

LOWDOWN

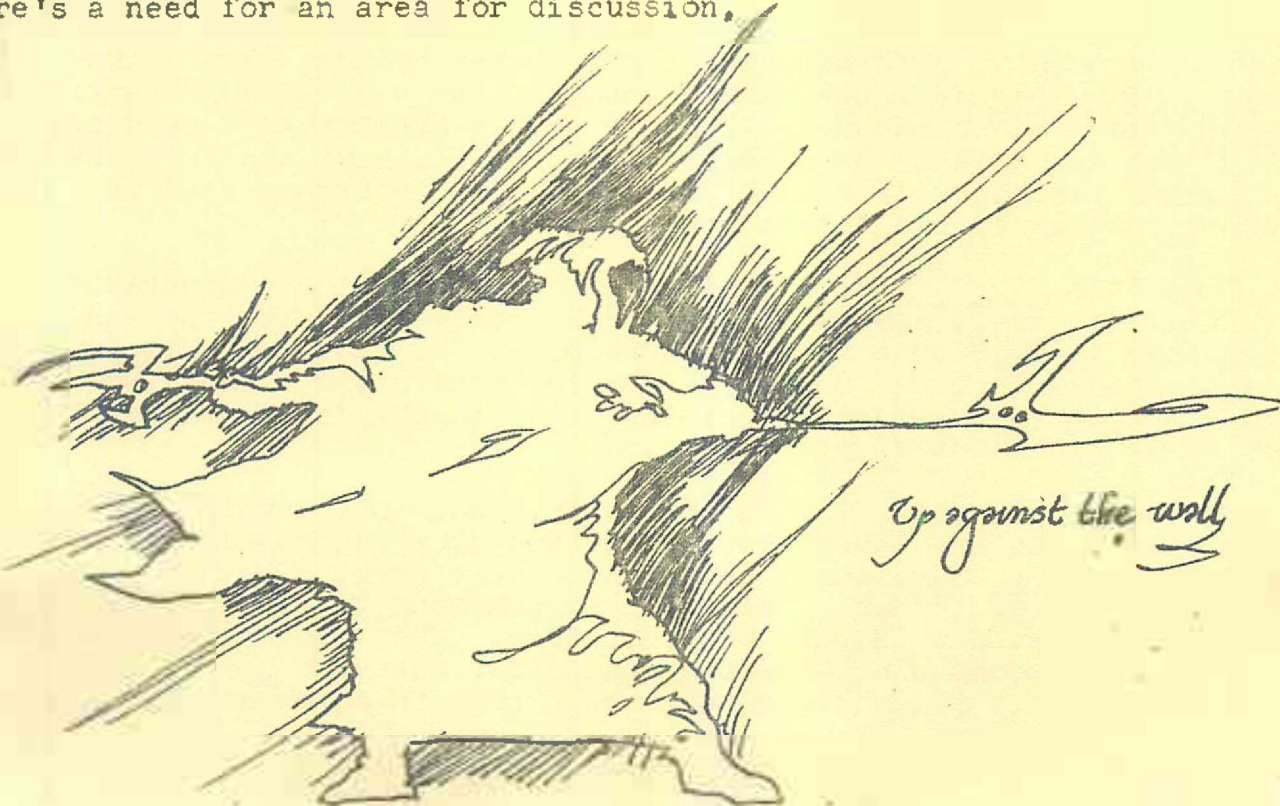
Lowdown is edited and written by Richard Labonte (53 Rosedale Ave, Ottawa 01, Ontario, Canada) and Michael and Susan Glicksohn, with help from Angus Taylor, Phil Kinsman, Rick Cuyler, Dave Rasmus, and Rowan Shirkie. It is distributed free to all members of Noreascon, Toronto in '73.

April 18, 1971

This is the third issue of Lowdown in four years; it all began back with Baycon, when we decided it would be an interesting idea to rush out a one-shot publicizing the Hugo nominees in an attempt to boost informed voting. It was fun, and the response was enthusiastic, so a second issue was published for St. Louis. We skipped Heidelberg because of the problems in getting the list of nominees far enough in advance of the ballots to make publication worthwhile. But the co-operation of the Noreascon committee this year has made it possible to mail Lowdown about the time the ballots are being mailed.

I hope we succeed in encouraging the Hugo voting turnout; by the time Toronto in '73 is a realized fact, it would be nice to have a really enthusiastic Hugo award, to give the whole thing a sheen of legitimacy.

Because ballots are not due back until the end of June, there may be time for a follow-up to this issue of Lowdown; I'd like to see some general comments on the nature and style of Hugos, Hugo nominations, and worldcon committees, such as are included in this issue of Lowdown; it may be that everyone is happy--but perhaps there's a need for an area for discussion.



Tau Zero--Poul Anderson
Star Light--Hal Clement
Ringworld--Larry Niven
Tower of Glass--Robert Silverberg
Year of the Quiet Sun--Wilson Tucker

Novel

I haven't read Tau Zero--but I want to. The novel which could bring Poul Anderson his fourth Hugo has only appeared in a hard-cover edition from Doubleday, so few fans (myself included) have even seen it, much less bought it. Despite the hardcover handicap, though, here it is on the ballot, which may be as good an indication as any of its merit.

One reason I want to read Tau Zero is that the majority of the reviews I've seen have praised it highly. They speak, in glowing terms, of its ideal synthesis of science and fiction, combining hard-science ideas (the "Bussard spaceship" to get things going, the warping of space-and time as the ship's speed approaches that of light, to keep them going) with a strong fictional development of characters, and of the human problems posed by the scientific premises. They speak of Anderson's unique prose, beautiful without being "arty", rich with images and allusions which amplify the central ideas, developing stylistic devices to echo and enhance the plot (time dilation within the ship is matched by time dilation within the book, for example), telling the story with economy and grace. They speak of the importance of that story, with its thought-provoking implications about power and eternity and human relationships and maybe even spaceship earth.

They speak about Tau Zero as if it is everything science fiction should be.

The other reason I want to read the book is somewhat more idealistic. Every year, books like The Phoenix and the Mirror lose out on richly-deserved Hugo nominations because of poor hard-cover distribution and sales. Certainly, some hardcovers get on the ballot; some, like Stand on Zanzibar attracts enough attention to win. I'm not saying Tau Zero should win the Hugo--I can't say that, I haven't read it. But if the award is to be meaningful, it should have its fair chance. The Lancer paperback is due out in June. Please try to read it (and everything else!) before you vote.

Hal Clement's Star Light, on the other hand, was widely distributed; it hit almost every news-stand in North America when it appeared in the ubiquitous Analog, June through September. The sequel to Mission of Gravity takes place on Dhrawn, a sun (or possibly a planet) with a high internal temperature, a gravity of 40 earth-g's, and an ammonia/water/oxygen/who knows? atmosphere.

That's the background. That's all it is, too. Ostensibly, a team of human scientists are investigating the body, hiring Mesklin natives led by Mission's Barclennan to do the actual work. They do very little, since Barclennan et al are busy scheming to hide information from the humans, who in turn mistrust them. When the intrigues have gotten totally confusing, and the communications gaps have left the reader hopelessly floundering, Clement throws in a few natural dis-

asters conveniently losing or trapping various Mesklinites. For these events, the planet serves as a handy gimmick, no more--for example, the sudden flood by the ice/liquid "river" which grounds the Kwembly could be an earth-flood for all the development it's given. Clement conveys little sense of a real world. (Interestingly enough, I can remember no colour adjectives, and few other descriptive/connotative words. The language and style are functional but pedestrian. And "The stars twinkled violently"??? 'Twinkle' and 'violently' have different connotations.)

I finished Star Light wanting to know a great deal more than Clement told me--about the possibility of intelligent life on Dhrawn, about the internal heat source, about the workings of the planet--if you're going to write a scientific science fiction novel, give the background! I also wanted to know more about the characters, most of whom remain names--the humans smugly paternalistic, the aliens indistinguishable.

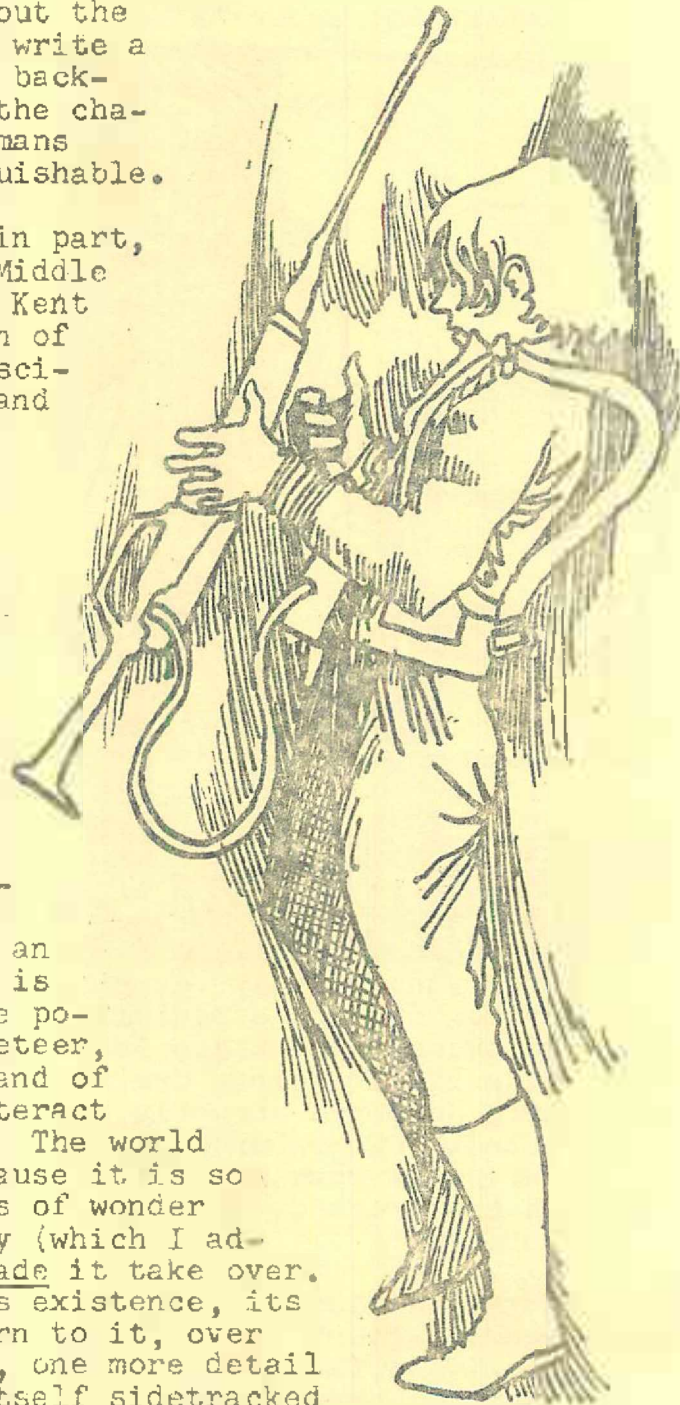
I don't read Analog on general principle--in part, it reinforces my paranoid conviction that Middle America is out gunning for me (the famous Kent State editorial appears with the conclusion of the novel); but mostly because I find its scientist-engineer orientation uninteresting and its stories dull.

Star Light didn't do much to change that view of Analog.

Now Larry Niven's Ringworld poses just the opposite problem; its world is too richly developed.

If one stresses the science in science fiction, then Ringworld (Ballantine, 95¢) is the logical choice for the science fiction achievement award.

Like a halo, the incomprehensibly-huge circular artifact crowns and illuminates the body of his "known space" writings. It is an impressive creation. But...but...but...it is supposed to be a background, with which the potentially-fascinating cast of a crazy puppeteer, a kzin and two humans (one with a nasty brand of luck) interact, while they conflict and interact with each other. And it isn't, of course. The world is, well, the star of the book--partly because it is so stunning a creation, for those whose senses of wonder are oriented to hard science and technology (which I admit mine isn't) but mostly because Niven made it take over. It is so complex, in its conception and its existence, its engineering and ecology, that he must return to it, over and over again, to establish one more fact, one more detail--while his plot dribbles along and gets itself sidetracked pointlessly, and while his characters never seem to develop in relation to each other, or to whatever is going on.



Of course, none of this will matter to many people. I can see Ringworld becoming a central cult book, especially if Niven continues to develop his own private space. Ironical, isn't it, that a world whose civilization fell because no mining was possible in its thin shell will be itself mined for ideas for years to come! For my own part, I can admire the ringworld; but it never becomes meaningful to me. The characters do not convince me, I cannot see and feel the world through them. I find that Ringworld promises more than it delivers.

But for the hard-science people, this is the book of the decade. It is already highly successful; it's been widely-praised; and it beat out Hugo nominees Tower of Glass and Year of the Quiet Sun as well as more "arty" Ace Specials The Steel Crocodile, And Chaos Died and Fourth Mansions to win this year's Nebula.

Robert Silverberg's Tower of Glass is another novel which seems to promise more than it delivers.



Ah, Bob Silverberg. Always reliable, always entertaining, a master craftsman who, in his yearly proliferation of words, has lately been including one masterpiece. Up the Line last year wasn't it; neither is Tower of Glass this year. I expect that most fans, like me, can only judge the Galaxy version, April-June; there is a Scribner's hardcover which may or may not have been revised.

Frankly, had it not been for the Hugo nomination, I never would have read Tower of Glass. I found the opening section uninteresting--characters and background sketched in in the most obvious and perfunctory way, apparently pointless shifts of tense and point of view, plots which ran parallel when they should have meshed. A good first draft.

The whole novel is like that. Mind you, any author would probably sell his typing fingers to be able to write a first draft like this. Language says "Yessir" to Mr. Silverberg and flows the way he wants it

to, often wittily, dramatically, vividly. The horrors of underground Gamma Town are especially real, and are even more effective in their illuminating juxtaposition with the underwater-restaurant scenes. Yet it's still a first draft. Ideas, characters, plotlines are introduced, then dropped abruptly, perhaps picked up later but never fully developed. Tower of Glass is fascinating, but much of the fascination is perverse--when will Silverberg show us more of the twenty-third society he has created, more of the effects of the transmat procedure of human society?

When, in fact, will Silverberg come to terms with his background? I cannot accept his sketch of a homogeneous and mechanized society in which the talented but untrained boy-in-the-basement-lab builds an android, turns it into an android-building-empire and persuades the world to accept, as slaves (which they don't need, having already de-

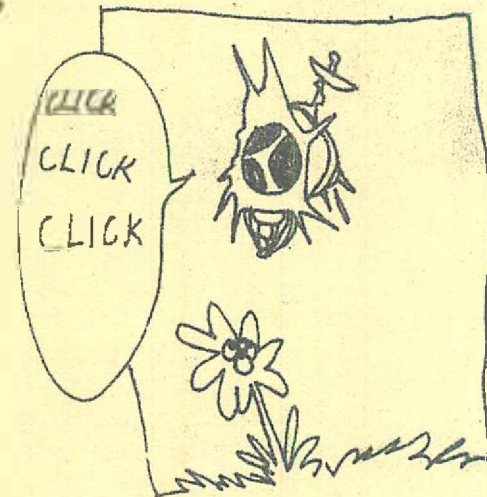
veloped efficient robots) beings which are complete, if artificial persons. The androids have reasoning power, emotions, a complete culture (which amazingly no human ever discovers unless, like Manuel, he is guided to it) and no built-in controls.

Krug's tower, his fanatical attempt to communicate with sentient star-life, even if it is not a recognizable brotherly race on a paradise planet but a nightmare from a radiation hell, is obviously, ironically, appropriate to the android question, the problem of intelligent "alien" life here. Obviously. Yet it's never made relevant. The tower links the two without uniting them. In fact, the star-plot gets pushed further and further aside, reappearing only at the end, in a climax which becomes anticlimax, followed by escape for the non-hero--and for the author.

Tower of Glass has all the elements of a truly great, imaginative, challenging novel. I wish Silverberg had written it.

I found The Year of the Quiet Sun...quiet. In his latest Ace Special, Wilson Tucker invents no startling scientific concepts, uses no dazzling pyrotechnics of style or characterization, employs no startling premises--other than the belief that man will endure, even will find a private peace, which is startling enough given the novel's background.

The hero, Brian Chaney, is shown in three different worlds; his own of 1978; 1980; and 2000+ after the wars are done. Tucker develops each in some detail, extrapolating logically, without polemics or hysteria, a complete range of social, military, moral and political problems, and his hero's reactions to them. I found his attention to human details in the huge social canvas fascinating; shunted forward to 1980, Chaney, to orient himself in a strangely-familiar world (and Tucker convinced me its almost mine, eerily almost-known) goes into a supermarket to check the price of a steak, as an indication of what the economy is doing; that's convincing; that's human!



I also found Chaney so. Much comment has been made by reviewers and fans alike about Tucker's terrible flaw; simply, Tucker's mistake--and I'm not giving anything away here, I'm sure--is that one learns late in the story that the hero is black. Now yes, certainly, there should have been some strong hints of this at least, more than "We shall overcome" scrawled on a parking ticket. Yet I found this "flaw" valid in precisely the same way that everyone else seems to have found it invalid; it forced me to go back and re-evaluate the hero, his relationships, his reactions (and, yes, my own assumptions) from the beginning.

Quiet Sun deals with some important and thought-provoking problems in a solidly interesting, if fairly conventional way. It does not resolve anything. It does not really add anything to the field, though it may confirm non-addicts in their belief that sf is just fictionalized prediction. It's quiet, yes, especially in its final acceptance and assertion of life. Yet in this I found it moving. If your interest is caught by the "soft" sciences, the man-in-his-world sciences, The Year of the Quiet Sun is your book.

For another point of view, excerpted quotes on the novel nominees...

TAU ZERO:

...is a magnificent piece of science fiction, with slightly more stress on the science than on the fiction...the plot is a bit too much the usual superman (Übermensch) type...No doubt Anderson intends a moral point about power and its uses in his depiction of the Constable, but I question the decorum--the realism--of making him outperform professionals in other areas. (Pulp conventions die hard). But in other ways the story is far from pulpish. The Swedish (and human) free love practises by the fifty people on the ship, with its realistic depiction of the hurts which individuals suffer in their relationships is more mature than most such stories...The depiction of the society is, I think, well done. Certainly Anderson individualised a number of characters, which is difficult to do with many people on a ship. --J.R. Christopher, SFR 41, Nov. 1970.

Tau Zero has as its biggest problems...when Anderson tests what I assume to have been its basic assumption--that you can tell a super science story and a human one at the same time. I think you're doomed to retelling *Aniara*, and *Aniara* isn't worth telling because it works only as a function of some psychic mechanism. Probably the one that says the good Lord didn't intend for folks to go unpunished. That would be why the moment of triumph is the moment of let-down in this attempt. --Algis Budrys, *Galaxy*, Dec. 1970.

This is the ultimate "hard science-fiction" novel. Everyone else who has been trying to write this kind of thing can now fold up his tent and creep silently away. The scientific principle is deceptively simple but the eventual consequences of this seemingly modest and constricting set of assumptions are so staggering as to make the intergalactic epic of E.E. Smith, Ph.D (who made up all his "science") seem in retrospect like a trip with mommy to the corner grocer.... Anderson has not failed to populate his starship with interesting people with complex human problems....But nobody but a Dostoevsky could have given this novel a cast that would not be overshadowed by the grandeur of its events. Its flaws are mostly the consequences of its strengths. Overall, it is a monument to what a born novelist and poet can do with authentic scientific materials. --James Blish, *F&SF*, March, 1971.

RINGWORLD:

Larry Niven, in the unlikely event that you didn't already know, is a shining example of what can be done by the technologically oriented writer of science fiction. *Ringworld* contains one genuinely mind-boggling concept--a ring-shaped artificial world, large enough to circle its sun; as if someone had drawn a circle in space, at, say, Earth's mean orbital distance....The whole story, which is basically a Grail-hunting adventure, is woven together very skillfully and proceeds at pretty smooth pace. I have minor quibbles about the length of time it takes Niven to get his characters to the Ringworld, and then there are a few meaningless traveloguey episodes on the Ringworld....I also think Niven's premise depends on evolution's operating very quickly in one

instance and far too slowly in another. That's a far more serious quibble, because this contradictory assertion is fundamental to the story. On that basis I'd give this book three stars out of a possible four. That ain't bad.--Algis Budrys. Galaxy, March 1971.

The Ringworld is something new to science fiction. It took a marvelous leap of imagination to conceive it, and a lot of guts to use it. But Larry brought it off, and obviously plans to use it again....Ringworld is simply fine science fiction, an experience in reading you must have. If you have wondered what the old phrase "Sense of Wonder" means--read this book and you'll know. Ringworld inspires it, --Geis, SFR 41.

This one will undoubtedly be a Hugo nominee. It's a quest across a strange world, except that the questors are of three different races and constantly plotting against one another. Plus some advanced science and engineering that I'm not at all sure I believe..., and a query on the nature of luck. It makes a big book, and quite an entertaining one. --Buck Coulson, Yandro 204, Feb. 1971.

TOWER OF GLASS:

I have read Robert Silverberg's book and liked it, but felt cheated by it, too. The theme of man-android conflict, the philosophical questions of what-makes-for-humanity, of religion, of godhood...all these and more cried for a book three times as long. The picture of the underground Gamma culture was fascinating, a rich bite of what should have been a banquet, but was only a taste. Curse you, Bob Silverberg! --Richard Geis, SFR 41.

The book starts out slowly and I had trouble reading it in Galaxy, but once into it, wow, easily my favourite of the year...I'd pick it as the best of the year.--Charlie Brown, Locus, Jan. 6, 1971.

YEAR OF THE QUIET SUN:

...About the only thing the book reveals about Tucker's talent...is that he is adept at transposing the morning newspaper headlines into a novel of topical if literarily negligible interest. It is simple and straightforward in most ways but lacking the complexity necessary to convince the reader of the immediacy of its theme.-- Richard Delap, Granfalloon 10, Nov. 1970.

...The plot isn't really all that great, but the characters are. It's another near-future, riots and doomsday sort, but with a difference. I can't honestly say I appreciated the mystery structure or caught any of the "clues", but it seems to make very little difference; I enjoyed it anyway. In fact, you handled it much the way I'd like to some time. People are people, and giving readers and reviewers convenient tags to make prejudging easy is a hack device. The book might even do some real good in that area. Recommended. --Buck Coulson, Yandro 198.

STARLIGHT:

Odd thing; we couldn't find any reviews of this one.

The Thing in the Stone--Clifford Simak
Ill Met in Lankhmar--Fritz Leiber
The Region Between--Harlan Ellison
Beastchild--Dean Koontz
The World Outside--Robert Silverberg

novelet

There isn't really a loser among the novelette nominees this year; the category is marked by some fine writing, and, more importantly, by some interesting ideas.

Some of the finest writing comes out in Clifford Simak's *The Thing in the Stone* (IF, March, 1970) and in Fritz Leiber's *Ill Met in Lankhmar* (F&SF, April, 1970). They are both straight story, not subtle, not new thought in the science fiction field. Simak's story about a lonely man and his communion with an entombed creature from another place has two strengths--it is a very human story, low-key and easy-going in the telling, with a Simak decent-guy stereotype for a hero; and it has an engaging up-beat ending, with a neat parallel drawn between earth and non-earth and the belief in original sin. It's a really comfortable story, a satisfying tale told by an accomplished story-teller.

Leiber's story is the same, an accomplished tale by an accomplished writer. The novelette tells of the first meeting of Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser, Leiber's swaggering sword and sorcery team. It is a violent story, powerful in its tragedy and intense in its action; but Leiber mixes humour with his tragedy (pie-bald, but humour none-the-less) and crafts a tight, fast-paced, engaging story.

Fine writing, then, marks the Simak and the Leiber nominees; Ellison's *The Region Between* (GALAXY, March, 1970) is described by Dick Geis as an interesting, readable failure...again, fine writing, but the mastery of Simak and Leiber doesn't seem to be with Ellison in his story of the aftermath of suicide. (The story, without the Jack Gaughan McLuhanesque typographical experiments, also appeared in *FIVE FATES*, a collection of stories all started with the same suicidal premise).

The story itself is fine when it deals with concrete action, but falters and dies in the swamp of Metaphysics, says Geis.

Harlan's aliens are fine creations; with economy and skill he makes them different, whole, visible in their culture. His opening scene, when Bailey is put to death by a casually selfish technician, is joltingly real. There are small gems of incident and scene all through the story, says Geis.

Ellison is a good writer, too; but his story is less valid than Simak's or Lei-

YOU'RE
NEXT.



ber's because it does not succeed in accomplishing its purpose; it loses itself along the way.

The strength of the previous novelists discussed, if it can be said they have something in common, has been the quality of characterization. Simak excelled at creating a real person; Leiber excelled at re-creating his stock heroes; Ellison succeeded in creating believable aliens; and Dean Koontz, in *Beastchild* (VENTURE, August, 1970) comes up with what Ted Pauls calls a qualified success because "he has created a believable alien race, and, within that framework, a believable individual, Hulann."

It is a carefully written story, in a prose style which, if it can hardly be acclaimed for its poetic beauty, is at least clear and professional, and there are some highly effective action scenes, says Pauls. (For some more comments on *Beastchild*, you might turn to the fanwriter reprints, where Pauls' column on *Beastchild* is reprinted.)

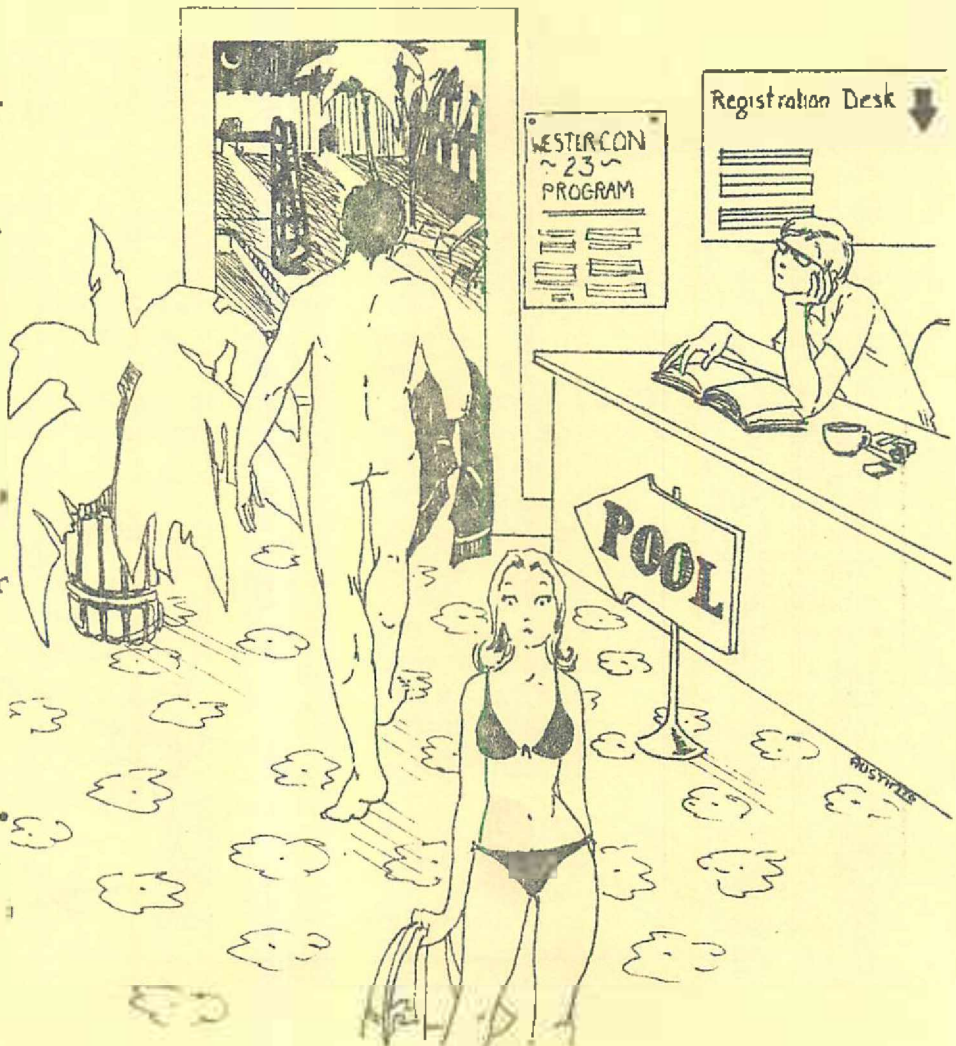
Robert Silverberg's *The World Outside* (Oct.-Nov. GALAXY, 1970) is the smoothest of the nominated stories; it's part of his *Urbmon* series, a future world of billions stacked up in high-rise cities. In this story, one dweller decides to see what the outside is like, and finds himself enmeshed in a society too free for his understanding. When he does return home, he is destroyed--his desire for freedom might infect the dwellers of the cities, and topple a society built on the principle that no man is free to live a life apart.

Silverberg's story, like the others, is well-crafted...there aren't any poor nominees this year.

Ellison and Leiber provide the action; Simak and Silverberg the writing, and Koontz tries to tie it all together.

But there are some distinctions to be made--Leiber is definitely s&s, Ellison experiments, Simak writes typical old-wave fiction, Silverberg writes typical new-idea fiction, and Koontz takes a bit of style, a bit of plot, a bit of character and a bit of experimentation to create a lot of story.

You could best decide by reading all the nominees, now that you know where to go for them.



Continued on Next Rock--R.A. Lafferty
 In the Queue--Keith Laumer
 Brillo--Ben Bova and Harlan Ellison
 Slow Sculpture--Theodore Sturgeon
 Jean Dupre--Gordon Dickson

SHORT

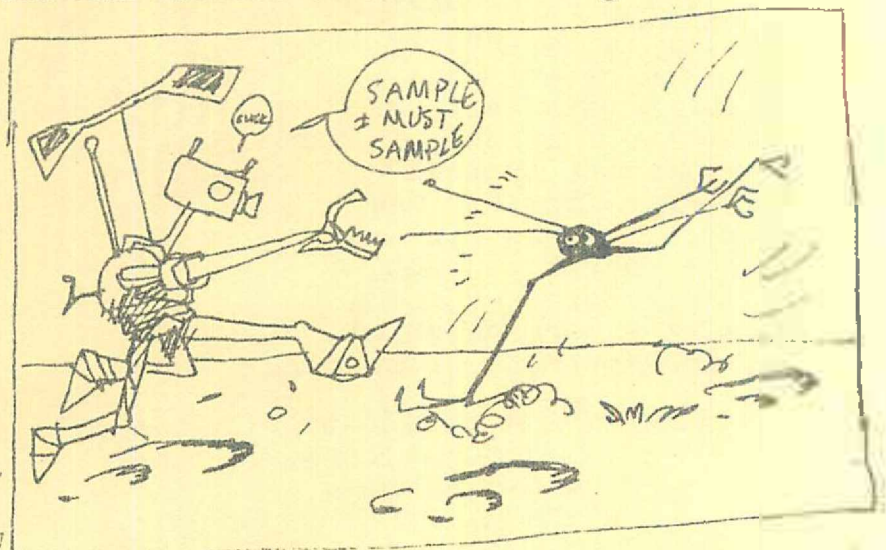


There is more of a split in styles represented in the short story nominees than in the novelet category; there's a real, substantive difference between the approach and the technique of Lafferty or of Bova and Ellison; and the Laumer story is a split with himself; Buck Coulson said that Laumer's *In the Queue* demonstrated that Laumer could write new-wave nonsense as well as anyone else.

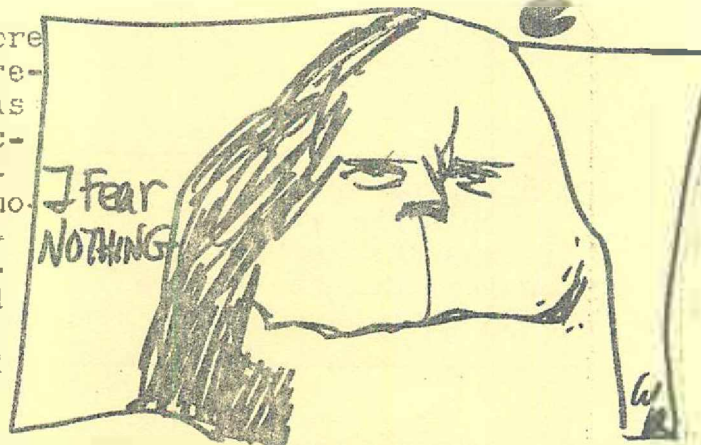
In the *Queue* is a neat story all about a future where it's groovy to stand in line a lot; in fact, it's all there is to do for years and years. If you make it to the head of the line and your papers are in order, you have accomplished a purpose in life. Our Hero makes it to the top, but once he's done he's faced with the prospect of a pointless retirement, so back he goes to the end of the line. It's easy to agree with Coulson's assessment of the story; but it was smoothly-written nonsense, and that's no mean virtue. (It's in *ORBIT 7*, edited by Damon Knight for Putnam.)

Brillo (*Analog*, August 1970) is a surface story in best *Analog* tradition, in which man shows up machine because man has humanity for man; a police robot is shelved because it cannot inject the human element into its grasp of straight law. The story is not turgid, it is not draggy, it progresses evenly and it has nice touches of humour and pathos. It's really fun to read, much like Laumer's tale. And like Laumer, Bova and Ellison do little more than entertain the reader; they do not stir him. The man-machine conflict is no great revelation, and the so the impact of the tale lies mostly in lightness of its touch and the clarity of its main character, the tough and doubting cop. Laumer's story depended on a surprise ending, this one on a predictable one; both conclusions are what you expect.

Jean Dupre, by Gordon Dickson, appeared in *NOVA 1*, another example of an original anthology yielding Hugo material. Richard Delap in *SFR 39* says of the story, in a review of the anthology: "As fine as



the foregoing stories are, nothing quite prepares one for Gordon Dickson's story, surely one of the very best stories Dickson has ever written, ever. It combines two of fiction's most difficult themes to handle believably--the clash of cultures and the emotional trauma of adolescence. Every incident runs the risk of falling prey to nonsensical heroics or slushy sentiment, and it is to Dickson's credit, extreme credit, that neither risk is fulfilled. It should be remembered at awards time next year."



Theodore Sturgeon's *Slow Sculpture* comes much closer to the sticky trap of sentiment. Sturgeon's tale (*GALAXY*, February, 1970) shares with the Bova-Ellison story a thought for the refusal of man to accept the new, but in this case the rules are reversed; the cure for cancer works while the robot did not. But this thought, so much the basis of the robot story, only underlies what is in fact a love story. "From a lesser author, it might not seem so crude," says Richard Delap in the *WSFA Journal* 72, who comments that the love theme has nearly become a Sturgeon trademark in sf. The man and the woman find a guide for their love in the misshapen beauty of a bonzed tree, as it turns out, and the whole thing is very symbolic. It's not the standard fare of Laumer-experimental or Bova-Ellison-traditional, but it is substandard story-telling.

R.A. Lafferty writes as if he wished words weren't so inflexible. The short *Continued on Next Rock* (also from *ORBIT* 7) is a baffling, enigmatic piece of word-juggling...it's about archaeologists working a dig, and about two...people...working with the professionals. It's about a dig into the past which shows the future, about a man from the past who is the future, about a woman in the present who is neither.

Lafferty, unlike any of the other nominees, be they straight-sf writers or experimenters or mood-builders, casts a spell; it doesn't matter what he means, it is only enough that in 30 pages he creates so many images and demands of the reader so much dedication and builds up so much startling detail that it's hard to believe the whole thing is done with the same language you use to buy bread.

The story puzzles, it please; it makes to laugh and it causes to frown; it is superbly evocative--of thought, of emotion...of doubt and of pleasure. It succeeds, where three of the other nominees fail, in doing more than entertaining.

It and Jean Dupres are the best of the shorts, because they are literature.

It's nice to have at least that choice.



No Blade of Grass
Hauser's Memory
Colossus/The Forbin Project
Blows Against the Empire
Don't Crush that Dwarf, Hand Me The Pliers

drama

No Blade of Grass is not a documentary, but it could be.

Those are the last words you hear from the narrator as you leave the theatre. They're very discomfoting words.

No Blade of Grass is going to hurt a lot of people. I'm sure it may drive a few suicidal people to finally killing themselves...and possibly a few others.

The movie, by the way, comes from the book by John Christpher, one of the numerous British science fiction writers who delight in watching the end of the world, or at least of civilization as we know it.

No Blade of Grass is about the effects of an extremely infectious virus which kills most grasses, rice, wheat, oats, most grains, front lawns and back yards. Those with any background in ecology will admit that such a blight is not at all implausible. Once you accept the existence of this incurable virus, the whole movie fits together. The first to feel the effect are those who live directly off grasses, the people of China, India, Africa, South America, nearly half the world. Next to be hit are those who eat meat from grazing animals. The situation then is one in which most of the world's food supply is suddenly non-existent.

The action of the movie begins with flashbacks and flashforwards--it is often difficult to tell whether you're watching the past, present, or future. The technique is almost invariably effective, producing disorientation, confusion, and apprehension in the audience, matching the mood of the characters.

The theme of the film is the attempt of civilized man, reduced to savagery, fighting to survive yet maintain his civilized values.

The movie is terrifyingly and starkly real. You can see it happening tomorrow, you can see yourself in the situation. Scenes of pain and fear, lust and greed, of dying and fighting, of desperation, are all exactly what they were meant to be. The bullet holes are stomach churning, the flying blood makes you hold your gut.

No Blade of Grass has minor flaws which you can pick out intellectually, but I doubt you'll be able to fault the film emotionally.

The other two nominated films, Hauser's Memory and Colossus/The Forbin project, both have major intellectual flaws; and you'll have no chance to fault the films emotionally because there is no reason for reacting emotionally to the films.

Colossus/The Forbin Project is a slick and slight adaptation of D.F. Jones novel Colossus about a U.S. computer which teams up with its Soviet counterpart to give peace a chance.

The computer Colossus is by all accounts the star of the film; none of the humans is as interesting, and what little attempt there is to inject some personal note into the predominant conflict between man and computer fails for lack of dramatic impact.

It's more fun to watch the computer frustrate men than it is to watch women frustrate them, at least in this movie.

And the film is fun; can't argue about that. The man-machine conflict is played for fun, the flashing lights and the gizzmoed control rooms and the dancing instrument panels are all fun fun fun. Fine fun. But froth fun.

It's a froth film. A faithful enough rendition of the novel, and a professional enough example of film-making; a reasonably interesting novel made into a reasonably interesting film. I can categorize it this way: No Blade of Grass will make you think; Colassus/The Forbin Project doesn't try to make you think; and Hauser's Memory isn't worth thinking about.

All the film nominations this year are based on science fiction novels; Hauser's Memory, the novel by Curt Siodmak, is the least of the three, and the film never escapes the mediocrity of the book.

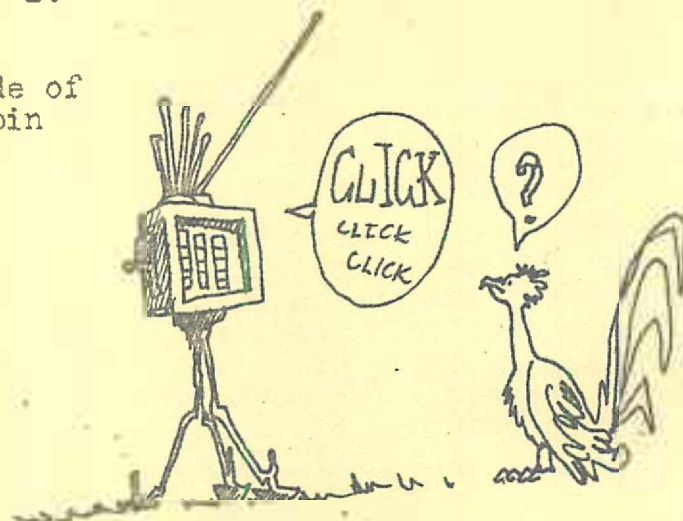
It's about a man injected with the past of another--tge better to go into that past and reveal Iron Curtain secrets for fun and profiteering.

The novel was not much more than a hoked-up spy tale with the thrill of memory transfer thrown in for science fictional legitimacy. And when you give that sort of plot to television--this was a TV movie--with a limited budget and equally limited-ability actors.

Hauser's Memory probably reached a larger audience than the other nominees, film and record, because of its network exposure on NBC and CTV. That's the way it seems to be.

Hauser's Memory is intolerable; No Blade of Grass is exceptional; Colossus/The Forbin Project is at least acceptable. Those are the film choices

It's a good thing the Noreascon chose to allow non-film items in the best dramatic presentation category this year. There just isn't much value in the films this year, with only one of them really worth considering.

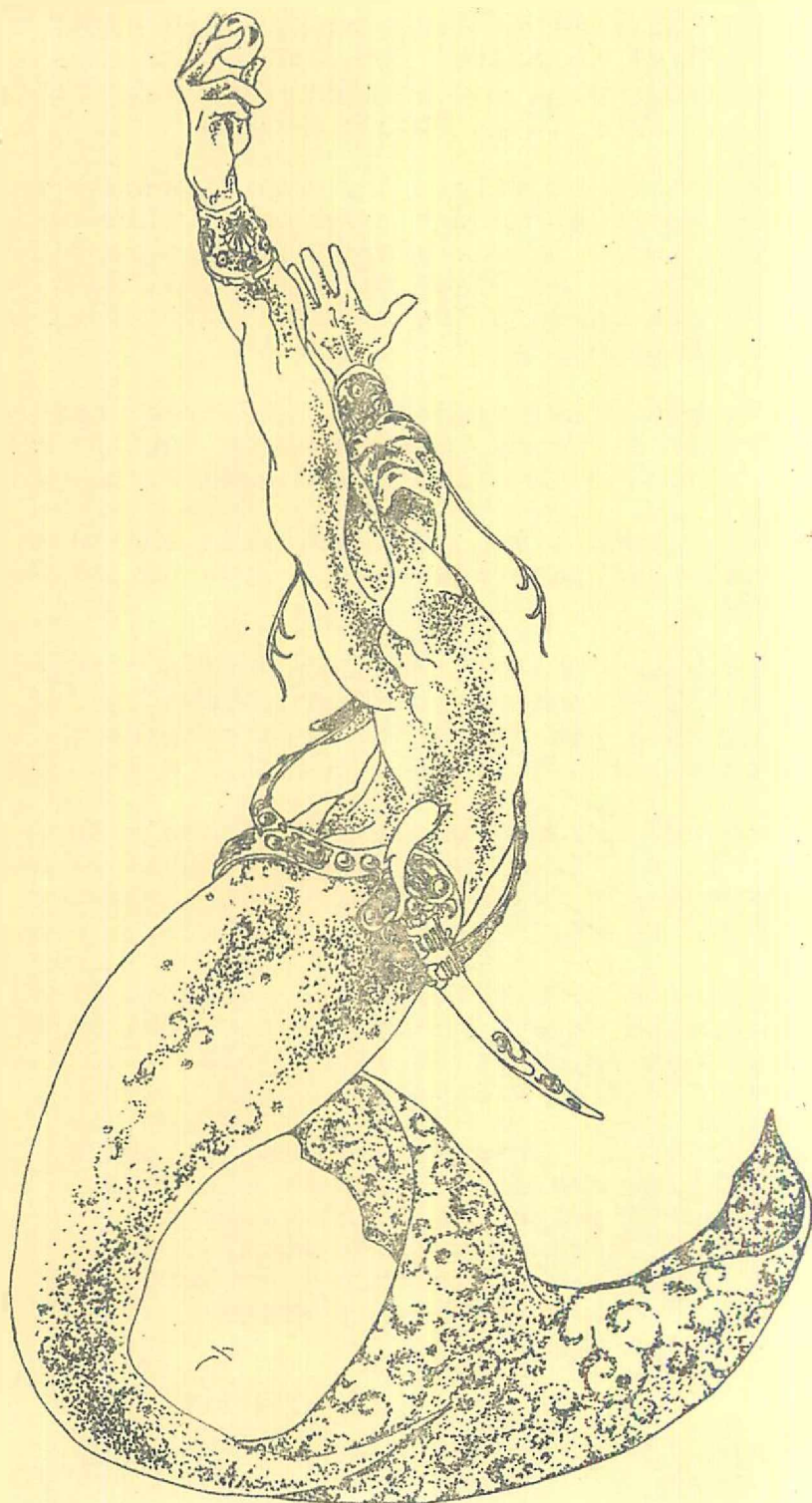


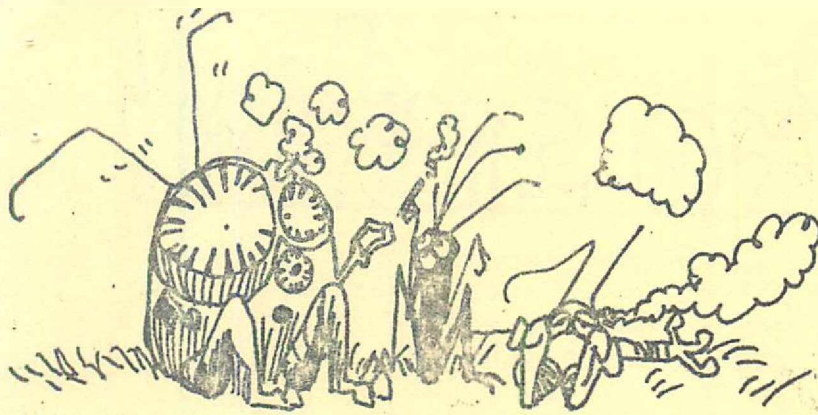
This year fandom has been perceptive enough to nominate two record albums in the dramatic presentation category, thus freeing us from the usual sterile choice among godawful movies and godawfuller television programs. Both albums are worthy nominees. In Blows Against the Empire, Jefferson Starship has given more of that fine SF (San Francisco) rock along with some of the nicest sf (science fiction) lyrics in a growing body of sf-oriented rock. Paul Kantner and Gracie Slick deliver. (Pause for applause). However, in comparing the two albums, one must ask oneself the extent to which each measures up to one's own definition of science fiction. In my view Blows Against the Empire fails somewhat in this regard.

For one thing, the starship songs comprise only half the album. And while these songs may be good music to hum to yourself on the way to Far Centaurus, they are a little short on specific planning. Jefferson Airplane (the earth-bound version of Jefferson Starship) has always been more revolutionary in rhetoric than in action, although this is certainly not to deny the vital place of their music in the consciousness of Our Generation. Jefferson Starship strings together a lot of pretty phrases about outer space and the new generation, but how much do they contribute to understanding the processes involved?

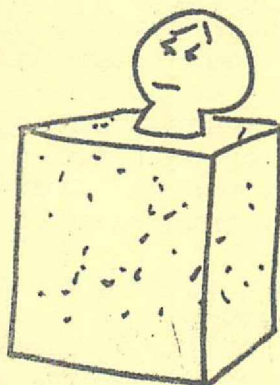
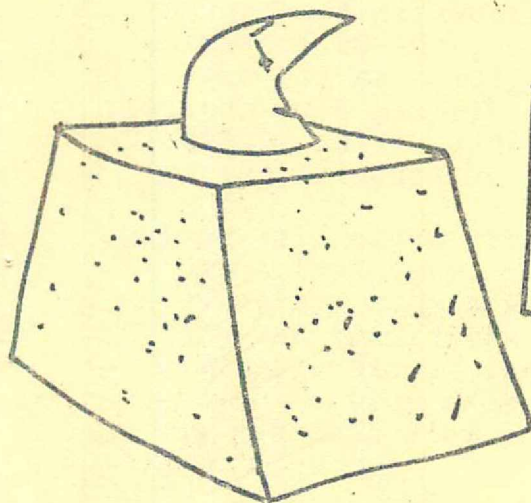
(One reviewer suggested it might be more appropriate to call the album "Slaps Against the Empire".) On the other hand, as they say themselves, there's "Room for babies and Byzantine dancin astronauts of renown". So maybe there's room for them on the Hugo ballot--and it's good to see them there. But whether they deserve to win is another matter.

If Don't Crush That Dwarf Hand Me The Pliers by the Firesign Theatre doesn't win a Hugo this year, it will be a crime of major proportions. (So much for any pretensions of impartiality on my part.) Take





NOTHING MUCH - WHAT
HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?



Brave New World, Stand On Zanzibar, everything ever written by Frederik Pohl, every television and radio commercial, serial and soap opera you ever saw or heard; mix in comic books and your memories of high school, milkshakes, and the 4th of July. Add the massacre at My Lai. If you're British or Canadian, add portions of the Goon Show and Monty Python's Flying Circus...I could go on and on, but I won't. Let's just say this is the biggest trip since 2001, and the most original contribution to the entire science fiction field in many years. The Firesign Theatre has created a real work of art, intricately plotted and beautifully executed. They have taken the vulgar elements of North American mass society and fashioned a statement that speaks to all who care to listen. Everyone will hear messages relevant to her or his own experience. For myself, I hear (among other things), echoes of R.D. Laing's theories on the nature of social relationships, and Albert Camus' cry for rebellion.

Not only is this album very weird, and funny beyond words-- it is a genuine contribution to our attempt to understand ourselves and to our struggle to build a new society.

A rare work indeed.

And the sf fan need make no apologies for it--it's pure science fiction.

A final plea: don't mark your ballot in this category until you've at least listened to Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers.

You owe it to yourself and to science fiction.

It's all on Columbia Records, if you want to order or buy a copy and find out for yourself.

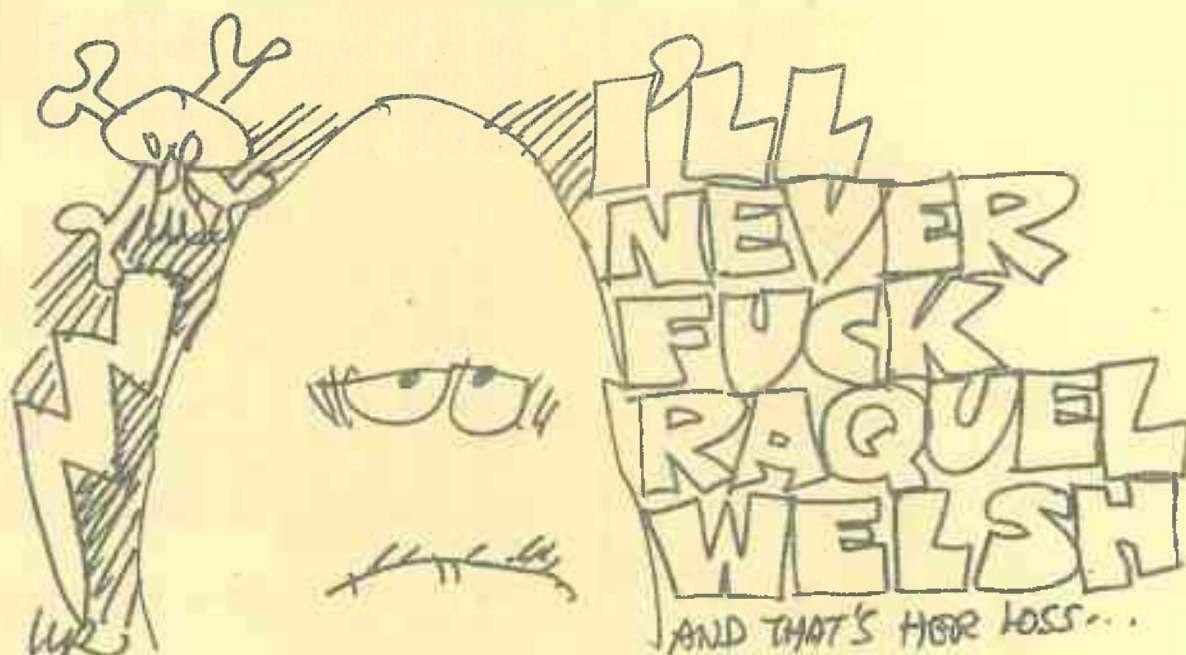
Leo and Diane Dillon
Kelly Freas
Jack Gaughan
Eddie Jones
Jeff Jones

Pro artist

There are seldom any real surprises in the nominees for best professional artist, and since the category is set up in such a way that voters must compare each artist's entire year's output, voting in this category is very much a matter of personal taste in art. There is very little a "review" can do in this area except point out where each nominee appears and leave the decision to the voters. All five nominees are professionals, after all, and are masters of their own particular styles; each would be a worthy recipient of the award.

Leo and Diane Dillon have received almost universal praise for their superb covers for the Ace Science fiction specials. Considered by many to be the apex of art in sf book covers, these richly coloured mosaic like paintings introduced techniques unknown in the genre and it is a tragic loss that, owing to poor sales, the Dillons will no longer be handling these assignments. In addition to the Specials, Dillon covers appeared on several Harlan Ellison hard and soft cover books, and their vibrant colours and distinctive and highly artistic style have attracted many enthusiastic supporters.

Frank Kelly Freas continued in 1970 as the primary artist for Analog, with fine covers and interior drawings. Although many feel that Freas is no longer producing the quality of work he did ten years ago, his dark and brooding astronomical covers and his bright and whimsical aliens continue to make Analog the most distinctive visual package on the sf scene. Freas also possesses a unique and extremely distinctive style which has made him the most honoured professional artist in the science fiction field.



Jack Gaughan has carried four prozines singlehandedly as far as covers and interiors are concerned, and has appeared on the cover of at least one other. His work for If, Galaxy, Worlds of Tomorrow and Worlds of Fantasy has varied considerably in quality, from some of the best in the field, to some rather hurried sketches that have shown the incredible deadlines he has worked under. But some of his early covers in 1970 were spectacular indeed and when given time, he produced some remarkably attractive and cohesive graphic packages for If and Galaxy. And somehow he managed to find time to do the covers for half the paperbacks being published! Jack's many fans have good reason to praise his last year's efforts.

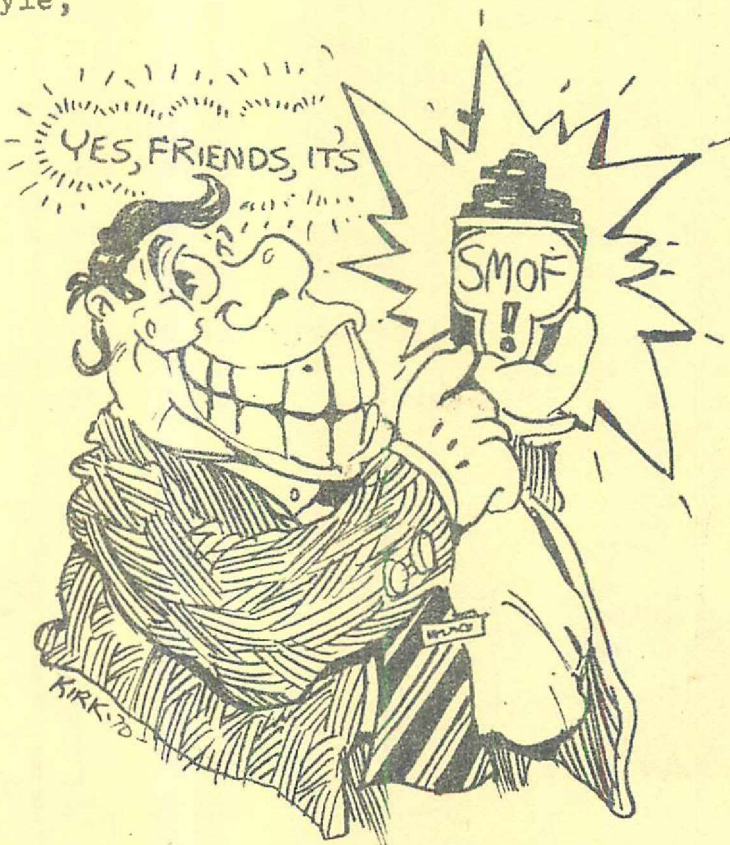
Eddie Jones is at a distinct disadvantage where most North American voters are concerned. His splendid covers for Visions of Tomorrow will be largely unknown to the North American fannish scene. I myself have only seen one copy of VoT, but it had an amazingly vital cover painting and Eddie's paintings at St. Louiscon (admittedly in 1969) showed me his treacherous skill and poetic vision. His monochromatic studies of the Ice Chariot and Fire Chariot were perhaps the best work in the show. I wish I'd seen more of Eddie's work, and I have the sad feeling that lack of familiarity will deny him the recognition he undoubtedly deserves.

Jeff Jones is perhaps primarily known for his barbarian fiction covers, with mightily muscled warriors and alluringly-clad females battling a variety of aliens, wizards, and demons. He is a master of soft colours, and blending patterns, as contrasted to the "hardness" and sharpness of, say, Frank Frazetta. Jeff's covers for Amazing and Fantastic featured his swirling colours and melting figures adapted to more obviously science fictional situations and helped improve the appearance of these two magazines immeasurably. They also used Jeff's black and white drawings as interiors, and their style, which also appeared in several comic-type magazines, is considered by some to be Jeff's most powerful and expressive work.

As I said initially, all of these nominees are talented professional artists and doubtless most voters have their "favourite" among them.

But you owe it to yourselves, to these five fine artists and to the Hugo to make every effort to see as much of each man's output before making a decision.

And which ever way it goes, I think the award will be a well-deserved one.



Amazing
Analog
Fantasy and Science Fiction
Galaxy
Visions of Tomorrow

Prozine

The old regulars are back in the best prozine category--predictably stuffy Analog, literarily-pretentious F&SF, middle-class low-brow Galaxy; and there's the concession to European daring, this time with the well-designed, visually-excellent, recently-deceased Visions of Tomorrow.

And there's the lolling-puppy newcomer, all enthusiasm and innovation, Ted White's gosh-wow Amazing.

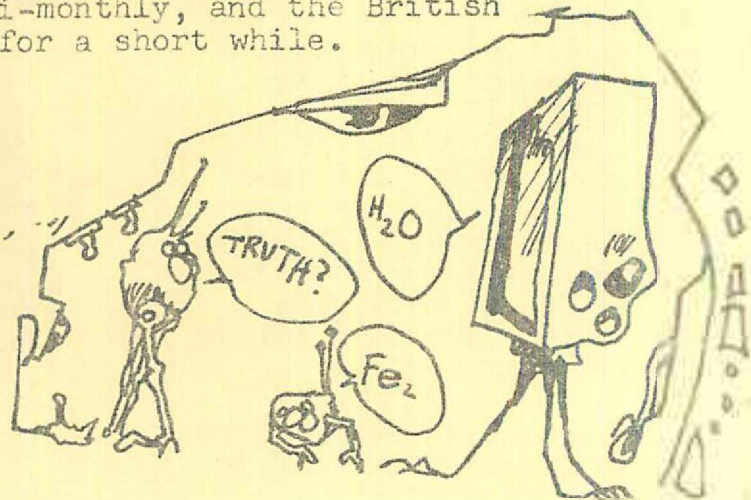
You pitch your penny and you take your choice.

The nominees this year which come from the prozines are pretty evenly split among the three regulars, with Galaxy perhaps edging out the other two in quantity. The best-improved magazine has got to be Amazing, with its fan-oriented features coupled with its strong novel policy. The strength of VoT, from all reports, lies (lay) in its packaging. Analog seldom has a stand-out story, and is best described as stolid. Galaxy is above all an integrated magazine; the art goes well with the stories, the stories tend to be of a lightweight, low-idea type, and the overall impression left is one of comfort. F&SF, on the other hand, aspires to a higher level of art in writing, and is less afraid of fey humour than the other two regular nominees.

I like Amazing, if only because it's less predictable than the rest.

But this may be the last year for the regular nominees to show up; apparently some of the fiction non-magazine regular publications like ORBIT (which contributed two short stories, by the way, in the best short nominees) received several nominations. It might mean a revamping of the category in the future, with more collections of original fiction coming out in non-magazine format, while the prozine field falters and folds in on itself.

Some figures: Analog and F&SF are dependably monthly, and Galaxy is monthly off and on; Amazing is bi-monthly, and the British Visions of Tomorrow was bi-monthly for a short while.



Energumen
Locus
Science Fiction Review
Outworlds
Speculation

Fanzine

There are probably as many different types of fanzines as there are fans, and what one person considers vital in a fanzine may be totally unimportant to someone else. The nominees for Best Fanzine stress a fairly wide range of aspects of fanzine production and content and offer a wide choice to the Hugo voters.

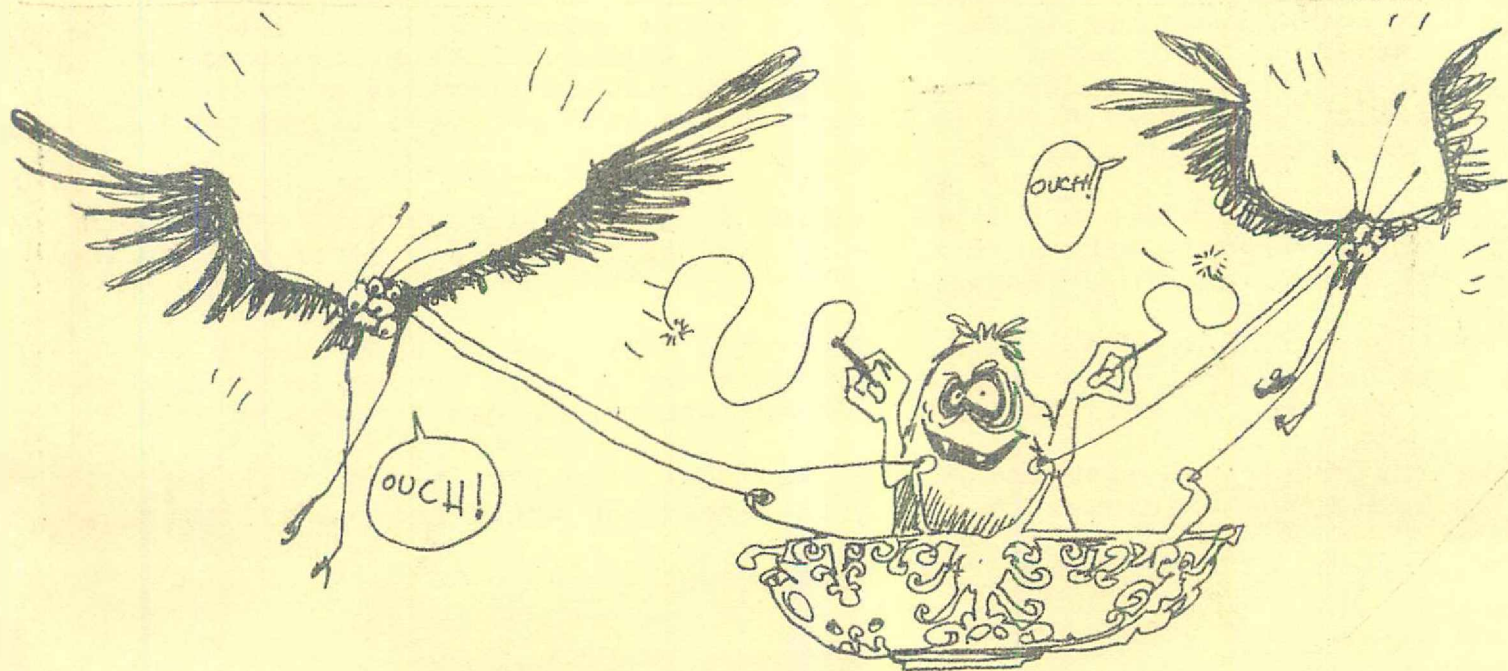
ENERGUMEN is one of the new genzines, in which content and appearance are considered important parts of the total package. The 1970 issues featured a blend of both serious science fictional material and lighter fannish columns and were noted for their art, particularly the covers and excellent interior work of Alicia Austin, and for the fannish "Kuraquat May" by Rosemary Ulyot. Fannish fans and genzine fans might find ENERGUMEN appealing.

LOCUS is a newszine, containing comprehensive lists of book and magazine publications, fanzine reviews, convention news and news about and of interest to fans. Also featured was artwork by most of the top artists in fandom. While LOCUS' prose and layout were utilitarian and somewhat fragmented, it made up for its lack of polish with regularity and breadth of coverage. If news is of prime importance to you, LOCUS is the only choice.

CUTWORLDS is a fanzine primarily noted for its appearance, with the 1970 issues being experimental and highly innovative in matters of layout and graphics. Excellent artwork was the norm, often especially created for the content which included much fan fiction. Of particular interest were the many full-page drawings of Steve Fabian. Voters interested in the visual aspects of fanzines would likely choose to vote for CUTWORLDS.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW managed to escape its image as a blood-letting centre of raging controversy and began to concentrate on content. Reviews and letters formed the main part of most issues, but columns by writers and specials such as reprinted Goh speeches were featured. Excellent covers and interior illos were provided by most of fandom's top artists. Genzine fans with a preference for some serious reviewing tinged with controversy will find that SFR fills the bill.

SPECULATION is devoted entirely to serious discussion of the science fiction field, with all else taking a back seat to the content. Layout, graphics and art are almost non-existent, but the quality and depth of the reviews and analyses are second to none in fandom. And it's not dull! Dedicated serious fans will have no trouble selecting SPECULATION.



Terry Carr
Tom Digby
Liz Fishman
Dick Geis
Ted Pauls

fan writer

THE INFINITE BEANIE

TERRY
CARR

Carol and I visit Leo and Diane Dillon fairly often, since they live nearby and are very groovy people. Leo is a man with an instant fantasy-trip for all occasions. The first time I met him he immediately began to describe his plan for making a shoe with a false bottom, or a false top, or whatever. The foot went into the bottom, but the top half was covered by a flap that could be raised by a string that ran up inside the pantsleg to one's hand in the pocket. The idea is that you're standing there talking prosaically with someone, and you pull up on the string so that the top of your shoe peels back, revealing inside...a fried egg.

This kind of humor takes a mind that's a bit warped, as you can see, but it's my kind of warpage. One one recent visit we started talking about the myth of alligators in the New York sewers (you know the story: parents used to give their kids baby alligators but then they'd start to grow and the parents would realize that if they didn't do something soon they'd have a full-grown alligator in the house, so they'd flush the alligator tads down the toilets into the sewer system, where they'd grow up). "But what in the world do you suppose they'd live on, down there in the sewers?" I asked. "Oh...rats and things like that." "Rats," I mused. "How would they catch them, I wonder. Do you suppose they run them down?" "That's exactly it!" Leo said. "They're trained, by the Department of Sanitation, to catch rats. That's the real reason we have alligators in our sewers." After which I went off into a fantasy about the home of the chief of the Dept. of Sanitation having a sign on its front door saying, "WARNING: These premises protected by Attack Alligators," and by that time, as you can see, things were getting pretty strange.

A couple of weeks ago I was talking about the Dillons with someone who said, "I guess with a schedule as busy as theirs they never got a chance to read the novels themselves."

"Never read them?" I said. "They read every one of them; don't be silly. I've had lots of letters from the writers themselves, exclaiming about how well the covers illustrated the books." (That's true.)

The difference with the Dillons was that they didn't just pick out a scene or a character to paint, they read the whole book and illustrated

the themes. That, of course, was one of their troubles, from a commercial standpoint, because your average gook-on-the-street wouldn't know a theme if it bit him in his collective unconscious.

....the flow of Dillon paintings for the Ace Specials has stopped; Mr. Mediocre wants spaceships so we'll give him spaceships. I can't help feeling that a golden period of sf art has ended, a victim of economic necessity, otherwise known as The American Way. I had lunch last week with George Ernsberger of Avon, who said he knew just how I felt because he'd just had to make the same decision about an artist ...who'd done a lot of imaginative science fiction covers for his books, including that beautiful one for Bob Silverberg's Nightwings... but every book for which he'd done the cover had been subpar in sales, so back to rocketships goes Avon too. Wowee, gang.

Somebody, in a discussion of Black Studies, Gay studies and such, came up with the idea of a course called Head Studies, which grabs my imagination. Roll is called verbally and everyone answers "Here!" Except for the A student, who says "Everywhere."

Yesterday Tom Purdom called; he was in town to buy some sheet music for recorder, because New York City is apparently the only place you can get good sheet music for recorder. Most people you ask them "What're you doing in town?" and they tell you something boring like their sisters' getting married; Tom Purdom you ask him that he says he's here to buy sheet music for recorder.

We were talking about blurbs on books and I fell to fantasizing about doing blurbs that really tell why the book's being published. Notes from the editor, that kind of thing. "This novel is no damn good, but there's going to be a movie based on it." "We had to buy this stupid short-story collection to get this authors' real neat novel The Ecology of Infinity--now that you should read." "I commissioned this book because I wanted to know something about the subject myself; I wonder if anyone else is interested?"

The following is an actual unretouched verbatim account of a conversation at the dinnertable chez Carrs one night:

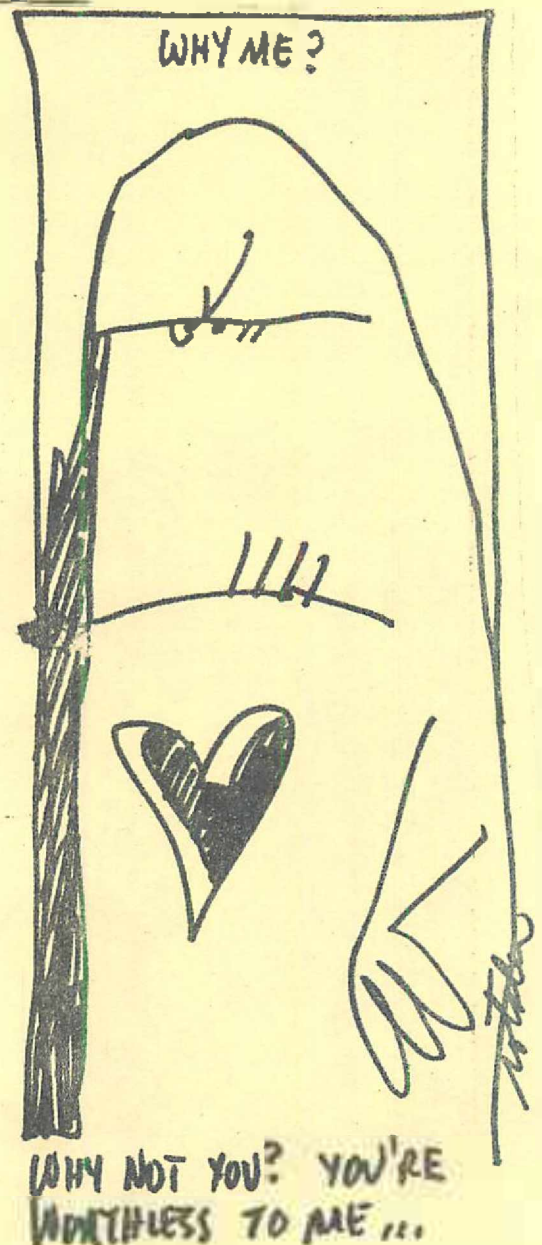
TERRY: The placemats are wrinkled, did you notice?

CAROL: Sure. That's because you put them near the window where they get wrinkled.

TERRY: I didn't put them there, you did.

CAROL: Well, maybe so. But I put them there temporarily and you're the one who left them there.

--from Focal Points 15, 16, 19, 23



EST MODUS IN REBUS

PAUL
TEELS

Somebody objecting to a few remarks of mine on a Poul Anderson novel recently accused me of allowing my philosophical and political leanings to govern my critical judgement, i.e., of generally praising the SF of "left-wing" writers while finding literary grounds on which to condemn the fiction of "right-wing" authors. Since I had just the week before written an essay calculated to make Norman Spinrad shriek "Mad dogs are kneeling me in the groin!" I found this accusation rather absurd. However, as I was occupied at the time with the drink in my hand and the girl to my immediate left (you'll pardon the expression), I contented myself with a quiet smile and said "Friend, why don't you ask Dean R. Koontz about that?"

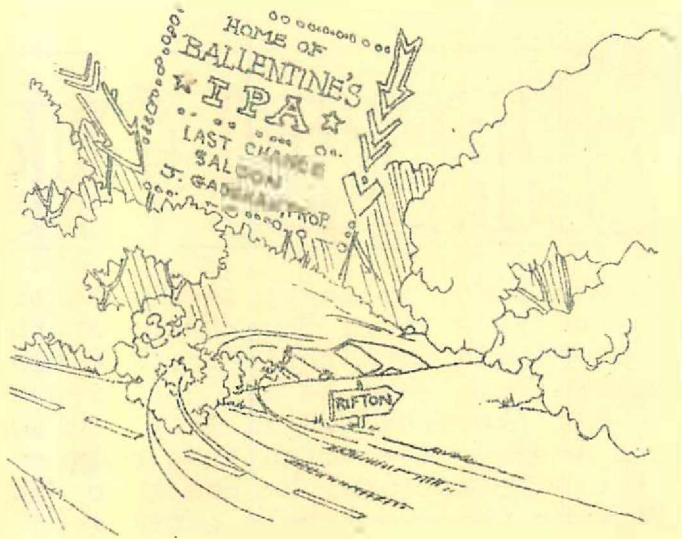
Dean, you see, is one of my fellow filthyfreakohippyleftists. We are, so far as I have been able to see, completely sympatico in our views on politics, philosophy, morality, the Fox Americana, etc. Dean is a guy with whom I'd like to take a couple of months off and hitch-hike across the country (admittedly, his charming wife Gerda, would have something to say about that...). Yet, at the time of the conversation related above, I had never had anything favourable to say about his science fiction. If anything, the, well, sense of spiritual brotherhood (pretentious but accurate terminology) I feel with Dean has made me a far harsher critic of his work that would otherwise have been the case. I know, you see, that Dean Koontz is intellectually, philisophically and artistically capable of being one of the finest writers in the field, so I expect a great deal from him. For this man to fritter away his creative ability turning out sloppy second-rate novels like Fear That Man and Fall of the Dream Machine is, in my eyes, verging on a criminal offense.

All of which brings us by a rather circuitous route to the novel at hand: Beastchild. At PgHlange II, Dean told me that he considered Beastchild the finest thing he has written to date, and after reading it I agree. The author is still miles from realizing his potential but he is getting there. Beastchild is at least a qualified success.

The principal reason for the success of Beastchild is that Koontz has created a believable alien race and, within that framework, a believable individual, Hu-lann. There is a tendency for SF writers to move in one of two diametrically opposed directions when portraying an alien life-form: Either making them so completely alien that their psychological processes and motives are entirely



incomprehensible (which is legitimate, but makes individual characterization nearly impossible), or making them so completely and exaggeratedly human as to transform a serious story into a farce (I am thinking here of stories, some by well-known authors, that are in the approximate class of the cartoon in which a squat, short-armed bullet-headed alien steps out of his flying saucer and promptly falls madly in love with a fire hydrant.) The author of Beastchild neatly avoids these extremes. The naoli are portrayed with some care and consistency, and they are a recognizably alien race, socially, psychologically and morally (as well, of course, physically). But Hulann, the archaeologist working on Earth, is at the same time a person, an individual with whom the reader can feel emotional involvement. There are a number of little snatches of dialogue and narrative, all of which would be meaningless quoted out of context, which contribute to making Hulann one of the few lizard-like aliens in SF with warmth and dignity.



Koontz also does a commendable job of characterization with another alien, the vastly different Docanil the Hunter, a soulless neuter bred for pursuit and killing. The strengths of Beastchild also include several more mundane aspects: It is carefully written in a prose style which, if it can hardly be acclaimed for its poetic beauty, is at least clear and professional, and there are some highly effective action scenes that are not, like some previous work of this author's, marred by over-writing.

However, Beastchild is yet only a qualified success, and the qualifiers are significant. One of the two major characters, the human child Leo, signally fails to come alive. Partly this is because Hulann is so well portrayed that his character monopolizes stage centre, but the problem is deeper than this. Even on those rare occasions when Leo emerges for a moment or two as something approaching a three-dimensional character, he is not believable as an eleven-year-old child. Children are damnably difficult to portray believably, and many writers more experienced than Dean Koontz have flubbed the attempt, but the failure must still be entered prominently on the debit side of the register. Even more damaging, however, is a gratuitous one-page sequence in which it is revealed that death, for the naoli, is impermanent (though they are not aware of it), and that the souls of deceased naoli are wiped clean by a sort of super-computer and reincarnated into an egg at the moment of fertilization. Admittedly, this is a fascinating idea, but it is one that bears no relation to anything else that happens in Beastchild and only succeeds in accomplishing a bit of artistic gutting; it robs Hulann's death of tragic content. Better that fascinating idea should have been saved for a short story.

On balance, Beastchild is a success, and I believe that Dean Koontz is entirely correct in feeling it to be the best thing he has written so far in his career. It is 100% better than anything else of his I have read. However, I shall be disappointed if by next year at this time he isn't writing stories 100% better than Beastchild.

--Ted Pauls, Outworlds Six

THROUGH THE WORMHOLE

FISH
M
A
Z
N

My neighbour is angry because squirrels hide cookies in his flowerbeds. I know he's angry because he stopped my rotten little brother and growled, "Those damn squirrels are hiding cookies in my flowerbeds." Rotten came home to me, "He says the damn squirrels are hiding vookies in his flowerbeds." I felt good about that. This particular neighbour has a petty mean mind that only opens to getting as much as possible at the least cost; he can't possibly appreciate the wonder of having four or five squirrels sitting on the front porch waiting for their morning cookies. (Tollhouse is a favourite among furred tree-people. I come out on the porch with the box, sit there on the stairs holding it, and they rummage around helping themselves. They sit there eating till full and then run to my neighbours yard with the rest. And it's not always cookies--leftover breakfast toast smeared with peanut butter, apple slices, grapes, assorted nuts--and the surplus is always stored in the flowerbeds. And as I watch them fiendish delight fills me as I visualize my neighbour once again sticking his fingers into a wet, sticky ant-encrusted peanut butter sandwich or a mass of half-decayed grapes while he's digging around his precious tulip. And the clanking crunching and knocking that wafts from his power mower when the walnuts are zooped into the blades is another kind of soul music.

I have never liked this neighbour, but maybe I wouldn't take such pleasure in the whole thing if it weren't for an incident this past winter. Every winter I liberally sprinkle the yard with birdseed,



peanuts, and leftover scraps of bread. I've done this for all the eleven years we've lived here, and as a result I have a huge clientele of doves, crows, blue jays, cardinals, starlings, sparrows, and assorted finches, and as it goes into Spring, robins and unidentifiable sorts that don't stay long. They settle in surrounding trees, wait till I've finished layering the yard, then swoop in as I turn to go--droves of them winging in from as far as a block away; it looks like an Alfred Hitchcock movie. I never realized how my neighbour resented this until one of those birds fell down the chimney.

It was one of those rare times when my rotten little brother wasn't talking, yelling or screaming in rage; his big mouth was pressed shut by his mump-swollen cheeks. He becomes kitten-like when he's

tired or sick--a blond and pale kitten with enormous blue eyes underlined with dark rings. The kid actually becomes loveable. He was curled against me as I read a book of poems to him when suddenly, from the fire-place across the room, we both heard a frantic flapping descending the chimney, then a loud soft dull thud. I pulled the firescreen away, opened the draft, and looked up--the bird peered back, only his head showing over the shallow wall that formed a shelf over the back was of the fireplace. I reached for him but he pulled down and back into a corner. Rotten's eyes were wide with concern as he knelt beside me. "Is he dead?"



"No, just stupid. Tripping himself down a chimney and then backing away when help is offered."

"Oh."

"Uh huh. Just your everyday average dumb dove."

"If you can't reach him why don't you get into the fireplace and stand up?"

"How would you like to join the bird?"

The flapping started again. I kept hoping the bird would rise far enough to fall over the two-inch wall of the shelf, and down into the log grate and brought an old pillow from the basement to lay in the grate. To no avail. So I called the humane society. No answer. Just then I heard our neighbour pull up in his driveway and called to him as he opened the screen door of his porch. "There's a bird in the chimney and I need someone with a longer reach than I have."

"Leave him there."

"No, you don't understand. He's trapped right above the fireplace. I can't reach him and he'll starve to death."

"What makes you think I can get him?"

"Well, your arms are longer and I can almost reach him. Please, he'll die there."

He opened the screen door wider. "What do I have to do with a bird?"

At that moment I had a wild urge to rip off his twerpy little moustache. "You really won't help, huh?"

"Well, you're the one who keeps bringing them around." The screen door slammed.

Rotten, who had been standing next to me, yelled out the window, "Younasty son of a bitch!" I pulled him back.

"Don't say things like that!"



"Ok." He leaned out the window again. "Big dumb bastard!"

The big dumb bastard son of a bitch slammed his back door. I closed my bedroom window and both of us went to the bed to think.

"Liz, he'll die."

No he won't. I'll call the fire department."

"There's a bird in my fireplace. Could you send someone?"

"Lady, we can't send a truck out there for a bird."

"Not a truck, just one man. I don't care if he has to take the bus."

"Sorry, lady. Try the police."

"The police. Ok."

"Listen, there's this bird in my fireplace. Could you send someone?"

The woman turned from the phone and I heard her ask, "Do we rescue birds?" Nope. "Try the fire department."

"But they told me to call you."

"I'm sorry."

I again called the fire department. "There's this bird in my fireplace and I was told to call the fire department."

"Lady, I told you, we can't send a whole engine out there for a bird."

"But he'll starve to death and I won't be able to sleep tonight knowing that the poor helpless thing is cold and thirsty and hungry and---"

"Look, get a hanger and straighten it out except for the hook, and hook him down."

"Hook him down? But won't that hurt him?"

"No, it won't hurt him."

"Ok, but if it doesn't work, I'm calling back."

He laughed. "Right."

I prepared the hanger as directed and stared at it. "He's crazy. It won't hurt the bird, it'll kill him." I picked up the phone.

"It didn't work."

"Did you straighten the hanger?"

"Yes, but it didn't work." (Oh yes, I lie a lot).

"Well, there's nothing I can do."

Now I felt anger. "Oh, you could if you tried. There must be fire-

men who are doing nothing more than playing cards. Send one of them out here. What's the matter with everybody? Isn't there enough humanity to extend a little, even for a bird?" It was a long speech, the gist of it given here. I don't remember all that I said but at the end of it a fellow at the desk said, "All right, give me your name, address and telephone number and I'll speak to the chief." The fire chief called and told me he was sending a man out.

I showed him where the bird was. "What's the pillow for?"

"So he won't hurt himself when he comes down."

"But he just fell all the way down the chimney."

"And if I had known I would have had a pillow up there."

He grinned. "I was warned about you."

"Will you please get the bird?"

He reached and pulled the struggling bird to the pillow--a large, slate-coloured pigeon. "I thought the department said it was a dove."

"Well, I thought it was; I only saw its face. But if I knew it was a pigeon I wouldn't have said so."

"I believe that."

He went away to was the soot, I released the pigeon who flew right back to the chimney, and then called the fire department. "The bird's out--a pigeon."

"A pigeon?"

"A pigeon. I want to thank you."

He sighed in resignation. "Just as long as you're happy, lady."

Most definitely.--Liz Fishman, Yandro 197.



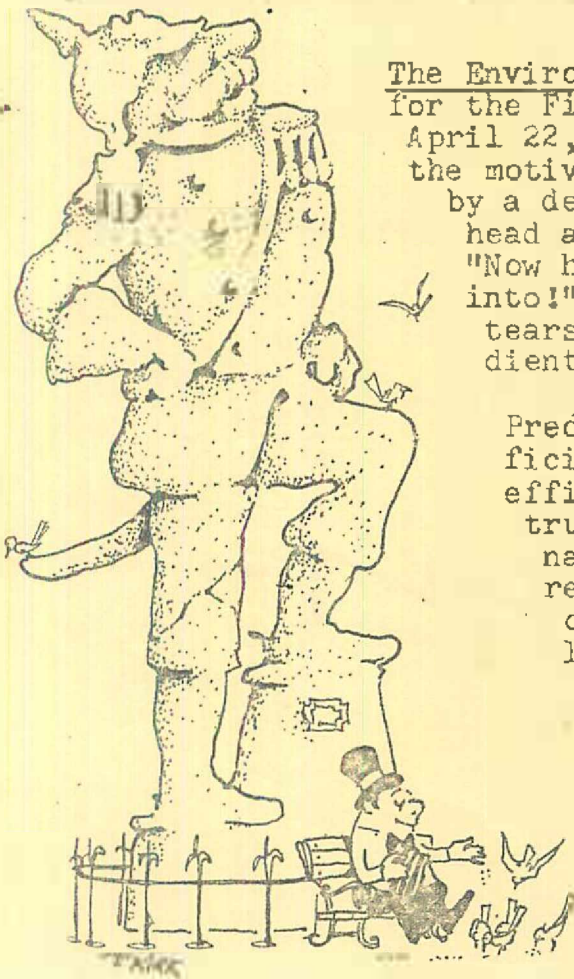
DIALOGUE / AND THEN I READ DICK GEIS

I imagine that next year, if not sooner, science fiction will begin to reflect the present flurry of sociological disaster warnings.

Most sf to date ignores a future in which almost all of Earth's natural resources are gone--used up. And seven billion people populations are common...because few sf writers realized that even four billion may be more people than we can permanently cope with. The current population in this country may be too large to maintain, soon.

There is a monumental lot of lip service being given to "saving the environment" now; sage noddings of heads..."Amen, brother." And damned little realization of what is coming in the way of either ecological disaster or the changes that must be made if disasters are to be avoided.

For instance--bigtime corporate capitalism will have to end; mass production of short-lived junk will have to end; cars will be strictly rationed; gas rationed; babies rationed; perhaps there are revolutions coming; a definite reduction in our "high" standard of living. What will happen in the cultural areas is going to be mind-boggling. The screams of anguish from the Establishments of all kinds will be

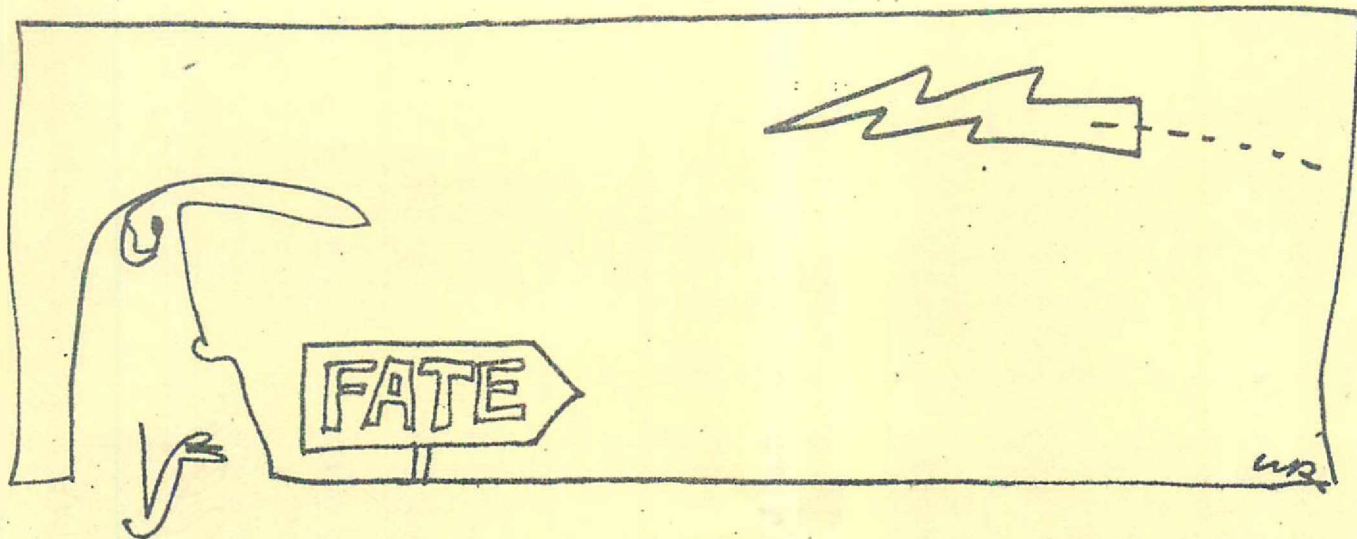


The Environmental Handbook edited by Garrett de Bell for the First National Environmental Teach-In on April 22, 1970, makes all this obvious...and yet the motives behind the furor are tainted, I suspect, by a desire to beat authority figures over the head and be deliciously virtuous at the same time. "Now here's another fine mess you've gotten us into!" Ahh, the joys of the intellectual as he tears into the rapacious businessman, the expedient politician, the Babbits--"Now it's MY turn!"

Prediction: A few relatively painless, superficial things will be done--more sewers, more efficient smog control, more abortions, but true population control will be left to mother nature, as will the ending of the industrial revolution be left to the time when iron, copper, lead, coal, aluminum etc. are no longer in easy supply anywhere.

NOW, and the next few years, is likely the last of the golden age. After us, the deluge.

--Dick Geis,
Science Fiction Review 37



"Hey, Alter. Come on up from down there. I want to talk to you. ALTER!"

"Don't bother me now Geis. I'm busy"

"What are you doing down there in my thalamus? Listen, if you screw up my pulse again--"

"Our pulse. I read that people with slow heartbeat rates live longer. I figure if I can slow ours down to around sixty per minute..."

"Stop fiddling! Last month you nearly killed our body from messing with the pituitary. Come on--UP!"

"Just trying to improve things. You've got to admit we've never been that horny before. Now, three days of pure--"

"Never mind! I have some thoughts on sf magazines I want to bounce off you."

"Rubber thoughts. Nothing ever really heavy, eh, Geis?"

"Shaddup and listen. I just got through reading Ted White's depressing editorial in the October FANTASTIC. He--"

"Did you dig that awful cover? Looks like it was stolen from a sword and sorcery fanzine. Gray Morrow did it, and he is a professional, but it sure looks amateurish."

"I am not here to criticize the artwork...although as bad as the cover for this FANTASTIC is, you have to admit that the new logo for AMAZING and the cover for the September issue make it a different magazine. AMAZING now shows that indefinable thing called 'class.'"

"That Jone's cover is a winner."

"But Ted's editorial in FANTASTIC...he reports that thus far all of his changes in AMAZING and FANTASTIC have gone for naught. Circulation has not gone up. He lays the blame on the distributors who do not in fact distribute all the copies of AMAZING and FANTASTIC that they should or could; in fact, he says they cheat and rob."

"Umm. And your platonic thoughts are?"

"That there is only room for one or two sf magazines on 90% of the newstands, especially the supermarket and liquor store racks. The retailer and the distributor are unwilling to give sf any more space. And so ANALOG and F&SF are usually the ones displayed. Sometimes GALAXY and IF, rarely AMAZING and FANTASTIC.

"And how would you solve this problem?"

"It's insoluble. There are too many sf magazines for the space they are given for display. There are too many other, bigger, better selling magazines filling up the racks. Sf gets token representation. The only way to win in that kind of a battle is to either publish a "classier looking sf mag (one that looks more respectable and "quiet" than ANALOG) or seek a different type of distribution.

"What about putting the mags into college book stores? That's where most of the readers are, anyway."

"Right. But the logistics are probably such that it isn't possible, for good reasons."

"Well, Geis. How would you go about cracking the nut?"

"As to the bookstores, I don't know--I haven't enough knowledge of distribution practices and costs. But as to the newsstands --I would go to a larger format, as VISIONS OF TOMORROW has, and title the magazine simply SCIENCE FICTION, and use low key sf covers, striving for an aura of a quality package. No screaming banners, no loud blats about the new, GREAT story inside. A small, quiet cover listing of well-known authors.

"That format would cost, Geis. You'd probably have to charge 95¢, maybe."

Likely, yes. Well, we'll probably never know...."

--Dick Geis
Science Fiction Review 39



SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN

NOT
YOU
D

THE HOUSE AT POONEIL CORNERS.....Regardless of how little difference there is morally between unlawful premeditated homicide and what soldiers do to enemy soldiers, the word "murder" excludes the latter except in certain special cases such as antiwar speeches. My reaction to your statement that you had been including war in your question on murder was that you had caught everybody in a Trick question and were gloating over it. I wonder if people's feelings over being fooled this way had anything to do with the "You don't know what 'murder' is" tone of some of the replies.

And this brings up the "examination syndrome" I've noticed once or twice in APA-L. This takes the form of "if he didn't print it he didn't know about it" such as a statement starting out "Only two people in APA-L figured out..." as opposed to "Only two people in APA-L told me they knew..." and may be the result of school tests.

IDEATIONAL FLUENCY.....I think I'd classify games (not just board games) as to who or what the opponent is. It can be the other player(s) (football, checkers), the nonhuman universe (mountain climbing, solitaire, hunting) or a third party not in competition, or a person's noble qualities against his lesser qualities (keeping track of how often one cheats in solitaire). A common combination is several people who compete by comparing their ability against the Universe or a not-in-competition opponent but not actually conflicting against each other (tackling or blocking other players is OK in football but a no-no in track) and can be characterized by the outlawing of defensive tactics (coughing On Purpose during a putt). Those who are up on the theory could also classify such games in terms of degrees of zero-sumness (Comparison games less nearly zero-sum than Conflict games).

Hmmmmmm Monopoly IS partly manipulative in that players can decide what property to buy when. How about simply redefining the goal as to maximize the amount of money in circulation (expand the economy)? Would it work? And this has reminded me of the hypothetical movement I've been thinking of to ban zero-sum (sort of like Direct Conflict) games because it conditions children to the idea that hurting another is equivalent to helping yourself (which it is, exactly, in some games). Actually I'd call it "psuedo-zero-sum" to be more inclusive.)

A CASHLESS SLOT MACHINE WHERE YOU STICK IN A CREDIT CARD AND IT ADDS AND SUBTRACTS RANDOM AMOUNTS ON YOUR ACCOUNT UNTIL YOU PULL IT OUT
Hmmmmmm. You could just mail your Master Charge to Las Vegas with instructions to play it for so many minutes and mail it back afterward and lose all your money without having to make the trip yourself.

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS.....What you describe on nametags is a try at changing fan manners in relation to one particular item and sounds reasonable to me. The way it was presented at the con, however, gave me a negative impression for some reason. I think I thought the committee had signed up some of its favorite artists (and was vague when I asked which ones) to not do free illos, as a commercial thing, possibly excluding other artists. Maybe what should be done is a statement in the last pre-con progress report to the effect that "good manners require paying artists for nametag illos." And at a large con could someone like George be inundated by "I bought a ticket so you have to do it" demands?

And I see in their PR that Boston is using plastic tags. Maybe someone should check with them on whether special tools are needed to illo them or if regular pen or pencil or whatever will work.

LIQUID LOVE.....Will the women in question switch to midis completely or just get a few as Work Uniforms and wear minis at other times?

Would you consider something like a bassoon, kettle-drum or other instrument common to symphonic music but rare in rock a "gimmick" if it's featured in a few rock records.

---A two-syllable word with only one vowel, and that a 'y'?

TORUS AND THE BULL.....As a practical matter, the stretching, etc., allowed in topology should enable you to shape some part of a Klein bottle into a useable container to drink from, perhaps with the rest shrunk down as a handle. And would a fly walking around on one be everted or just mirror-imaged?

I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.....I tried drawing a 6-color Mobius strip map and could do it only on the assumption of using Magic Marker or something that soaks through the paper but not on the assumption that two points that lie opposite each other (two sides of the sheet before joining) had no correlation. Maybe the problem has two different answers depending on how you define "draw a map" or maybe I'm just getting too sleepy to think straight.

--Tom Digby, Something Else

And some comments on the individual fanwriter nominees...

There's been considerable discussion in recent months concerning the great number of really fine artists now active in fandom and the apparent decline in the number of top-quality writers. The general conclusion seems to be that in actual fact, because of the proliferation of fanzines, today's top writers are restricting their output to a small circle of zines, whereas in the olden days, the top writers could and did appear in almost every major fanzine. The nominees for the Hugo for Best Fan Writer certainly this year bear out

this conclusion. And in doing so, they offer a distinctive choice of writing styles to the Hugo voters.

TERRY CARR is the fannish writer on the ballot. From what I have seen, Terry's output for 1970 centred around THE INFINITE BEANIE, his column for FOCAL POINT, although he had a major article in WARHOON and letters in most of the "fannish" fanzines. His writing tends to be anecdotal, dealing with various incidents involving the Carrs and their friends. It's light, amusing and of interest to fannish fans. In addition, Terry's fanzine commentaries and fan history columns are of interest to the fannishly oriented voter.

TOM DICBY is relatively unknown to me. I'm aware that he writes PROBABLY SOMETHING for APA-L, with reprints appearing in THE WILD FOUNDATION, but I've not seen his work in any other fanzine. The one piece I have on hand here is a humorous speculative essay, inventive and adequately written but rather minor. Considering the relative unavailability of Tom's writing, I imagine his support comes from other members of the APL.

LIZ FISHMAN writes a humorous column, THROUGH THE TRIGGER, for YANDEO. Again to the best of my knowledge, she writes for no other fanzine. The column deals with the improbable events of her life, often featuring her little brother Rotten. Although these have nothing to do with science fiction or fandom, they are extremely well written and Liz has a genuine flair for comedy. Her small but quality output should appeal to those with a sense of the absurd.

DICK CHIS, yet another one-fanzine writer, does the MONOLOG and DIALOG for SFR as well as many of the short book reviews which appear there. The MONOLOG is generally mere reporting, so Dick's most creative writing occurs in his dialogue with his alter-ego in the DIALOG section of the editorial. This section covers a wide variety of science fictional and fannish topics in a light and humorous fashion. Dick's writing pervades SFR and he should be the choice of those who favor personal reporting.

TED PAULS appeared in a vast array of fanzines during 1970 and was almost certainly the most widely published critic of the year. His output centred around medium-length book reviews in the one to two page size, all well written in an entertaining and provocative style. Ted also wrote some one paragraph summations and some longer, in-depth analyses, all of which revealed the thought and insight which characterized his writing. He is the obvious choice of those who favor criticism and reviewing.



Alicia Austin
Steve Fabian
Mike Gilbert
Tim Kirk
Bill Rotsler

FAN ARTIST

Despite the calls for a restructuring of this category, we are still forced to work within the confines of the present system. As a result, there is a wide variety of artistic styles competing for this year's award. In the following brief capsule descriptions, I shall try to indicate where each artist's work has appeared, what the strong points of each nominee are and what common criticisms, if any, have been made of their work.

ALICIA AUSTIN, with covers on *SFR*, *ENERGUMEN* and *THE ESSENCE* and very many fine interior drawings plus impressive showings at several regional convention art shows, exhibited mastery of a wide range of styles and a technical ability second to none during 1970. Most familiar was her art-nouveau, Beardsleyesque style but her cartoon-style work for "Kumquat Fay" in *ENERGUMEN* was much praised, as were several masterful full-page drawings for poems in the same fanzine. Critics who claimed an over-reliance on art-nouveau were merely unfamiliar with the many examples of her other techniques. Alicia's facility for intricately detailed work and her versatility of style make her a strong contender for this award.

STEVE FABIAN worked almost exclusively in full-page drawings during 1970, with probably the very best examples of his complex style appearing in *OUTWORLDS*. In addition, Steve's remarkably beautiful work appeared as covers for *EMULYON* and *ENERGUMEN* and in a folio in *CRANTALLOON*. A master of shading, Steve is without equal in the intricate and stylized drawings which are his forte: his technical brilliance is acknowledged even by those critics who complain of a certain lifelessness to his work.

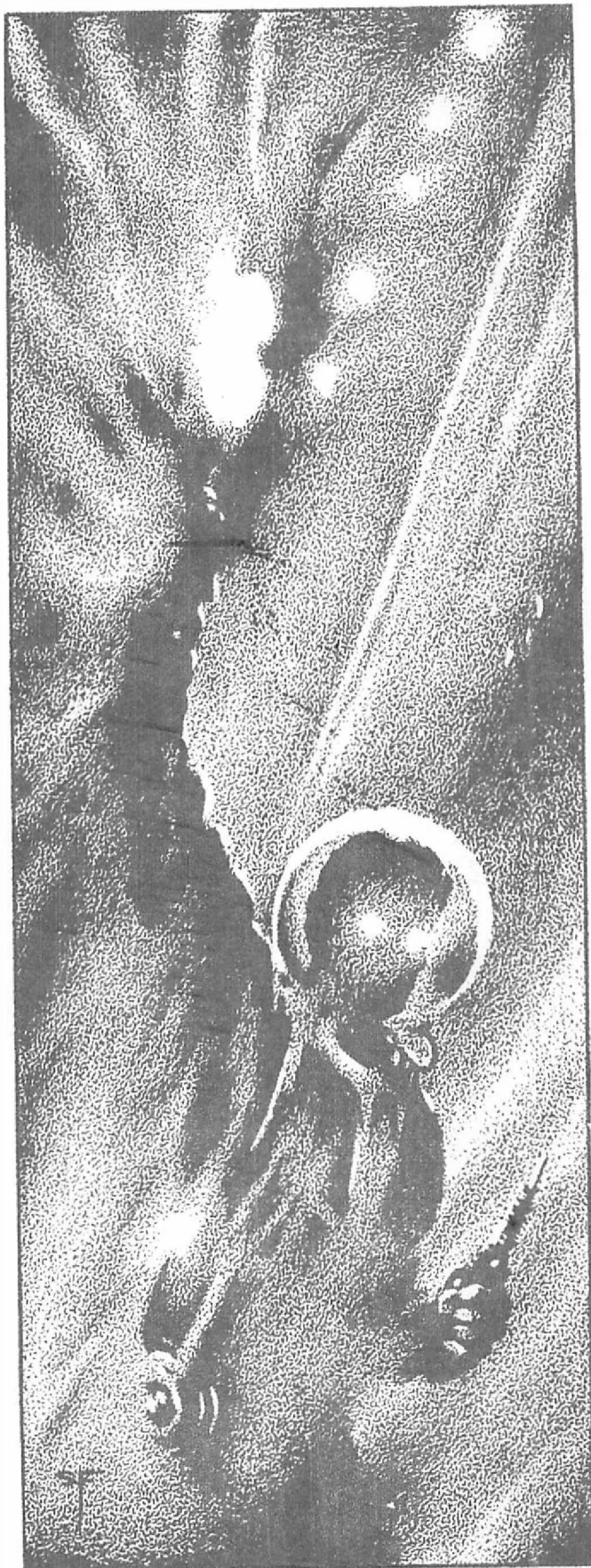
MIKE GILBERT appeared in a multitude of fanzines during the year under consideration, with both covers and interior illustrations. His pen and ink sketches tend to centre around several recurring themes and often feature an enigmatic woman in juxtaposition with Mike's well-known spaceships or machines. His cartoon "scratches" are a delightful breed and Mike uses them to considerable comic effect. His color paintings appeared at many eastern Art Shows. Mike's scratchboards, as featured in *OUTWORLDS*, are considered by many to be his finest works since they avoid what his critics consider to be Mike's greatest weaknesses -- a regrettable sloppiness of execution, and a tendency to imitate Jack Gaughan.

TIM KIRK dispensed superb cartoons throughout fandom during 1970. His covers included *NOCTURNE TRIP*, *ASIA JOURNAL* and *ENERGUMEN* while his interior work appeared in *THE ESSENCE*, *UNICORN* and countless other fanzines. (His full-page cartoons were a regular feature of *SFR*.) Tim's tremendous sense of humour coupled with a phenomenal ability for humourously detailed drawings produced a steady stream of uproarious aliens, monsters and mythological creatures while several splendid folios clearly showed the serious side of his talent. If Tim has any critics in fandom, I'm honestly unaware of them, although there are those who would like to see more of his 'serious' work.

BILL ROTSLER is probably the most generous, and hence ubiquitous, artist in fandom. There is scarcely a fanzine published, from the lowliest cruizine to the Hugo nominees, that does not contain a Rotsler illo or two. Bill's unique sense of humour has illuminated fandom with a quarter of a century of his distinctive cartoons featuring his dirty old men, his nubile young women, and his hearts and noses. And in 1970, his more serious drawings of strange portals and gates and asteroids appeared as both covers and interiors. Bill is the undisputed master of his type of drawing and the genius beneath the apparent simplicity of his style has been widely recognized. Nevertheless, his critics point out the strong similarities between many of his drawings and suggest, totally erroneously, that what he does requires little skill or talent.

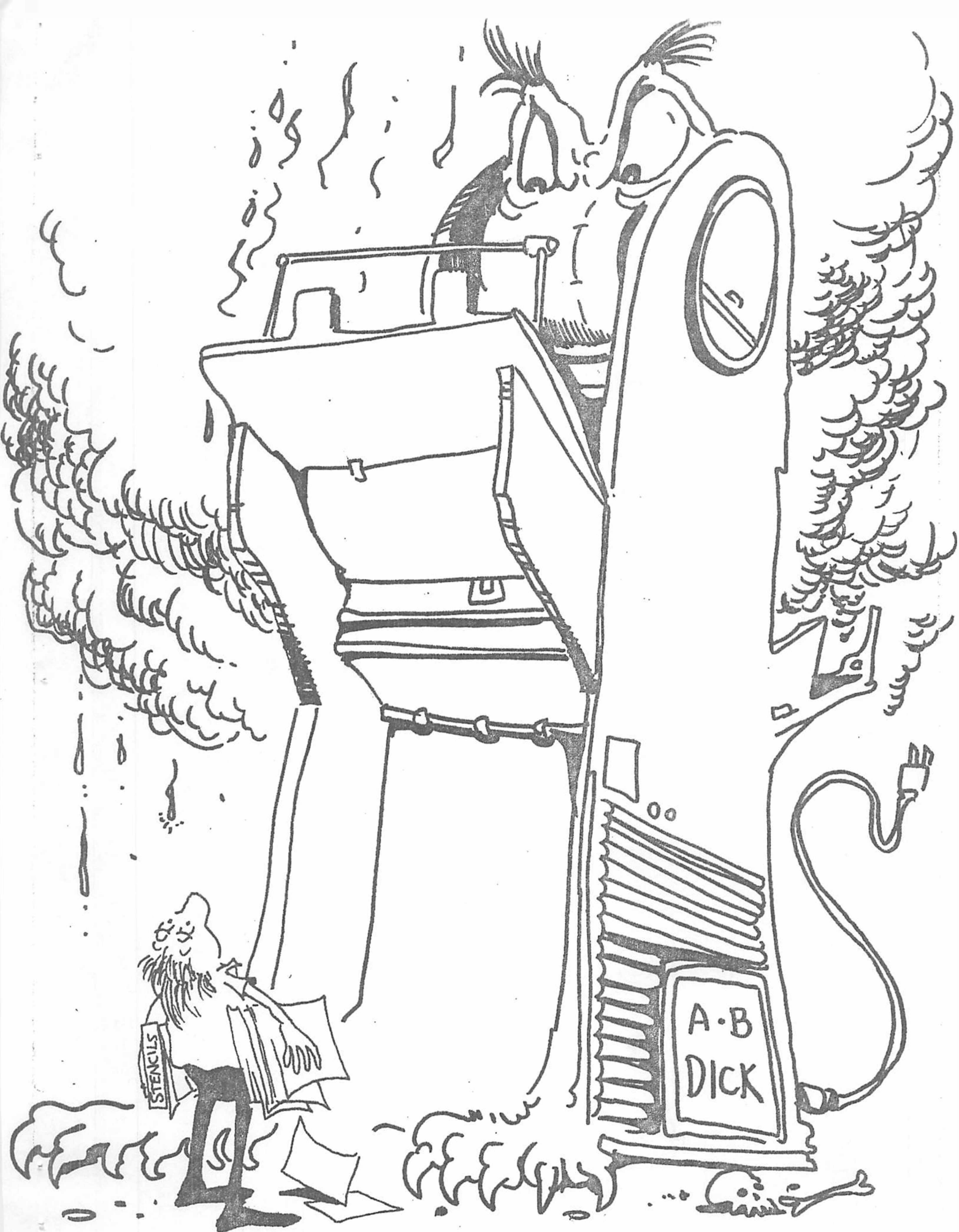


Atkin





Isaac Asimov







NIXON GETS TOUGH OR

WE ARE GETTING PHYSICAL

OR: DROP YOUR
DRAWERS, YOU
Lousy hippy
degenerates..

state of youth
in trouble by
the artist who never
SIGNS HIS NAME: MCGILBERT

NOTICE TO
REPORT FOR
PHYSICAL

Here we will find the terror filled story of an impassioned young artist and the horror he faced - the hands of the quacks - the mental test (ha ha ha) - the reunions - the after math: there is nothing heartwarming here as you learn where all the flowers went...

6:30

THE FEDERAL
BUILDING:



AND: AFTER AN
HOUR RIDE TO
GRIMY BUFFALO
WE HAVE DISCOVERED
MANY FRIENDS FROM
HIGH SCHOOL.

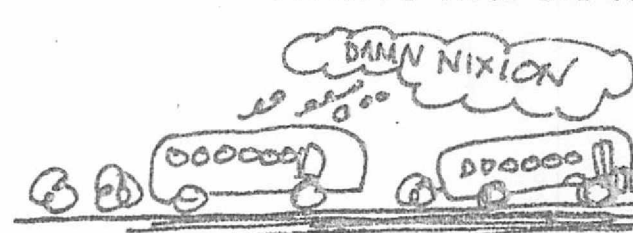


DOUG

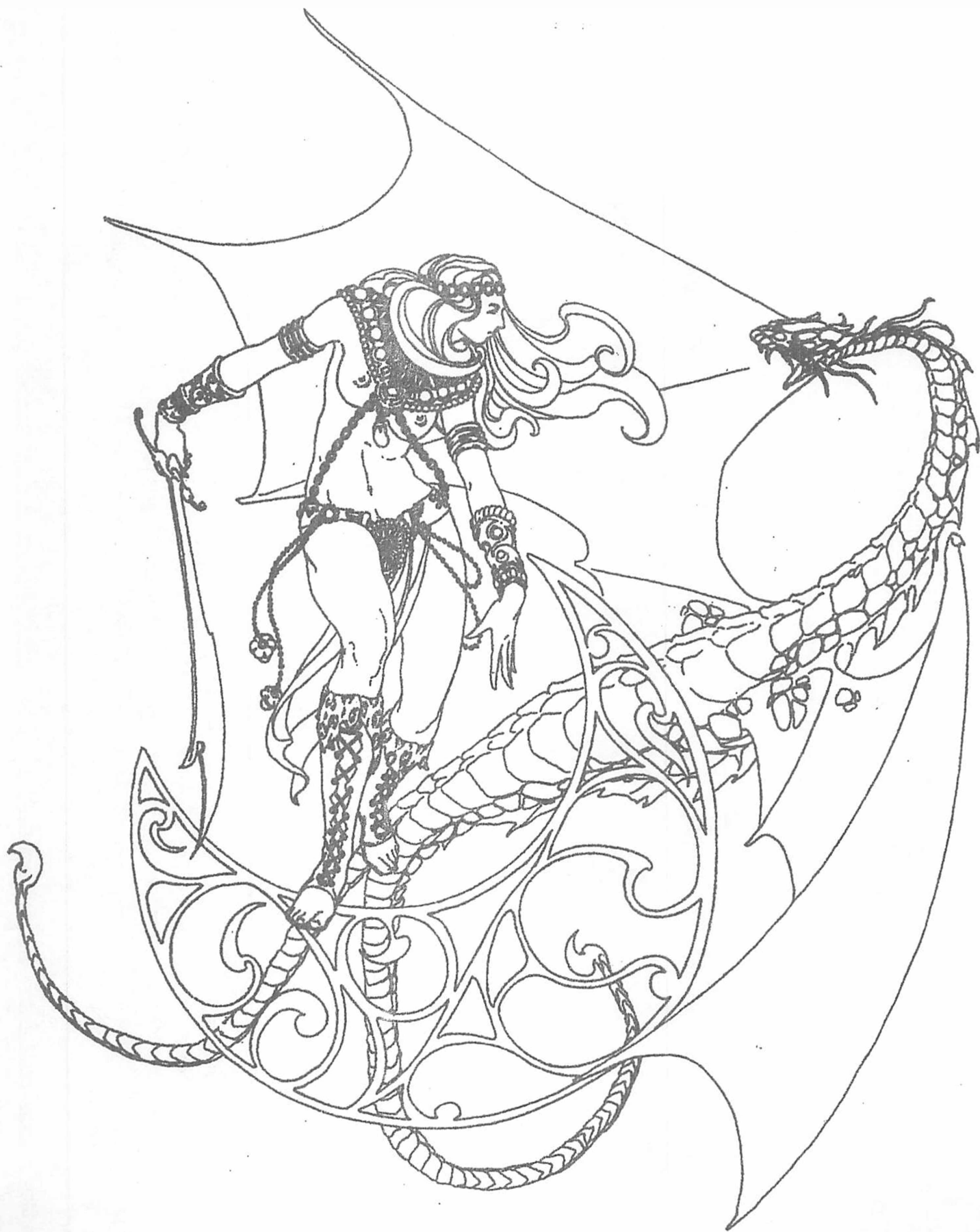
OUTWARDS APPEARANCES HAVE
CHANGED BUT NOW WE ALL
THINK THE SAME



ALAN



NIXON
NEEDS
ME





HUGO COMMENTS

Jerry Lapidus 54 Clearview Drive, Pittsford N.Y. 14534

...[it] is a very common complaint, that hardcover fiction never, never, never gets nominated or wins. The exceptions always prove the rule, for the few exceptions that exist are books that got incredibly wide fannish discussion, were by major authors and were thus bought in hard cover editions by at least some people and garnered enough fanzine controversy to make a name for themselves. It happened first, I think, with Stranger in a Strange Land, again two years ago with Stand on Zanzibar. The same thing happened last year with Silverberg's To Live Again, certainly his best book yet and a high quality book by any author. But it came out in hardcover only, didn't get much publicity, didn't get many reviews (although those it did get were generally excellent)--and didn't get nominated, while crud like Macroscopic and Silverberg's own far-inferior Up the Line, published both in magazine and pb form, both were nominated. Perhaps the only solution for these (and for things like Delany's "Helix", which people are now saying didn't deserve the Hugo because it was substantially unchanged from the original British edition, published the year before) would be a special clause in the Hugo rules, to allow a work published only abroad or in hardcover the chance, if it doesn't receive enough nominations to be eligible in the year of publication, to compete the following year when it's published over here or in paperback.

Alex Eisenstein 6424 N. Mozart, Chicago Ill. 60645

...Jerry Lapidus' mild denseness is harmless enough here, but in certain other connections it can be an incredible nuisance. He often demonstrates a distinct disability in dealing with abstractions -- witness some of his past arguments advocating certain changes in the Hugo rules, such as his suggestion that they revert to allowing TV series to compete as series against individual productions (an incredible stupidity, no matter how it is viewed), or the alternate proposal to subdivide the dramatic award into subsidiary categories (equally inane -- dramatic sf has never been plentiful enough for the competition ever to be very fierce, and the Hugo itself should hardly become or incorporate a series of second-string Oscars, Emmys, Tonys, and even Grammys). His most recent proposal isn't quite so silly as the bulk of his previous half-baked notions, but his exceedingly vague formulation of it indicates how little real, hard thought he has devoted to the question before lifting his pen. And, as always, the inspiration for the promoted change lies in anguish over the loss sustained by a specific work; if this goes on, Jerry will be beating the fannish underbrush for various idiosyncratic modifications of the Hugo rules after each and every awards presentation! This sort of senseless, unconsidered, and inconsiderate promulgation of largely useless changes must cease.

Admittedly, there is a vital difference between the present case and all previous ones involving Lapidus and his affronted aesthetic sense: here the issue is not of taste frustrated but of taste apparently never exer-

cised -- the ruination of a book's just desserts (i.e., a chance at the Hugo) by inadequate distribution or promotion. Well -- just as the vicissitudes of personal taste cannot be legislated either for or against, so the shoddy handling of a book by a particular publisher cannot be legislated out of existence (at least not within the Hugo awards system!), nor effectively mitigated by any sweeping revision of the rules. Moreover, any attempt at devising some radical new provision to cover the above exigency would inevitably result in a clumsy proposition -- one that would entail further gross inequities and saddle future Worldcon committees with an unnecessary, and quite possibly difficult, additional burden. For these reasons I adamantly oppose any such improvisory and cumbersome change as I think Jerry currently envisions...and will do so with ferocity at future Convention business meetings.

However -- there exists an easy out. In the rules as they now stand is a clause that allows an author to "withdraw a version from consideration if he feels that version is not representative of what he wrote." (Para. 2.02) In general, determination of the above condition is left to the author, and a cagey one --like, perhaps, Chip Delany -- can utilize the rule to avoid the award pitfalls of limited distribution. If Jerry thinks that some voters, getting cagey in return, might object to this usage of the rule, then the rule can be formally extended to provide for all contingencies by rewording as follows: "the author may withdraw an edition from consideration if he feels that it is not representative of what he wrote, or that it did not receive adequate marketing." (Underscored wordage identifies actual changes and additions.) This modified rule would be liable to abuse, but abuse by any author would hardly be self-serving, so that aspect is not a real problem nor valid objection -- for what writer could possibly benefit by holding out for the second or third reprinting? By that time the work would surely be better known than in its original edition, but people would also be quite conscious of its status as a work of the past. Anyway, the committee could always exercise its judgement to eliminate any such cheater; another clause in the by-laws states that "eligibility of nominees shall be determined by the convention committees." (Para. 2.14)

The revised version of 2.02 still puts the burden on the author, but that is as it should be. (To lay responsibility on the publisher would truly be frivolous, not to mention naive, and the con committee has enough work to drive them all nuts without trying to make such a difficult determination for every sf or fantasy story published during the primary year of eligibility and/or the prior year.)

Linda Bushyager 121 W. MacDade Blvd Apt B211, Folsom Pa. 19033

I think the Hugo rules should be changed in another way. There should be a new category added for Best Fan Cartoonist. So that the straight artists like Fabian, Austin, Gilbert, Barr, etc., could compete among themselves, while cartoonists like Kirk, Rotsler, Schalles, John Ingham, and others will have more of a chance by competing together.

I intend to put up such a motion at Noreascon this year. And I very much hope that members attending the business meeting will support it.

Mike Glicksohn 267 St. George St. #807, Toronto 180, Ontario

There's to be a motion at Noreascon to divide the Fan Artist Hugo into Best

Fan Artist and Best Fan Cartoonist. I can understand and sympathize with the motives behind this: but the next step would be to split off the Best Fan Critic and Best Fannish Fan Writer from the Best Serious Fan Writer and to separate Best Newszine from Best Fannish Fanzine and Best Serious Fanzine. Things would proliferate out of sight. And how are we to define a cartoonist? To many people, a "cartoon" style means a simplistic drawing with a funny caption; there'd have to be some rigorous artistic definition in the rules before the change would be workable. I'm afraid the supporters of this move would have to come up with some pretty conclusive arguments before I'd go for the proposed change, no matter how unfair the present set-up may be.

Fred Patten Apt 1, 11868 W. Jefferson Blvd., Culver City Cal. 90230

Actually, I think the Hugo category for Best Professional Artist is misplaced, or misnamed. In all other professional categories (except prozine) the voter is asked to select a specific work as being the best of the year in its class. In the Best Artist category, the voter is asked to select the best creator, judging from the totality of his work during the given year. 'Best'? 'Most Popular' might be a more apt wording.

Several months ago I drew up a plan for a new series of awards to do for s-f artwork what the Hugo does for the literature. It would be presented to an artist for specific pieces of art, rather than for the best overall average record in each category. This would help eliminate the tendency of fans to consider an artist for his record over a considerable period of time, rather than for the one year technically under consideration. If it worked out well enough, it might replace the two Best Artist categories in the Hugo awards to the extent that they could be dropped as no longer necessary. I asked several fans for their opinions and criticism, and their unanimous comment was, "Oh God, not more awards!", usually followed by a complaint that the Worldcon banquets were too long as it was. (They wouldn't have to be given out there.) It might be interesting to see if anybody else thinks there's merit in this idea.

Since I envisioned this as a set of awards to parallel the Hugoes, I copied its basic structure closely. The awards were tentatively titled "Science Fiction Art Achievement Awards", the word "Art" being the only addition to the formal title of the Hugo itself. They would be nicknamed the Pauls, after Frank R. Paul, naturally. He not only did the first artwork for the first s-f magazine, he's generally recognized as the first great artist, and a genuinely great artist in the terms of the s-f field, that science fiction produced. The only alternative nickname that I considered in the same class was the Boks. (At this point, I felt a moral qualm: what's the socially proper manner for appropriating a respected person's name for an award when the person's permission cannot be obtained? Considering what I've heard about Bok's opinion of fans sponging off the pros, I can't say I think he'd be pleased if he knew his name was being used by fans to give prestige to another of their awards. Come to think of it, did anybody ever get Gernsback's permission before tagging the S-F Achievement Awards the 'Hugo'? I assume he was pleased with the honor or he'd have objected, but did anybody ever ask him in advance or did he find out only after the awards started being handed out?)

The categories presented more of a problem, and I drew up several sets of alternates. You could divide them by place of publication. Best Prozine Art, Best Paperback Art, Best Hardcover Art; with colour and black-and-white subdivisions for each. You'd need color vs. b&w divisions for the prozines,

or interior illustrations would never have a chance over the covers. Some paperbacks (mostly Ace) publish interior sketches, and it'd be nice to encourage more. As to hardcovers, many books have beautiful dust jackets that have been virtually ignored by fans in consideration of awards up to now, and some still have interior illustrations, too.

You could divide them by type of subject matter. Astronomical, for the work of a Bonestell, a Hunter, or a Dollens. Science-fiction adventure, for the work of a Freas, a Morrow, or others who draw realistic illustrations of futuristic scenes. Heroic fantasy adventure, for the work of a Frazetta, a Jones, or a Steranko. Symbolic/Abstract, for the work of a Gaughan, a Savage, a Walotsky, or the Dillons. Straight Fantasy, for the work of a Gallardo or a Jacques. And of course, most artists do paintings in more than one of these subject fields.

You could divide them by type of art. Realistic illustration. Cartoon, both humorous and serious (Cartier and Bode are illustrators whose work I'd class as cartoon rather than realistic or abstract, whether humorous or serious.) Abstract/Symbolic, again. (Can anyone come up with a clear distinction between the two? I'm not sure that such diverse styles as the Dillons' and Steele Savage's deserve to be judged in the same category.) Photomontage, I suppose, though this is little used. (Except for those abominations on the Curtis paperbacks. The Art Director of Curtis Books should be shot as a service to s-f. The Art Director of Macfadden-Bartell, too.)

Form of award: a Perma-Plaquet certificate, as the Worldcon art show is now giving out; possibly with a reproduction of the winning piece of art included in it.

Selection: voting by fans, similar to the Hugo system. I like the idea, suggested for the Hugoes, of allowing one or two selections to be added to the nominations made by the fans, by a sort of panel of experts if they should feel that there is any particularly excellent piece of work that was published in too obscure a place to obtain a fair consideration by the nominating fans.

Management: some kind of board of directors and/or experts. The Worldcon Committees don't need more work, and, with the sorry record the Hugoes have gotten after having been tampered with by one ConCom after another, I wouldn't care to trust the Pauls to them. The problem is to get a board that'd be active, competent, impartial, and not subject to conflicts of interest. How many members? (I suggest 7) How selected? How maintained and renewed? Answerable to fandom or only to itself? How financed?

These and other questions can be answered if there's enough interest in the idea to make it worth the consideration. The main advantage of the Pauls is that they'd be awards for specific merit in science-fiction and fantasy illustration, rather than popularity awards for one particular artist over all others. In fact, an award could go to an anonymous piece of work; some paperback publishers still aren't identifying their artists, some of whom do fine work. I'll be interested in seeing what response, if any, this idea gets -- which set of categories most people would prefer -- how they think the awards should be managed -- and so on.

novel--susan glicksohn
novlette--richard labonte
short story--richard labonte
dramatic presentation--phil kinsman, richard labonte, angus taylor
professional artists--mike glicksohn
prozine--mike glicksohn
fanzine--mike glicksohn
fanwriter--richard labonte, mike glicksohn
fan artist--mike glicksohn

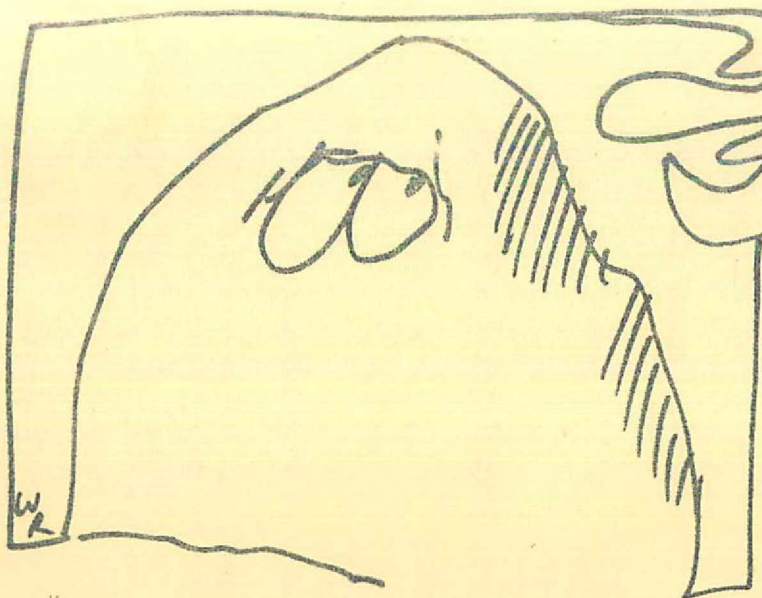
fanwriter reprints: the infinite beanie--terry carr (from focal point)
through the wringer--liz fishman (from yandro)
dialog/and then i read--dick geis (from sfr)
est modus in rebus--ted pauls (from outworlds)
something else again--tom digby (from apa 1)

fanartist portfolio: william rotsler (from sfr)
alicia austin (from granfalloon)
mike gilbert (from outworlds and energumen)
steve fabian (from embylyon)
tim kirk (from granfalloon)

fan art from energumen, with a piece or two from outworlds

lettering by rick cuyler, dave rasmus, rowan shirkie





LOWDOWN
53 ROSEDALE AVE
OTTAWA O1, ONTARIO
CANADA

TO:

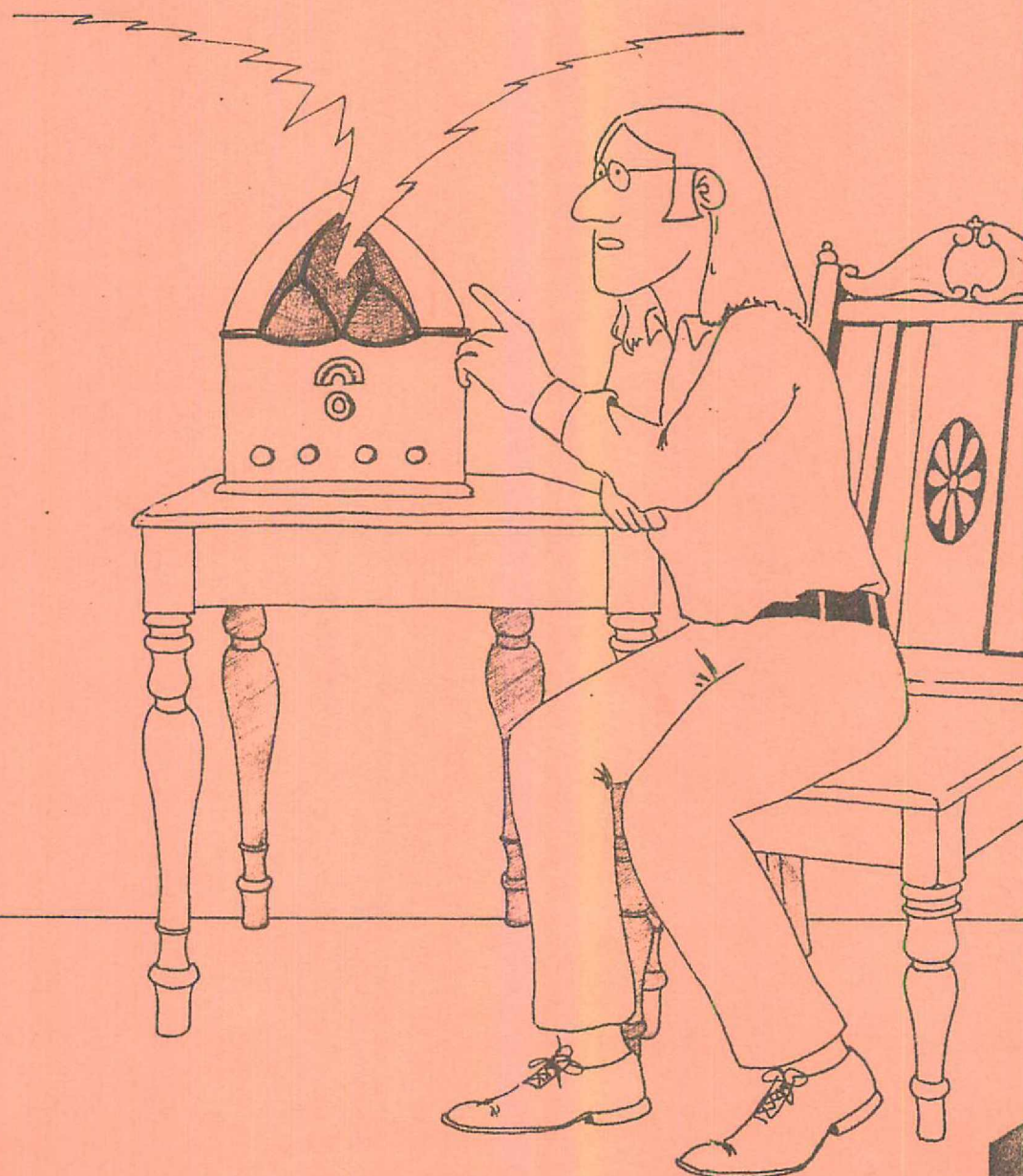
THIRD CLASS MAIL

PRINTED MATTER ONLY

WILL KING KONG BE ON THE FILM PROGRAM?
WILL LELAND SAPIRO PAY FOR HIS BANQUET TICKET?
WILL JOHAN MEET HIS DRAFT DODGING FRIENDS?
WILL MIKE GUCKESCHIN FIND SOME INDIA PALE ALE?
WHO WILL OVERRUN THE CON — 7,000 COMIC
FANS OR THE INSIDIOUS GOON SHOW FANS?

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TUNE IN TO THE NEXT EXCITING EPISODE OF

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