. To which he replied, "Wait till you hear Wolfie sing it." I never got to. When Moonwolf sang it at CHAMBANACON, everyone in the room joined in and could not hear him for love nor money. I think the audience should shut up unless specifically invited to sing along. (Perhaps I should add that I am audience, not performer, myself.)

Actually, I have heard/seen other performers point to a neo sitting shyly in the

corner and say, "Sing." I have myself, on occasion, pointed out a new person from whom we have heard nothing and requested they perform. Most performers are quite well-mannered, actually. The catch is that unless you are really dynamite, they aren't going to ask more than once or twice.

While singing may be the primary purpose of filking, I think humorous stories and funny intros are not out of place. There are several filk performers who are not that good at singing but who are popular because they can present a song well. Balance and moderation, balance and moderation.

{{Oh boy, lots and lots of good comments! I hope Lan doesn't mind the space I'm going to take up replying.

{{Other than the "Dealing With Women" section, in what way was I skewing toward males? I realize I may have blind spots here -- I'd honestly like to know.

{{Your comments on conversation are valid, but I'd hesitate to include them. In all fairness, practically everything I wrote was stated in stronger, more black-and-white terms than I would normally use. If you tried, you could probably find, for every "rule" or guideline I proposed, a case of someone breaking the rule and doing so in a socially acceptable way. The trouble is that in order to successfully break the rules you must first know what they are and know how to operate successfully within them. The Primer is aimed at those who aren't yet familiar with the rules. Qualifications and expectations, which are a more complex and subtle subject, can be picked up later. Judgement and common sense, if they are acquired at all, come with experience and maturity. I'm trying to help the inexperienced and the immature.

{{Actually, I found writing the "Dealing With Women" section to be the easiest to write, mostly because to write it I just had to look back on my own mistakes. Reaction so far indicates that I was pretty accurate, so I can't say that I agree with having these sections written by the sex being dealt with. If you have any specific additions or corrections, please let me know. Offhand, I can't think of any memorable problems I've had with the way fannish women deal with me, so I'd have some real trouble writing a "Dealing With Men" section. (Anyone out there care to volunteer?)

{{Hmmm . . . perhaps I should offer some background on the "getting laid" line. Many young males entering fandom are socially inept, which means they are extremely sexually frustrated, which means they are constantly horny, which means they all too often allow their hormones to overrule what little better judgement they have. Trust me, I know. Someone in that state is nearly obsessed with getting laid. Remember the line from the movie Revenge of the Nerds -- "Jocks only think about sports. Nerds only think about sex." My guess is that this is why you've had to get forceful so often. That line wasn't just flippancy -- it was written as a deliberate attention-getter, to point out to young males that the obsession is unreal-

istic, and to make them more receptive to the guidelines.  
 {{I thought attitude was one of the things I was talking about. How can I make that aspect clearer?  
 {{You're right -- as a performer, I was thinking from a performer's viewpoint, and neglected the audience. Could I get a copy of your MARCON article? Or has Buck Coulson already covered the subject adequately?  
 {{Yes, I was a bit heavy-handed on the subject of humorous stories and intros. See my earlier comment on my intended audience.}}

Bob Rodgers: Interesting ethnography. A few things were left out.

Nothing was said about weapons. It seems to have been only during the past few years that I've seen many people with swords at cons, but they have caused a lot of trouble. It seems that if someone isn't in the SCA, or at least knows and can follow the SCA rules on steel, he or she shouldn't wear a sword. (I've seen too many D&D players who aren't old enough to be trusted with the swords they are carrying. Some of these people were past thirty.)

At a recent con I attended, blowguns were being sold in the hucksters' room, which could be worse than swords. I've yet to attend a con with a written rule on projectile weapons, other than quoting the mundane laws on firearms.

Speaking of projectile weapons, it is not considered proper etiquette to shoot filkers to put them out of their misery, though I've heard some who sound as if they might welcome euthanasia.

{{Excellent thought! I'd entirely overlooked weapons. Thank you for the reminder. I'll draft something in the subject soon.}}

Robert Sabella: Unfortunately this seems like the type of article that would fall mostly on deaf ears: those who already behave properly don't need it, and those who do need it probably don't realize what cafs they really are.

Steven Fox: The best article, or at least the one I liked the most, was Mark Bernstein's "Convention Etiquette". I find the actions of some fans annoying, annoying enough to make me think that some of them grew the fuck up in caves (or under rocks)! I have been to many cons in my years of congoing. Lately however, I no longer attend certain types of conventions -- Dr. Who cons and Trek cons particularly! Now it's just down to science fiction conventions. My own reason for this is because I've found more geeks and nerds at these types of conventions than I can take. I realize that not all these Trek and Who fans are without manners, but I'm real, real tired of finding conversations with friends being crashed by people who have no fucking manners. Not to mention that these geeks never heard of soap or water or Zest! Of course I've found geeks and nerds at SF cons as well, except the numbers of these individual (nerds) is much smaller.

My biggest problem is with fans who don't understand the difference between public and private conversation, or worse, they assume that anyone in their earshot is speaking to them, and proceed to interrupt conversations with un-asked-for, un-invited comments or opinions. Although Mark's article hits the nail on the head, I do not agree that "fan-nish activity provides nerds with exactly the right atmosphere to learn the social skills that will serve them well in both fandom and the mundane world. Nobody is automatically ostracized." The reason I don't is because of the fact that Nobody is automatically told to stop acting like a jerk. Most fans are quite nice people and don't try to be offensive, so when someone acts foolish, those around him or her just shrug it off. A person who needs to learn the ways of normal social intercourse should do it in a more normalized area -- that being the so-called mundane world -- where he or she will meet all kinds of people, and not just fans. Nuff said!

{{Given my respect and appreciation for LL, being called "best" means a lot to me. Thanks much.

{{Sorry, True Believer, 'nuff not said. Don't forget the rest of the paragraph you quoted: "On the other hand, there is no automatic acceptance, either. If you offend people, you probably will hear about it eventually." The people you refer to will, in all probability, never learn social skills in the mundane world, because the mundane world isn't interested in teaching them. They've already been rejected there. Fans, when truly annoyed, are more likely than mundanes to say, "This is what you're doing wrong" instead of "Go away, you bother me". Only in fandom will they find people willing to tell them both what they're doing wrong and how to correct it. (I would like to point out that it's not my intention to try to force any sort of obligation on anybody. If you don't want to deal with "geeks", fine. You have every right to tell them to get lost. There are already plenty of people in fandom who are willing to offer advice.}}}

Tom Digby: On "having the right body" for a particular costume, there is in some quarters of fandom a reaction against the prevailing mundane standards of beauty. What if Queen Unpronounceable of Planet Unpronounceable in the Unpronounceable Galaxy really does weigh 400 pounds, and stuffing that mass into a brass bra and a loincloth is considered good-looking there? Of course the advice about knowing how you really look in a costume still holds: A conscious act of rebellion against mundane standards is one thing, while self-delusion is quite another.

L.A. area filks are different from the Midwestern style. Most of the ones I've seen have been set up as bardic circles where each person gets a turn to "pick, pass, or perform". When it's your turn, you have a choice of requesting something from someone else (which means that the popular people do get heard more), or performing something of your own choosing (which gives new people a chance), or simply saying "pass" (a safe out

for shy people). The problems with this set-up have mainly to do with how long it takes to go around if you have a large group.

I notice the "Etiquette" article had no mention of smoking. Some functions will be labelled as non-smoking (many L.A. area folk parties, for example) or will have smoking sections. If you smoke, don't be the first person in the room to light up unless you've been there enough times to know what the policy is or someone tells you it's OK.

I've been on panels where half the audience area was designated as non-smoking, but they didn't say which part of the panel was which. That can occasionally be a problem.

Ruth Berman: Mark Bernstein's "Convention Etiquette" has a good deal of useful advice, but he falls into a common kind of rudeness in the process of trying how to be polite. That's to say, he includes advice on how to deal with women, starting out, "Guys, I hate to be the one to break this to you...." It's a form of rudeness to forget that not everyone in the audience is a guy.

more about  
H. P. LOVECRAFT

Robert Bloch: Please tell Mark Leeper I've no intention of duelling with him; his and my opinions re HPL may differ, but that's what they are -- opinions. My only observation concerns the \$5 per story fee. Apparently Mr. Leeper was not around in 1914 when Henry Ford raised his assembly-line employees to \$5 a day -- a move which continued throughout other blue-collar enterprises; white-collar jobs paid more. And by 1921 wages had risen substantially; HPL's \$5 fee per story was indeed substandard.

Ben Schilling: Lovecraft's \$5 per story was a substantial amount of money in the 1920s. During World War II, when we were afraid of a Japanese invasion of Hawaii, the government issued a specially prepared currency for Hawaii. Everyone was required to exchange their regular money for this special currency. The largest bill provided was \$20, which implies that, even twenty years later, \$5 would have been a significant amount of money. A similar action took place with the invasion of North Africa, but these were only for use by military personnel so the largest bill was \$10.

Cy Chauvin: Mark Leeper might be interested in knowing that the hardcover edition of deCamp's biography of Lovecraft does contain an index. Re: "Herbert West - Re-Animator", if Lovecraft was trading upon his name to get this published, why didn't he offer the publisher a much better story, "The Outsider", which Mark says was written in the same year? Could it perhaps be because the publisher didn't want something innovative, but rather a set six-part piece? I'm not a Lovecraft fan, and Mark is certainly better read in this area than I, but it seems so atypical of Lovecraft's character to trade upon his name and write only for money. His heart was certainly not in the piece.

# THE ECKLAR TAPES

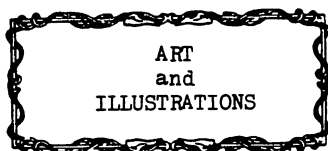
Buck Coulson: Genesis came before Horse-Tamer's Daughter. There was even an earlier one, Traveller, but it seems to be out of print by now. Julia sold the first version of that to a few people including me, and later Off Centaur brought out a remastered version which I also have. Julia sings about a third of the tape Brandywine, from Off Centaur. I'm a bit surprised at your admiration of Divine Intervention, since Juanita and I thought the orchestral arrangements were sometimes inappropriate and nearly always padded. The voice is as good as ever, of course, at least to a basically non-musical listener like me, but I'd rate Horse-Tamer's Daughter as her best tape.

Robert Sabella: This was fascinating. I have grown increasingly discouraged with popular music in the 80s. It has so little depth to it. Everything is three-minute hooks and endless repetition. And it has gotten so hard to find anything new. In the 70s there were numerous FM stations that played everything imaginable. If you listened long enough you would find exactly what you liked. Now all stations have such restricted playlists that the only way to discover anything new is by plunking down \$6.49 plus tax (and then only for sale items). That's a lot of money to gamble on something unheard. You make Julia Ecklar's music sound quite good, but I hate to take the plunge without knowing anything about your taste in music. Having never attended a Midwest regional con, I've never gone to a folk sing. I've always assumed they featured folksongs, hence the name. Is that a valid assumption? Because I am not particularly a devotee of folksongs.

[[The way folksongs are handled depends largely on the area of the country and the people attending the con. On the East Coast they're into sing-alongs, which means that most of the folks are re-written folksongs. There are lots of original material being written in the Midwest and West Coast, so the folksongs become more like display forums for a writer's latest endeavor. You should try to make it to a Midwestern con, one of these days. I think you'd like it.]]







Tom Didby: I notice a couple of illos (p. 44, 96) with artist signatures and such in mirror writing. Is this a goof, or done deliberately for layout reasons, or what?

[[Sylvus Tarn signs her work in mirror writing, and she actually can write that way. It is not a mistake.]]

Craig Ledbetter: Foster's cover immediately had me thinking of a tale that this might be a scene from. That's the sign (for me, at least) of an excellent cover illustration.

[[So what story is it????]]

Mary Kay Jackson: The alien Clint Eastwood cartoon on p. 13 is particularly amusing since I am extremely fond of Eastwood movies. It bothers me sometimes that an otherwise intelligent, moderately pacifistic female such as myself gets so much pleasure from those things. And others like them. I am not alone in this -- the enjoyment, that is. Don't know if it bothers the others. In addition to the Eastwood movies, there are the Mad Max things and probably lots of other examples. Think it has something to do with our, at times, too safe culture? Might be an interesting article here somewhere.

[[It might be that you release any violent tendencies through watching those movies so you don't need to express them physically yourself. Then again, maybe not. You could try writing an article about it. I'd consider it for publication!]]

Steven Fox: The art this issue was good, mainly because you had no apparent problems with your art reproduction. The art was clear and crisp. Keep this up. The cover by Foster was excellent! He is one of the few fanartists that can draw. Other art I liked were: Jim Thompson (11,80), Paul Lambo (15), Bob Barger (25), Brad Foster (26), Geoff Everts (29), Tullio Proni (33), Joan Hankewoods (62), Terry Jeeves (74) and Bill Nichols (back cover).



#### General Comments

Craig Ledbetter: The long lettercolumn is something I've come to expect of LL, and of course this time around was no exception. I still wonder why people get perplexed at receiving LL for nothing more than your expecting them to comment on it. Is it so much trouble to lift the pen and put it to paper?

to David Shea

Mark Bernstein: I've been thinking for a while about the best way to respond to David Shea's letter in LL #21. I ended up deciding that the simple, straightforward approach is best.

I messed up. I'm sorry.

For me to attempt to reply to the specific points raised in Mr. Shea's letter, tempting though it may be, would be self-serving, unreasonably defensive, and a waste of everyone's time, including my own. The undeniable fact of the matter is that I made an off-hand comment in print about a matter concerning which I had no first hand knowledge (the management of CONSTELLATION). In fact, I had no knowledge about it at all, save what I had picked up through rumor and hearsay.

I hope that Mr. Shea, along with the other members of the CONSTELLATION committee that I may have offended, will accept my apology, and believe me when I say that my words were born solely of haste and poor judgement. It was never my intention to direct a slur at any individual.

By the way, David (I hope you don't mind my switching to a more informal tone for more informal matters), thank you for your contribution to the "obscure books" discussion. As the organizer of that panel, I'm always interested in new recommendations, and I was familiar with less than a third of your list.

to Mark Blackman

Clifton Amsbury: I have a correction for Mark Blackman, though I agree with what he was trying to say. The word totalitarian is a word used by fascists (Mussolini, Hitler, Salazar, Franco) to describe what they impose on their own subjects. After World War II there was (along with a general effort to save all but a few top Nazis) a sudden concerted effort in the West to identify Communism with fascism as an identical system and to turn the war fever against the Soviets. I do not know whether that distortion of the word was an original part of the campaign of flowed naturally from it, but suddenly in 1946 "leaders" from the reactionary Pope Pius XII to Labor Party head Clement Attlee were calling the Soviets "totalitarian".

The societies in which the two systems appeared were authoritarian societies. Our (English-speaking) society has taken four hundred years of evolution to partially grow out of that. Fascism appeared and temporarily succeeded in countries which had made some progress toward democracy. It was an attempt to return them to the Middle Ages socially and politically.

Communism has been an attempt to democratize authoritarian countries and has never made a success in any place with an effective working democracy. Naturally we can neither insist nor expect that their ideas of democratization be identical with ours. But totalitarian is not what they are.

Comments on "A Neo's Reading List"

to Skel  
on Writing and "twee"

R. Laurraine Tutihasi: One thing that's made clear by David Shea's "A Neo's Reading List" is that tastes and opinions differ widely. Out of his total list, there are only two books that I agree on completely as being good choices. There are eight books I'd never put on such a list.

Ruth Berman: In the comments on "A Neo's Reading List", I was interested by Robert Sabella's comment that some anthologies should be included. When I first started reading SF, I was enthralled by the Groff Conklin anthologies, which I found conveniently in the school library. I wonder if these are still an important starting point for neos, or if the SFWA Hall of Fame anthologies and the annual Hugo Winners anthologies have superseded them (I see Dave Yoder specifically mentions the Conklin anthologies as good introductions, as well as some others.) The Healy/McComas Tales of Space and Time (and sequel of New...) also fascinated me then. Damon Knight's Orbit series was outstanding in more recent years, although maybe at that point I am getting away from things that neos would want to be reading first and more into things that should follow a little later.

[[I also think that the "Best of the Year" type anthologies are fairly good introductions to SF, though on occasion the selections may be a bit over the heads of many neos. The problem with the Conklin anthologies and the Healy/McComas books is that they are not available in paperback. The SFWA Hall of Fame series is, as are many other collections.]]

Clifton Amsbury: I agree that A Canticle for Liebowitz is a must, but while it may be true that Cherryh has done better than The Gate of Ivrel, I will insist, "But not for neos."

To: Tom Digby --

[[These are in the order I received them.]]

Ben Schilling: The story about the sea captain racing a comet and ending up at the wrong entrance to Heaven is, I believe, "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven". The author was never even nominated for a Hugo, although some of his work has been quoted in recent SF novels (e.g., Heinlein's Job: A Comedy of Justice). He was generally known by his pen name "Mark Twain".

Jeff Tolliver: The answer to Tom Digby's question about the title of the story he described is: Mark Twain's "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven."

David Singer: What makes me take pen in hand (I'd've typed this but the stereo and typer are in different rooms) was your reply to Tom Digby. I find it hard to believe that you didn't recognize Mark Twain's "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven". (I must admit that I had to look up the title.) It's worth reading; if memory serves, it's in the volume Letters from the Earth, which also includes "Adam & Eve's Diary" and a few other good things.

Ruth Berman: I was rather puzzled by Paul Skelton's objections to P.M. Ferguson's advice about stuff beginning writers should read. Of course, Skelton is correct in saying that if the beginning writers try to read all that stuff first, they won't be getting any writing done (well, not for quite a while), but one can't spend all the time writing, and it's a good idea to be reading some of the stuff about writing rather than trying to rediscover it all on one's own. A book of rules of grammar is probably not needed by most fans, or by anyone who reads a lot, but it's useful to have around on the rare occasions when you're not sure, or the rather more frequent occasions when someone starts trying to "correct" your grammar, even though it was already correct in the first place. Strunk & White's book has a great deal of advice very useful for writing essays, although not as useful for other kinds of writing. Having the best dictionary you can afford is not piffle, but common sense for a writer -- not because there's any likelihood of needing to look up obscure words, such as "twee", but because the bigger dictionaries will give more information about the word, where it comes from, and how it's used, so that it becomes easier to figure out not only if it's the right "meaning" for what you want, but if it's the right "feeling". (Not so important for writing essays -- gets to be very important for writing dialogue for characters.) I do find "twee" in a one-volume dictionary -- the Webster's Unabridged, where it's given as a word in imitation of the sound for a horn or some birds. In the miniprint OED of two volumes, I find that meaning and (in the appendix) the more recent slang British meaning of sweet (meaning too sweet, or as we'd say more likely to say, cutesy-poo), in imitation of babytalk. (It also can be short for "tweezers". Who'da thunkit.)

Sam Long: My desk dictionary at work (Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language) has "twee" in it, and defines it as a back-formation from "tweet", a child's pronunciation of "sweet", meaning "affectedly clever, dainty, elegant, etc; mincingly cute or sweet", and notes that it is a British colloquialism. Some words I have not found in my one-volume desk dictionary (but have found in my two-volume "ensmalled" version of the OED) are "phthisizootic" (pesticidal), "patibulary" (having to do with gallows), and "omphaloskepsis", the practice of meditation by gazing at the navel. (An exponent of this arcane discipline is not an "omphaloskeptic" but rather an "omphalopsychist".)

Tom Digby: Neither Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary nor The IEEE Dictionary of Electrical and Electronics Terms nor an English/French dictionary I have define "twee". I do remember in one SF story the viewpoint character was talking with some bird-people, and any word the translator couldn't handle came through as "twee", but I doubt that's the standard use for the word.

Buck Coulson: "Twee" is from an old Abbott and Costello routine, where it was first coined. As nearly as I can reconstruct it, the dialogue went as follows:

Abbott: ...and never the twain shall meet.

Costello: What twain? Where'd the twain come from? What twain?

Abbott (exasperated): The twain on twack twee!

This has been a genuine look back into the yesteryear of Radio Fandom, and what you get for letting me start reading your fanzine at random.

to Don D'Amassa

Buck Coulson: We don't use our VCR much, but Don D'Amassa's comments triggers a response anyway. What awed me were audio recordings; the idea that it's possible to listen to people who have been dead for

years. Think about it awhile; it's sort of a weird feeling. Of course, now with videotapes, you can also watch people who have been dead for years; of course you can also do that by watching old movies on TV.

Craig Ledbetter: Don D'Amassa certainly explained why he signed the No Award petition clearly enough. Too bad the way the petition read it was next to impossible to detect his line of reasoning from it (the ad). I agree that a fanzine nominated for a Hugo should have roots in SF.

to Dennis Fischer

Ian Story: Onnagata (lit. "woman-style") are the male actors who play female roles in the kabuki. A long-ago shogun decided that the theatre was too corrupting an influence for women, and since then female roles have been played by male specialists.

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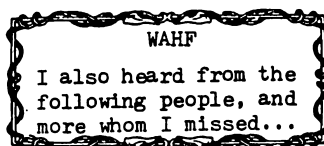
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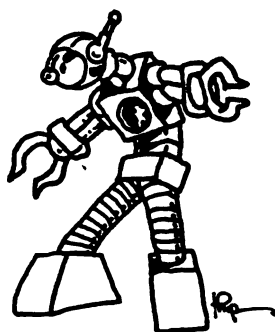
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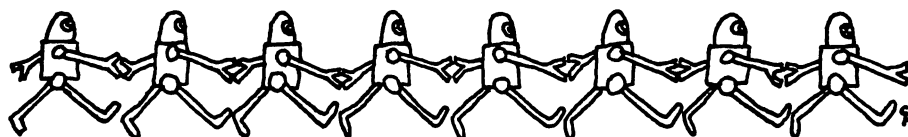
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1987

L. Sprague DeCamp  
Frederik Pohl

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In the next three years several authors will be celebrating their 50th anniversaries as writers of Science Fiction and Fantasy. Consider submitting critical articles, artwork, anecdotes, reminiscences, and personal experiences about these authors so they can be honored as they deserve.

I am planning the issues to come out in the summer/fall of their year of celebration, and so would need the submissions by the 31 of March of that year. Please think about this and try to help honor these writers who have given us so much pleasure for a half-century.

1988

William F. Temple  
Lester Del Rey  
Arthur C. Clarke

1989

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Alfred Bester  
Robert A. Heinlein  
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Theodore Sturgeon  
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