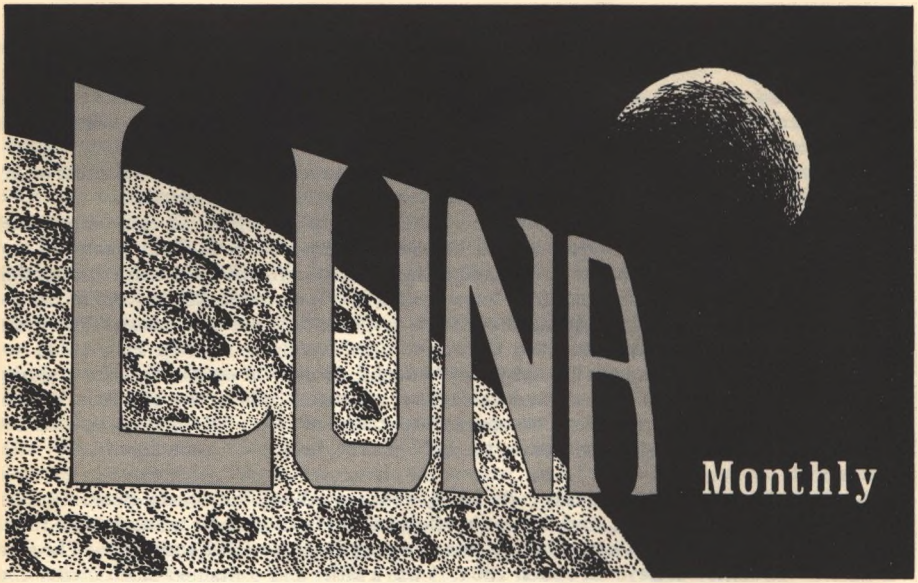



No. 54 September 1974

# Philip José Farmer

An Interview Conducted by Paul Walker

*When I thought—"What should I ask Philip Jose Farmer?"—the topic of 'sex and violence' came to mind. You've written about both in an individual and interesting way, and I'm curious to know your views on them as subjects in your own fiction and in sf in general.*

I suppose it's inevitable that you should think of 'sex' when you think of my name. And, perhaps, vice versa. My first sf story, *The Lovers*, was published in *Startling Stories* magazine in 1952. It was a story which could not have existed without its sex. The story proceeded from, and returned to, the sexual attitudes of the hero, an Earthman from a rigidly nonpermissive society, and the heroine, a mimetic humanoid.

"Mother," my third published sf story, was about a man who ends up quite happily a prisoner in a creature that is a giant sentient womb, a real Big Mother. And a number of my stories in the immediate years after 1952 were deeply concerned with terrestrial and extraterrestrial sex and reproduction. "Open to Me, My Sister" (later, "My Sister's Brother"), "Father," *Moth and Rust*, *Strange Compulsion*, *Flesh*, and *Night of Light* were born from sex. Usually, peculiar forms of sex (from our viewpoint). None of these were, however, 'sexy' stories. Nor was there anything 'pornographic' about them. Except for *Flesh*, they depicted the sexual customs and mechanisms of nonterrestrial sentients, or in some cases, of nonsentients. These were described in as academic a manner as possible in a fictional story, though I tried to make the telling as dramatic as possible at the same time. And I did not hesitate, in fact I was eager, to go deeply into the complex biology of the extraterrestrials. I probably went too deeply in *The Lovers*. But I was writing for a specialized audience, and I felt that I could go into sexual reproductive, and genetic details in an sf magazine as deeply as I wished. The traffic would bear it. And so it did, though there were some readers who complained.

If I were to rewrite *The Lovers* today, I'd transfer some of the biological explanation to an addendum. But then I'd rewrite the addendum, making it even more detailed, disposing of some objections to it by so-called scientists when the story came out, and I'd add some diagrams.

The point is that my earliest 'sex' stories were not what is generally thought of when 'sex story' is mentioned. There was no description of intercourse between Hal Yarrow and

Jeannette Rastignac (the mimetic humanoid) in *The Lovers.* That was left to the imagination.

If I did rewrite it, I'd now put in such a scene, but only to show Yarrow's crippled sexuality and how Jeannette overcame it. And also to show their love for each other. And to show their failure to be entirely honest with each other.

And that's what most of my sexual stories are also about—in fact, what most of my stories are about—the failure to be honest, to communicate without reservation.

Despite the fact that there was no explicit description of sexual intercourse, *The Lovers* and "Mother" and "Open to Me, My Sister" disgusted both John Campbell and Horace Gold. Neither could accept the description of extraterrestrial sex and reproduction in *The Lovers,* the biomechanics of the larva-phallus in "Open to Me, My Sister," or the use of a knife as a phallus to impregnate the Mother in "Mother" (not to mention Eddie Fetts' eating his own mother later after Big Mother vomited her up as a stew). They could not tolerate the exotic erotics, and they probably thought, wrongly of course, that the majority of their readers couldn't either. And these two thereafter viewed me as a 'sex writer.' Anything I submitted from then on smelled to them of 'sex' before they opened the evnelope. However, they didn't have to sniff much, because I sent them very little afterwards.

Still, things changed somewhat. By 1959, Gold was editing the Galaxy-Beacon Books. These were to be 'sexual' sf. And it was significant that Gold came to me and asked that I write a novel for Beacon. I had sold him just one story between 1952 and 1959, "The God Business," published in *Beyond*, March 1954. It was a satire and contained much nudity and a lot of Freudian psychology reduced to absurdity. But no sex to offend anybody except the most puritanical. He could accept that, though he was still turning down my other stories, most of which dealt with the racial theme. Horace did publish stories which had characters recognizable as Negroes, but he was not prepared to buy a story which waded

**LUNA Monthly**
Editor: Ann F. Dietz
Published monthly by Frank & Ann Dietz, 655 Orchard Street, Oradell, N.J. 07649

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL:
First Friday of preceding month

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:**
50¢ per copy, 75¢ on newsstand
$5.00 per year Third Class mail within U.S.
5.50 per year Third Class mail worldwide
6.75 per year First Class mail within North America
Subscriptions requiring special invoicing 50¢ additional
Microfilm Edition: $17.00 per reel (year)
Back issues: #1 to 25 - 75¢ each, #26 to current - 50¢ each

**All checks and money orders must be payable to Franklin M. Dietz Jr. only**

US ISSN 0024-7375

**ADVERTISING RATES:**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full page | $8.00 | Quarter page | $2.50 |
| Half page | 4.50 | Eighth page | 1.50 |

Classified advertising: 2¢ per word
Half-tone copy: $5.00 additional

Rates are for camera-ready copy. Please request special LUNA layout sheets for setting up copy. Ads requiring preparation should be submitted in advance for quotation.

**COPY SIZE:** (inside margins)

| | |
|---|---|
| Full page | 6" x 9" |
| Half page | 3" x 9" or 6" x 4½" |
| Quarter page | 3" x 4½" |
| Eighth page | 3" x 2¼" |

**OTHER LUNA PUBLICATIONS:**

| | |
|---|---|
| LUNA' Speech Transcripts | Editor: Franklin M. Dietz Jr. Published Irregularly |
| LUNA Annual Bibliography | Editor: Ann F. Dietz To be published |

Member: Science Fiction Publishers Association

**OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTION RATES for LUNA Monthly via Airmail/FC through agents:**
AUSTRALIA A$6.30
Gary Mason, GPO Box 1583, Adelaide, S.A. 5001, Australia
CONTINENTAL DM22
Mario B. Bosnyak, 1000 BERLIN 62, Merseburger Str. 3, W. Germany
GREAT BRITAIN 355p
Gerald Bishop, 10 Marlborough Road, Exeter EX2 4JT, England
JAPAN ¥3000
Takumi Shibano, 1-14-10, O-okayama, Meguro-ku, Tokyo, Japan

even ankle deep in the cesspool of race relations in this country. He said they were too controversial; his readers (especially the Southerners) wouldn't like them.

All right. I knew by then that I'd overestimated the flexibility and progressiveness of most of the editors and the readers in the sf field. When I started writing sf, I'd naively thought that any sf reader would be as aware of the anthropological facts and the falsity of racial prejudices, as I. I soon found out how wrong I was. But that doesn't matter. Gold asked me to write a novel for Beacon, saying that his publishers had forced him to put some sexy scenes in most of the novels.

I wrote *Flesh*, and it was the only one in the line in which he had to take out some of the 'sex.' Of course, today it's pretty mild stuff, and would only amuse the reader. But the sex is integral to the story. If Stagg had no scientifically implanted compulsion to mate, combined with a superhuman ability to do so, then there'd be no story.

Even so, when it was reprinted in hardcover years later, Joanna Russ criticized it as being too coy in places. Maybe so. I could have rewritten some parts to make them more specific, but why should I? It's not the act itself that matters, it's the events that lead up to the act and the physical and emotional consequences thereafter.

Besides, Joanna Russ, though usually a very perceptive analyst, didn't understand the story at the gut level. She's a women's lib worker, and I'm all for women's lib, but I've noticed that when it comes to the cult of the great goddess, they boggle. They misunderstand the whole thing. Don't ask me why. The concept eludes them, and stories about The White Goddess slip through their otherwise very sound heads. (There are exceptions, of course.)

Anyway, I was identified as a 'sex' writer early in the game. Yet, from the beginning, I was writing of religion, too. *The Lovers*, *Moth and Rust*, "Father," "Attitudes," *Night of Light*, "My Sister's Brother," and my only mainstream novel, *Fire and the Night*, all these were about religion as much as sex. My second published story, "Sail On! Sail On!" contained no sex, but it used theological terms to explain spark-gap transmitters and radio waves. "The Alley Man" was about, among other things, Neanderthal sex. But it was also about Neanderthal religion. *Flesh*, which I wrote at Gold's instigation, was also about religion, as was my series of Father John Carmody stories. Why then am I a 'sex' writer and not a 'religion' writer?

The answer, I suppose, is that many sf writers have written of religion. I was the first to get a sexual sf story published, and the only one to write a number of them. Also, the sex in my stories was so outre that it stamped itself in most readers' minds. It doesn't matter how many other subjects I write about with equal intensity or frequency. Or how many other writers have written about sex. I am The Sexual Writer in sf.

However, I confess that I can't see why you link 'violence' to my name. I don't think my stories contain much violence. Certainly not an abnormal amount. Not more than the story itself calls for. Certainly very little compared to that in, say, the stories of Keith Laumer or Harlan Ellison.

Perhaps you link both sex and violence to my name because violence usually accompanies the sex in my stories. That is because they usually deal with the sicknesses of our attitude towards sex. They show the result of these sicknesses, which is uausily violence (mental or physical) in our society. Just as the result of greed for power or money is violence.

Sex and violence are frequent subjects in literature. And they are so because everybody in this society, from children on up to centenarians, are deeply involved in sex

INDEX TO FEATURES



All subscription inquiries should be addressed to F. M. Dietz Jr., and include stamped, self-addressed envelope or postcard for prompt response. Comments and contributions are welcomed. Contributors receive a complimentary copy of the issue in which their material appears. Reviewers for films, plays and books are solicited. A sample review should be submitted by new writers.

and violence. You can't get away from them unless you become a hermit. You still can't even then. You carry your sex with you, and you have to worry about violence the moment a stranger heaves in view.

Still, why do these subjects concern me so much when other writers, say, seldom use them? What writers? Heinlein's early books have much violence, and his latest ones are swollen with sex. I'm trying to think of a single sf writer who doesn't deal with these, even if the dealing is, as it were, under the table. Ballard has little, perhaps nothing, of sex in his geometries. But violence is always there; it's even implicit in his landscapes. Especially, in recent years, they contain the violence of automobile collisions. And the violence in his stories is, now I think on it, disguised sex. Especially the car crashes. The car—a traveling womb and a threatening penis all wrapped up in one. A casualty cock, you could call it. The crash, an orgasm. Yet nobody thinks of sex and violence (except me) when he thinks of Ballard—as far as I know.

What about Lafferty? Here's a peculiar writer who doesn't apparently write much about sex and violence. Or does he? His style is so intriguing, but ultimately so confusing, or, I should say, veiling, that an analysis may find S&V under the turbulent surface. I've never analyzed his stuff; just enjoyed it, so I can't say.

In any event, a few years ago I put the seal of The Sex Writer on myself. Though I am sometimes labeled by some people as a hack, I often experiment. Not just in style or technique or content but in differing fields. I had never written so-called 'pornography,' though some prudish readers have called *Flesh* and "Riders of the Purple Wage" such. I had written varieties of sf, hardcore science, biological, psychological, sociological, fantasy, parodies, etc. But though I was often hard-pressed for money, I'd never written pornography. This was strange, because many sf writers have done so. You'd be surprised—or maybe you wouldn't—at how many of the biggest names in sf have supported themselves with hardcore porn. Of course, they did this under nom de plumes, and they quit as soon as their sf paid off enough. Writing hardcore porn is very boring, I'm told. It's all strictly formularized, the formula depending upon the particular publishers' market. So many pages have to have scenes of intercourse; there have to be so many references to sex per page, and so forth. There are certain tabus; you don't offend religious sensibilities by making fun of God or Christianity, and so forth. Actually, hardcore porn is, or at least was, the least free field for a writer. He could go all out describing all sorts of so-called perversions, but he was very restricted in other areas. At least, this is the way it was explained to me.

As for me, when I got this idea of writing a few novels for Essex House, I had never even read a pornographic book. Not unless you consider Joyce's *Ulysses* or Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn* as such. I don't. Only a semiliterate prude would call them pornography.

What I wanted to do was to write a few parodies or pastiches. For instance, I'd always considered vampire stories, werewolf tales, and in fact, the whole Gothic field, as more-or-less disguised sex stories. Pornography of the weird. Why not bring out the hidden stuff into the open. Most lovers of the Gothic are kids just getting into puberty. At least, that seems to be the general makeup of the Count Dracula Society, for instance. I'd regard them as typical. (There are exceptions, of course.) But I'd always thought that when the fifteen year old (never mind his chronological age), was reading about the vampire sucking blood from the victim's neck, he's subconsciously replacing the blood and neck with other fluids and organs. Maybe I'm wrong. And there could be religious motives for reading such stuff so fanatically. The conventional religions have been rejected, and the kids are looking for, to them, new religions in the very old religions, those which spawned the vampire and the werewolf.

But I said to myself, why not show Dracula for what he really is? And, instead of the conventional fog which covers the Gothic landscape, smog will choke visibility and lungs alike of the characters in this modern tale. Thus, *The Image of the Beast* was born. And in the first scene, a private eye (this is a parody on the private eye story, too) is losing his penis to the pointed iron dentures of a vampiress. And so it goes.

The sex is explicitly described, although I failed to write genuine pornography or to excite the lusts of some according to one critic. (He seemed to know a lot about

pornography. But he'd written a lot of it in his younger days.)

Brian Kirby was editor of a new line of porn books called Essex House. He'd talked his publisher into founding it for the purpose of raising the literary level of porn. (Provided that it also made a good profit.) The writing and plotting was better than that in the hardcore stuff, and it was different in that it tried to show the psychics behind American sexual mores.

I wrote *Beast* under my own name. I wasn't ashamed of it. Then I wrote a pastiche, *A Feast Unknown*, about Tarzan and Doc Savage in conflict. I could not, of course, use their real names because of copyrights. I've always thought that these two Heroes would, in reality, have much more sexuality than Burroughs or Dent showed them as having. Also, Tarzan, raised by very primitive hominids, would not have a moral code very close to that of Western civilization. (I changed my mind about that later on. The reasons for this are detailed in my *Tarzan Alive.*)

So I told the story of the 'true Tarzan' and the 'true Doc Savage,' with my tongue in my cheek, and had a good time. And I showed the dark side of the moon in the characters of the two Heroes.

Though I was given a free hand in writing, with no formulas, no number of sex scenes per so many pages required, still, the books went mainly to stores specializing in pornography. This not only limited their sales, but the fact that they were not just one long sex scene, that they did have a plot and characterizations to some extent and motives for the actions of the characters, made them unappetizing to the typical porn reader.

By the time I'd started *Blown*, the sequel to *The Image of the Beast*, I'd about had it writing porn, even the free-er more literate kind that Essex House wanted. I had a contract to do a Gothic, a ghost-cum-sex story, titled *Love Song*. When I finished this, I was through. *Love Song* was a failure; the ghost theme sort of petered out, if I may use that term, and I was sorry that came out under my own name.

But writing these books was worthwhile, for me, anyway. It was a form of therapy. It helped me rid myself of certain puritanical conditionings. Or, if it didn't get rid of them, it at least brought them out in the open where I could look at them, blow the dust off, and put them back into a better-fitting pocket.

I also got a good look into the porn business. But that's another story, one which I may novelize some day.

One thing definitely resulted from this experience. I have no desire to write anything explicit about the mechanics of human sexual intercourse. I want only to write about the psychics which lead up to the act, which bring it about, and its emotional consequences. That is the way terrestrial sex should be written about. If a man wants to bugger a sheep, it's not how he does it that's important, it's why he does it.

Describing extraterrestrial sexual mechanics is fully justified, however. This involves the scientific and the sense of wonder.

*One of the most interesting, and curious, aspects of your work is its preoccupations with literature itself: Moby Dick, Doc Savage, Tarzan, etc. Many contemporary sf writers seem to share your inclination: Zelazny, Blish, Delany, etc. It suggests to me that you find literature more interesting than life. Is this so? And if it is, why? And if it is not, then why do you find literature a worthy subject to write about in your fiction?*

Let me quote some of Leslie Fiedler's article in the Book Review section of the *Los Angeles Times* for April 23, 1972. This was presumably a review of my *Tarzan Alive, A Definitive Biography of Lord Greystoke.* But it was actually an analysis of my career, a sort of biography, too, as seen through the Freudian prism of Dr. Fiedler.

> "In this light, it seems appropriate to describe Farmer's cultural imperialism as a gargantuan lust to swallow down the whole cosmos, past, present and to come, and to spew it out again.
>
> "Farmer wants even to eat and regurgitate himself; the industrious hack who writes his books, plus that hack's fantasies of what he secretly is and might be. And in the end, he does manage to mingle almost unnoticed among superheroes and mutants and monsters, as if the character Philip Jose Farmer

were as real as any fiction...

"Finally, I suppose, Farmer must dream of swallowing down his readers, too, or at least of 'taking them in,' as the telltale phrase has it, with jokes and hoaxes and 'scholarly' proofs. And there is something satisfactory, after all, about imagining ourselves, complete with wives, kids, and worldly possessions, disappearing into an utterly fictional world along with Alice and Tarzan and Kilgore Trout, the Scarlet Pimpernel and Jack the Ripper and Samuel Clemens. But not before we have managed to say, as I am trying to say here, 'Thanks for the feast.'

And Fiedler says, earlier, "But Tarzan, for all his encyclopedic comprehensiveness, represents only a small part of Farmer's larger attempt (at once absurd and beautiful, foredoomed to failure but, once conceived, already a success) to subsume in his own works all of the books in the world that have touched or moved him.

"For him, the traditions of science-fiction provide a warrant for constructing universes of his own: worlds whose place names turn out inevitably to demand as many footnotes as T. S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land'—Dante's Joy, Baudelaire, Ozagen (Oz again!); and which are inhabited not only by new species but old friends, fictional or real—Hiawatha, Alice in Wonderland, Sir Richard Burton, Ishmael (Melville's), and Hermann Goering."

Fiedler is essentially correct. I have been doing this and will for some time. I am rewriting the old tales I loved so well in my childhood and youth. And I'm trying to intégrate the great characters, tie them into a family, as it were. I've been doing this for some time, though I didn't really become conscious of my Grand Plan until I read Fiedler's article.

But what Fiedler doesn't say is that all this 'rewrite' of my youthful Heroes is essentially a clearing of the decks for action. Therapy. Once the swallowing and the digesting and the regurgitation are done with, then I get on to the real 'action.'

What is this? I don't know for sure. But if I live long enough, then perhaps I can write... what?... a true classic? Or a true book? A truth?

I want to write something that will be the equivalent of Moby Dick, The Brothers Karamazov, Huckleberry Finn, Tropic of Capricorn, Alice in Wonderland. Perhaps I won't be able to do it even after the decks are cleared. Perhaps I'll always be the 'industrious hack' But then the same thing was said at one time about Balzac and Dostoyevsky.

In the meantime, I can't agree with you about my "curious... preoccupations with literature itself." Or I half-agree with you. As you may have noticed, none of the characters in the Riverworld series (*To Your Scattered Bodies Go*, *The Fabulous Riverboat*) are drawn from literature. Many are people who really existed, flesh-and-blood people. Burton, Alice Hargreaves, Goering, de Bergerac, Clemens, von Richthofen, King John, Liver Eating Johnston, and many others in the first two books and many more in the stories to come are historical persons. Some are people now living, though I've had to disguise them under pseudonyms. Elwood Hacking of *The Fabulous Riverboat* is a fake name for a living American. And Pyotr, a character in my novel *Inside Outside* was Dostoyevsky.

If I have used many characters from fiction, I have used even more from real life.

Do I find literature more interesting than life? Literature *is* life because it's part of life, made by living beings. Literature doesn't just exist in print; it proceeds from

living beings, is 'bookized,' and then passes back into living beings, through their minds, and influences their thoughts and their actions. It's part of a great cycle—or recycling. A man lives, he writes of his living, others read his writings, and their lives are in turn affected by the writing. And some of these affected ones write stuff which derives circuitously from the original writings. And these are read. And so on.

Increasingly, no matter what adventure stories I may be writing at this moment, I tend towards the dictum of Henry Miller. He says this on page 12 of his *Tropic of Capricorn*,

> "For there is only one great adventure and that is inward toward the self, and for that, time nor space nor even deeds matter."

That is the adventure toward which I am headed, though not directly. The self-life of the imagination as prismed by reality.

*You mention* Moby Dick, The Brothers Karamazov, Huckleberry Finn, Tropic of Capricorn, *and* Alice in Wonderland *all in one breath as you mention Burton, Goering, de Bergerac, etc. and as easily you speak of literature proceeding from life, assuming a life of its own from which a new literature proceeds.*

*You speak of wanting to integrate the great characters into one family, and you speak of your adventures into your private self—the swallowing, assimilating, regurgitating of literature to get on to the real 'action.'*

*I'm curious to know what all these things have in common among themselves and with your private self. To begin with, the fictional characters...*

For one thing, they're all poetic in their fashion. In a fashion that starts something in me vibrating, whereas other classics don't. They all have elements of fantasy, of dream-worlds. They all *ask questions. Final Questions* to which we have no final answers. (Maybe I shouldn't say final. They just seem final because if we did have answers then we'd see that more questions had to be asked.) All of these books are adventures of adventurers who quest after final answers as if they were Knights after the Holy Grail. All except *Huckleberry Finn* ask about the nature of reality and what is behind it; while *Huckleberry Finn* poses the terrible moral dilemma in which all human beings *should* find themselves: how do we satisfy the demands of our individual conscience and compassion, and those of our society?

Mike Gilbert

*And what do your non-fictional, real-life, characters share in common?*

For one thing, except for a few obvious ones, they're Heroes. They existed in real life yet were larger than life. The real Burton penetrated the Holies of Holies, Harar and Mecca, and he sought for the source of the Nile. De Bergerac, like Burton, was a great swordsman—one of his battles is incredible but it really took place—but the Frenchman's voyagings, unlike Burton's, were of the mind only. However, he went much further than Burton, whose travels were confined to this globe. De Bergerac went to the moon and the sun.

Alice Pleasaunce Liddell Hargreaves was the real little girl who asked Dodgson for a story that famous golden afternoon, and she is an extraordinary person in her own right. I fell in love with her through the photographs of her in one of the lives

of Lewis Carroll. Just as the fictional Alice stepped through a mirror, so I stepped through a photograph to meet the real Alice. It pleased me to have the 'real' Alice fall in love with Sir Richard Francis Burton. They never would have stayed together on Earth, but the Riverworld is a different environment and works changes in its dwellers. Alice doesn't appear much in the first Riverworld book, but she'll be developed three-dimensionally in the third one, I hope. In fact, I regard the first Riverworld book as the tuning up of its instruments by the orchestra and the second as the prelude. The third will be the symphony itself.

Sam Clemens is another of my characters. I first read the Tom Sawyer stories and *Huckleberry Finn* at the age of nine or ten. During the next fifteen years, I read all his published works, reread the cream many times, and then, at about twenty-five, read all the biographies of Clemens. There's something in me that 'resonates' with both Sam the author, Sam the man, I should say, and his best books. This resonance, and the fact that most of my heroes were discovered in my childhood and youth, accounts for my choice of them as characters in my fiction.

I resonate. I nostalge—if I can analogize a verb from this noun, and I can. But it's resonance that's the big cause. And, curiously, it's often a resonance from something that's lacking in me. I know what a coward I am, but I would be as courageous as my heroes. I know how slow and stupid I often am, and I would be as quick and intelligent as my heroes.

But there is also a resonance in the doubts and the questions of the Heroes. Burton, de Bergerac, Clemens with their cynicism, their eternal questing for religious verities, their metaphysical ponderings, their innate melancholia, their rejection of their societies—at the same time they longed to accept them without question—these are men whose wavelengths are mine.

At the same time, some of the real people I've used, and some I will be using, are men who seem to be without self-doubt, who move in their society as untroubled by doubts about it as fish are about the nature of seawater. Such are William Marshal, the greatest of the medieval warriors, tutor of princes and regent of England; Liver Eating Johnston, Rocky Mountains trapper and Crow Killer; and the Swazi who was the real-life model for Umslopogaas, the great black hero of Haggard's *Nada the Lily* and *Allan Quatermain*. These were two of the books I read when very young and reread many times. And Umslopogaas and Galazi were among my all-time heroes. They were black. Another of my heroes, Hiawatha, was red. When I played in that huge lot with its many trees and a creek and slopes and lots of the tall plants we called Indian spears, when I played Tarzan and John Carter of Mars and David Innes of Pellucidar, I also played at being the black Umslopogaas and Galazi and the red Hiawatha and Chingachgook. Pardon this slight digression among my childhood images. If it is a digression. That I played these roles at such an early age, played them hard, with a vivid imagination, that I identified with them, is relevant to this interview. These explain much. I was then much more sensitive to intimations of immortality, and the heroes of my childhood were truly immortal. As long as I live, they live within me. Though I expect their voices to become less strong in the future.

Anyway, these real-life people will be in the third Riverworld novel. Men like Marshal and Johnston and Umslopogaas were men whom, at times, I think I'd be happy to be. Heroes, awfully bloody heroes, though, and now that I know what real blood and guts hanging out and brains blown out and jaws knocked off and skulls broken and skin burned look like, I do not have any desire to commit violence of any kind. Nevertheless, their mental attitude, the unquestioning acceptance of the structure of the world in which they were born and in which they proceeded to carve their own place, is what I sometimes envy. But if I were given the choice, I'd really rather be a neurotic and unhappy questioner—such as Burton and Clemens—than unthinkers such as I imagine Marshal and Umslopogaas were.

Why did I choose Goering as an antihero in the Riverworld books? In the first place, though he was a villain in real life, an antihero, and he starts out his Riverworld life being so, he becomes a hero. His significant adventures are inner. One of the themes of the series is spiritual regeneration. Goering was a famous World War I aviator, and I'm a fan of World War I fliers. He had great physical courage but little moral courage. He was an opportunist, a man of no genuine principles, but he wasn't as rotten as Hitler and, in fact, did intervene to

save some Jews. Hitler at least believed in what he was doing. Goering would go the way the wind blew. Yet as shallow and unpromising and weak as he was, he was a human being. And human beings are capable of regeneration if they have the will.

Goering, like a fictional character of mine, Father John Carmody, is about as sorry a man as could be found. But, like Carmody, he moves upward, partly levitated by others, partly by his own bootstraps. He falls back, but eventually... We'll see... In this series is the religious-psychical theme which runs through many of my works. And even with the despicable Goering, I resonate. Did you know that when I was twenty-one, I was converted during a fundamentalist revival meeting? Not for long. My emotions had momentarily overpowered me, but my emotions could not continue to convince my intellect. Or perhaps my will to believe was weaker than my will not to believe. So I backslid and have been sliding ever since. But the universe may be a closed one; all roads a circle.

*Why do you feel the need to 'integrate' your fictional and non-fictional heroes into one 'family'?*

For one thing, 'proving' the relationship is a lot of fun. It's intellectual fun, to be sure, but a good part of the fun in science-fiction is intellectual. Ideas and their unsuspected relationship, the sudden revelation of them by author to reader, used to be an important part of science-fiction. 'Surprised by Joy,' as it were.

You read and re-read about the characters you love, you read a number of times. And almost a sexual intercourse takes place. The character of the author mates with its mirror-image in your mind. The issue of this union is the child of that author's brain and yours. It is your flesh and blood. And you feed it and educate it, and it grows. And, lo, my Ishmael, my Tarzan, my Nina T--- are not yours.

You've read about how Bradbury, as a kid, could not buy all of the Barsoom books of Burroughs, so he wrote his own? In a sense I did that. But I acted, not wrote, the sequels. I was no thin pale weak lonely kid (I'm not talking about Bradbury here) who was forced to develop his imagination with fantasies because he had no real playmates. I was very strong and swift and was so agile in the trees that my nickname in grade school was 'Tarzan.' I read a lot, far more than my playmates or even the recluses among my friends. As long as daylight lasted and the weather was fine, I was out among them. My imagination urged my muscles to develop, and as the muscles strengthened, so did my imagination. And then, one day, a friend dared me to leap from one branch of the great sycamore in Bob Smith's lot to another. I'd done much jumping from one branch to another, but I'd never tried that jump. And so, like Lucifer, I fell because of pride. I ripped some muscles in my thighs and was paralyzed for half an hour with the intense pain. And from that day I became introverted.

Of course, the seeds of the change had to be inside me. A fall isn't going to change a person's character unless there's some psychic stuff for the physical trauma to work on.

I mention this because it's significant in my development as a writer. I did continue to compete in athletics after the muscles had healed. But my heart was never in it. I broke a couple of world's records in track in high school, but only during practice. In competition, if I made a winning jump, I was disqualified because I invariably stepped an inch or so over the board in the broadjump. If I concentrated on staying within the border, I made a poor jump. And I was consistently outraced in the 440 by boys whom the coach insisted I should have beaten.

I don't know what peculiar thing occurred when I fell thirty feet and landed flat on my back. I gave up trying to be Tarzan in the flesh but continued to be him in my mind. And then I quit that, too, as I got older. I was no longer Tarzan or Umslopogaas or Raffles; they became entities in their own right. Still, they were entities in my mind. I was now the observer, the spear-carrier, the secondary character, Ishmael instead of Ahab, Malone instead of Challenger, Watson instead of Holmes.

All these years my unconscious had been trying to make order out of chaos. There were these many beloved characters in my mind, apparently unconnected, each on his own wildly eccentric orbit, each a bit in the randomness of a newly created universe. But the real lord of this world, me, I suppose, said, "Let there be order."

Order means that there must be a genesis and forefathers and sons and daughters and

aunts and cousins. When I was young I was very familiar with Greek and Norse mythology, and a few years ago I found out that Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain can trace her ancestry right back to the great Germanic All-Father, Woden in Old English and Odin in Old Norse. And so, through the early kings of England, Woden is the all-father of the Scarlet Pimpernel and Tarzan and Phileas Fogg and Richard Wentworth and all the great detectives/explorers/supermen arranged in the geneology in *Tarzan Alive*. Which is further expanded in my forthcoming biography of Doc Savage. This family arrangement, by the way, has not been one hundred percent arbitrary. I've tried to use quasischolarship in my genealogy, and textual evidence whenever possible. My guide for procedure was the type of thing done in the pages of *The Baker Street Journal.* For instance, Baring-Gould, in his *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*, asserted that Challenger was Holmes' cousin. He had no textual basis for this at all. But I was able to demonstrate that this relationship was indeed so. I could do this because Tarzan's mother was a Rutherford. And I could 'prove' that the George T-- and Nina T— of *Trader Horn* were Tarzan's cousins for the same reason. And so on.

*Fiedler suggests you wish to "mingle almost unnoticed among superheroes and mutants and monsters, as if the character Philip Jose Farmer were as real as any fiction..." But this would suggest a renunciation of the self, an escape from self, which is not the impression I get from your books. (It is the impression I frequently get from Bradbury's wistful re-creations.) But there is nothing 'wistful' about your characters, nothing charming or hallucinatory about them—your worlds are concrete, even in dream, and there is a stark contemporaneousness about them. The impression I get of your characters is that they are part fun, part functional (in a professional sense), part archetypal, and in all, satirical of themselves and expressions of a private view of man.*

I don't think Fiedler meant that this placing of myself in some of my works indicated an escape from self. If I went to Brazil (and I have been), I wouldn't be escaping from myself. I would be escaping some of the responsibilities of my residence in the U.S.A. But I'd still be Philip Jose Farmer, and there's no getting away from that in Peoria or Rio de Janeiro. However, the beauty of putting myself in my stories is that I can then study various aspects of myself. In the Wolff-Kickaha series, I can be Paul Janus Finnegan or Kickaha. Yet I know very well that Kickaha is not me as I am, but he is as I would like to be. And Peter Jairus Frigate in the Riverworld, Burton's Boswell, is me as I am, though I'm probably not that bad. Rousseau's *Confessions* made him out to be worse than he was, you know. As for Boygur in *Lord Tyger*, Fiedler's perceptiveness is very acute. Boygur is a caricature of me as the mad scientist who tries to raise his own Tarzan and continually has to compromise with reality. The derivation of the name Boygur, by the way, is to be found in *Peer Gynt.*

I think, however, that putting oneself in disguise in one's own created worlds is a sort of signature. "See, I did this!" And it's also a subtle method of control of the world. Rembrandt puts himself in his paintings, half-hidden in the crowd. Cabell puts himself in *Poictesme* as Horvendile. Johnny Shawnessy in *Raintree County* is both upper case J.W.S., the solid respectable citizen of the county, and lower case johnny shawnessy, the man who knows no boundaries, whose face is seen slyly peeping from behind a pillar in a frieze in the Parthenon or looking over Rembrandt's shoulder in Rembrandt's own painting or seen momentarily during the storming of the Bastille. The author signs his works with himself and also plays the anonymous demiurge of the created world.

Also, I would have liked to have known Burton and de Bergerac and Clemens. I never had the chance here, but I get it in the Riverworld. But all is not roses, as you'll see. Frigate finds much to irritate and anger him in Burton, and the two do not always get along by any means. So even in the dream-world there is realism, and I suppose this is what you mean by my worlds being concrete, by the sense of contemporaneousness.

The satirical elements derive from my own character, of course. I have a built-in detector, a very sensitive one, for measuring the distance between what man aspires to be, or claims he is aspiring to be, and what he actually is. This is innate, I'm sure, although my very early contact with Swift and Clemens helped sharpen it. No child can read them as soon and as often as I did without picking up something from them.

As for the 'archetypes,' I don't like to think too much about them. In fact, I wish I'd never heard the word. It doesn't pay to become too conscious of the unconscious. The deliberately psychological writer is seldom rewarding. It's the unconsciously archetypal writers, such as Haggard and Dostoyevsky, who show you something valuable in the realm of psychology. Jung has demonstrated this.

Judy Merril once said that I had a direct pipeline to the unconscious. Maybe so. If so, I don't intend to try tracing the pipeline, the circuits. I might snap the line, break the circuit. Long distance keeps calling me, and I don't want an unlisted number. Do I make myself clear?

Anyway, I love my dreams. In retrospect, I even love my nightmares. I don't envy people who can't remember their dreams or who've never been frightened in a nightmare. To remember only your conscious world is to be only half-alive.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

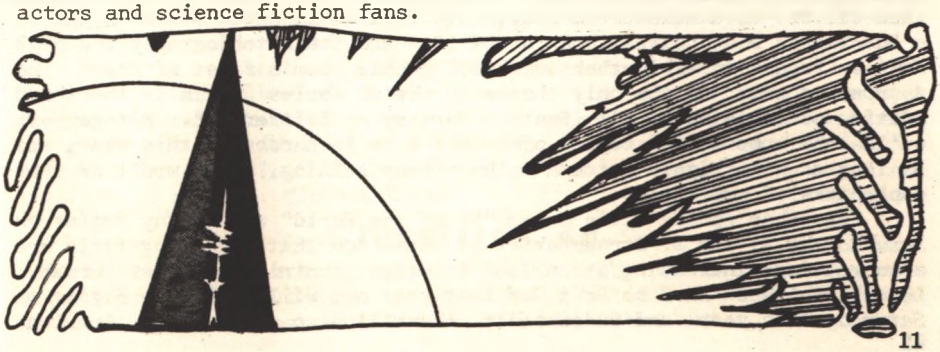
## 1974 TRIESTE FILM FESTIVAL

The twelfth annual International Science Fiction Film Festival, held during the week of July 6-13 in Trieste, Italy, awarded the top prize of the Golden Asteroid to the Polish film *The Sand-Glass*. Directed by Wojciech Has, this is a disturbing but beautiful film which leaves the viewer suspended in a temeless world. Silver Asteroids for best acting were awarded to John Ryan for his role in *It's Alive* (Warner Brothers) and Russian actress Jana Bolotava in *The Silence of Dr. Ivens*. Special jury awards were presented to *The Silence of Dr. Ivens* (Russia) and *Miss Golem* (Czechoslovakia). The Golden Seal of the city of Trieste for the best short film went to *The Making of Silent Running* by Chuck Barbee (U.S.).

The jury for the 1974 Festival consisted of Brian W. Aldiss (Great Britain), Ivan Bociorov (Russia), Danielle Delorme (France), Kenneth Hartford (U.S.) and Alessandro Blasetti (Italy).

Of the ten competing features this year, the U.S. produced four: *It's Alive* (radiation monster-baby stalks Los Angeles), *The Crazies* (Pennsylvania town contaminated by biological weapon), *Dark Star* (a satirical film reminiscent of *Dr. Strangelove*) and *Doomsday Machine* (unbelievable plot and poor special effects which drew whistles and catcalls from the crowd). The selection could have been better if it had included such films as *Sleeper, Westworld, Zardoz* or *Day of the Dolphin* but these were missing.

Public screenings in the vast courtyard of the medieval castle of St. Giusto were sold out every day, resulting in more than 16,000 paying customers throughout the week. The usual retrospective was absent from this year's program, but is expected to return in 1975. The afternoons were taken up with an information section, which was mostly straight scientific documentaries. There were also concurrent art shows with space themes, and informal meetings which brought together film makers, actors and science fiction fans.



# The International Scene

GERMANY There appears to be much interest in sf plays on the German radio. In July alone, the Deutschlandfunk in Köln had dramatizations of *Computers Don't Argue* by Gordon R. Dickson, *The Lymphater Formula* by Stanislaw Lem, *Six Matches* by A. and B. Strugatski and others by R. Sheckley and various German authors. The Bayernfunk again produced Lem's *Do You Exist, Mr. Jones?*, accompanied by an interview with the author and a commentary by Dr. Dieter Hasselblatt, who is very interested in sf and has just finished a book on the subject to be published by Droste Verlag this summer.

Most remarkable in Germany at the moment is the ever increasing success of Stanislaw Lem. His novel *Solaris* was the only title in the Marion von Schröder science fiction & fantastica line that wasn't remaindered, as befell all books by Ray Bradbury, Walter M. Miller Jr., J. G. Ballard and so on. It sold out its first edition and is now even back in print in a higher priced hardback edition. A paperback edition will appear as a Suhrkamp Taschenbuch in February 1975--at a steep DM 7, --or nearly $3.00, a price not uncommon these days in Germany for a paperback. Marion von Schröder also just published Lem's *Return from the Stars* under the German title *Transfer* at DM 25,--or $10.00. This is the last Lem title sold in Germany before we of Insel and Suhrkamp took over all of Lem's books, some twenty volumes so far, of which nine will be in print at the end of the year. We have now acquired rights not only to Lem's science fiction, but also to all his other fiction and nonfiction, including *Summa Technologiae, The Philosophy of Chance* and the cybernetic *Dialogues*.

Our most successful Lem book to date is *Robotermärchen* (Fables for Robots), published last fall in the prestigious Bibliothek Suhrkamp, a series that publishes only the top of world literature, writers like Eliot, Queneau, Broch, Kafka, Beckett. We sold out a first edition of 6,000 copies early in the spring, reprinted 4,000 in May, and a third printing may soon become necessary. This is still small compared to Lem's editions in East Germany, where first printings of 30,000 and more copies are totally insufficient, but we begin to approach them; 10,000 copies in hardback is very good for a collection of short stories in Germany, and would be equally good in the U.S.A. His other books aren't doing that well, but we sell at least twice as many copies of a Lem book than of our other sf titles, and we certainly couldn't sell American sf at the prices we ask for Lem books. We are still having translation difficulties, but hope to be able to publish the remaining books in quick succession. In fall 1973 we had *The Futurological Congress* in my sf series for Insel Verlag, and *Star Diaries* (528p. for DM 30,--or more than $12.00) as a mainstream book; this fall we'll have *Memoirs Found in a Bathtub* as a mainstream book at DM 26,--and the autobiography *The High Castle* (again in Bibliothek Suhrkamp), while Lem's first sf novel *The Astronauts* will be the only choice in the sf series. This is the third edition of this novel in Western Germany or Switzerland. Altogether, we'll sell some 20,000 copies of Lem's book in hardback this year, and as long as the highly priced volumes keep selling, there won't be any paperbacks of our titles.

The other spring title in my "SF of the World" was *Monday Begins on Saturday* by A. and B. Strugatski. It seems now that the Strugatskis are also getting increasing attention in other countries besides Germany. Denoël published *Hard to Be a God* last year and will do *Monday Begins on Saturday* this year, and undoubtedly there'll also be further American

translations.

Two fantasy titles published by Insel this spring were Jean Ray's novel *Malpertuis*, and *Dunst*, a second collection of weird short stories by the excellent Polish writer Stefan Grabiński; this fall they'll publish another collection by Sheridan Le Fanu.

The paperbacks print their usual stuff. It appears that they have been hit too by the paper crisis, and there are rumors that some will fold or at least cut back on their sf. One volume of exceptional interest is Rein A. Zondergeld's *Phaicon I* (Insel paperback), a well illustrated collection of 10 critical essays on fantasy by authors like Louis Vax, Roger Caillois, Stanislaw Lem, Jörg Krichbaum, J. L. Borges, Cortazar, Jean Ray and the compiler. --Franz Rottensteiner

POLAND Latest of Stanislaw Lem's books are *Wielkość urojona* (Czytelnik, Warsaw, 1973, 172p., 30,000 copies) and *Opowiadania wybrane* (Wydawnictwo Literackie, Cracow, 1973, 489p., 60,000 copies). *Wielkość urojona* (Imaginary Number) is a volume of introductions to non-existent books; *Opowiadania wybrane* (Selected Stories) a volume of previously published work designed for use in the schools. Besides 10 short stories it contains, at the special wish of the Polish Ministry for Education, the novel *The Invincible*. Lem has also finished in ms. another volume of short stories to be entitled *Maska*. 1973 also saw publication of the first book on Stanislaw Lem: Eva Balcerzak's *Stanisław Lem* (Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warsaw, 179p., 10,000 copies) in the series "Contemporary Polish Authors." Some other people in various countries are now preparing books on Lem: the major Russian sf critic R. Nudelman, and Michael Kandel in the U.S.A., while I may edit a Lem reader (a collection of material by and on Stanislaw Lem) for either Suhrkamp or Insel Verlag in Germany. Prof. Michael Kandel, the principal American Lem translator, has received a grant for writing a book on Lem, and Seabury Press is interested in publishing it.

Lem will be the editor of a new fantasy/sf series for Wydawnictwo Literackie in Cracow. The first four volumes are Philip K. Dick's *Ubik*, Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, the French novel *The Sign of the Dog* by Jean Hougren, and a collection of short stories by M. R. James.

Lem continues to do well in foreign editions, especially *Solaris*. It had a second book club edition in French, a beautifully illustrated volume from C.L.A. (Culture, Art, Loisirs), Paris, 1974; will have a book club edition of 15,000 copies in Finland; and appeared in a book club edition in one volume with *Eden* in Germany; it also sold to Argentina. Lem's *Collected Short Stories* and *Hard Vacuum* have been sold to Sweden, *His Master's Voice* to France, *Tales of Pirx the Pilot* to Bulgaria, *Summa Technologiae* to Yugoslavia, and *The Cyberiad* to Rumania. *The Cyberiad* seems to do well in the U.S.A.; it had good sales and a nice critical response, including a statement from Arthur Koestler, who declared: "*The Cyberiad* is the funniest and at the same time most thought-provoking book I have read for a long time. Lem has created a new genre and the translation is brilliant." Next Lem book from Seabury will be *The Futurological Congress*, due late this year in the excellent translation of Prof. Michael Kandel. --Franz Rottensteiner

## Classified Ad

$200.00 REWARD for a solution to the population problem, presented in short story form, 1000 words or less. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1975. Zero Population Growth, 50 West 40th Street, New York City, 10018.

# Lilliputia

*THE HOUSE WITH A CLOCK IN ITS WALLS by John Bellairs. Drawings by Edward Gorey. Dial, 1973. 179 p. $4.95. Age level: 9-12*

I was initially impressed by the quality of paper and the clarity of the type face—the general technical excellence of production and design.

The story itself is a self conscious exercise in nostalgia, witty and somewhat tongue in cheek. Fat, orphaned Lewis, in 1948, goes to live with his uncle Jonathan. Who turns out to be a wizard. His next door neighbor, Mrs. Zimmermann, is a witch with a doctoral degree in magic from Gottingen. Lewis becomes involved in the search for an invisible clock that ticks in the walls. The book is also a bit of a parody on the fat-boy-who-gets-taken-under-the-wing-of-the-school-hero genre.

I enjoyed the book very much. —Leslie Bloom

*THE HOUSE ON PARCHMENT STREET by Patricia A. McKillip. Drawings by Charles Robinson. Atheneum, 1973. 190 p. $5.95*

*THE THROME OF THE ERRIL OF SHERILL by Patricia A. McKillip. Illus. by Julie Noonan. Atheneum, 1973. 69 p. $4.95. Age level: 10 up*

These are, respectively, the author's first and second books. And are they different from each other. The first is a ghost story in an ordinary contemporary setting (for younger teens, I'd think). The second is a Thurber/Tolkien type of fable which is a delight. It is probably aimed at younger kids, but is the sort of thing that would appeal to a literarily inclined adolescent (or adult).

In *The House on Parchment Street*, Carol, who has grown up in California, goes to England to spend her vacation with relatives she's never met. Her cousin Bruce is very difficult to get along with. She discovers that the reason for this is that he has seen ghosts in the basement of the mid 17th century house they live in, and is afraid to tell anyone. Carol has also seen the ghosts. The children, and a friend, then discover a secret passage in the basement, and start to excavate it. I liked the book, but it's got one of those Puritans persecuting the Royalists bits in it, and I'm firmly on the side of the insurgents.

*The Throme of the Erril of Sherill* tells of the quest made by the Cnite Caerles, to find the Throme, so that he can marry the King's Damsen, and so on. I loved it. The book could have been much too cutesy, but isn't. I won't even complain about the prices of children's books. And I wish I had a very young child to read it aloud to.

—Leslie Bloom

*MACHINE by Lore Shoberg. McGraw-Hill, 1973. Abt. 39 p. $3.95. Age level: 4-7*

Ok, who hates the Machine?

Someone please count those with their hands up? Thank you.

Next question: who uses a car, electric or manual razor, retractable ball point pen, watch, etc. etc. etc.

Someone please count all those sheepish people with their hands up. Thank you.

This is a picture book about the evil Machine and the brave little boy who Stopped It. I'm not sure what age level it's aimed at, since any kid capable of reading about Jack and Jill visiting the well and capable of making a few correlations knows that Machine has been here for ages and is here to stay. In fact, Machine's progenitor was the stone ax. Today's stone ax is called the guided missile. It isn't Machine that's corrupt or misguided or getting out of hand, it's Us, humans.

Why doesn't someone do a cute picture book on how Human finally grew up and stopped making a mess of things? Perhaps because it takes one to know one, and mature people are in dreadfully short supply. End of tirade.

P.S. The price was chopped off the cover of the copy I was sent but who cares? I don't recommend buying it anyway. Also, I had to count the pages which weren't numbered. Maybe their numbering machine broke down? —Gail C. Futoran

*THE SPRING ON THE MOUNTAIN by Judy Allen. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1973. 153 p. $4.95. Age level: 12 up*

This book is somewhere on the border between science fiction and fantasy, but is more on the fantasy side.

Three unrelated children are staying as paying guests at a cottage in the west of England. The proprietors of the guest house have it on lease from a very elderly woman, Mrs. White, who has some powers. The children are persuaded by Mrs. White to go on a quest for a disappearing spring on a nearby mountain.

The writing is simple and matter of fact. The more serious and somewhat mystical elements never become gooey. I'd say the age range should be about 9-12.

—Leslie Bloom

*RHODA'S RESTAURANT, by Robert Tallon. Bobbs-Merrill, 1973. $5.95. Age level: K-4*

Although the idea for this story (a genie that comes in a can) is a good one, it is not well written and the illustrations are awful. The pace of the story is very uneven. The pictures are all black and white line drawings, and are Ugly. I certainly would not spend $5.95 on this book. —Joni Rapkin

*FRANZ KAFKA: MAN OUT OF STEP by Deborah Crawford. Illus. with photographs. Bibliog. Crown Publishers, 1973. 183 p. $4.95. Age level: 12 up*

Franz Kafka is one of the least likely subjects for a juvenile biography, and it is really too bad, for this is one of the best-written biographies for children I have seen in quite some time. There is no cutesy, talk-down-to-the-reader, phony dialogue or 'action.' Instead, the author has drawn heavily from the diaries and letters of Kafka himself and of those who knew him, and from information supplied by still-living members of the latter group. The only elements that mark this as a juvenile title are the references to the subject as "Franz" (in an 'adult' book he would be "Kafka"), and the very detailed descriptions of the social and family influences upon the formation of his personality, and thus upon his outlook on life, and ultimately, the bleak world inhabited by the characters in his stories and novels.

The author is frank about the sexual symbolism in Kafka's works, as well as his relationships with women. This would tend to recommend the book to the junior high and high school readers, rather than the usual juvenile audience. The same group was 'devouring' Hesse a few years ago, and this slim biography might just convince a few to try some Kafka.

It is to be sincerely hoped that Deborah Crawford produces more biographies of this calibre—the young readers certainly deserve them. —Charlotte Moslander

*BEYOND THE TOMORROW MOUNTAINS by Sylvia Louise Engdahl. Drawings by Richard Cuffari. Atheneum, 1973. 257 p. $6.95*

I am trying to pinpoint the difference between those older juveniles that are essentially adult (Le Guin's and Norton's best) and those, like this book, which don't quite pass the line. I think it has something to do with the author telling the reader too much, too simply, and the characters seeming a bit younger than they should, given the context. Engdahl is also just not as good a story teller as Norton and Le Guin at their best.

In this book, as in her earlier ones, Ms. Engdahl is concerned with ethical and emotional development, self knowledge, and the need to come to terms with the conflicts between ideals and the necessities of human society.

The hero, Noren, is a recent recruit to the technological elite, the Scholars, of a colony on a poor and hostile planet. The story deals with his attempts to solve his conflicts about his social role in the midst of a major cultural crisis. The book drags a bit in spots, but on the whole moves fairly well, and holds one's interest. The characters are a bit underdeveloped, and the moral (man does not live by bread alone) a bit hackneyed, if essentially valid.

Finally, the art work, (pen, ink and wash), is excellent. I really appreciate an older juvenile with good art work. —Leslie Bloom

*THE SILVER CROWN by Robert C. O'Brien. Illus. by Dale Payson. Atheneum Aladdin A30, 1973. 274 p. 95¢ Age level: 8-12 (hardcover: Atheneum, 1968. $4.95)*

This is science fiction. One of those they-are-training-an-army-to-take-over-the-world books.

On her birthday, Ellen finds a silver crown on her pillow. She doesn't question it because she always knew she was queen of something. While she is out playing in the park her house blows up. Then the policeman who is taking care of her is murdered. Since her parents blew up in the house, and she doesn't know anybody in town, she decides to hitch to her aunt's home several hundred miles away. She is thereafter pursued by baddies all over the Southeast.

The only thing wrong with the book is the intrusive fairy tale element of Ellen 'knowing' she is a queen, and finding the crown on her pillow. I'd have been a lot happier if she'd found it in an old trunk in the attic or something. The book is otherwise well written, and entertaining. —Leslie Bloom

*THE BONGLEWEED by Helen Cresswell. Macmillan, 1973. 138 p. $4.95. Age level: 10-14 (Carnegie Medal runner-up)*

The publisher calls this fantasy but it's really closer to straight sf. Becky's parents are employed as live-in help by an experimental botanist and his wife, who run a large public garden in an English village. Her father is head gardener and her mother cook-housekeeper. Becky feels neglected, and takes out her resentment by tricking the botanist's nephew into planting rare seeds of an unknown plant, which grows prodigiously and produces magnificent flowers.

This is a rather tried and true sf plot—the plant that can't be stopped. The body of the book is concerned with people's various reactions to the plant, which thoughtlessly takes over the town graveyard. The slight fantasy element is supplied by Becky's discovery that she can control the plant.

The story flows smoothly, the characters and their relationships are handled well. I enjoyed this. —Leslie Bloom

*THE COURT OF THE STONE CHILDREN by Eleanor Cameron. Dutton, 1973. 191 p. $5.50. Age level: none given. I'd suggest 10-14. (ALA Notable Children's Book of 1973, National Book Award for Children's Books)*

Nina is miserable because her parents have been forced to move from their mountain town to San Francisco. She discovers the French Museum, which exhibits, among other things, the reconstructed rooms of a crumbling chateau. She also discovers the ghosts of a young woman and her cat, who inhabit these rooms. The ghost wants Nina's aid in clearing her father of a murder for which he was executed.

The book is well written and as convincing as one could expect. Nina's strained relationship with her parents is well handled. The circumstances surrounding the old murder are moving without being overly sentimental, and give an interesting picture of the French upper class at the time of Napoleon. —Leslie Bloom

*SQUAWWWK! by Thomas Rockwell. Illus. by Gail Rockwell. Dell Yearling 8227, 1973. 148 p. 75¢. Age level: 8-12. (hardcover: Little Brown, 1972. $5.50)*

This is a light adventure in which a roc grows from a page of *Sinbad the Sailor*, while a certain seventh grade class is reading about the great bird. The roc starts out by biting the good, old-fashioned teacher who makes a lesson of every experience, and proceeds to eat the classroom furniture. A great deal of fun is poked at panicky adults who assume the bird is dangerous (even the National Guard gets into the act), bureaucratic school administrators, and insensitive guidance counselors. In the end, the roc flies off to parts unknown, leaving behind a town to be rebuilt, various religious fanatics, and some very cynical children.

*Squawwwk!* is a most ridiculous title for a truly enjoyable juvenile satire. Most kids will love it. Up-tight adults definitely will not. —Charlotte Moslander

*THE SNAKE HORN by Morton Grosser. Illus. by David K. Stone. Atheneum, 1973. 131 p. $4.95. Age level: 8-12*

Danny's father is a musician, but even he can't play the strange-looking horn brought home from the Netherlands by a friend who has just returned from a European tour. Danny figures it out, though, with the help of his little brother and the school music teacher, and ends up pulling a very surprised seventeenth-century English musician into 1970. There is a great deal of hip musicians' talk, some suspense-filled interscholastic football, and a good deal of humor, mostly derived from the difference in customs between 1670 and 1970. The characters are a multi-racial group—Dennis, who gives Danny the horn, is described as being "the color of Hershey's chocolate," and it takes the assistance of a Chinese herb doctor, a neighbor named Mrs. Mendelstein (who refers to him as a dybbuk), and a cantor to send Anthony Quennell, the English musician, back to 1670.

This is a relatively good piece of light fiction for the over-primary-below-junior-high reading group—Danny may play a good saxophone, but he also quarterbacks the school football team and hates his English teacher. However, the repetition of the 1970 date may be something of a drawback. Ten years from now, 1970 will be far enough in the past to be exotic. The 8- or 10-year-old of 1974 looks upon it as just mildly old-fashioned. Unfortunately, this may cause some young readers to reject the book entirely.

—Charlotte Moslander

*TINKER TALES by Mary Dawson. Pictures by Jacqueline Chwast. Parents Magazine Press, 1973. $4.50. Age level: 4-8*

The eight stories in this collection all appeared originally in *Humpty Dumpty Magazine*, and they are all about Tinker the elf and friends. The stories are short and cute but not outstanding, and the pictures, although not very colorful (black and white, plus either red or blue) fascinate me because of the variety of textures. They look like a catalog of shading plates from a mimeo supply store. On the whole, I think that the stories are much better suited to the magazine format than this kind of a collection because, put together they seem very short and choppy; while in a group of other features and stories with different characters, they would be more interesting. In a collection, they need more development with possibly fewer stories in the one book.

—Joni Rapkin

*CATCH YOUR BREATH: A BOOK OF SHIVERY POEMS selected by Lilian Moore and Lawrence Webster. Pictures by Gahan Wilson. Garrard, 1973. $2.59. Age level: 7-10*

Some of these poems are good and some are not so good, but the illustrations by Gahan Wilson are all good. My main reservation with this book is that children of this age may not be too big on poetry; but if they like any at all, this is a likely prospect.

—Joni Rapkin

*THE WAY HOME by Joan Phipson. Atheneum, 1973. 184 p. $5.50. Age level: 10-14*

This book disturbed me. Mostly because I have difficulty coping with any level of mysticism, and because I am a fairly firm materialist, and the book is rather anti-materialist.

Three people, Peter (about 7), his sister Prue (about 13), and their cousin Richard (about 18), are in a car wreck in the Australian wilderness. They slowly discover that the country they find themselves in is not quite the Australia they've grown up in. Their journey home, through a series of strange, and sometimes terrible landscapes, helped by a (usually) unseen presence, forms the bulk of the book. The protagonists are very conscious archetypes. Peter is the uncontaminated innocent, Prue an open minded pragmatist, and Richard the committed, closeminded, materialist, who cannot cope with anything that threatens his world view.

I think this is probably a good book. Ms. Phipson has a vivid, visual prose style that is very effective. It's her ideas that bother me. Also, the scenes with the presence seem to me to be brushed with an occasionally sticky sentimentality.

—Leslie Bloom

*FOLLOW THE WHALES: THE HYDRONAUTS MEET THE OTTER-PEOPLE by Carl L. Biemiller. Doubleday, 1973. 185 p. $4.50*

This is adequate adventure fiction for early teens. The setting is a post holocaust world with (of necessity) a regimented society and rigid psychological control. Humanity is dependent, primarily, on sea products, and the most free members of the culture, the individualists, are members of the Marine Service, which polices and protects sea resources. The culture is supposed to be egalitarian, but there is only one female in the book, and all authority figures are male.

The protagonists of the book are two pairs of Wardens, in their late teens. The main character is Kim, the male half of the heterosexual pair. Their assignment is to follow a school of whales as an excuse for looking for a possible race of artificially amphibious humans.

The main flaw in the book is an excess of expository material on whales and other sea life. These passages are more awkwardly written than the rest of the book, and impede the flow of the narrative. There is, however, a rather amusing scene of whales mating.

There were parts of the book I found interesting and enjoyable, and I wouldn't mind seeing what Mr. Biemiller does with the sequel. (This is the second in a series, with at least one more book due. I haven't read the first.) —Leslie Bloom

*MOE Q. MCGLUTCH, HE SMOKED TOO MUCH by Ellen Raskin. Parents Magazine Press, 1973. $4.50. Age level: 4-8*

The moral of this story is that smoking is bad and honesty is good. It is done so well, however, that it is all right that it has a moral (which is not printed in the book). Moe Q. McGlutch keeps smoking and the child of his fourth cousin-twice-removed keeps telling him he smokes too much, and the parents keep telling the child to stop it because Moe is very rich. The various mishaps caused by the smoking are illustrated in bright colorful pictures that combine just the right amount of fantasy with not-quite-realism.

—Joni Rapkin

*PETRONELLA by Jay Williams. Pictures by Frisco Henstra. Parents Magazine Press, 1973. $4.50. Age level: 4-8*

Shades of Women's Lib—this is a story about a princess who goes to rescue a prince from an enchanter. It is told in true fairy tale style but it is certainly not old fashioned, and the pictures are in the same spirit as the story. I enjoyed it and I am sure that children will like it too. —Joni Rapkin

*HERE ABIDE MONSTERS by Andre Norton. Atheneum, 1973. 215 p. $5.95. Age level: 12 up*

This is science fantasy, and seems to be aimed at somewhat younger readers than most Nortons. The book jacket doesn't give a suggested age range, but I'd guess at early teens.

The setting is an alternate world where lie the origins of Celtic myth. Two American teenagers, Nick and Linda, are drawn into this world which is, incidentally, menaced by flying saucers and indigenous evil forces. Nick and Linda join with a group of British survivors of a WWII bombing raid. One of the Britons, Rita, had been rejected by the group after going native, which changed her into something other than human. Nick is continually warned against her and her fate, but must find out for himself the real meaning behind it.

The book seems rather loosely written. Paragraphs are short, and Nick is a somewhat pallid, undeveloped character. Linda is even more so. I would like to see this material developed the way Miss Norton has developed the Witchworld. One of Miss Norton's greatest strengths has always been the development of alien cultures, and I don't think she does herself justice here.

The book isn't bad, and it might be quite entertaining to the age group at which it seems aimed. It's just one of those things that doesn't quite come off.

—Leslie Bloom

*THE LITTLE BROOMSTICK by Mary Stewart. Illus. by Shirley Hughes. Dell Yearling 4897, 1973. 190 p. 95¢. Age level: 8-12 (hardcover: Morrow, 1972. $4.95)*

This is another of those delightful Dell 'Yearlings' with larger-than-usual print, short chapters, and a within-the-allowance price. Mary Smith is a little English girl who is sent to stay with her great-aunt Charlotte in the country while her parents are away. It is a very dull existence, with no playmates, until the black cat, Tib, shows Mary some mysterious purple flowers—then the witchcraft begins.

Mary's adventures at Endor and her encounter with Peter, the vicar's son, form a well-written adventure story. Mary is a thoroughly normal, likeable child, who worries about being late for meals and has difficulty doing things properly when she 'helps' in the garden. Children who are at the dreamy imaginative stage, or who 'love' witches, will enjoy her story.

—Charlotte Moslander

*THE TESTING OF TERTIUS by Robert Newman. Drawings by Richard Cuffari. Atheneum, 1973. 186 p. $5.95*

This is a very pleasant book. It is undoubtedly derivative of T. H. White, but I find I don't care.

Merlin is put under a spell by the evil Hunnish conqueror Urlik. The young knight Brian, his lady Lianor, and the apprentice magician Tertius must free him from it. They accomplish this with the aid of a Pictish shaman, an Irish giant, the White Lady and King Arthur. A major problem is that Tertius's magical abilities are compromised because Merlin had given him a large dose of post industrial technical and scientific knowledge, which makes him skeptical about magic.

The book is a really enjoyable melange of Arthurian legend and historical anachronism.

—Leslie Bloom

*THE AUTUMN PEOPLE by Ruth Arthur. Drawings by Margery Gill. Atheneum, 1973. 166 p. $5.50. Age level: 10-14*

I suppose this is a 'girl's book,' which is a shame. Because it is a good and a moving book, with a great deal of historical and geographical atmosphere. It is the story of Millie, who gave up the man she loved because of a quite realistic fear of supernatural retribution, and of her great granddaughter, Romilly. The story, for the most part, takes place on a Scottish island, during the summer of 1901, and a recent summer, say 1971. It is a ghost story, and a story of witchcraft, the intrusion of evil into the commonplace and familiar.

The story is told smoothly, with economy (perhaps too much so). Characterizations are brief and deft. The illustrations are excellent, and capture the period flavor quite well.

—Leslie Bloom

*SWEETWATER by Laurence Yep. Illus. by Julia Noonan. Harper and Row, 1973. 201 p. $5.50. Age level: 10 up*

This is a beautiful book. It is the story of Tyree, son of the Silkies, descendants of the starship crews who were stranded with the other colonists on Harmony, and who chose to stay in their city when it was flooded and adapt to a simple life, dependent upon the sea. It is also the story of the Silkies' fight to preserve their own way of life in the face of sightseeing parties who find them 'quaint,' and of Tyree's craving for music which leads to a growing friendship with Argan, master musician of the intelligent native race of Harmony.

The plot is fast-paced and keeps the reader eager for the next page, yet there is the sense of timelessness, of a good, simple life lived close to the rhythms of fish migrations and tides. Tyree's family is a warn, closely-knit one in which each member receives a certain amount of respect from the others, although Father's word is unquestionably Law. It is refreshing to find humans living side-by-side with an alien population, although neither species has much regard for the other.

Definitely a rousing good adventure novel. Definitely a good study in human nature, too.

—Charlotte Moslander

# Reviews

*GENDER GENOCIDE by Edmund Cooper. Ace 27905, 1973. 200 p. 95¢ (orig. title: Who Needs Men?)*

Edmund Cooper is one of my favorite writers. *All Fool's Day*, *Five to Twelve*, and *A Far Sunset*, are all fine examples of sf as it illuminates an individual's relationship to his society and his destiny. On the other hand, perhaps because of this fact, some of the most disappointing sf novels are also written by Mr. Cooper, and *Gender Genocide* ranks at the top of this list. It is a women-rule-future-society-where-men-are-second-class-citizens plot with a poorly thought out (to put it kindly) explanation for this sad state of affairs, to wit, the women rose up on their high-heeled, hind legs at some unspecified point in history and "drove the men out," having finally gotten tired of them, one supposes. Try relating that to any logical human society you can postulate! In fact, the whole book struck me as a first draft. Take this example from p.1: "Rura was tired. So, probably, were her companions, Moryn and Olane. The traditional Extermination Eve orgy had been a recordbreaker. No doubt it would go down in College history as one of the great ones of the twenty-fifth century. Rura could remember making love to three girls. After that, things became hazy. Goddess knew how many girls had then made love to her."

Cooper at his best (as in *A Far Sunset*) rises above the sentimentality he is always prone to; for our sympathy in *Genocide* both hero and heroine (heroine deserts her lesbian fellow Exterminators to join thy leader of the hunted rebel males, natch) are bumped off in the end. I could have cared less. I wish Mr. Cooper had worked on this one. As it is, it is insulting to his fans.

—Gail C. Futoran

*MASTER OF THE UNDEAD by Hugo Paul. Lancer 78726, 1973. 221 p. $1.25*

The most irritating thing about this book is that it could have been superb, and it wasn't. The author builds up his background beautifully; he details his characters with great care and attention—but then, on the very edge of success, he loses it all.

Between pages 7 and 34, there is a prologue which tells the history of the town of Sesame, a small place in Kansas. The prologue ends with a brutal mass murder and the lynching of a mute for the crime. It is well told, and seems worthy of a book in itself.

Chapter One begins with the same town in the present, and begins a detailing of the lives of several of the main characters. Alas, this goes on far too long. The villain of the piece doesn't even appear until along about page 129, by which time the author has told us far more than we need to know about amybody or anything in the town.

With the entrance of Dr. Greentree, things do begin to happen; people die or get killed and are miraculously 'healed' by Dr. Greentree, who has, by the way, taken up residence at the old murder house. And this is where the story really falls apart. It is never terribly clear exactly what Dr. Greentree has to do with the Parchman murders, or what his actual purpose is in Sesame. There are some references to his being some sort of ancient murderer from the Schwarzwald, and at the same time, there is some idea of vengeance implied. Exactly what he is about is simply never clear. And the ending is even more abrupt than the preceding. Dr. Greentree gets bumped off almost offhandedly, and that's that.

The book is an exercise in frustration; I was carried along so well for nearly 200 pages, then suddenly dumped, waiting for a new wave of action to carry me to a solid substantial finish, and I suddenly found myself at the last page, slightly bemused, wondering if I had missed something. A pity; great promise unfulfilled.

At this point, a word is in order about the production of the book: the cover is atrocious; whoever did the cover shot apparently doesn't know about the difference between lighting for the stage and for the studio and its effect on makeup; the cover blurb—"What EXORCIST Could Banish Him?" is a crude attempt to cash in on somebody else's publicity; the editing is atrocious—all through the book there are punctuation marks where they shouldn't be, misspellings, and a general indication of a total lack of competence. All these things are indices of a tremendous drop in quality from Lancer and I, for one, am very unhappy to see it.

—Michael L. McQuown

*FINAL SOLUTION by Richard E. Peck. Doubleday, 1973. 189 p. $4.95*

Cleverly disguised as a mild-mannered Assistant Dean at Temple University in Philadelphia, Richard E. Peck is really one of us. His previous short stories have been published in the various traditional sf publications and have been pretty good. And now we have a novel. Dr. Peck is a writer who draws on the world around him (witness "Gantlet" in *Orbit 10*). *Final Solution* is an extrapolation, an 'if this goes on' type of story, projecting to its ultimate illogical extremes certain trends in education. Or perhaps we should say "certain perversions in education today."

Robert Kiley, an instructor at Urban University, has chaired a faculty committee which presents suggestions for change in the University's teaching program. It is called "the Kiley Proposal." Kiley is shot by a sniper and dumped into an experimental Cryonics unit. After fifty years he is revived and sees the results of his handiwork. Disaster. Middle America has triumphed and sealed its problems into the cities. The universities and the cities have been merged, PhD's are almost automatic, the poor are employed in their usual jobs (being given automatic grades of A), puberty is delayed with drugs. Bald (hair doesn't survive freezing) and with ceramic feet (a clumsy technician broke the real ones while Kiley was still frozen) Kiley steps into an urban situation which pits the business administration faculty against the regular faculty and the students against them all. Kiley's revival is as if Freud or Marx could come back today, the Kiley Proposal has been footnoted and implemented into a nightmare world that isn't as grim as that in Brunner's *The Sheep Look Up* if only because all the world's shit has been confined to the cities. Dr. Peck has also written a funny book rather than a grim book. He catches the grammar of Black English, a language which has become the standard speech of the cities. Kiley tries to change the world and at the end of the novel we think he might just do it.

I'd recommend this novel to everyone. Laugh a little, cry a little. Stylistically I think Dr. Peck owes (as do we all) something to Kurt Vonnegut. The only jarring note is Dr. Peck's picture on the jacket: he is sitting amidst technical equipment. Looks like the man of distinction at a distillery. But a good book. —J. B. Post

*THE END BRINGERS by Douglas R. Mason. Ballantine 03366, 1973. 208 p. $1.25*

No more 9-5 hassles, dreary offices, house hunting or saving 'til you're married. Inviting? Read on. Mason has imagined a true epicurean delight. Hedonism at its best. The ideas appeal to all of us occasionally. This attractive life style involves not only the jet set but encompasses the entire human population.

In Mason's world people are wholly uplifted into an elite status and served by their fairy godmother androids. Where's the pumpkin you ask? Of course there's a catch. The kink in this deus machina is a guy named Finnegan who for a very esoteric reason—boredom—rebels. In Wirral City he discovers during the androids' medi-check that people are drugged and eventually ground into freeze dried, hermetically sealed milk bone. Shades of *Soylent Green.*

Finnegan rescues some and forms an underground guerrilla unit to fight the robots. The cell grows as additional members are collected. Very conveniently, the group finds an old underground disaster center. From these headquarters, Finnegan leads assaults on the android city. Meanwhile, android colonies located on other continents declare war and devastate Wirral City. Finnegan's worst enemies are destroyed and, with a little help from his friends, the remaining androids are zapped. Finnegan then puts on his Henry Kissinger cap and concludes a detente with the other android cities.

I enjoyed this book thoroughly. Mason's plot, while not wholly original, was inventive to say the least. His characters presented a unique blend of humor in an untenable situation. Mason repeatedly entices the reader with some ideas about biofeedback plus some personal questions about the definitions of happiness. I really appreciated his deft use of intellectual concepts which did not interfere with a reader's entertainment but served to expand it.

The book can be read by an audience 12 years and up. That's the beauty of it. Mason has the rare talent of appealing to many types, many ages. I certainly recommend it.

—Karen Ludwig

*THE STAR ROAD by Gordon R. Dickson. Doubleday, 1973. 229 p. $5.95 (paperback: DAW UY1127, 1974. $1.25)*

Of the nine short stories in this book, I found two I thought effective and several that ranged from mediocre to poor. Apparently Dickson can write when he wants to, but far too often he strings together a series of dismal cliches and lets it go at that. The two stories I liked were "On Messenger Mountain" and "Jackal's Meal." The first of these is a long but fairly tight story of a crash in the high mountains of an unfriendly planet. It is, in fact, a double crash—an Earth ship and an alien ship which simultaneously knock each other out of action. The rest of the story is a contest between the earth spacemen and a peculiarly terrifying form of alien with the physical power and temperament of a Bengal tiger, who stalks them and single-handed nearly wipes them out. "Jackal's Meal" is a game of wits between an earth diplomat and the ruler of an alien world in which each is jockeying—and bluffing—for power. This story too, was well done. It's a little puzzling to find such diversity of style—good and bad—in one author's collection, but there it is.

—Samuel Mines

*IN THE ENCLOSURE by Barry N. Malzberg. Avon 15073, 1973. 190 p. 95¢*

A shipload of aliens arrives on Earth, where they are promptly interned in a super-concentration camp and endlessly interrogated by teams of 'therapists' who are psychologists and experts of various sorts. The idea is to milk them of their presumably superior skills in technology. The story is told first person by one of the prisoners, who plots an escape. There is little doubt that he is in an advanced state of neurosis or even psychosis, but so is almost everyone else in the compound, including the therapists. The book is well written but actually it's a short story idea inflated to novel length and it drags interminably. There simply isn't enough plot development or movement to keep it going. Even the female interest is dragged in bodily (if you'll excuse the pun) and the sex seems out of place in this gloomy introspective chronicle. The aliens are never directly described, or even well visualized—one gets the impression that they are vaguely human, judging by the meagre descriptions of the sex acts, but as beings they remain vague. The climax and ending are much more typical of a short story than a novel.

—Samuel Mines

*BURNT OFFERINGS by Robert Marasco. Delacorte Press, 1973. 277 p. $6.95*

I liked this one. The plot, of course, is conventional. A credible, and appealing, young couple and their son, rent a quaint old white elephant of a house in upstate New York from an even quainter old couple, and the inevitable strange things begin to occur, accumulate, and culminate in a climax of terror. The differences that make *Burnt Offerings* by Robert Marasco a novel on a par with Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* are more subtle.

Before I was half done with it, I was ready to complain here that Marasco had taken too long to get his novel moving. The opening pace is leisurely, affable. We are first introduced to Marian and Ben Rolfe; the former an intelligent, most likeable urban female, bored with her domestic existence, conscientious in her maternal duties toward her eight year old (genuinely childlike) child. And her husband Ben, a disgruntled schoolteacher. And Ben's Aunt Elizabeth, an elderly but lively lady, proud of her independence. We experience the climax of the Rolfe's dissatisfaction with New York City life; their decision to rent a summer place. The discovery of the old house, and the lengthy interview with its owners. Then, at last, we see them move in. And by the time the 'things' begin to happen, we realize that Marasco has established his people and Place so concretely in our minds that we accept everything that follows as his characters themselves do.

They do not believe in ghosts, for instance. They do not believe in the preternatural. Nor do they believe in evil incarnate. And it is not simply that they do not believe, but that they are *incapable* of accepting the existence of the malevolence that attempts to destroy them until it is too late. And their incapacity is not stupidity but an ignorance inherent in our culture. Ben knows that 'something' in the house is taking possession of his wife; that 'something' is trying to kill him and his son, yet he refuses to accept the evidence of his senses; neutralizing them with Freudian dogma: "It's all in my head!"

Marian, too, knows what the house is trying to do to her; knows that she is being used as 'its' accomplice in a scheme that may include the murders of her husband and son, but like Ben, she is helpless. She wants that 'something' in the house as much as it wants her; she is as much consumed by her own covetousness of the house as she is consumed by 'it.'

Marasco builds his terror without shock or sensation; without violence or gimmickry. We are never in any doubt that there is 'something' in the house; and the 'things' that occur do occur, but they only slightly resemble our familiar specters. There is a more subtle, psychological quality to them. A human quality that may be symbolic. Marasco is the author of *Child's Play*, a Tony Award winning play that had the critics baffled, and it would be easy enough to baffle myself trying to discern symbols in his first novel. Quite unnecessary. As a straightforward horror story, it succeeds admirably. Marasco is an expert craftsman, with a fine eye for detail, and a clean, clear style that makes the book hard to put down. He is not the conniver that Ira Levin is. There is nothing slick or satirical in the book.

Frankly, it scared the bejesus out of me, and as I said, if you liked *Rosemary's Baby*, you have to like this as well. Personally, I think it is a more interesting, intelligent book with more genuine suspense and terror, and a spectacular next-to-last scene. And like *Rosemary's Baby*, it is best to begin it early in the evening, because once you've begun, you will not be able to put it down.

—Paul Walker

*DOUBLE VISION by Noel B. Gerson. Popular Library 00452, 1973. 286 p. 95¢ (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $5.95)*

Isn't it wonderful how the people in stories who travel back in time are always experts on the period they visit! In this case, our hero goes back to live the life of his favorite ancestor, whose name was the same as his and who looked just like him. The only real problem is that part of the time there are, presumably, two minds in two bodies, and the other part there is apparently only one mind in one body; what happens to the second person? Other than that, it is an interesting book, especially recommended for war history buffs.

—Joni Rapkin

*MISTER JUSTICE by Doris Piserchia / HIERARCHIES by John T. Phillifent. Ace 53415, 1973. 176, 141 p. 95¢*

*Hierarchies* is a good-humored, rollicking sort of space opera, although space plays a very minor part in the story. Essentially it is the familiar tale of the Secret Service operatives trying to get a girl and some priceless jewels out of hostile territory and delivered safely to headquarters—in this case Earth—with the baddies trying to stop them. En route they run into the usual array of skullduggery, ambush, and a BEM or two. No surprises, general 12 year level, but done with a certain flair and some tongue-in-cheek humor, it isn't hard to read.

Its back-up twin on the other side of this paperback, *Mister Justice*, is something else again. The ancient penny dreadful spawned the dime novel, which yielded to the pulps, which were replaced by the James Bonds and similar one-man armies. Now, it seems, we are getting a return to the penny dreadful. And dreadful is exactly the word to describe Mister Justice. It makes no sense at all. I read the first 96 pages conscientiously, after that I gave up and skimmed towards the back trying to find out what eventually happened. Actually, nothing really does happen except that nearly everybody winds up dead. The old pulps were fond of creating a kind of 'phantom detective'—a Clark Kent character who was often an effete playboy (to borrow Spiro Agnew's immortal terminology) in one life, and a stern dealer of justice in his masked role of avenger. This vigilante outlook on life, which you will find in John Ehrlichman's testimony before the Watergate committee, apparently dies hard. Perhaps it is a heritage of our frontier tradition, when law rode on a man's hip, and we've never gotten over it. Still, I think I could forgive Doris Piserchia that much, if *Mister Justice* weren't such an incoherent mess as to be virtually unreadable. This is the kind of thing the harsher critics of science fiction refer to when they delegate all sf to the trash heap.

—Samuel Mines

*THE TEMPLE OF THE PAST by Stefan Wul. Seabury Press, 1973. 137 p. $6.95*

Stefan Wul is claimed to be one of France's more popular sf authors, with 17 works published between 1956 and 1961. His books are currently being reissued in France, with this 1957 novel appearing as part of the six initial Continuum titles published last June.

A space ship falls into the sea of an unknown planet and is swallowed by a huge sea creature, whose metabolism involves silicon and chlorine instead of the more familiar terrestrial mixtures. The few survivors finally force the creature to land by altering its metabolism. The space ship's life support systems continue to function even in weakened state, but with accidents, only the captain finally survives. Because of irreparable damage, escape from the unknown planet is not possible. Encapsulating himself and a self-powered transmitter in a huge block of plastic, he hopes his message will eventually reach intelligent ears. To tell more would be unfair to readers.

The book will appeal to those who enjoyed Clement's *Ice World* or *Fantastic Voyage*, having some elements of each. It is essentially a well-paced adventure story with reasonably well-developed characters. The translation by Ellen Fox is smooth, although there is a slight British flavor in some of the dialog—"old boy" is used several times. An enjoyable but overpriced short novel, but a second choice for libraries.

—Neil Barron

*THE STONE THAT NEVER CAME DOWN by John Brunner. Doubleday, 1973. 206 p. $5.95*

John Brunner is undoubtedly one of the best contemporary writers of science fiction and so any of his books are worth reading. *The Stone That Never Came Down* takes place in a not-so-distant Europe, hovering, as is the world in his deeper work, *The Sheep Look Up*, on the edge of total disaster.

Brunner is a 'social science fiction' writer and in this work he continues to deal with the themes that obsess him and other thinking people today. To illustrate: in April 1974, United Nations Secretary General Waldheim listed the following six related world problems as constituting a 'global emergency.' They are: mass poverty, overpopulation, food shortages, energy shortages, military expenditures, and the possibility (or probability) of worldwide inflation.

These are the concerns of Brunner. In his Europe unemployment, inflation, and poverty are among the factors which are rushing the world toward World War III. There seems to be no hope for civilization until the inventor of VC, a drug which heightens intelligence and sensitivity, and enables people to see through the lies that govern them, decides to release the drug to humanity, wildly gambling that it will have the same effect on people that it has had on animals in laboratory situations.

This is an exciting plot idea and as always, Brunner writes well, intelligently, and without cliches. However, this book does not achieve the heights of either *The Sheep Look Up* or *Stand on Zanzibar*. Brunner again uses here the montage, John Dos Passos technique which he used in the other two books, but here this device begins to get wearing. The jumping around from one character to another makes it difficult to juggle and remember which is which and the constant interrupting of the story line often becomes irritating and militates against emotional involvement of the reader with the characters.

There is also an unfortunate tendency at times to over-moralize and this, too, is uncomfortable for a reader of any degree of sophistication. Here is an example:

> Whereas Sicilian peasants, whose brutal Mafia-dominated culture has ruined their own homeland and who have no less tenuous connection with Britain than the fact that both islands were ruled by Norman bandits some nine centuries ago, are permitted to go and come as they please, blacks from the Commonwealth to whom the British owe an incalculable debt are barred from the nation that grew fat by sucking their ancestors' blood, or if by some miracle they do achieve entry are constantly at risk of being deported. (p.18)

Despite any drawbacks, any Brunner book will be of interest to fans. Still, this book cannot be characterized as a major effort.

—Sheila Schwartz

*THE INFINITE MAN by Daniel F. Galouye. Bantam N7130, 1973. 202 p. 95¢*

This was a lot of fun. *The Infinite Man* is cosmically apocalyptic sf. Bradford, a down and out acid head becomes (unknowingly), possessed by the Creative Force of the Universe. The Creative Force has found that he has made the universe too complex and proceeds to start simplifying things. He feels He has been working too hard. He has also created an opposing Destructive Force to make things more interesting. The Destructive Force (working through a psychiatrist), is competing for control of Bradford with a scientific foundation and a crackpot religious cult.

For an author on the far side of the generation gap, Galouye doesn't do a bad job on the hippies and cultists. His drug terminology is rather confused. The Creative Force is quite an endearing old being, and the plot complications are well worked out. Read and enjoy.

—Leslie Bloom

*THE GREAT TIME MACHINE HOAX by Keith Laumer. Award Books AN1171, 1973. 171 p. 95¢*

One of the more appealing aspects of science fiction is that it is so closely related to magic. And those stories that utilize this gimmick are always very high in entertainment value. Here we have a computer which has grown so complex and able that it encompasses practically all the accumulated information there is. Moreover it is able to create realistic reproductions of almost anything—a scene from the past or the future—extinct dinosaurs or primitive cavemen—practically anything. These are apparently optical illusions, but turn out not to be as the two experimenters suddenly discover. The computer is not conjuring up 3-D illusions, but is a real time machine and is actually transporting them into assorted time slots in which they are actually exposed to whatever dangers lurk in that particular environment. Thus our hero is wildly dodging irate policemen one moment, and irritated cavemen the next, or ducking arrows from the bows of latter-day Robin Hoods. All this makes for a good-humored romp through time. You'll enjoy it thoroughly, I believe.

—Samuel Mines

*A SPACESHIP FOR THE KING by Jerry Pournelle. DAW UQ1042, 1973. 157 p. 95¢*

How can a fast moving action packed book have a blurb that starts with, "That library is...?" Ask Don or Jerry, but for me, a librarian, it gave an immediate interest. Sorry folks, but that is ethnocentricism. Anyway, once more into the fray, good fellows.

Colonel MacKinnie, who is defeated by superior arms not fighting men, is recruited by his enemies, at least his enemies' ex-pawns to save not earth but earth as a self-ruling planet in a not too well defined empire. All this is preamble, the story starts later.

It runs something like this. Earth is an overrun planet and too backward by empire standards for self-rule. If final judgment reflects this, earth becomes a sub colony. Before final judgment, earth must gain space travel. To do this, it must rob the necessary knowledge from another backward planet's Temple which is in reality a galactic library. Space travel, by the way, is the way a planet may gain maturity and thereby become a full and equal member of the empire.

The second part of the book is the taking of the library cum temple from the fanatic priesthood and the roving barbarians of Placentia. To do this, MacKinnie must become a salesman, continue and expand his military prowess and gain a knowledge of galactic Christianity and learn practical politics. How he does this makes the boring and slow beginning unimportant. The last half of the novel moves with speed and with interesting plot twists.

The characters who interact with MacKinnie have more rounded personalities than he does. One that sticks in my memory is Archbishop Casteliano. He seems to be a Pat O'Brien type and I am sorry he is only a small cog in the wheel of *A Spaceship for the King.* Lucky for the reader that Mr. Pournelle left the door open wide enough for MacKinnie and all the rest of his character friends to jump through with three or four more books. Maybe the new wave tide is receding.

—Scratch Bacharach

*THE BLACK STAR by Lin Carter. Dell 0932, 1973. 235 p. 95¢*

Diodric, young warrior of lost Atlantis, fights to save his beautiful City of the Golden Gates and the White Emperor from the dragon hordes of Thelatha the Accursed. When the city falls he flees with the lovely Lady Niane, little knowing that he has become the guardian of the mystic jewel the Black Star, symbol and bulwark of the Empire. He struggles across the continent, facing constant natural perils and the sorcerous pursuit of the Demon King who must gain the jewel at all costs. Before him lies a great destiny for himself and his descendants—if he survives.

Carter's writing ranges from the enjoyable to the passable to the abysmal. This first novel in the author's projected Atlantis trilogy molders somewhere amongst the bones of mighty-thewed Thongor—you can draw your own conclusions.

—B. A. Fredstrom

*ALTAR OF EVIL by Florence Stevenson. Award AN1107, 1973. 154 p. 95¢ Kitty Telefair Gothic no. 3*

For a representative of a Gothic series, this book is amazingly good. Not, you understand, that I have anything against Gothic series, but even at best a series can be difficult to sustain, and a bad Gothic can be very bad, indeed. In this case, however, the story stands on its own. If you are looking for a Gothic novel, you would not be sorry if you picked up this one.

—Joni Rapkin

*MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN, TRACING THE MYTH by Christopher Small. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1974, c1973. 352 p. $9.95 (orig. title: Ariel Like a Harpy: Shelley, Mary and Frankenstein)*

Were it not for the fact that Christopher Samll is described on the dustjacket as literary editor and drama critic of the *Glasgow Herald*, I would tend to identify this book as a doctoral dissertation. Perhaps it was!

This is not to imply that the book is not well written. It is a brilliant book, consistently interesting and knowledgeable. It is just that it has a tendency to belabor and to tell the reader more than is logically required for the understanding of such material. In addition, there is such heavy emphasis on the Freudian aspects of the lives of Mary Shelley and of all of her circle, that at times this becomes ludicrous. To illustrate:

> Frankenstein is brought up with his 'more than sister,' Elizabeth, the name also of Shelley's mother and of his favourite sister. Frankenstein's elderly father, on the other hand, the revered, high-principled learned Syndic, entirely mild and benevolent, is an exact reverse image of the tyrannical father who, to whatever extent he existed in real life, haunted Shelley's imagination. In fact, this sort of wise, kindly, silver-haired old man, altogether un-authoritarian, the somewhat enfeebled counter-balance to the hated Lord God Father Almighty—too old, it may be observed, to be any sort of rival to a young man—crops up again and again in Shelley's writings, most notably in *The Revolt of Islam* (1817): the aged 'hermit,' 'grand and mild' who rescued the hero, Laon, from prison, cares for him and instructs him, though only as his 'passive instrument.' (p.103)

This kind of tangential nonsense interrupts the flow of Small's book. The work is best when it actually does what the title promises the reader. That is, traces the myth to help explain the extraordinary influence that this work has had on western consciousness. Passages such as the following one fulfill the promise of the title:

> When it first appeared its newness may fairly be called staggering. It was not a novelty of form of style, but almost wholly of content; there was something *monstrous* about its central idea that produced the typical reactions of people confronted with a *lusus naturae*, a breach in the accepted order of things. (p.13)

Overall, this book would be of greater value to the student of Romantic literature than to the science fiction aficionado. It is a good reference book for libraries to stock but not recommended to the general reader.

—Sheila Schwartz

*GARAN THE ETERNAL by Andre Norton. DAW UQ1045, 1973. 156 p. 95¢*

*Garan the Eternal*, if it should be necessary to warn the unwary, is more a catch-all collection than a novel. The book consists of two rather artificially connected novelettes and two unrelated short stories.

"Garin of Tav," copyrighted in 1947, is a straightforward lost race yarn. Adventurer Garin Featherstone penetrates a curtain of Antarctic haze to find a hidden land where he fights and triumphs for the beautiful princess Thrala and her lizard folk against the evil Black Ones. In part two Garin, now Garan of the Flame, is told of his former incarnation as "Garan of Yu-Lac." In that past life on a far planet he was involved in the exodus that established Earth's Antarctic civilization. Here again is his (this time doomed) love for Thrala, and his eternal confrontation with evil in the form of Kepta the Ambitious. The short stories are somewhat more imaginative: a light-hearted tale about the "One Spell Wizard" of High Hallack and the more somber story of vengeance accomplished with the "Legacy from Sorn Fen."

*Garan the Eternal* will win no awards and few plaudits for Miss Norton in comparison with her other work. Nevertheless, the formula plotting is adequate, the writing competent for its ilk, and the readability only slightly tarnished by some of the silliness.

—B. A. Fredstrom

*INTO THE OCCULT by Peter Underwood. Drake, 1973. 154 p. $5.95*

Another import, this book by a long-time observer of psychic phenomena presents a reasonably balanced view of the genre, neither falling into the hysterical 'true believer' or the cynical debunker attitude. Mr. Underwood draws his material from a variety of sources: the Psychical Research Society, the Spiritualist Society, the College of Psychic Studies, and the *Psychic Press*, as well as his own group, the Ghost Club, one of the oldest groups interested in the subject.

Each category of phenomena or theory is presented with a general explanation of how it is supposed to function, along with Mr. Underwood's remarks based on his own experience. The material is well presented, and deserves closer examination.

—Michael L. McQuown

*CITIES & SCENES FROM THE ANCIENT WORLD by Roy G. Krenkel. Owlswick Press (Box 8243, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101) 1974. 82 p. $16.00*

Let's see now, if we divide 180 illustrations into $16.00 we come out to less than 10¢ per illustration. Most are worth more than that. It's a big book, measuring—Hell, can't find a ruler—but it is good-sized. The color frontispiece is also used on the jacket. Rather than being printed in black-&-white, a brown ink is used, easier on the eye, for the book itself. The preface by Sanford Zane Meschkow is basically biographical. Krenkel's own introduction is a short essay on doodles and "other irreverent observations."

The bulk of the pieces have to be called sketches, Krenkel uses the technique of suggesting shapes and shadows with well placed lines. Krenkel often does have elaborate architectural pieces. The two techniques can best be compared on pp.66/67 where the same ancient place, Pataliputra, is depicted, once in a sketch and once in a drawing with elaborate detail. There are also several half-tones among the illustrations. They all have as subject matter some scene (or city) from the ancient world (which, by stretching things, includes some fantastic and mythical realms). While most scenes are urban, a few bucolic views break the monotony.

A few unkind things should be said about this production (which, for the record, is a 3,000 print run). Krenkel can't draw birds in flight for the proverbial beans, his flamingoid things don't look real. The pseudo-LC card on the verso of the title page has an error in spacing. The printer miscalculated and some of the text of the jacket blurb runs into the fold. Such complaints are so minor when compared to the virtues of this work that they may be safely ignored. I won't urge anyone to buy it sight unseen but I think everyone should try to get a look at a copy and if Krenkel's thing is yours, by all means buy. At less than 10¢ an illustration one really can't go wrong.

—J. B. Post

*THE ALIEN CONDITION edited by Stephen Goldin. Ballantine 03212, 1974. 206 p. $1.25*

This is a fairly original idea—a dozen stories told from the viewpoint of a life form completely and utterly alien to us. That's quite a challenge to any author's imagination and it is a tribute to these authors that it comes off as well as it does. It achieves its primary goal, which is to create an atmosphere of utter alienness—an environment, a way of life, a pattern of thinking completely different. As stories these aren't much—most of them are sketches rather than stories. But for most of us this is a fascinating look at what *might* be out there and some of the unexpected beings and systems we could conceivably encounter if we ever do discover inhabited worlds. Editor Goldin's comments sometimes seemed a little stretched to me—he was forever trying to draw moral conclusions which struck me as unnecessary. No life form needs justification or probably even comparison with other forms on a moral basis. You should get a kick out of this collection—all original stories, by the way. —Samuel Mines

*COLLECTED GHOST STORIES by Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman. Arkham House, 1974. xii, 189 p. $6.00*

The introduction by Edward Wagenknecht places Mrs. Wilkins-Freeman in her place in American letters. For university English types, this is the most valuable part of the book. Most readers, however, will find the eleven stories mildly interesting, if predictable. But if her ghosts are rather traditional, she was, in her own way, a realist with the living. The people may not seem real now but they would have at the turn of the century. The ghosties range from rather malevolent ones to sad children ghosts looking for love. "The Shadows on the Wall" is about murder and retribution—or at least we think it's murder. "The Hall Bedroom" shows a striking similarity in theme (though miles away in execution) to Lovecraft's "Dreams in the Witch House" and is the closest thing to science fiction in the collection. "Luella Miller" is a great vampire tale without a traditional vampire. "The Vacant Lot" is fairly traditional in plot but nicely worked out. "The Jade Bracelet" has moments of terror. The rest are, well, genteel. Worth reading but not worth buying for most people. I suspect Arkham House will be quite awhile unloading the 4,000 copies unless the universities and colleges of the land buy it. —J. B. Post

*THE FRANKENSTEIN LEGEND: A TRIBUTE TO MARY SHELLEY AND BORIS KARLOFF by Donald F. Glut. Scarecrow Press, 1973. xxv, 372 p. $10.00*

Well, while far from the last word on the subject, this is many, many words somewhere in between. It is a whole compendium of Frankensteinian lore, enough to keep most of us more than satisfied. Not only is the main line of development of the Frankenstein Monster charted, but related themes which contribute (like the Golem legend) to it are examined in some detail. Starting with the book by Mary Shelley, Mr. Glut takes us along the checkered career of the Monster through the stage versions, the silent movies, the comics, television, and the various film versions which we know today. The plot summaries of the latter-day Frankenstein movies (many of which have nothing to do with Frankenstein) are oft-times stomach-turning. There is a 14 page introduction by Forrest J Ackerman and a 29¼ page index. This is sure to become a basic reference book, but not everyone likes to buy reference books. Because so much of the book deals with the film versions and has so much detail (minutiae?), it probably should be bought by film nuts. For the rest of us, a library copy should suffice. —J. B. Post

*THE DEVIL'S GENERATION, ed. by Vic Ghidalia. Lancer 75465, 1973. 175 p. 95¢*

One look at the names of the authors represented here should indicate the quality of this collection. Of course, it is not too hard to do well when you have people like Bradbury, Matheson, Boucher, Bloch, Derleth, Silverberg, Simak, Kuttner and Blackwood. Actually, this book is misnamed, because most of the stories are not about the Devil: they are about the supernatural, and also about children, the generation referred to in the title. I definitely recommend this one. —Joni Rapkin

*MEETING THE BEAR: JOURNAL OF THE BLACK WARS by Lloyd Zimpel. Pocket Books 77564, 1973. 223 p. 95¢ (hardcover: Macmillan, 1971. $5.95)*

If you like stories about race wars, and I don't, this one isn't bad. It is told from the point of view of an employee of the "California Human Rights Commission" and insofar as it is about him, it is well done. But the background of a race war really ruins it. I hate books like this one. Too bad it is so well done. —Joni Rapkin

*GODS AND GOLEMS by Lester del Rey. Ballantine 03087, 1973. 246 p. $1.25*

*Gods and Golems* is a collection of five short novels by Lester del Rey. They include: "Vengeance is Mine" (Galaxy 1964), "Superstition" (Astounding 1954), "Life Watch" (Fantastic Universe 1954), "For I Am a Jealous People" (Star Short Novels 1954), and "Pursuit" (Space Science Fiction 1952). The title of the book defines its subject matter: gods, real and unreal; and robots bent on avenging mankind. Four of the stories involve alien invasions, four involve ESP, among other wild devices. In all, four of the stories are good to excellent; one, "Pursuit," is not very good.

I haven't renewed my enthusiasm for del Rey in years, so I cannot say how typical these stories are of his work. The one theme they have in common is the supremacy of man over the idea, or even the existence of, God. In these five short novels, del Rey boasts an extreme, atheistic humanism, best articulated in "For I Am a Jealous People." In del Rey's view, God does not exist, except as a superstition; but even if He does exist in some form in the universe, He is irrelevant, if not hostile, to the human condition. Man is a creature born with free will, with an eradicable individuality, and potentially omnipotent imagination, that makes him the competitor, rather than the servitor, of any deity.

True, God may be immortal; His powers more personalized; but man's technology is every bit as immortal as He is; every bit as powerful; and should mankind die (and he will only die at his own hand, of his own stupidity), his works will live after him. So man has no need of God or religion; and the persistence of both beliefs (superstition) is nothing but the fear of free will. Human freedom is dependent on the individual's realization of his own potential.

This last idea is best expressed in the long story, "Superstition," my own favorite.

Del Rey's humanism is of another generation than mine; and his sf is of the 40's Campbell tradition. Genuinely interesting ideas abound in these stories, and del Rey's speculations upon them are intelligent and amusing. The stories have a predominantly intellectual appeal; they are 'about' their themes and ideas rather than their plots and characters. And del Rey writes with a careful hand, as if he thought everything out first, then rewrote meticulously. But these are also the stories' disadvantages.

They are too long. Del Rey has the habit of beginning at the *very* beginning and plotting his stories incident by incident, never skimping on detail, as if he meant to write a longer work. The stories are not over-written, but over-extended, so it takes us ten pages to reach a point that we could have reached in two or three if del Rey had condensed his exposition and tucked it into the plot as flashback. As it is, the stories are a bit ponderous.

Compounding their ponderousness, is the fact that, despite del Rey's literate, lucid style, his characters are essentially the same character with minor variations; and 'he' isn't quite substantial enough for us to identify with 'him.' These are not stories of conflict between people, but strictly interior, intellectual conflicts within the same character trying to reason out a mystery: what is the nature of the nature of the catastophe? of the aliens? of God? These stories, then, do not engage our emotions. At least, they did not engage mine. I read on and on, with some effort, *only* because I was interested in the plot ideas for their own sake. I really didn't care if the hero lived or died.

Nevertheless, *Gods and Golems* is worth reading. While the above may seem excessively critical, especially if you can't remember a del Rey story that you ever disliked, the fact is that, like Leiber, del Rey is so good at what he does well that his failures stick out like sore thumbs. He comes so close to mainstream quality that his inability to attain it (primarily because of his two-dimensional characters) seems unforgivable.

—Paul Walker

*THE ALCHEMY DECEPTION by Hans Holzer. Award AN1059, 1973. 184 p. 95¢*

Somehow it just doesn't seem fair to me to write a detective story about a psychic detective. When he is looking for something he always knows where to look and even when he loses the person he is following, he knows where to go to find him. He also seems to be telepathic at times, and although he seems to have a way with the ladies, the author seems to be afraid of them. All in all, it is an exciting, but not a particularly interesting book.

—Joni Rapkin

*KING OF ARGENT by John T. Phillifent. DAW UQ1046, 1973. 191 p. 95¢*

*King of Argent* is a novel of conflict: man against environment, man against ruthless enemies, man against self. Phillifent has written a number of science fiction adventure yarns for Ace under the pseudonym John Rackham. In the present effort he achieves one of his most entertaining novels by extending and developing his usual formula.

Hero John Lampart discovers an incredibly metal-rich planet on a scouting expedition. The temperature range and other conditions on Argent seem to rule out native life forms or the possibility of successful mining operations—men just couldn't take it. But Lampart's grasping employer Carlton Colson devises a way. The great geneticist Leo Brocat turns Lampart into a superman by altering his body to accept a partly silicon base. Now able to survive, Lampart is dropped on the planet to survey the mineral wealth as a guide to automated mining operations.

But Argent turns out to be far different than expected—there is life aplenty, danger... and beauty. It becomes Lampart's world, his home, a place to preserve from exploitation. Then Eve enters Lampart's Eden in the guise of Dorothea Colson and time runs out for the King of Argent.

Pleasant light-weight adventure. Try it. —B. A. Fredstrom

*THE WITCH'S WORKBOOK by Ann Grammary. Pocket Books 78287, 1973. 270 p. $1.25*

This seems to be exactly what it calls itself; an aspiring witch's how-to book. Unfortunately, I don't know enough about witchcraft to say for sure, but every once in a while, I got the impression that this was a big put-on. If so, however, it is a very 'in' put-on and if you really want to learn witchcraft, this book has many spells that might really work (then again, as the author says, they may not). If you are not interested, however, this book can get somewhat boring. —Joni Rapkin

*TOMORROW LIES IN AMBUSH by Bob Shaw. Ace 81656, 1973. 281 p. 95¢*

Thirteen original stories by Bob Shaw, who has pretty much lost his Irish accent. These stories vary all over the galaxy, from standard good-guys bad-guys muscle flexing, like "..And Isles Where Good Men Lie," to minor wisps of fantasy or whimsy with only the tiniest bit of idea. I don't know—can't quite put my finger on it, but I wasn't enthralled. Shaw writes well and he has imagination, but for me these stories don't quite come off. They lack something—salt maybe. "What Time Do You Call This?" should have been a mad romp through time when a bank robber sees a foolproof method of heisting a bank and disappearing into another time slot, but comes out ordinary and predictable. I think of what Bob Silverberg or maybe Ron Goulart might have done with this and it is to sigh. Another near miss is "Communication" in which a computer salesman runs afoul of a confidence man who intends to mulct the suckers by pretending to contact the dead via computer. The trick ending is that it reverses—oh, you know, the dead come back and try to contact the living. Now this should be funny, no? Sigh—it just manages not to be funny. The best story in the book was "The Cosmic Cocktail Party" which has a very good idea in keeping personalities preserved after death in a kind of nutrient tank from which they can communicate to the living. It's pretty good—it would have been a lot better if not for a kind of overall fuzzy quality which makes for stumbling in the reading. That's a blanket criticism of most of these stories, by the way, they are not very easy reading. Which is too bad.

—Samuel Mines

*CHANGELING EARTH by Fred Saberhagen. DAW UQ1041, 1973. 176 p. 95¢*

Saberhagen has, with the writing of *Changeling Earth* done some neat things to both messianic and sword and sorcery sf. In a sense, he might have saved sf (messianticly speaking) by making the whole greater than the two above mentioned parts. The beauty of the mix is the combining of 1950's adventure style and 1960's moralistic preoccupation style. That and the fact that the reader is told by the characters that this is exactly what the author is doing. It can be made no plainer and yet the book is completely readable.

We start out as a typical sword and sorcery novel, replete with torture, gods, magic and heroes. In this case, Rolf, who is a young and very able leader and blade wielder leads us 3/4 of the way through the book to the main characters and past their deaths. His god is Ardned, who at critical times inhabits Rolf's mind and acts as his guide. Our villain is an ageless sorcerer and ruler of 9/10 of the earth. He is known as John Ominor. He has god-like powers stolen from Orcus, a god whom he has imprisoned. Here then is our cast of actors whose job it is to control the whole world. Ominor must contain Orcus to hold his own power. It develops that a race to the physical presence of Ardned with a holy relic by Rolf and friends must be run against the forces of Ominor. Orcus, whose evil presence is always in the background stands ever ready to force his freedom and must also be taken into consideration. Suffice it to say Rolf wins the race and frees Ardned to his full potential. Ominor must then free Orcus, and that is part two of the book. Now, lovers of sf, take it from there.

If you can find it and you read it in the same general frame of mind that I did, the ending is a little bit of Tolkien. Be prepared to enjoy this book, but try to keep one jump ahead of the words! It will be well worth your time. —Scratch Bacharach

*WHO IS JULIA? by Barbara S. Harris. Popular Library 00170, 1973. 317 p. $1.25 (hardcover: McKay, 1972. $6.95)*

You can call it a brain transplant or a body transplant, but whatever you call it, that is what this book is about. It mentions the moral and legal problems connected with such an operation, but it is mainly about the woman who has the operation. The book is well written and thought provoking, and raises some interesting questions. I found it hard to put down. —Joni Rapkin

*SHELTER by Dan Ljoka. Manor Books 95252, 1973. 224 p. 95¢*

If or when the nuclear holocaust comes, it is generally agreed that millions of people will be killed, but millions more may survive to die from radiation unless they can get to deep shelters and be prepared to sit it out for months or years. The big question would be, with shelter space limited, how would the mass of people react to any selection scheme, choosing those who would live and those who must die? Would they be civilized, or become desperate mad beasts killing each other to get to sanctuary?

This author's answer is that they would quite rapidly become desperate mad beasts—all but a few. The story tells of a group of women and one man, who accidentally find themselves inside a shelter under Washington as the bombs fall. They would have no problem except that one of the women is a psychotic, and primitive and murderous to boot. Her character is somewhat implausible and synthetic, but she is the vehicle by which the author achieves the breakdown of the others.

Meanwhile there is a counterplot dealing with the situation on New Zealand, not bombed, but waiting for the radiation to come drifting upon them, exactly like the situation in *On the Beach.* Shelters are prepared, but shelters that hold an insignificant number—a situation which touches off the insane mob action of those not chosen.

This is a very grim and shocking story. Unfortunately the author's writing skills are not quite up to it so that the characters and dialogue are frequently just a little on the flat and unconvincing side. But the basic idea, frightening and sobering as it is, far from escape fiction or entertainment, is more than worth contemplation. And many of the scenes in the book will remain in your mind for a long time to come—an unpleasant portent of what may come to pass. —Samuel Mines

ALSO RECEIVED:

Aldous Huxley: A Biographical Introduction, by Philip Thody. Scribner, 1973. $2.95

Angel's Tear, by Jane Blackmore. Ace 02284, April. 95¢

Armageddon 2419 A.D., by Philip Francis Nowlan. Ace 02938. $1.25

Cap Kennedy 9: Earth Enslaved, by Gregory Kern. DAW UQ1118, June. 95¢

Cap Kennedy 10: Planet of Dread, by Gregory Kern. DAW UQ1123, July. 95¢

Caravan of the Occult, by John Macklin. Ace 22222. $1.25 (c1971)

Change the Sky and Other Stories, by Margaret St. Clair. Ace 10258. 95¢

Colony: Earth, by Richard E. Mooney. Stein and Day, July. $7.95

Conversations with a Corpse, by Robert C. Dennis. Bobbs-Merrill, June. $5.95

The Crossroads of Time, by Andre Norton. Ace 12312. $1.25 (c1956)

Cumulative Paperback Index, 1939-1959, by R. Reginald and M. R. Burgess. Gale Research, 1973. $24.00

Dune, by Frank Herbert. Ace 17263. $1.50 (c1965)

The Early Asimov, Book One, by Isaac Asimov. Fawcett Crest P2087, June. $1.25 (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $10.00. reviewed LUNA Monthly 41/42)

The Green Brain, by Frank Herbert. Ace 30262. $1.25 (c1966)

Impossible—Yet It Happened! by R. DeWitt Miller. Ace 36711. 95¢ (c1947, orig: Forgotten Mysteries)

Lest Darkness Fall, by L. Sprague de Camp. Ballantine 24139, August. $1.25

The Magic Art of Foreseeing the Future, by Daniel Cohen. Archway 29703, August. 95¢ (hardcover: Dodd, Mead, 1973)

Mama's Ghosts, by Carol Lee Lorenzo. Harper. $4.95. Age 10 up

The Man Who Folded Himself, by David Gerrold. Popular Library 00546. 95¢ (hardcover: Random House, 1973. $4.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 45)

The Metallic Muse, by Lloyd Biggle Jr. DAW UY1115, June. $1.25 (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 44)

Omega, ed. by Roger Elwood. Fawcett Gold Medal M3030, August. 95¢ (hardcover: Walker, 1974. $6.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 51)

The Oakdale Affair, by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Ace 60563. $1.25

The Overlords of War, by Gerard Klein. DAW UQ1099, March. 95¢ (hardcover: Doubleday, 1973. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 49)

Perry Rhodan 49: Solar Assassins, by Kurt Mahr. Ace 66032, July. 95¢

Perry Rhodan 50: Attack from the Unseen, by Clark Darlton. Ace 66033, July. 95¢

Perry Rhodan 51: Return from the Void, by Kurt Mahr. Ace 66034, August. 95¢

Perry Rhodan 52: Fortress Atlantis, by K. H. Scheer. Ace 66035, August. 95¢

The Planets—Their Signs and Aspects, vol. 3 The Principles and Practice of Astrology, by Noel Tyl. Llewellyn. $3.95

Reference Guide to Fantastic Films: Science Fiction, Fantasy, & Horror, vol. 3, comp. by Walt Lee. Chelsea-Lee Books (Box 66273, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066) $9.95paper (vol. 1 reviewed LUNA Monthly 40, vol. 2 reviewed LUNA Monthly 51)

The Second Coming: Satanism in America, by Arthur Lyons. Award AN1031. 95¢ (tardcover: Dodd Mead, 1970)

Some Trust in Chariots, ed. by Barry Thiering & Edgar Castle. Popular Library 00586. 95¢ (c1972)

Stranger Than Life, by R. DeWitt Miller. Ace 78935. 95¢ (orig: You do take it with you. Citadel Press, 1955)

The Unknown, by Brad Steiger. Popular Library 00579. 95¢ (c1966)

Unseen Torment, by Katheryn Kimbrough. Popular Library 00543. 95¢

Village of Fear, by Frances Cowen. Ace 86420, June. 95¢

Voices from the Tapes: Recordings from the Other World, by Peter Bander. Drake, 1973. $6.95

Warlock of the Witch World, by Andre Norton. Ace 87321. $1.25 (orig: Ace 1967)

The Witches' Almanac from Aries 1974 to Pisces 1975, ed. by Elizabeth Pepper & John Wilcock. Grosset & Dunlap, March. $1.25

Zen Comics, by Ioanna Salajan. Tuttle, August. $2.75