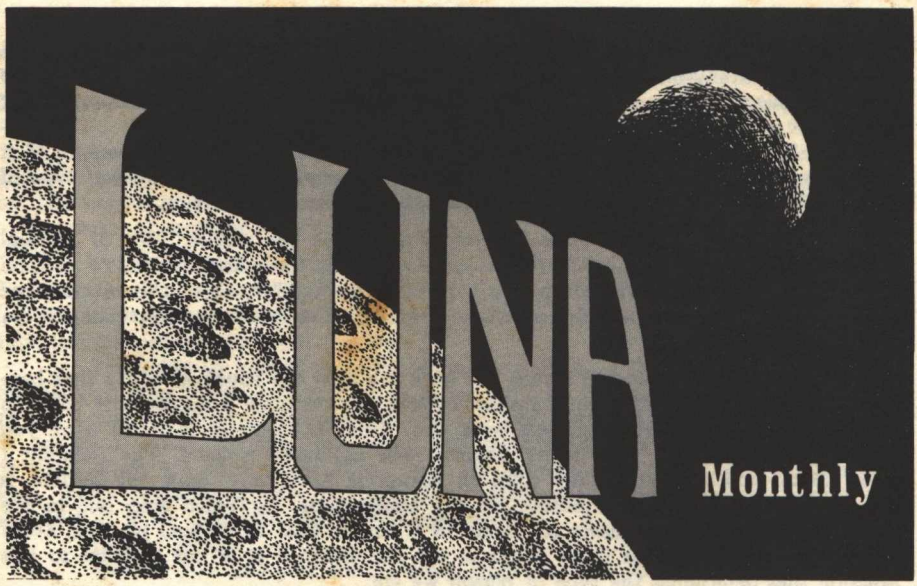


No. 52 May 1974

Zenna Henderson: An Interview

Conducted by Paul Walker

What was the origin of the "People" stories? Why have you gone on writing them?

The "People" stories originated with "Ararat." When I first started, I planned a story about some people who crossed the Atlantic by 'lifting' from their home in Transylvania—with all the concomitant stuff that goes with Transylvania. But, as usual, I found that I can't write about unpleasant people, so I changed it to interstellar refugees, and the "People" emerged.

I went on writing them because I liked them. And at a time when I was experiencing considerable unhappiness in my personal life, the stories helped occupy my thoughts.

Also the fan response was unanimously pro, and even the crank letters were mostly happy. I will probably write more of them. (You do know that each story was originally a separate novelette, don't you?)

You said you conceived each of the "People" stories as a separate novelette, but have you kept a detailed record of the characters, the events, history, etc.? You seem to have filled out the middle of the story, but have you considered an end to it?

No, I haven't compiled a history of the "People" but, this summer, a fan of mine sent me her compilation of people, ages, relationships, etc. that she used as a college paper—and I haven't even had time to read it yet! I've not considered an end. The series may expire because my interest might get engaged in other areas. As of now, I hope to write more of them.

There are certain incidents (teacher-pupil confrontation, problems of communication, etc.), themes such as loneliness, cultural isolation, alienation, the 'miraculous' element in everyday life, that recur in your "People" and other stories. How autobiographical is your work?

The "People" aren't autobiographical. All of the stories are based on

students I have taught, places I've known, experiences I've had, but the stories are not of any specific anything in my life. The people, places, and events are syntheses of dozens of people, places, and events plus imagination and alteration to fit the needs of the specific stories.

The miraculous in daily life I write about because I am so conscious of it all the time. Miracles go on all the time. Oh, not the wave-a-wand, *boi-oi-oing!* type of miracles, but all the wonderful, slow miracles of life, growth, and being.

There does seem to be a running theme in the stories: that of cultural isolation; of a people cut off from the mainstream of the world, fearful of cultural confrontation, of misunderstanding, if not physical harm. What about this theme? And could it possibly relate to your own experiences with the Indian and Mexican children in Arizona?

Never came across it among the kids. It's only the educated adults that have coined the expression. How much Spanish culture do you think a six-year old has who was born in Eloy, and whose parents were, too? There is economic isolation when you can't afford something, but hardly anyone feels culturally isolated. The isolation I write about, and that apparently finds an answering "me, too!" from my readers, is the isolation of person from person. It's the human state. As Ogden Nash said in one of his poems—a person is never so lonely as when he tries to pretend he isn't. *Every* one is lonely. Each of us *is* an island in the last analysis. It is our reaction to this isolation that determines the type of person we are.

A multiple question. Most of your stories concern children—especially male children. And the stories in your collection, The Anything Box, *all seem to have a common theme, best expressed in the story, "Turn the Page": "Believe again! You have forgotten how to believe in anything beyond your chosen treadmill. You have grown out of the fairy tale age, you say. But what have you grown into?... With your hopeless, scalding tears at night, and your dry-eyed misery when you waken. Do you like it?"*

Faith. The capacity for wonder, imagination, mystery, enchantment. The supreme tragedy of our growing up is our loss of the capacity for these things. And that loss results in a hollowness of being. But fortunately we have children to revive, to re-educate, us in them.

Yes, most of my stories concern children, but I quarrel with your "especially male children." I haven't conducted a head count but I'd be willing to bet that it's about six of one and a half-dozen of the other. Almost consciously I think "boy, last time—better be a girl this time."

The thing to believe in is the ultimate triumph of Good. And that God is a personal God who knows each one of us as we can't know ourselves; who has given us life for a unique function that no one else can ever perform; that we are responsible for our every action, thought, and word; and we will be held personally accountable for them when we go through Death into the presence of God. That we are never alone, never forsaken, never beyond God's love and compassion—and always as important as if we were the only mortal ever created.

Last of sermon?

Well, if you feel you are far away from God, be advised—He isn't the one who moved!

I think the feeling of futility, of emptiness, of aloneness begins to show itself in juvenile delinquency, and ends in a society that suffers as ours does now.

The major criticism of your work is that it is 'sentimental.' You have been accused of being a 'woman's writer.' How do you feel about that?

A writer is a writer is a writer. That a woman writer sounds like a woman writer is no great thing. A man writer sounds like a man writer! So? Is either of them a thing to point at either in praise or criticism? I don't consider myself 'sentimental.' Maybe I'm 'sympathetic.' I know I'm empathetic. To me a good story is a good story whether it's from a male or female. I truly don't think there is a man sound or a woman sound to a story.

Who are you?

I'm two me's. One me is just me—name, address, height, weight, place of birth. The other me is the writer. Consequently the first me has all the statistics; the writer has none. That way I can accept and enjoy the pleasant letters I get about my stories, be pleased that the writing has had the success it has had; although the business of earning a living often gets in the way of it so the writing has to go into abeyance until time permits. Still, the duality makes me very shy of meeting people who 'want to meet' me. They meet the un-writing me—never the writing me.

LUNA Monthly
Editor: Ann F. Dietz
Published monthly by Frank & Ann Dietz, 665 Orchard Street, Oradell, N.J. 07649

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL:
First Friday of preceding month

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
50¢ per copy, 60¢ on newsstand
$4.25 per year Third Class mail within U.S.
4.75 per year Third Class mail worldwide
6.00 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 19 - 75¢ each, #20 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$6.00
Gary Mason, GPO Box 1583, Adelaide, S.A. 5001, Australia
CONTINENTAL DM20
Mario B. Bosnyak, 1000 BERLIN 62, Merseburger Str. 3, W. Germany
GREAT BRITAIN 240p
Gerald Bishop, 10 Marlborough Road, Exeter EX2 4JT, England
JAPAN ¥2800
Takumi Shibano, 1-14-10, O-okayama, Meguro-ku, Tokyo, Japan
SCANDINAVIA S Kr30
Per Insulander, Midsommarvagen 33, 126 35, Hagersten, Sweden

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.

Statistically speaking, however—I've always been mountain conscious since I was born in the foothills of Santa Catalina mountains near Tucson, Arizona. We lived mostly with Grampa and were beguiled by stories of the family being driven out of old Mexico by Pancho Villa's men. If they'd stayed they'd have had to give up their arms, which would have been suicide.

We moved a lot—twelve grade schools—but the mountains were always around somewhere. It was quite an experience to get back into the midwest—long after I was grown—and see the sky sitting down on the land full circle.

There were five of us: three girls and two boys. I'm the oldest girl, and second in the family; the only one of us who graduated from college. I was reared a Mormon—both grandfathers and great grandfathers had more than one wife—but I'm a Methodist now. One of the things about Methodism is that you can feel at home in any worship service. You may not agree with some tenets, but as long as the love of God is there, you can feel comfortable.

I graduated from Phoenix Union High School in Phoenix, Arizona; got my BA from Arizona State University (it was Arizona Teachers College, then). Got my MA at the University, too, and since graduation, about twenty-four graduate hours. Mostly languages and literature. And, yes, even with the Master's, I still teach first grade. I have no desire for the upper grades. It's more fun to count to ten for my children in English, Spanish, French, German, Japanese, and Russian.

I can get along with my Spanish, French, and German when traveling, and learned what little Japanese I have (counting and Thanks) when I taught at one of the Japanese Relocation Camps during WWII. I used my French and German on an airbase in France for two years (1956-58); and I use my Spanish all the time with my kids. I think our school is about 65% Mexican. (It tickles me when on Tuesdays and Thursdays we go through our 'flag information' to where I say, "Another name for our flag—" and right after Old Glory, one of my boys always shrieks, "La bandira!"

Where was I? Did I mention I was married seven years; that there were no children; and that we were divorced? Or that my mother died while I was in France. My father now lives in Seattle with my stepmother. My older brother lives in Phoenix and my sister in Tucson—and Eloy is midway between—so I yo-yo back and forth on weekends. I'm claustrophobic about staying in the same place I work when I'm not working.

Right now I'm at Pinetop, Arizona, about ten miles from Showhow, and 7200 feet up in the hills. I own a summer cabin where I stay, mostly alone. For hobbies I like to do all sorts of needlework, and am currently going through a collect-quilt-patterns phase along with making afghans. I don't sew anymore, but once I made most of my dresses. I collect, too. Just about anything small that stays still long enough: thimbles, printed toys to be stuffed and sewed, old cookbooks, old needlework magazines, calendar towels. I've been through the rockhound phase, the lapidary phase, the digging for bottles phase, doll collecting. I love thrift shops and patio sales. And I like to bake, although I hate dishwashing. And I like to walk and disconcert my friends by parking way out in the parking lot of shopping centers instead of comfortably close.

About the only fiction I read any more is detective and crime stories. I don't like the tough guy stories or international intrigue, but Agatha Christie, Upfield, Ngaio Marsh, Marric, Dorothy Sayers, etc.

Hoo boy! Writer's cramp!

Now for the Writer Me—I was writing poems and stuff from the third grade up. We learned poetry in them days. Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud" and Longfellow's(?) "There is a forest primeval/The murmuring pines etc." So I started writing poems. The first time I really tried to write for publication was in the late 40's. "Come On, Wagon" was my first published short story, except for a bad one in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

I haven't written a novel because I never had that much to say; nor the time to say it in; but I'm trying to get started on one this summer. Not sf or fantasy. Suspense.

You speak of two "me's": the statistical "me (woman, teacher), and the writer "me." How does the writer "me" rank in relation to the other? Is she to be taken seriously?

The writer "me" is a person for whom I can accept praise happily, and for whose successes I can rejoice without bragging. The statistical "me" is the everyday one that, a stranger seeing, would never suspect was AN AUTHOR!; which is piquant in its own way. Perhaps the writer "me" is more nearly what I wish I were most of the time. Maybe the unexpected blossom atop, while my toes squish in the humdrum mud.

How do you work? What are your writing habits?

I write in longhand with soft leaded big primary pencils—usually leaning on one elbow on my bed or, if it's handy, sitting in an overstuffed chair with my legs over one arm and a book or magazine on my lap to write on. I write on both sides of usually yellow paper (second sheets). I type when I can no longer think up excuses, and revise as I go; then revise the rough draft, then retype the story and heave a large sigh when I can put -30-

Why do you like mysteries? Why do you feel the urge to write one? And how do the two genres, sf and mystery, compare as literatures? And I might add—do you regard sf and mysteries as literature proper, or as intellectual vices?

I don't care for the puzzle ones as much as the suspense ones. As I said, I don't care for the spy-intrigue ones, or the tough private eyes, or the ones with sex grafted on every sixth page. I like mysteries because they're easy to read. I usually read them at one sitting. The suspense ones that I like best can be re-read: Christie, Mable Seeley, Sayers, I re-read happily. They have enough interesting story so it doesn't matter if I remember the solution ahead. And I like mysteries because often they have authentic backgrounds of various industries or professions or areas of the world that are new to me. I can fill in the gaps of my own knowledge in such stuff as mountaineering, banking, insurance adjusting, agriculture in England, the Australian Outback, etc.

As literature? I'd be inclined to believe mysteries are more nearly literature than sf is. It depends on your definition of literature. My definition is that literature reflects the life of a given period. That's rather loose but in my re-reading of mysteries reaching back into the 20's and 30's I am struck by the social attitudes that contrast with ours. The racial biases, the class distinctions, what people ate, how they dressed, what they considered good and bad. We have periods of time crystallized in these books.

Sf doesn't qualify on the basis of my definition because it doesn't reflect any given period. I decided to write a suspense novel for the same reason I decided to write sf—because I ran out of good ones to read! I started reading sf when I was about twelve, with the old *Astounding Stories* and *Amazing Stories*, and fantasy with the old *Weird Tales*. Second-hand, of course. And, from the library, the Jules Verne books. I began to write it in 1947 or thereabouts. I knew I couldn't write technical stories, so I wrote about ordinary people reacting to sf situations, or in the case of the "People," unusual people. My formula for a story is (quote from somewhere): Usual people in unusual circumstances, or unusual people in usual circumstances.

You said "Sf doesn't qualify [as literature] on the basis of my definition because it doesn't reflect any given period [of history]." Then what does it do? What value is it to you?

Sf, like fantasy, is adult fairy tales. It gives people who are bound so tightly in conventional ruts by their profession, or just by the cussedness of things, a chance to dream—What if so-and-so were *not* true? What would the world be like? Sf presents the mind with possible or probable new frontiers, and goes on from there. Sf is *fun*—or was when I used to read it a lot. And it stretches the brain and stimulates the imagination. Presupposing it is *good* sf.

You said you wrote poetry? You have a characteristic poem for me?

Poetry? Lemme go look. Oh, dear! A *characteristic* poem? They vary so, and, I might add, are much more autobiographical than my stories; even the Persona I adopt. But here's a small one:

Continued on Page 7

NEBULA AWARDS

The Ninth Annual Nebula awards were presented April 27 at the Nebula Awards Banquet in Hollywood. The winners, followed by other nominees in alphabetical order, were:

Novel: **RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA by Arthur C. Clarke** (Galaxy, Sept.-Oct.)
Gravity's Rainbow by Thomas Pynchon (Viking)
The Man Who Folded Himself by David Gerrold (Random House)
The People of the Wind by Poul Anderson (Analog, Feb.-March)
Time Enough for Love by Robert A. Heinlein (Putnam)

Novella: **THE DEATH OF DOCTOR ISLAND by Gene Wolfe** (Universe 3)
Chains of the Sea by Gardner Dozois (Chains of the Sea, Nelson)
Death and Designation Among the Asadi by Michael Bishop (If, Feb.)
Junction by Jack Dann (Fantastic, Nov.)
The White Otters of Childhood by Michael Bishop (F&SF, July)

Novelet: **OF MIST, AND GRASS, AND SAND by Vonda McIntyre** (Analog, Oct.)
Case and the Dreamer by Theodore Sturgeon (Galaxy, Jan.)
The Deathbird by Harlan Ellison (F&SF, March)
The Girl Who Was Plugged In by James Tiptree, Jr. (New Dimensions 3)

Short Story: **LOVE IS THE PLAN, THE PLAN IS DEATH by James Tiptree, Jr.** (The Alien Condition)
How I Lost the Second World War by Gene Wolfe (Analog, May)
Shark by Edward Bryant (Orbit 12)
A Thing of Beauty by Norman Spinrad (Analog, Jan.)
Wings by Vonda McIntyre (The Alien Condition)
With Morning Comes Mistfall by George R. R. Martin (Analog, May)

Dramatic Presentation: **SOYLENT GREEN by Stanley R. Greenberg** (MGM, from the novel Make Room, Make Room! by Harry Harrison (duplicate trophies awarded to screenplay writer and novelist)
Catholics by Brian Moore (CBS Playhouse)
Steambath by Bruce Jay Friedman (Hollywood Television Theatre)
Westworld by Michael Crichton (MGM)

Special Award: to the late **Edward G. Robinson** for his final performance in Soylent Green, Award of Honor

The new SFWA officers, also announced at the banquet, are: President - Fred Pohl; Vice President - F. M. Busby; Secretary - Ted Cogswell; Treasurer - Andrew Offutt; Special representatives or trustees: West - Robert Silverberg, South - Joseph Green, East - Audrey Bilker.

RECORD-SETTING SF PARTY

"I think there are more people here tonight—certainly more pros—than were at the first World Science Fiction Convention" was an observation heard at the pre-Banquet party for SFWA members held the night before the Nebula Awards at the new 17-room home/museum of Forrest J Ackerman in Hollywood. A concept of President Jerry Pournelle and the organization's PR man Jim Byron, the party at Son of Ackermansion (movie actor Jon Hall's former 4-storey residence purchased last August) was arranged by the van Vogts and Mrs Ackerman, Wendayne hostessing from 7:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Among the estimated 180 present at what was frequently referred to throughout the evening as "the greatest party ever given in science fiction" were Jack Williamson, Catherine Moore, Frederik Pohl, Robert and Barbara Silverberg, Robert Bloch, A. E. van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull, Edward Bryant, T. J. Bass, F. M. Busby, Ib J. Melchior, George Clayton Johnson, James Gunn, Tom and Terri Pinckard, Poul and Karen Anderson, Terry and Carol Carr, G. C. Edmondson,

Jerry Sohl, Alex and Phyllis Eisenstein, Ross Rocklynne, Dennis Etchison, Mel Gilden, Steve and Kathleen Golden, Lois Newman, Fred Patten, William Rotsler, Harlan Ellison, Leo and Cylvia Margulies, Col. Alfred Worden (Command Pilot Apollo 15), Alan Dean Foster, S. Kye Boult; editors from Simon & Schuster, Dell and Doubleday; Ray Bradbury, Arthur R. Tofte, Eric Burgess, Randall Garrett, Harry Harrison, Bill Warren, Charles and Dian Crayne, Barry Atwater, Steven J. Utley, Charlie Brown, Horace Gold, C. L. Grant, Vonda McIntyre and Jerry Pournelle.

The Ackerman collection of science fiction and fantasy, begun in 1926, now numbers over 100,000 pieces and eventually will be displayed in at least 10 rooms of the house, with original artwork in practically every room. Although only 4 rooms (plus garages) are approximately complete at the present time, the boxed collection consisting of over 2000 cartons, the comments recorded in the Guest Book included: "Awed"—Arthur Tofte; "Impressive"; "Words fail me"; "Amazing Astounding Thrilling, Startling, Fantastic, Weird, Astonishing, Unknown..."—Poul Anderson; "Wondrous, famous, monstrous"—Karen Anderson; "Massive"; "I'm glad I didn't have to move all this stuff!"—Don Glut; "Superb"—Gordon R. Dickson; "Fascinating"; "Incredible"; "Scintillant"—A. E. van Vogt; "It's true!"—Col. Alfred Worden, Astronaut; "The most impressive collection in the world, bar none!!"—Lois Newman; "It's beyond imagination"—Jack Williamson; and "It'll never stop growing"—Fred Patten.

Publisher Leo Margulies donated 5 original paintings from covers of sf and fantasy magazines edited by him and it was learned from him during the evening that he will continue *Weird Tales* in a new format: pocketbook form. The first *WT* paperback will be numbered 5. Forry was pleased to announce that, in the campaign begun by A. E. van Vogt, Robert Bloch, Walter Ernsting and Ray Bradbury to alert the world to his need for financial support for the museum he has created for posterity (over $1000 a month mortgage and upkeep till he is 82 in 1998)—Forry was pleased to announce that the latest contribution was a check for $100 from Isaac Asimov, although no more than $1 apiece has been asked from every fan and professional interested in the preservation of science fiction and fantasy in this one central source, located at 2495 Glendower Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90027. It is understood by LUNA that one unemployed fan, Charles Lorance of Texas, has regularly been donating $1 a week since last November; many readers (very few known fans) have sent from $5 to $25; the late Tammy Hajewski donated $100 at the time of her death; contributions have been received from Canada, Holland, Japan, Germany, Taiwan, England and Sweden; and Ron Graham of Australia and Tetsu Yano of Japan have each donated $1000 apiece.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Zenna Henderson: An Interview continued from Page 5

Sic Transit

Because Change is the constant,
My heart its strength has spent
In sharply knowing possession
And quickly, relinquishment.

That was written in France about 1957. Oh, my! How it recalls—Well, no matter. One other kookie aspect of me that explains phrases that come back to me on galley proofs with question marks by them—maybe I mentioned it already—often, to me, movement, light, and sound are interchangeable. For instance, leaves blowing in the wind are music; lights flashing off and on are noises like a horn honking; an airplane beacon blinking chirps; bright lights blare; a sudden noise is like a shaft of light.

I can't sleep in morning buses and have trouble sleeping in boats and planes because movement is noise is light, and who can sleep in such confusion! Darkness is silence. The new moon is a high thin sustained note. A full moon fills the night with sound; music if I'm happy, cacophony if I'm in a bad mood.

Thinking it over it reminds me of something in, I think, "Turn the Page," "A part of the truth is sometimes a lie." I am as many people as there are people to react to me!

WALT LIEBSCHER SUFFERS STROKE Walt Liebscher, 54, fan of many years, going back to the Galactic Roamers and original Slan Shack of Battle Creek, Mich., has had a severe stroke and is paralyzed on his right side. His speech is also only about 50% intelligible but his mind is active and his lively sense of humor intact. It is his wish that fandom should be aware of his condition and he would welcome fanzines, cards, letters or any other expressions from concerned parties, although it will obviously not be possible for him to respond. Walt's "Alien Carnival" was published as a Shock Short in *Perry Rhodan* 27 and more recently as one of a collection of stories in a new format by Ken Krueger. His floral fantasy in a recent *Vertex* will also be republished in a future *Perry Rhodan*. Walt may be contacted at California Hospital, 1414 S. Hope St., Los Angeles, Calif.

ARTHUR LOUIS JOQUEL

Arthur Louis Joquel 2d, fan, died in California, probably sometime in March of cause unknown at time of going to press. His age was believed to be in the mid-50s.

The original 1944 publication of Jack Speer's *Fancyclopedia* listed him, together with Donn Brazier, as co-creator of the abbreviation "fmz" for fan magazine and he published an actual digest of fanzines called *FMZ Digest* for perhaps 6 issues, probably in the latter part of the 40s.

It was he who burst into the clubroom of the LASFS on Sunday December 7, 1941, shouting—"My God, the Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor!"

After WW2 he created and chaired the one and only Atomicon, a one-day conclave of LA fans concerned about the opening of the Atomic Age.

He was noted for the neatness of his fan product, his 2 issues of *Specula* remaining visual gems to this day and he also published a few issues of a lesser periodical, *Spectra.*

He no doubt had a hand in LASFS publications at one time and probably was an officer of the club.

He was extremely knowledgeable on matters metaphysical, occult—Aleister Crowley, Atlantis, Black Magic, etc.—and gave a stimulating lecture about werewolves and shape-changers at the Witchcraft and Sorcery Convention of 1972.

He had a hardcover nonfiction book published called *The Challenge of Space.* His Shock Short, "Lost Atlantis," was published in *Perry Rhodan* 33.

Fanwise, he adopted the Esperanto name Alojo.

He was a good friend of —Forry Ackerman

PETER GRAINGER

3 authors, 1 fan, killed simultaneously.

The news is greatly delayed in being made public but late in 1971 fan Peter Grainger, probably in his early 60s, a fan who at one time had one of the greatest collections of all pulp magazines (in addition to sf and fantasy), was killed by a drunken driver.

With him died Peter Cartur ("The Mist," *F&SF*, and "Nor Moon by Night," *Famous Fantastic Mysteries*); Max Dancey ("Two-Way Stretch," *F&SF*; "Me Feel Good," *Orbit SF*; and "The Loneliest Town," *Fantastic Universe*); and Roger Flint Young ("Forbidden Fruit," *Amazing*; "Inoculation," *Fantastic Adventures*; and "Suburban Frontiers" and "Not to be Opened—" in *Astounding*). All three authors were pseudonyms of Grainger. He last appeared in *Perry Rhodan* 38 as Max Dancey in collaboration with G. Gordon Dewey with "The Keknij Escape."

Mild mannered, soft spoken, wry humored, he never made waves in the sf field, keeping to himself and a small circle of friends, operating a secondhand book and magazine shop, as far as I know, at the end of his life. I was glad to have been his friend, gratified to have been his agent, infuriated by the way he lost his life.

—Forry Ackerman

The International Scene

SF IN FRENCH: RUSSIAN SNAILS IN PARIS

by Mark Purcell

L'ESCARGOT SUR LA PENTE by the Strugatskiis, Arkadii and Boris. Tr. by Michel Pétris. Champ libre, 1972. 201 p.

Hard to Be a God by the same brothers was recently Englished for Seabury's excellent European sf series. But as I type this, *Snail on the Slope* still requires French at least to read, if not the original Russian (1968 periodical, 1970 book).

Like *God*, their *Snail* novel is vigorously written. Its locale is a bureaucratic government outpost in a forested frontier area, mainly distinguished by an acidulous cloudy mist that can for instance eat up small motorcycles. Plot action concerns the restless prowling or escaping round the outpost and forest below, of the colony's resident linguist, Perets. About the local administration, Perets makes the same discovery that American protagonists make about all our institutions in postwar fiction, mainstream or sf; that these manmade apparatuses are self-sustaining. In the closing chapter, Perets has all this spelled out for him and the reader by one of the women workers; he has by this time discovered that you can take over such a modern administrative machine without arousing anyone else's protective emotionalism about your action, and by the same logic, give out orders instead of taking them. (He is emitting some remarkable rules and regs as the novel ends.)

Ah, *1984* again; no, not really. Orwell's point was that the power-drive in our bosses is not a sublimated urge for something else than power: whether security, sex or prestige. In *Snail* the 'hero' is pushed oaround offhandedly, impersonally; and the pushers are willing to let him do the pushing in turn. Probably the outside influence on *Snail* is less Orwell than some more contemporary novels by Stanislas Lem, especially the plot situation in *Bathtub Memoirs*, 1961. There are at least some superficial analogies, though the elaborately numbered memoranda in *Snail* don't seem to me anyway to make the Heisenberg's-atom reference that I think they make in *Bathtub*. (Of course *Snail* is really meant to pay off emotional debts to some Soviet bureaucrats, not duplicate Lem's novel.)

The Strugatskiis' satiric idea doesn't permit them to employ their well-described natural background for an emotionally serious *39 Steps* kind of chase story, even though most of their book is structured as this kind of book in appearance. No, the action gets more and more into fantasy; especially the passage in Ch. V where Perets, (regressively) hiding, "underhears" a cybernetic conversation drawing complexly upon his childhood-toy memories.

Despite this fantastic element, both *Snail* and *Hard* seem to me struggling towards the form of good mainstream novels; *Hard* of course could have been written as an historical. Their themes not only would have been unaffected but much of the way developed similarly. Both books are concerned with attempts at 'progress' and development. *Hard*'s theme was that 'friendly' outside assistance programs to underdeveloped cultures may produce opposite results by backlash. In *Snail*, the progress machine—isolated in a wilderness—suffers because there is no culture, underdeveloped or not, out there, no 'real' to bite into.

The Strugatskian criticism is not the adolescent dystopian bellyache common to modern Western sf, that tomorrow presents us problems as did today and yesterday. There is no necessity to assume that either the Strugatskiis—or Solzhenitsyn for that matter—are criticizing the Marxist historical analysis. Perhaps they are. But criticism like *Snail*'s doesn't require it.

To get the title out of the way, its source is given on the title-facing page as a haiku; the older Strugatski, Arkadii, is a professional translator from the Japanese. In American English, "Rat Race" would convey the same general idea.

Have You Read?

Asimov, Isaac "Benjamin's Dream" (story) Saturday Evening Post, April, p.8

Bradbury, Ray "The Wish" (story) Woman's Day, December, p.34+

Canby, Vincent "Movies Are More Sci-Fi Than Ever." New York Times, March 17, Section 2, p.1+

"Cartographic Fantasy" (Atlas of Fantasy) American Libraries, May, p.248

Cook, Joan "The Wonderland of Lewis Carroll" (display at Hewlett-Woodmere Library) New York Times, March 31

Davis, Peter G. "The Devil Takes a Star Turn" (recording of Boito's Mefistofele) New York Times, March 17, p.D30-1

Donlan, Dan "Developing a Reading Participation Guide for a Novel: Fahrenheit 451." Journal of Reading, March, p.439-43

Fremont-Smith, Eliot "Rabbits Run" (Watership Down) New York, March 4, p.60-1

Harmetz, Aljean " 'Alice' Returns, Curiouser and Curiouser" (Disney movie) New York Times, April 21, D1+

Hoch, Edward D. "Writing the Mystery Short Story." Writer, April, p.16-18

Hutchison, Don "Return of a Superhero" (Doc Savage) Toronto Globe and Mail, Feb. 16

Lawrance, Clive "Bard of the Space Age" (Asimov) Christian Science Monitor, March 27, p.F1

Lingeman, Richard R. "Erich von Daniken's Genesis." New York Times Book Review, March 31, p.6

Mahlmann, Lewis "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" (play) Plays, March, p.77-83

Nored, Gary "The Lord of the Rings—A Textual Inquiry." The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, vol. 68, No. 1, p.71-4

Pace, Eric "Poe Devotees Are Gloomy Over Losses and Vandalism at His Cottage in the Bronx." New York Times, April 3, p.45

Sagan, Carl "Seeking the Cosmic Jackpot" (space probes on TV) TV Guide, March 23, p.9-10

Shippey, T. A. "Beyond Belief" (View from another shore, and Hard to be a god) New Statesman, Jan. 18, p.81

Slattery, William T. "Lunacon: It's Mostly for Fun." New York Post, April 13, p.12

Straub, Peter "Last Resort" (Vermilion Sands, Sadness, The Poor Mouth, and The Adventures of God in His Search for the Black Girl) New Statesman, Dec. 7, p.874-6

Sturgeon, Theodore "If...?" New York Times Book Review, April 14, p.22

Swank, April. Special Sci-Fi Section (incl. Sci-Fi Comes of Age: Cons Around the World, by Harvey Bilker; Cryonics: Is There Life After Death? by John Austin; Kiss of Fire, by Harlan Ellison; Don't Call Me a Science Fiction Writer: Harlan Ellison, by Jack Curtin; Yes, Virginia, There Really was a Dracula... by Ralph Novak; Forry's Fantastic Museum; Singing the Bradbury Electric, by Pam Fourzon; The Wonder Store)

Thane, Adele "The Gold Bug" (play) Plays, March, p.88-95

Turner, Alice K. "A Science Fiction Bookshop Blasts Off" (The Science Fiction Shop) Publishers Weekly, Feb. 11, p.52

Watts, Frances B. "Leprechaun's Pot of Gold; a Happy St. Patrick's Day Legend" (play) Plays, March, p.70-6

CHECKLIST INFORMATION WANTED I will be compiling materials this summer for *The Checklist of Fantastic Literature II*, which will be published by Fax Collector's Editions. This will be the long-awaited sequel to Bleiler's *Checklist*, and will be a bibliographical listing of all U.S. hardcover titles in science fiction, fantasy and weird, since 1947. I would greatly appreciate information from fans, private collectors, editors and publishers, who could send me book lists, and who, in particular, have information regarding errors and omissions in the Bleiler volume. Please address Dr. Marshall B. Tymn, Editor Checklist II, English Department, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti MI 48197. *[This information apparently supersedes that in LUNA Monthly 51—Editor]*

Coming Events

June

28-30 MIDWESTCON at the Quality Inn Central, 4747 Montgomery Rd, Cincinnati, Ohio 45212. Reg: $3. For info: Lou Tabakow, 3953 St. Johns Terr, Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

July

3-12 SCIENCE FICTION WRITING WORKSHOP at the University of Toronto, under leadership of Judith Merril. For info: Division of University Extension, Univ. of Toronto, 119 St. George St, Toronto, Ontario

4-8 NEW YORK COMIC ART CONVENTION at the Hotel Commodore, Park Ave, NYC. GoH: Joe Simon. Reg: $7.50 in advance, $9 at door, $2.50 supporting. For info: Phil Seuling, P.O. Box 177, Coney Island Station, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224

9-11 WORKSHOP ON TEACHING SCIENCE FICTION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CLASSROOM at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee. For info: Robert Galbreath, Local Chairman, Center for Twentieth Century Studies, UWM, Milwaukee, Wis. 53201

11-14 4th Annual AMERICAN NOSTALGIA CONVENTION at the Baker Hotel, Dallas, Tex. Reg: $7.50, $2 supporting. First progress report available now for 15¢ postage from: Nostalgia Con, Box 34305, Dallas, Tex. 75234

12-14 SCIENCE FICTION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee. For info: Robert Galbreath, Center for Twentieth Century Studies, UWM, Milwaukee, Wis. 53201

August

23-25 AGACON 74 at the Sheraton-Biltmore Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. Membership: $7.50. For info: Agacon 74, Box 11023, Atlanta, Ga. 30310

29-Sept. 2 DISCON II at the Sheraton-Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. GoH: Roger Zelazny, Fan GoH: Jay Kay Klein. Reg: $5 attending, $3 supporting. For info: Discon II, P.O. Box 31127, Washington, D.C. 20031

September

27-29 PgHLANGE 6 at the Sheraton Motor Inn North, Pittsburgh, Pa. GoH: Joanna Russ. Adv. reg: $3.50, $4 at door. For info: John Curlovich, 108 Montville St, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15214

November

29-Dec. 1 INFINITY 74 at the Hotel Commodore, NYC. Reg: $4 to Nov. 1, $5 at door. For info: Joe Rizzo, 21-68 41st St, Astoria, N.Y. 11105

January 1975

10-12 INTERNATIONAL STAR TREK CONVENTION at the Americana Hotel, NYC. Adv. reg: $5 to Dec. 1. For info: International Star Trek Convention, Box 3127, New York 10008

July

3-6 WESTERCON 28 at the Hotel Leamington, Oakland, Calif. GoH: David Gerrold, Special GoHs: Ian & Betty Ballantine, Fan GoHs: Charlie & Dena Brown. Membership to July 7, 1974: $4, $5 to May 1, 1975, $6 thereafter. For info: P.O. Box 24560, Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Information supplied in this list is the latest available to us, including all changes received prior to closing date.

CLUB INFORMATION WANTED We are planning to resume periodic listing of club meetings in LUNA Monthly, and would appreciate receiving current information from all groups that would like to be listed. Information needed includes name of group, meeting schedule and place, person to contact for further information, other restrictions and qualifications. Please send to: LUNA Publications, 655 Orchard Street, Oradell, N.J. 07649.

Editorial

With this issue we return to monthly dating, and expect to be back on scheduled publication date with the July issue. During the past year we have unfortunately missed a number of issues; however all subscriptions have automatically been extended, being based on number of issues rather than date.

We wish to thank our readers for their patience and continuing support during this time. We had seriously considered a permanent change to a less frequent schedule, or even dropping the magazine entirely, as it did take practically all the time not devoted to our regular employment. There are many other things we'd also like to do—work around the house, an evening out now and then, weekend trips, etc.—which have not been possible because of the demands made by this magazine.

The irregular schedule of the past year has also been a costly one. The hard core of active fans simply isn't large enough to support their magazines sufficiently to just break even on costs. And it's difficult to attract or retrain new readers to an irregular 'monthly' magazine. The idea of advertising to the general sf prozine readership wasn't practical until we could resume a regular publication schedule. (Such advertising is a growing trend these days when offset printing, computer mailing labels or used addressing equipment, and bulk mailing permits are not beyond the means of the dedicated fan publisher. These time-saving production and mailing shortcuts allow large increases in circulation with little additional work, thus permitting circulation figures which would have been considered impossible 25 years ago.)

Our expenses in 1973 for publication of LUNA Monthly were $3,039. In addition, we had expenses of $486 for maintenance on our typesetting equipment; which, however, was almost completely offset by the $464 we received for typesetting services. Income from subscriptions and advertising amounted to $2,229, resulting in a net deficit of $810 for 1973.

These figures illustrate the point we have previously made, directed to those who are not familiar with the economics of fan publishing—that your subscription dollars do not cover the full cost of mailing the issues to you. And they do not cover any additional costs for correspondence, replacement of issues lost in the mail, or other special services. We frequently receive requests for information or sample copies, for instance. Without return postage, of course. It really isn't worth the 10¢ cost of a letter to respond, as we have found that a majority of these requests do not result in a paid subscription.

The latest phenomenon we've seen comes from the increase in number of science fiction study courses in the grade schools. Judging from the number we've heard from, English departments across the country from Prairieville to Metropolis, are including science fiction studies as a standard part of their curricula. And they all seem to have the same method for obtaining teaching materials—the teacher or one or more students will write, requesting free copies. No return postage, of course. We don't know where these people get their information, but judging from the number we've seen every fan editor in the country must be receiving these requests. We hope that other fan publishers, when they do bother to respond, take the same position we have: explaining that fan publications do not usually make a profit, and they must therefore pay for any copies or subscriptions. We have yet to receive a paid order from one of these schools, making it apparent that their interest ends when the freebies run out.

There is a lot more which could be said on the subject of relations between fan publishers and the non-fans becoming interested in sf. Another time perhaps—our space is limited, and we don't want to use too much on a subject which is incidental to our main objectives. We always appreciate your comments, and if anyone comes up with some really cogent remarks we may carry this discussion further in future issues.

S F and the Cinema

BERGMAN'S 'RITUAL'

by Mark Purcell

Very sensibly, after the breakdown of the old distribution system that enabled potential film producers to estimate costs, the big-name international directors have begun exploring TV. Many of the most interesting theatre-films now available are telly originals, shot by people like Welles, Rossellini and Ingmar Bergman. The most original and interesting of Bergman's TV work seems to be *Ritual* (3/69 Stockholm).

Riten is a horror-fantasy film in plot and in technique. The town censor wants to check out a small visiting acting troupe before licensing them. He has some difficulty learning about their act. Finally they demonstrate. Donning Greek tragic actors' masks and costumes, they employ the censor for the star role in a ritual murder.

In a theatre, *Riten*'s tele-source appears only in two theatrical assumptions or conventions: (a) the reliance on closeups and (b) borrowed from Bertolt Brecht, signs describing each scene before it unreels. There is no break in style between *Riten* and the director's theatre-films of the sixties, with their reliance on closeups. You can see here that this reliance has become a kind of artistic stimulus for Bergman; the film begins with a series of photographic blowups, which introduce the acting troupe and the plot 'mystery,' which the censor will eventually solve in a very painful way.

The acting troupe contains such regulars from Bergman's stock company as von Sydow and the fabulous Ingrid Thulin; and the movie is enormously autobiographical. Its interest lies in the interchanges between the actors and the censor (and among the actors themselves), not in the puzzle about their act. This relates its basic story to such older Bergmans as *The Magician/The Face* and *Sawdust and Tinsel/Naked Night*. But *Riten* is deliberately loaded up with references and allusions to nearly every film familiar over here. There is a quick parody short of the famous confession scene from *7th Seal*, for instance; a scene treated solemnly in most religious discussions of Bergman and, incidentally, borrowed by John Gardner for a story of his in the recent 1973 anthology of *Esquire* fiction.

In *Riten*, once the censor sees *Thulinsdatter*, he has, sensible man, another concern besides civic morals. Since he eventually gets to enjoy her, the American film-viewer may now think *Riten* is a stock media-liberal sermon about censorial prurience. But no: the point is not simply that the censor is prurient, but that the actress is promiscuous, and that the actors who send her to see the censor alone are something else that begins with a p. There is a reference in the dialogue (one of the actors' hotel-room scenes) to the actress' doing more nudie bits now that the troupe has "lost some of its South American bookings." This is an extremely candid admission in a script as autobiographical as *Riten*'s.

Bergman's point then is not the baby-like 'innocence' of the virtuous, persecuted artist. That the moralist is fascinated by what he preaches against, is banal enough to be the theme of a 'fearless' American film; especially in the media-lib version, which simply denies the existence of the social or sexual or moral problems which are the subject of the original complaint. *Riten* allows—as I have tried to show by my choice of examples from the film—for mutual involvement, the artist's hangup with a shockable community. If the censor is hypocritical (most of the time) to talk 'morals,' the artist is equally slippery (most of the time) to talk 'freedom.' Both terms are cant to conceal (a) this mutual involvement and (b) the sad facts there is bloody little morals in the community and bloody little art among the artists.

NEWS AND NOTES

MOVIES *Wicker Man*, a story of paganism in an isolated part of Scotland, won the grand prize at this year's International Festival of Fantasy and Science Fiction Films, in Paris. A British Lion film, it will be released in the U.S. by Warner...Frank Pierson has been signed to write the screenplay for Isaac Asimov's *The Caves of Steel* which Gerald Ayres is producing for Columbia Pictures... Forry Ackerman, as agent, has recently sold Ib J. Melchior's *The Racer* (originally published in *Escapade*), a futuristic racing car story, to Roger Corman. It is

believed that Harlan Ellison will develop a script from it for New World Productions. Previous Melchior film credits include *Robinson Crusoe on Mars, Journey to the 7th Planet* and *The Time Travelers*... Steve Rossi and Bernie Allen are planning a madcap horror picture entitled *Allen and Rossi Meet Dracula and Frankenstein* in which Dracula and Frankenstein are the good guys while Allen and Rossi are the monsters... Juvenile book *Escape to Witch Mountain* is being filmed by director John Hough who also did *Legend of Hell House* Donald Pleasence stars along with youngsters Kim Richards, Ike Eigenmann and Jordan Roarke... *Doc Savage: The Man of Bronze* has not yet been released but a second feature, *Doc Savage: Arch Enemy of Evil*, is being readied by George Pal for Warner. It will also be directed by Michael Anderson and again stars Ron Ely as Doc.

TELEVISION Isaac Asimov has written a script for an NBC News special, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, to be televised on May 30... As of April, Paramount TV now has a roster of 111 stations for its *Star Trek* episodes... CBS has added *Partridge Family: 2200 AD* to its Saturday morning children's schedule for next fall... Darren McGavin is the star of a new Friday night series, *Kolchak—The Night Stalker*, in which he plays a newspaper reporter checking stories of the supernatural. ABC has scheduled the series for 10pm in the fall... And CBS has tentatively scheduled *Planet of the Apres* series for Tuesday evenings.

CURRENTLY IN RELEASE

The Beast Must Die. Cinerama release of Amicus production. Produced by Max J. Rosenberg and Milton Subotsky. Screenplay by Michael Winder. Starring Calvin Lockhart, Peter Cushing. 93 min. Rating: PG

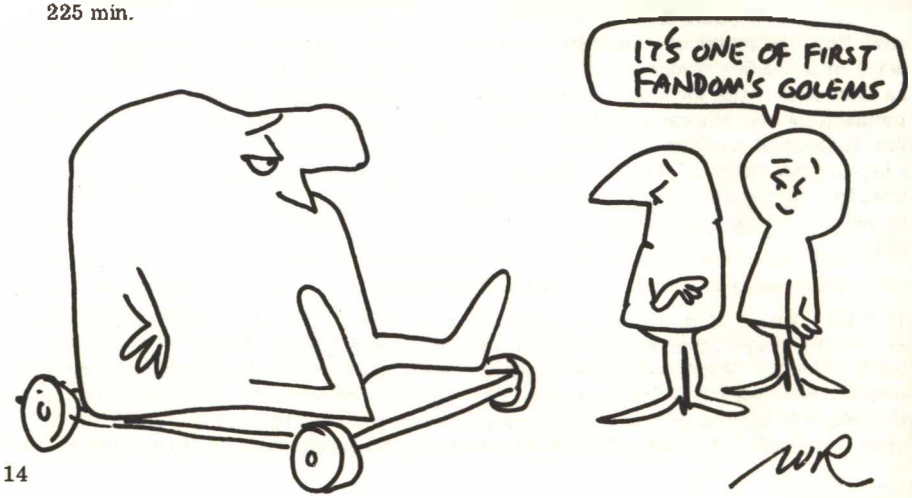
Dark Star. Jack H. Harris Enterprises release of a John Carpenter production. Directed by Carpenter, produced by Harris. Screenplay by Carpenter and Dan O'Bannon. Starring Brian Narelle, Andreijah Pahich, Carl Kuniholm, Dan O'Bannon. 83 min. Rating: G

France Societe Anonyme (France Incorporated). Albina Productions release. Directed by Alain Corneau. Screenplay by Corneau and Jean-Claude Carriere. Starring Michel Bouquet. 98 min.

The Phantastic World of Matthew Madson. Cinegrafik-Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen coproduction. Directed by Helmut Herbst. Screenplay by Herbst and Klaus Wyborny. 94 min.

Rhinoceros. Produced by Ely Landau and directed by Tom O'Horgan. Screenplay by Julian Berry based on the play by Eugene Ionesco. Starring Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder, Karen Black. 101 min. Rating: PG

Ruslan and Ludmila. Mosfilm production. Directed by Alexandre Ptouchko. Screenplay by Ptouchko and S. Bolotine from the poem by Alexander Pushkin. Starring Natalia Petrova, Valeri Kosinets, Vladimir Fiodorov, Maria Kapniste-Serko, Andrei Abrikossov. 225 min.



Paul Walker: In A Critical Condition

AN INFORMAL REVIEW OF BOOKS

WATERSHIP DOWN by Richard Adams. Macmillan, 1974. 429 p. $6.95

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE by Laird Koenig. Coward McCann and Geoghegan, 1974. 254 p. $6.95

G. K. CHESTERTON by Dudley Barker. Stein and Day, 1973. 304 p. $8.95

THE R-MASTER by Gordon R. Dickson. Lippincott, 1973. 216 p. $6.95

WONDERMAKERS II edited by Robert Hoskins. Fawcett P635, 1974. 320 p. $1.25

THE FAR SIDE OF TIME edited by Roger Elwood. Dodd Mead, 1974. 235 p. $5.95

FLAME TREE PLANET edited by Roger Elwood. Concordia, 1973. 159 p. $1.35

A TOUCH OF INFINITY by Howard Fast. Morrow, 1973. 182 p. $5.95

When a reviewer says, "This is a book for a rainy afternoon," or "for a few pleasant hours reading" what he, or she, usually means is that it isn't very good at all. That is, while it is a bad novel, it is at least readable, and suited to those unconscionable moments when our critical guards are down and we allow ourselves to be amused, or whatever (it is never quite understandable), by a book that at any other time we would toss aside within ten pages. Of course, there is no such thing as a "rainy afternoon"; few readers who can read an entire novel in "a few hours"; and a bad book is one of the most unpleasant experiences in life. The writer, however weak in however many respects, has got to offer us *something*. But what few writers, major or minor, can offer us is a completely satisfying reading experience. I mean, we do not expect perfection from any novel; we are trained to wait patiently for the plot to materialize, to tolerate clumsy purple passages or opaque descriptions. As long as the writer does well at what he does best, as long as whatever he does best appeals sufficiently to us, we will forgive him his weaknesses; and we readers are the most forgiving people who have ever lived.

What makes Richard Adams' *Watership Down* so memorable is that there is so little to forgive. It is a narrative tour de force that captivates our attention and our sympathies. It is the story of a group of rabbits (yes, friend, I said rabbits! And I know exactly how you feel. I felt the same way when someone told me about hobbits.), who, acting on the advice of a young prophet who forsees disaster, leave their warren and travel in search of a new home. They have adventures along the way; they find their new home; they have adventures round and about it; and they encounter another, totalitarian warren not far away with which they have their greatest adventures of all. I won't say more about the plot because unlike LoTR, plot is the essential, active ingredient in this novel.

I hesitate to call it fantasy, because aside from the talking-thinking-very human rabbits, the novel is more a realistic adventure story than a fairy tale. And the suspense is occasionally terrific. It is, in short, a great read; one of the most thoroughly satisfying, most consistently interesting novels I have ever read.

It has, unfortunately, been compared to Tolkien, but the only Tolkienesque thing about it is that its characters and backgrounds are novel, and it seems unlike anything you've read before—although it isn't, really. Adams is simply not Tolkien, either as a stylist or as a creative talent. His prose is professional, neat and clean and functional—it does whatever he wishes it to do, but it does not assume a character of its own, the special excellence we expect of great fantasy prose. It is neither lyrical nor evocative nor charming nor brilliant, but just very good. Nor is Adams' world as meticulously conceived, as original or spectacular: his backgrounds are adequate, but again they do not have that personality of their own as they do in great fantasy. Nor are Adams' characters striking creations, but only slightly better than average stock characters: the hero, the anti-hero, the visionary, the clown, the 'ethnic type' (a seagull), the villain. However, in their defense, Adams has not tried to make them fairy tale creations, but as rabbit-like as possible, so human as they

are—weak, insecure, egotistic, courageous, wily, etc.—they are never wholly human, but always somewhat alien in a more science-fictional sense. In fact, the novel is more science-fictional in its care for scientific accuracy and the 'alienness' of the rabbit culture, than it is purely imaginary as in fantasy.

So Adams is no Tolkien. So what? As I said, this is a narrative tour de force, and one should ask no more of it. For God's sake, don't be misled by those inane reviews of it that insist it is an allegory: its thematic level is shallow; it is its 'human,' narrative level that makes it so satisfying. But I will add one more complaint before recommending it as a 'must,' and that is that I found it too long. Four hundred pages of suspense and adventure is a bit much, but Adams never pads; there is all meat on his fictional bones. So I recommend this as a 'must' to those who love a grand story. (Note: Published in England, Dec. 1972, won Carnegie Medal and 1973 Guardian Award)

Next to one that is a "wholly satisfying read," the rarest novel is that which one cannot put down. The two are not identical, as the former satisfies more than the simple lust for a good story, while the latter satisfies only the need it creates for itself. *Rosemary's Baby* was such a novel. Laird Koenig's *The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane* is another. A light, gripping, smoothly written thriller (in the literal sense of the word) about a little girl who kills people.

No, not another *Bad Seed*; that one had a terror and pathos beyond the talents of a merely competent commercial novelist like Koenig. The little girl in this one is no monster, but a brilliant, sensitive (yes, even) warmhearted young woman who wishes to be left alone, and is prepared to take steps to eliminate intruders. And from the first, innocent pages to the last murder, she somehow keeps our sympathy at the same time she is scaring us to death.

I question the morality of Koenig's apparent acceptance of her rationale for the murders; he seems to be saying that pure hearts are above the law and that the little girl was perfectly justified in her acts. He never does mention her amorality, nor complain about her complete lack of remorse. In short, while the girl's acts and reactions suggest a monster, Koenig depicts her as a living doll. Frankly, I was disturbed.

I have recently discovered that I've lost my taste for biographies. There was a time—but be that as it may—now I find them tedious and obscure, rarely telling me what I want to know about so-and-so. What I find interesting about a famous person's life is what that life revealed about the age in which it occurred. Most of the most famous were not born ahead of their time, but were definitive of their time; their thoughts and works and lives made of and making up the fabric of that time and place. But you would never know that from most biographies. Dudley Barker's *G. K. Chesterton* is only occasionally an exception to this. Chesterton was an oddball in any time and place, but he happened in an oddball time at the turn of the century when oddballism was commonplace, and celebrated as at perhaps no other time in history.

The turn of the century in England represented the breakdown of the Victorian era, and the birth of our modern, pessimistic consciousness and collectivist ideologies. Chesterton opposed both, not in favor of Victorianism, but of a positive, humanistic idealism he diluted with an eccentric predilection for medievalism and religion (which he called "orthodoxy"). He was a likeable man, and a brilliant one, and also something of an old bore, but his congeniality was, and is, so great that I find him irresistible to read about. What makes him so extraordinary is that he was a literary man, an intellectual, a political polemicist, and yet he was a happy man. How many such animals are there—or have there ever been? And his happiness was genuine. No one seems to question that. At a time when his whole intellectual world was at war with one another, he managed to like and be liked by, almost everyone. And if he maintained a dubious 'image' as a romantic and eccentric, it was a delightful and imaginative role that harmed no one, not even Chesterton.

I find his books tedious, but still relevant, still brilliant. He always had something interesting and original to say about everything. Barker's biography is not another plodding recitation of the facts but a more subjective, affectionate appreciation of the man and his work and his friends Belloc and Maurice Baring. It does not tell me all I am hungry to know

of that wonderful time and the strange, fervent people who inhabited it, but it tells me enough of Chesterton to sustain my admiration of him as a human being.

Is Gordon R. Dickson a 'major' sf writer? Well, he has been around for more than twenty years, and longevity is two-thirds of a big reputation. He has twice been president of the SFWA, and won both the Hugo and thb Nevula Awards. *But is he any good?* I mean, when you think of Gordon R. Dickson (and no one thinks of him with his middle initial), do you think of a Big Name Writer, or do you think of *The Genetic General, Dorsai!* or *Soldier, Ask Not*? Personally, I think of the former. It is a rule of thumb with me that if one of Dickson's works is labeled 'major,' I will dislike it: I find his plots labored, heavy with unexciting detail and interminable conversation; his prose as delicate as any in a technical manual; his characterization restricted to two-dimensional 'types' (*Analog*-types, at that); his backgrounds flat; and his ideas uninspired, and uninspiring. There is no wonder in Dickson's work, only a workmanlike workmanship. But he *tries*. Everywhere there is evidence of his trying to make his people and places and ideas into something more alive and interesting. The trouble is that he rarely succeeds. At best, he can provide a good try. I can think of no other 'major' sf writer who has shown such an incapacity for growth in the course of his, or her, career. In fact, I think I preferred Dickson's first novel to this latest one, *The R-Master*.

The plot is complex in typical *Analog*-fashion, an old-fashioned novel of one man against the all-powerful Earth Council; a super-intellect who conspires with a secret society and, of course, succeeds in an absurd, arrogant manner. But, in typical *Analog*-fashion, the plot is not what the novel is about; this is a concept-centered story. Dickson is saying something about the nature of intelligence and how to deal with bureaucracies. What he has to say is occasionally interesting, and all that saves the book from being a complete waste of time. But once it has been said (and I will leave *it* to you to discover), we are left with a novel that would have been better reduced to a short story, as it simply has not enough dramatic material to carry it for 216 pages. I am tempted to say this is strictly for *Analog* fans, but I am an *Analog* fan, if not a zealous one, and frankly, I doubt they will be much more interested in the book than I was: Dickson's ideas are simply not that interesting.

Robert Hoskins is the former sf editor for Lancer Books who, perhaps single-handedly, developed Lancer's short-lived sf line, and edited one of the lesser, but not uninteresting, series of bookzines, *Infinity*. He is said to be a short, stocky, caustic man who became beloved, and loathed, for his crisp, sarcastic rejection slips. Having received a few myself, I am not ungrateful to him for the interest he showed in my work (however negative), considering the official indifference of other editors in the field. Hoskins tried to give a damn about everyone; he tried to give new, and more experienced, writers alike the feeling that there was a reader at the other end of their correspondence who was capable of reacting to their work in a human capacity. For this, for a few who were offended by his bluntness, he earned the nickname "Robert Hostile.' But I liked him, and I have enjoyed the light, fannish anthologies he has edited.

Wondermakers II is an old-fashioned, no-ax-to-grind, no-message-to-make-to-the-world (i.e. SCIENCE FICTION HAS COME OF AGE, HURRAH!) anthology of 19 stories dating from 1968 to 1972, and ranging from fair to excellent. The one story that has stuck in my mind, and continues to give me a laugh when I think of it is Gordon R. Dickson's "Computers Don't Argue," a Kafkaesque computer yarn about a book club hassle that kills a man. Then, there is one of the best-done sf stories I have ever read, Ursula K. Le Guin's "Vaster Than Empires and More Slow"; essentially—thematically, substantially—an old *Astounding* story about a world alive and aware of the earthmen who invade it, but done with such care and feeling, such depth of characterization and attention to detail, that it caught me up in its imaginary web as if it were a fairy tale. This is how science fiction *ought* to be.

Thirdly, I remember Manly Wade and Wade Wellman's "The Adventure of the Martian Client," a very clever, nicely written story about what Sherlock Holmes was doing as H.G. Wells' Martians invaded London. Fourthly, there is Dean R. Koontz's harrowing "The Twelfth Bed," a sort of "Casey Agonistes" without the pleasant ending. The rest are

readable, some good, some better, a few inexplicable. "Living Space" by Asimov; "The Gun Without a Bang" by Sheckley; "We Never Mention Aunt Nora" by Frederik Pohl; "Eastward, Ho!" by William Tenn; "Report on the Nature of the Lunar Surface" by Brunner are the ones I enjoyed the most.

In the May issue of *Analog*, Barry Malzberg has this to say of Roger Elwood: "What the Elwood phenomenon represents is not diversity but concentration, and with it the ever dangerous possibility that if Elwood fails, he may bring science fiction down with him. (Publishing) houses hesitant about science fiction which make commitments to him and do not succeed may be unwilling to deal with it for many years to come. Would-be anthologists may find themselves unable to sell to available markets flooded with Elwood material of only middling success or less."

Malzberg is, of course, a dedicated doomster. As far back as I can remember, publishers have always been hesitant about science fiction, and the genre has always had only a middling success, with a few rare and inexplicable exceptions like *Dune* and *Stranger in a Strange Land*. If it were not for sales to public libraries, hardcover publishers would probably publish little or no sf at all. But if writers are to continue to write it, sf must be published as profitably and in as wide a market as possible, and Malzberg concedes that Elwood has expanded the market. More important, he has literally created the broadest possible market in the most critically impoverished area of science fiction: the short story. At a time when so many talented sf short story writers have been neglecting their ideal art form, and the prozines have been dying a lingering death, to the complete indifference of pros and fans alike, Elwood has breathed new life into this—in my opinion—most interesting and successful of all aspects of the genre.

The short story is the essence of science fiction in that it is best suited to present a single idea in the purest, simplest, most successful manner. And single, singular, ideas are the essence of sf. Novels tend to be overwhelmed by the number of ideas they require, and few writers are talented or conscientious enough to develop them properly. Our best talents have always excelled in the short story—Leiber, Silverberg, Simak, Ellison, Bloch, Zelazny, and Sturgeon, not to mention Bradbury, Lafferty, Sheckley, Asimov, and Schmitz. Their novels, even their good ones, suffer in comparison to their short stories. So sf needs new editorial talents—new short story markets—and Elwood is providing them in a most, as Malzberg agrees, eclectic manner ever.

Whether they will be financially successful or not is not really the question: they will do as well as sf has ever done. This will convince some publishers to shut down their sf line, and others to expand theirs. But what I believe they will do is to convince more publishers to assign original anthologies to more writers such as Knight, Carr, and Harrison, and they in turn will encourage more short stories to be written.

As for Elwood the Editor, I came to his books without exciting much and have been pleasantly surprised. His tastes are eclectic, and not bad at all. He seems traditional in his taste, with no aesthetic axes to grind, no personal 'vision' to expound—which is refreshing, but tends to make his anthologies seem tepid in comparison with, say, *Dangerous Visions*, or even *Analog*. But the consistent quality of the stories I have read in his past four books is really impressive. Two good stories was the most I ever expected of *F&SF* (and two more than one could expect from *If* or *Galaxy*, although one might occasionally find two or three); and two or three 'interesting' stories in an *Orbit* or *Universe*, along with a cargo of inexplicable choices so mediocre in both talent and theme that they left my head numb with boredom. (I should add that I expect *ideas* from none of them, and have never been surprised. *Analog* alone, although so crudely written, has never failed to give me at least two ideas, two moments of wonder, an issue.) Elwood's anthologies, on the other hand, have an abundance of stories I have actually *enjoyed*, and *The Far Side of Time* and *Flame Tree Planet* are no exceptions.

The Far Side of Time is the superior of the two, with an intelligent, sophisticated 'New Silverberg' story, "Capricorn Games" to lead off. This is another of his decadents-at-play-at-the-end-of-the-world stories which is skin-deep, but well done. There is also a fine and funny Ben Bova story, a satire culled from the headlines, that is an example of

clean-cut, intelligent satirical writing. There is also another Gail Kimberly story, "Minna in the Night Sky" which is absolutely fine. Kimberly is a most talented writer: her prose slick and polished and evocative; her characters accurate and human; her plots expertly crafted; yet she lacks original ideas. But she is new, and given time may become one of our finest short story writers. She is already our most promising.

There is a Fritz Leiber ("Waif") and a Raymond F. Jones story ("Flauna") that have ideas and treatments in common: the love affairs between human males and beautiful aliens. Both are fine stories but both suffer from their slightly tired ideas, yet both I must recommend, nevertheless. It seems Leiber has gotten better with age, and Jones—well, it has been so long since I read a Jones story, I forgot how good he can be.

The remainder of the thirteen stories are all above average, readable, entertaining. In short, this is an anthology worth investing in.

Flame Tree Planet is less successful, but then it limited itself by asking for sf stories with a religious theme, and such things cannot be done to order. The ten stories are uneven, but none is really as bad as one might expect. Gail Kimberly provides an interesting story ("Many Mansions") as does Leigh Brackett ("How Bright the Stars") as does Thomas Scortia ("Tarrying") as does Dean R. Koontz ("The Sinless Child"—a very 'different Koontz story). The remainder, except for George H. Smith's long-winded "Flame Tree Planet" are fair to good.

No Hugo winners in either book, but no duds. No pretensions, either. Simply lots of well-written, entertaining stories. I would say that was an achievement, and I would recommend you sample both these achievements.

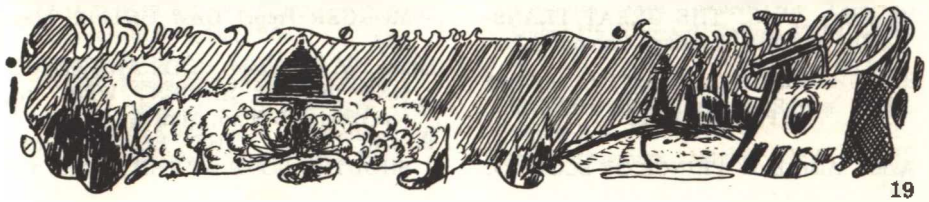
Howard Fast's *A Touch of Infinity* is a collection of 13 fantasy stories that are not really stories at all, but anecdotes; which means they do not involve the resolution of plot conflicts but the simplest exploitation of a single idea for a single effect, or the mildest irony. The characterizations are acceptable; the sociology adolescent; the sf ideas themselves amusing. For instance, there is a story of a born loser who suddenly finds he can work miracles; at least with hamburgers and buttered rolls; a story of a man who 'buys' God; a story of the day God demanded the human race 'show cause' or be exterminated; and a story of the discovery of a race of tiny people living in a wood near a small town and what the town does to them. Simplicity is the adjective that describes them all; thirteen light, amusing parables of our time that tell us nothing we did not know before, but do amuse, if not taken in one massive dose.

The blurb unfortunately is pretentious and misleading. Don't read it.

—Contact: Paul Walker, 128 Montgomery St., Bloomfield, N.J. 07003

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

FANZINE INDEX PROJECT Keith Walker is presently compiling an index of British fanzines from the beginning through 1974. The project is scheduled to be completed in a series of stages throughout this year. Information listed will include title, editor, and data on each issue: number, date, page size, page count, method of reproduction, etc. That project completed, he plans to take up the correcting and updating of the Pavlat/Evans fanzine index—a tremendous task begun by the late Harold Pizer but remaining uncompleted. If you have information, ideas, advice, or just plain support, Keith's address is: 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Road, Lancaster, Lancs., England. *[He also "would like to receive copies of your fan mag as they are published together with details (and copies if available) of past issues." We leave it to the individual fan publisher to make his or her own decision on this point. We're of mixed opinion as to whether fan publishers should be asked to support projects of this sort. See our editorial this issue for other comments on fan publishing.]*



New Books

HARDCOVERS

Asimov, Isaac, ed. BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE (repr) SF Book Club, Spring. $4.50

NEBULA AWARD STORIES EIGHT. Harper. $6.95

Biggle, Lloyd Jr. MONUMENT (repr) SF Book Club, April. $1.49

Brunner, John THE STONE THAT NEVER CAME DOWN (repr) SF Book Club, May. $1.49

Caidin, Martin PLANETFALL (nf) Coward McCann, March. $7.95

Carroll, Lewis ALICE IN WONDERLAND (centennial ed.) Clarkson Potter, Nov. $7.95

Cooper, Edmund THE SLAVES OF HEAVEN (repr) SF Book Club, Spring. $1.49

Cordell, Alexander IF YOU BELIEVE THE SOLDIERS (repr Brit) Doubleday, April. $5.95

Dann, Jack, ed. WANDERING STARS (repr) SF Book Club, May. $1.98

Elwood, Roger, ed. CRISIS: Ten Original Stories of Science Fiction. T. Nelson, March. $5.95

Herzog, Arthur THE SWARM (marg) Simon & Schuster, March. $6.95

Hunter-Blair, John WAR OF THE XROMATIDS: THE MHT ALTERNATIVE. Vantage. $5.95

Jefferis, Barbara TIME OF THE UNICORN (supernat) Morrow, March. $6.95

Sturgeon, Theodore CASE AND THE DREAMER (coll) SF Book Club, April. $1.49

Thompson, William Irwin PASSAGES ABOUT EARTH: An Exploration of the New Planetary Culture (marg nf) Harper, March. $6.95

Tuck, Donald H., comp. THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY, v.1: Who's Who A-L. Advent, March. $20.00

Yanovsky, V. S. THE GREAT TRANSFER (tr. from Russian) Harcourt, Jan. $6.50

PAPERBACKS

Akers, Alan Burt PRINCE OF SCORPIO. DAW UY1104, April. $1.25

Allen, L. David SCIENCE FICTION: An Introduction. Cliffs Notes. $1.95

Asimov, Isaac DAVID STARR, SPACE RANGER (reissue) Signet T4849, May. 75¢

THE SENSUOUS DIRTY OLD MAN (repr, not sf) Signst Y4940, April. $1.25

STORIES FROM THE REST OF THE ROBOTS (reissue) Pyramid N3296, Feb. 95¢

Blackwood, Algernon BEST GHOST STORIES OF ALGERNON BLACKWOOD. Dover, 1973. $3.00

Bleiler, E. F., ed. EIGHT DIME NOVELS (incl 1 sf) Dover. $3.50

Boorman, John and Bill Stair ZARDOZ (movie tie-in) Signet Q5830, April. 95¢

Boulle, Pierre TIME OUT OF MIND (tr, repr) Signet Y5871, April. $1.25

Brand, Kurt PERRY RHODAN 43: Life Hunt. Ace 66026, April. 75¢

Carroll, Lewis ALICE IN WONDERLAND (centennial ed.) Clarkson Potter, Nov. $3.95

Charroux, Robert THE GODS UNKNOWN (nf, repr) Berkley Z2547, April. $1.29

Chilson, Robert AS THE CURTAIN FALLS. DAW UQ1105, April. 95¢

Compton, D. G. THE UNSLEEPING EYE. DAW UQ1110, May. 95¢

Conaway, J. C. ANGEL POSSESSED (supernat) Belmont Tower BT-50665, March. 95¢

Crichton, Michael WESTWORLD (screenplay, production and photos) Bantam Q8441, March. $1.25

Darlton, Clark PERRY RHODAN 44: The Pseudo One. Ace 66027, April. 75¢

Dick, Philip K. COUNTER-CLOCK WORLD (repr) Berkley N2568, May. 95¢

GALACTIC POT-HEALER (repr) Berkley N2569, May. 95¢

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE (repr) Berkley Z2543, May. $1.25

Dickinson, Peter THE WEATHERMONGER (repr) DAW UQ1112, May. 95¢

Drake, W. Raymond GODS AND SPACEMEN IN THE ANCIENT WEST (nf, repr) Signet W6055, April. $1.50

Ellison, Harlan THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD (coll, repr) Signet Y5870, April. $1.25

Farmer, Philip Jose HADON OF ANCIENT OPAR (fty) DAW UY1107, April. $1.25

Galaxy Magazine THE BEST FROM GALAXY, vol. II. Award AQ1261, April. $1.25

Gray, Rod THE LADY FROM L.U.S.T. 11: Lady in Heat (sex supernat) Belmont Tower BT-50649, Feb. 95¢

THE LADY FROM L.U.S.T. 12: Blow My Mind (sex esp) Belmont Tower BT-50660, March. 95¢

THE LADY FROM L.U.S.T. 13: Laid in the Future (sex sf) Belmont Tower BT-50667, April. 95¢

THE LADY FROM L.U.S.T. 14: The Copulation Explosion (sex fty) Belmont Tower BT-50678, May. 95¢

Gutteridge, Lindsay KILLER PINE (repr, fty) Berkley N2545, April. 95¢

Harrison, Harry TUNNEL THROUGH THE DEEPS (repr) Berkley N2565, May. 95¢

(ed) NOVA 2 (repr) Dell 6668, April. 95¢

Herbert, Frank HELLSTROM'S HIVE (orig title: Project 40) Bantam T8276, April. $1.50

Hinge, Mike THE MIKE HINGE EXPERIENCE (art) Supergraphics (218 N. 6th St., Reading, Pa. 19601) $3.00

Jakes, John CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES (based on movie) Award AN1241. 95¢

Kern, Gregory CAP KENNEDY 7: The Gholan Gate. DAW UQ1108, April. 95¢

CAP KENNEDY 8: The Eater of Worlds. DAW UQ1113, May. 95¢

Lord, Jeffrey LIBERATOR OF JEDD (repr, Heroic fantasy series 5) Pinnacle 00205, Oct. 95¢

MONSTER OF THE MAZE (repr, Heroic fantasy series 6) Pinnacle 00206, Dec. 95¢

SLAVES OF SARMA (repr, Heroic fantasy series 4) Pinnacle 00204, Sept. 95¢

Machen, Arthur TALES OF HORROR AND THE SUPERNATURAL, v.2 (repr) Pinncacle 00282, Dec. 95¢

Malzberg, Barry N. TACTICS OF CONQUEST. Pyramid N3330, Feb. 95¢

Moorcock, Michael THE SWORD AND THE STALLION (s&s, Chronicles of Corum 6) Berkley S2548, April. 75¢

Norton, Andre THE LAST PLANET (orig: Star Rangers, repr) Ace 47162, April. 95¢

Pepper, Elizabeth and John Wilcock, eds. THE WITCHES' ALMANAC, Aries 1974 to Pisces 1975. Grosset, March. $1.25

Purtill, Richard LORD OF THE ELVES AND ELDILS: Fantasy and Philosophy in C. S. Lewis and J. R. Tolkien. Zondervan. $1.50

Russell, John Robert CABU. Pocket 77718, April. 95¢

Sheckley, Robert CAN YOU FEEL ANYTHING WHEN I DO THIS? (coll, repr) DAW UQ1106, April. 95¢

Snyder, Cecil III THE HAWKS OF ARCTURUS. DAW UQ1111, May. 95¢

Thody, Philip HUXLEY: A Biographical Introduction. Scribners, 1973. $2.45

Tomas, Andrew THE HOME OF THE GODS (nf, repr) Berkley Z2564, May. $1.25

van Vogt, A. E. THE PLAYERS OF NULL-A (reissue) Berkley N2559, April. 95¢

THE SECRET GALACTICS. Prentice-Hall, May. $2.45

THE WORLD OF NULL-A (reissue) Berkley N2558, April. 95¢

Vonnegut, Kurt Jr. BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS (repr) Delta 3148, April. $2.45

Weinbaum, Stanley G. THE BEST OF STANLEY G. WEINBAUM (coll) Ballantine 23890, April. $1.65

Wollheim, Donald A., ed. THE 1974 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF. DAW UY1109, May. $1.25

Zelazny, Roger ISLE OF THE DEAD (reissue) Ace 37466, April. 95¢

JUVENILES

Aiken, Joan THE KINGDOM AND THE CAVE (fty) Doubleday. $4.50

Anderson, Jean THE HAUNTING OF AMERICA: Ghost Stories From Our Past. Houghton, 1973. $4.95 10 up

Blassingame, Wyatt PAUL BUNYAN FIGHTS THE MONSTER PLANTS (marg fty) Garrard, Spring. $2.84. Grade 3

DeLage, Ida THE OLD WITCH AND THE WIZARD (fty) Garrard, Spring. $2.84. Grade 2

Harris, Rosemary, reteller SEA MAGIC

AND OTHER STORIES OF ENCHANTMENT. Macmillan. $5.95

Harter, Walter OSCEOLA'S HEAD AND OTHER AMERICAN GHOST STORIES. Prentice-Hall, Jan. $4.95. 9 up

Hitchcock, Alfred, ed. ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S SUPERNATURAL TALES OF TERROR AND SUSPENSE. Random House, Sept. $3.95. 10 up

Hoyle, Geoffrey 2010: Living in the Future (nf, repr Brit) Parents Magazine Press, March. $3.97. Grade 2-4

L'Engle, Madeleine A WIND IN THE DOOR (repr) Dell Yearling 8761, April. $1.25. 10-14

Mahy, Margaret THE WITCH IN THE CHERRY TREE (fty) Parents Magazine Press, March. $4.50. 4-8

Olenius, Elsa, comp. GREAT SWEDISH FAIRY TALES. Delacorte, 1973. $7.95

Peet, Bill MERLE THE HIGH FLYING SQUIRREL (fty) Houghton Mifflin. $5.95. 4-8

Sharp, Margery MISS BIANCA (marg fty, repr) Dell Yearling 5671, April. 95¢ 8-12

JANUARY BRITISH BOOKS

Asimov, Isaac, ed. THE HUGO WINNERS. Vol.1. 1963-67. Sphere, 40p. ni, pb. 7221.1249.1; Vol.2. 1968-70. Sphere, 40p. ni, pb. 7221.1250.5

Barclay, Alan OF EARTH AND FIRE. Hale, £1.60. 7091.4044.4

Blish, James STAR TREK. Vol. 4. Corgi, 30p. ni, pb. 552.09445.5; Vol. 5. Corgi, 30p. ni, pb. 552.09446.3; Vol. 6. Corgi, 30p. ni, pb. 552.09447.1

Burroughs, Edgar Rice TANAR OF PELLUCIDAR. Tandem, 35p. ne, pb. 426.13178.9

Coney, Michael G. SYZYGY. Elmwood Press, £2.60. 7057.0023.2

Cooper, Edmund THE OVERMAN CULTURE. Hodder, 35p. ne, pb. 340.17860.4

Cowper, Richard TWILIGHT OF BRIAREUS. Gollancz, £2.20. 575.01760.0

DeCamp, L. Sprague and Fletcher Pratt CASTLE OF IRON. Remploy, £1.45. 7066.0525.X

INCOMPLETE ENCHANTER. Remploy, £1.45. 7066.0524.1

Elder, Michael A DIFFERENT WORLD. Hale, £1.60. 7091.4045.2

Harness, Charles L. THE RING OF RITOURNEL. Panther, 35p. ni, pb. 586.03798.5

Harrison, Harry and Leon Stover STONEHENGE. Sphere, 30p. ne, pb, non-sf. 7221.4359.1

Heinlein, Robert A. THE DOOR INTO SUMMER. Pan, 35p. ni, pb. 330.02516.3

THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH. Pan, 35p. ni, pb. 330.10679.1

THE PUPPET MASTERS. Pan, 35p. ni, pb. 330.02235.0

Howard, Robert E. CONAN. Sphere, 30p. pb. 7221.4691.4

CONAN THE CONQUEROR. Sphere, 30p. pb. 7221.4692.2

LeGuin, Ursula K. THE TOMBS OF ATUAN. Puffin/Penguin, 25p. ne, pb, juv. 14.030632.3

Moorcock, Michael THE RUNESTAFF. White Lion, £1.95. ne. 85617.025.9

STORMBRINGER. Mayflower, 35p. ni, pb. 583.11343.5

WARLORD OF THE AIR. Quartet, 40p. ne, pb. 7043.1085.6

Norman, John OUTLAW OF GOR. Tandem, 35p. ni, pb. 426.13055.3

Robinson, Philip MASQUE OF A SAVAGE MANDARIN. Panther, 35p. ne, pb. 586.03934.1

Silverberg, Robert RECALLED TO LIFE. Gollancz, £2.00. 575.01764.3

van Vogt, A. E. SLAN. Panther, 30p. ni, pb. 586.02438.7

Lilliputia

THURSDAY by Catherine Storr. Harper and Row, 1972. 274 p. $5.95. Age level: 10 up

Thursday Townsend was fifteen, and nobody loved him. Except perhaps Bee Earnshaw, and old Mrs. Smith at the corner store. Certainly not his father, who was in prison, nor his flighty stepmother, Molly. So when Thursday disappeared, Bee set out to search for him. Old Mrs. Smith said he had been taken by the 'good people' and a changeling left in his place. The authorities said he was insane and must be hospitalized. But on Midsummer's Eve, Bee took Mrs. Smith's advice and 'rescued' Thursday from 'them' by declaring her love to him and forcing him to think clearly about his own personal situation.

This book is very well written and deals quite realistically with the causes of Thursday's illness, as contrasted with the environment which produced Bee. Bee learns a great deal about reality when she recognizes that her parents and brother are just as worried and unhappy over her pregnant sister-in-law's high blood pressure as she is about Thursday. Thursday's 'cure' is oversimplified and too sudden, but apart from that, this is one of the more worthwhile 'young adult' novels.

—Charlotte Moslander

THE THURSDAY TOADS by A. M. Lightner. McGraw-Hill, 1971. 189 p. $4.50

This book is dedicated to Andre Norton. If I were Andre Norton, I should be dreadfully insulted—it's a very unsatisfactory piece of work.

Picture this—a 17-year-old, male, Ph.D. arrives at the Gamow Institute on Estrada; where he meets the very famous Dr. Cyril Thursby, after whom a planet (commonly miscalled 'Thursday') has been named, is bitten by a poisonous toad indigenous to said planet, and finds himself shipped off to 'Thursday' with Dr. Thursby, Luki (a young, attractive, female lab assistant), and a case of sterilized male toxic toads. The plot goes on through various convolutions, including the discovery of a group of native humans who inform the offworld scientists that the survivors of a toxic toad attack are practically immortal. It is implied that these humans are not native to the planet. Our Hero leaves 'Thursday' on a freighter, and the novel ends.

I like stories which tie up all the loose ends by the last page; therefore, this one was rather annoying. Where did those humans come from? Did the colonists stop killing the few remaining toads? Whatever happened to Our Hero? Come to think of it, the rest of the book isn't interesting enough to make me really care about the answer to that last question.

—Charlotte Moslander

THE BEACHCOMBERS by Helen Cresswell. Macmillan, 1972. 133 p. $4.95

In ordinary English usage, a beachcomber is only one kind of scavenger. In this book, however, Scavengers and Beachcombers are two related but violently feuding clans living on the seashore. The Beachcombers live on an ancient ship docked on the beach, awaiting a treasure to be washed up by the ocean, consisting of a ship's log locked in a strongbox which an ancestor lost long ago. The Scavengers are pack-rattish people who consider any kind of junk whatsoever as treasure.

The young hero of this tale, Ned, finds himself spending a cheap Easter vacation with the Scavengers, whose last name is Pickering. While walking on the beach one day, he makes friends with the Beachcombers, who go by the name of Dallaker. It soon becomes apparent that the Pickerings had an ulterior motive in their offer of room and board to a young boy companion for their son. Ned's loyalties, of course, are with the Dallakers—consequently he becomes a counterspy.

Like another Cresswell book, *Up the Pier*, this book seems to depend for its fascination upon the evocation of the sea and sketchiness of characterization. In the end of both books, the youthful protagonist has had a wonder-filled though vague experience that he or she can recall in the mundane days of his or her adulthood. If it were not for this, the adventure would not seem adventurous enough to justify its pointlessness.

—Kristine Anderson

THE WIZARD OF OZ. Random House, 1972. Illus. by Rowland B. Wilson. 11 p. $2.95

This new and much abbreviated version of *The Wizard of Oz* is rendered in greeting card doggerel which loses much of the charm of the original. This is probably why it is not attributed to any author. Despite the style, it does manage to get the sense of the story across.

The interesting and unique aspect of this book is that the central characters (Dorothy, Toto, Scarecrow, Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion) are not drawn, but are plastic colorforms which can be moved from page to page by the reader. This aspect is an interesting innovation because it allows children to make their own story. It gives them a fuller sense of participation.

The story line does not hold the young reader's interest (I tested it at my son's nursery school). Children do like the movable illustrations. This is a good concept; its only defect is that the colorforms are easily lost. Children enjoy participating in the story, but this story wasn't interesting enough for them to want to participate.

—JoAnn Wood

AN OLDER KIND OF MAGIC by Patricia Wrightson. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972. 186 p. $4.95. Age level: 8-12

This is a marvelous book—filled with strange magic creatures from Australia, a comet which appears once every thousand years, and three children who enlist a modern-day wizard (an advertising man) and several department story dummies to help them combat Sir Mortimer Wyvern, who wants to build a parking lot in the Botanical Gardens. Of course, the Nyols take care of Sir Mortimer for awhile, and a talking dog turns him to stone, and the influence of the comet keeps traffic lights red for Skit the lizard, who is moving to the Botanical Gardens. The black cat is very happy with her new home atop the plaster eagle outside the advertising man's office, for a black cat can always tell a real wizard...

An Older Kind of Magic is a delightful story, very much akin to those I remember most fondly from my own childhood. One need not be Australian to enjoy it, but it leaves the reader most curious about the myths and legends indigenous to that southern continent.

—Charlotte Moslander

BLACKBRIAR by William Sleator. Illus. by Blair Lent. E. P. Dutton, 1972. 212 p. $5.95 Age level: 10-13

Danny was orphaned at the age of seven and taken under the wing of Philippa Sibley, the secretary at his school. Now he is fifteen and inwardly rebellious, yet outwardly complacent at Philippa's jealous attempts to guard him from other friendships. Then Philippa gets the brilliant idea of moving them both out of London deep into the countryside to an isolated house which has been for sale for years and years. The place is called Blackbriar, and it is haunted, of course. Rather than fear, Danny feels affinity for its 'ghosts,' which are really more like the free elements of nature. Philippa finds a crude wooden doll in the fireplace, which repels her horribly but has no effect whatsoever on Danny. Danny also enjoys walking out among the tumuli, thought to be Druid burial mounds. There he meets a free-spirited girl named Lark who becomes his good friend and companion in adventure.

One of the mysteries of Blackbriar is the names written on the cellar door with a date after each one except the last—Mary Peachy. One evening a strange-looking little man comes to the door saying he is looking for Mary Peachy. Later Danny finds out from an old newspaper article that Blackbriar was the place where people sick with the plague were once quarantined. He also learns that the local town librarian is up to no good with the local rich weirdo living in a nearby manor, and that their plotting has something to do with Blackbriar.

This book took me back to my Nancy Drew days, complete with old house and secret passageway, with shades of *The Secret Garden* and *Wuthering Heights* for the more sophisticated. The characters are believable individuals and their relationships are relatively complex for a juvenile mystery. In short, a very enjoyable reading experience.

—Kristine Anderson

Reviews

THE GLORY GAME by Keith Laumer. Doubleday, 1973. 186 p. $5.95

There is an ill-concealed 'moral' to this novel. The Military Man is incorruptible—and right about the devious plans of the aliens; the Politicians are interested only in power, public opinion, and their own ideologies. The Military Establishment and the Political Factions let their theories blur their common sense, thereby putting humankind in a risky position.

Briefly, Commodore Tancredi Dalton, who has been offered a rather nice bribe by both the Softliners and the Hardliners if he will sabotage the forthcoming Space Navy Exercise and (a) attack, or, (b) refuse to attack the alien Hukks, does neither, but guesses that the Hukks plan an invasion of our Moon while the Fleet is away, gets there ahead of them, tricks them into surrendering their Grand Armada and having their weapons dismantled, then ignores an order to destroy the Armada.

For which behavior, he is made an Admiral, given a desk job, thoroughly and publicly questioned by a Committee which is writing a treaty with the Hukks, and ends up, a civilian, running a Navy salvage yard.

From which he naturally averts a Hukk invasion, but allows them to depart with their dignity intact...

I somehow have the feeling I've met these characters before—the noble, commonsensical, humanitarian Hero faced with bureaucrats who think more of labels than realities. A little love interest in the form of a beautiful, wealthy Senator's daughter. The Other Side—neither better nor worse than Our Side, but nevertheless a force to be reckoned with... The novel is well written, and the plot holds together, but setting it in the future can only serve the purpose of illustrating a case of plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose...

—Charlotte Moslander

THE WOOD BEYOND THE WORLD by William Morris. Dover, 1973, facsimile of the 1894 Kelmscott Press edition. 261 p. $3.50paper

THE SUNDERING FLOOD by William Morris. Introd. by Lin Carter. Ballantine 03261, 1973. 238 p. $1.25

In 1894—the original publication year for the older of these two reprints, *Wood Beyond the World*—the British book buyer could purchase these current new titles: *Esther Waters, Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, Prisoner of Zenda, Diary of a Nobody, The Jungle Book* (I). And on the magazine newsstands was most of the material that next year became hard sf's breakthrough in British book form: Wells' first novel and his first collection. Thus French naturalism, the Great Detective, hard sf, and several other fictional forms not all illustrated above: they became Anglicized about the same date.

Prose heroic fantasy had already appeared, or been revived, by the poet William Morris in the late eighties. LUNA readers have at least heard of Morris' special dreamworld through Lin Carter's series of reprints for Ballantine, 1969ff. Paradoxically, this contradictory world—rural but clean, gentle but barbarous, underpopulated but economically active—grew out of Morris' attempts to show a workable craftsmen's society in an ideal form. The stimulus to write a book a year about this world perhaps came from his new Kelmscott Press (founded 1890), unless it was the creative pressure of the romances that stimulated the press' existence.

During his previous poetic career, Morris had been translating his way through early European epic and saga; his two summers in Iceland in the '70's had this concern in mind. For the Kelmscott series, choice of style and background seem to derive from Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. (There is a little influence in the style and page design of Wood from the King James Bible, perhaps unconscious.) Morris' stories and poems were written, he said, off the top of his head, as end-of-day relief from his 'serious' labors in politics, art, home furnishing and book design. This pulp-writer flow in his writing would encourage his imagination to tap the famous medieval romances already so familiar to Morris.

I take my 'source' examples from *Wood Beyond the World*, now available both in Dover's Kelmscott reprint and as part of Carter's series for Ballantine. The brave, strong, noble, mentally underdeveloped hero, Walter, at the very outset meets a character and situation comparable to Robinson Crusoe's at the point in Defoe where years alone on the desert island have left the aging hermit lonely, talkative, a little crazed, and worried about some nearby savages. But the main plot-situation that develops in *Wood* puts Walter in a social setup comparable to Sir Gawaine's in the great 14th century verse romance about Gawaine, the "Grene Knyght," and that Knight's inconveniently available and eager hostess-wife. That Walter is being established as his hostess' sacrificial king-lover-husband, floats in the background as part of the atmosphere of *Wood*. But Walter's lady only discards her previous lover harmlessly when he (Walter) appears. She doesn't make the older consort part of a ritual victim-chain. There are, however, other suggestions that Morris was acquainted with *The Golden Bough* (1st ed., 1890) or at least professional Victorian anthropology, a subject with a big contemporary reading public. The tribal earth-goddess and bear-tribe ritual murder of the background plot can be instanced.

Unfortunately, this source-hunting doesn't make *Wood* itself more impressive. The old poem actually embarrasses the 1894 novel because Walter is not mentally comparable with Sir Gawaine as the hero of a sophisticated romance. ("Prince Valiant" is directly derived from Morris' private version of medieval Europe. But the Sir Gawaine so prominent in the strip's early depression days, before Val matured and met Aleta, gives a much better picture of the medieval hero. Walter himself is closer to another descendant, Conan; just as brainless, though without Howard's blood-lust.)

Because Walter can't handle his rich eager bitch-Lady, Morris hands him as an unearned gift a bright, pretty, slave-ringed servant-girl of his mistress, to guide and counsel him for the rest of the book, and eventually have him crowned king elsewhere. For these services Walter neither 'rescues' her nor provides any other muscleman aid. A childish sex-fear infiltrates the story; and one reader anticipated that the evil Lady and good Maid would eventually be revealed as doubles of one sorceress. But the Morris books are uninterested in such wrenching plot-twists. (Neither is Tolkien, another Morris-ite.)

The servant-girl 'Maid' has all a distressed heroine's problems. Her mistress-owner has, on account of Walter, dropped a previous aristocratic suitor, the King's Son. Perhaps partly for emotional revenge, the King's Son wants the Lady's servant-girl as a playgirl pickup to take back home as a toy. The mistress hates the Maid too much to protect her from this semi-abduction. (It would be physically too dangerous for the Maid to resist her noble 'suitor,' but she stalls him temporarily.) The background of some painful 'realistic' contemporary servant-girl situation almost arises. Since Walter is such a dead weight as a romantic hero, it is tempting to say that Morris did not solve his own formal problem in narrating *Wood*. George Moore turned out *Esther Waters* the same publishing year about another maid with problems. And the quick-witted servant is the staple of that narrative form, the stage farce.

In *Wood* there is a duel between mistress and servant, magic used on both sides. Both by magic and mother-wit, the Maid wins. She eliminates both her enemies. Walter hears about all this afterwards—while she is leading him by the hand through a neighboring tribe of barbarian giants, Bear-totem hunters in a pre-farming culture. By magic and wits again, she gets Walter to the next civilized kingdom. These people have a system for electing their monarch that would have sunk any real medieval kingdom in a generation; it's respectfully described in Chapter 33. Neither tenacity, ingenuity, nor craft-training is required; not even the ability to produce a male heir. Under these conditions, Walter is elected. His counselors present his first royal problem for consideration: whether the serf-girl who has done all the work so far should become a servant in the palace or deserves to be queen. Walter struggles with this difficulty, and finally says, ask her. (p.241). She votes herself queen. But later (pp.257-9) Walter lets her run, unguarded, what we would call a UNESCO mission among the murderous Bear-totem giants. Walter is another of the curious passive 'heroes' of Morris' literary century that Professor Mario Praz used to discuss.

Walter's passivity must be partly deliberate on Morris' part. It lets the reader concentrate on an underpeopled, primary-colored world. Here a small social set of

handsome uncomplicated young people eat simple, delicious food, play and love (mostly foreplay) in a mosquitoless woods where they can run barefoot in their smocks. Once in awhile a magic lion tries to eat one of them, or they murder each other. But these bloody bits are only foreground plot, not the magical world of afternoon nature that everybody remembers visually from reading Morris.

Speaking myself as an amateur, not a member of the Greg Bear-totem, the Kelmscott typography (of Dover's edition) now seems more 'American' than 'British.' The heavy-inked layout was of course meant to cover and 'illuminate' the page. It seems to grab the reader in the hardsell manner of our commercial page design.

But now, Lin Carter, it's time for the big push. Go sell Ballantine on reprints of the great V.ctorian verse novels and romances. They're as readable as the prose novels and as free of copyright. For instance, take *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876). Morris himself considered it his best book.

—Mark Purcell

SCIENCE FICTION: THE GREAT YEARS, ed. by Carol and Frederick Pohl. Ace 75430, 1973. 349 p. $1.25

The stories in this collection were originally published between 1934 and 1953, so you will probably find some familiar ones here. However they have been well chosen and I recommend this collection to those of you who do not already have all or most of them. The stories are "...And Then There Were None" by Eric Frank Russell, "The Liberation of Earth" by William Tenn, "Old Faithful" by Raymond Z. Gallun, "Placet is a Crazy Place" by Frederic Brown, "Wings of the Lightning Land" by James MacCreigh, "The Little Black Bag" by C. M. Kornbluth, and "A Matter of Form" by H. L. Gold. In addition, each of the editors has written an introduction to the book, and there is a paragraph of introduction for each story. Even for $1.25, I would recommend this book as a professional piece of work and a pleasure to read.

—Joni Rapkin

A WEREWOLF AMONG US by Dean R. Koontz. Ballantine 03055, 1973. 211 p. $1.25

Koontz has masterfully updated the whodunit with a dash of mysticism and a superb technological imagination. The action occurs on a wealthy leisure planet where several members of the prominent Alderban family have been murdered. Each of the victims was found with his throat cut and holding a clump of wolf hairs belonging to a species extinct on the planet.

The Alderbans call upon the cyberdetective, St. Cyr, to solve the crimes and discover the murderer. This futuristic Sherlock Holmes performs as a synthesis—part man, part computer. He affixes to his chest a plug-in bio-computer which hooks itself into his nervous system. This device allows him to interpret people and events with logic incapable to the human mind. Employing the human side of his nature, St. Cyr is equipped to discover both perception and motivation. Thus, with the computerized extension of the brain in combination with the human personality, St. Cyr functions as the total investigator.

I usually enjoy detective stories and I certainly had fun with this one. Although the ending was in some ways expected, the unusual twist of Koontz had me racing through it anyway. The book doesn't offer any Mount Rushmore messages to your head, but if that's what you like, there are some in between the lines. For me it was purely escapist entertainment on a science fiction level with Alistair Maclean or Hammett. Particularly interesting was Koontz's stylistic device that relied on a dialog between the computer side of St. Cyr and his human counterpart. The opposition of personalities was presented as a human counterpoint. Koontz's imaginative use of the dialog to illustrate the character's internal conflict sustained the reader excitement right through to the conclusion. Besides the detective, the most interesting character was Teddy, the robot. He zoomed in and out delightfully as the plot was unfolding. At the end when he went berserk, it was absolutely enthralling, since most of us have envisioned what could happen if computers went bananas. Last and least, the romance aspect in the story appeared somewhat contrived and irrelevant to Koontz's illusion. It didn't interfere too much, but I felt St. Cyr's development could have been fostered in a more complimentary manner.

—Karen Ludwig

LAZARUS by Jerome Hartenfels. Popular Library 00438, 1973. 320 p. 95¢ (hardcover: Hill and Wang, 1966)

This is written in the form of an autobiography of one Brother Lazarus, an inmate in a somewhat peculiar religious foundation. He is a West Indian slum boy who immigrated to England to escape his family and his entire past. Once in London, he is manipulated and finally kidnapped by the Institute, a shadowy group of powerbrokers with roots in Elizabethan times. They brainwash, indoctrinate, and train him to be one of their agents, but he willfully bungles his first assignment and is sent to the monastery.

There are parts of the book that are fascinating, and Hartenfels certainly knows how to use words, but the book doesn't jell. This is largely due to the portrayal of Brother Lazarus. I just can't accept him as both the recent product of a West Indian slum, no matter how bright and well read, and the author of this very alienated middle class intellectual prose. He sounds just like one of the minor characters, Morgen, who is an alienated middle class intellectual. Another thing that bothers me is the total absence of women in that vast historic conspiracy known as the Institute, which recruits agents all over the world.

Whatever its faults, I did find the book enjoyable. But I don't see it as sf. It's more of a psychological suspense novel, and somewhat reminiscent of Harold Pinter in the atmosphere of obscure menace built up by the author. —Leslie Bloom

AN ABC OF WITCHCRAFT PAST AND PRESENT by Doreen Valiente. St. Martin's Press, 1973. 377 p. $10.00

This is a fairly useful book, if you are looking for data specifically related to Wicca, and more specifically to the Gardnerian school. Miss Valiente is, apparently, fully accredited in her subject as having been initiated in four different branches of Wicca. The entries are encyclopedic; they are concise and informative. If this is where your interest lies, it's a good book for the price. For more general information, look elsewhere.

—Michael McQuown

STORIES OF DARKNESS & DREAD by Joseph Payne Brennan. Arkham House, 1973. 173 p. $6.00

FROM EVIL'S PILLOW by Basil Copper. Arkham House, 1973. 176 p. $6.00

These two recent Arkham House collections of stories are strange items. Both are of the New look in AH titles: glued (or more precisely, adhesived) rather than sewn and bound, and printed on 55 lb. Whitman. The first has 18 short stories and the Copper book has five tales. The Brennan stories would be great if they were published one a month in *Weird Tales* in the '30's but to take all of them in at once in the '70's can give a case of intellectual indigestion. They aren't basically bad stories, just a bit out of date. Brennan seems to share with his characters a passion for things old and antiquarian, and his stories certainly capture a flavor of times past, but can science fiction and fantasy defy Thomas Wolfe and go back? Some people will find these stories delightfully nostalgic while others will dismiss them as a waste. De gustibus...

Basil Copper, on the other hand, writes long short stories. Each one is about half again as long as it need be but the extra wordage builds atmosphere. An Englishman, Copper tells his story slowly and carefully without regard to word counts or limits: each one ends at the ending in an internally logical manner. The best story, "The Gossips," is almost a classic and should be reprinted in anthologies of the best ghost stories. Even "Charon," the poorest story in the book, is an artistic and rather good retelling of an already overtold tale, the one about the fellow who seeks to obtain entrance to a shop/access to the top of a hill/passage on a strange ship/etc. and upon obtaining his goal obtains death. Copper handles the hackneyed theme rather well.

Both works are worth reading; the Brennan volume for a bit of pseudo-nostalgia and the Copper book for some interesting stories. Purchase of Brennan's book can safely be left to libraries but collectors may find it rewarding to add *From Evil's Pillow* to their shelves.

—J. B. Post

THE CHAMELEON CORPS AND OTHER SHAPE CHANGERS by Ron Goulart. Collier 02075, 1973. viii, 216 p. $1.50 (hardcover: Macmillan, 1972. $5.95)

Ron Goulart is a very funny writer. Indeed, he can't resist assaulting three icons with one brick. He has such an eye for the ridiculous he often overdoes his situations. But he overdoes them so well we can forgive him much and not really complain if his politics often mirror, albeit distortedly, our own world. The book in hand is in two sections, the first part is the adventures of Ben Jolson of the Chameleon Corps (under the Political Espionage Office of the planet Barnum). Jolson, like his fellow corpsmen, can change at will into anything, a very useful trait for a spy. Goulart plays such a situation for all the laughs it's worth. The last story, "Sunflower," is almost serious, though.

The second section is united only in the theme of shape changing. The best of the lot, a very good lot, is "Please Stand By," part of another series, the adventures of an amateur psychic detective, Max Kearny. Max is called upon to help a friend who turns into an elephant on national holidays. It is worthy of Anthony Boucher. A collection for everyone to buy and read and reread. —J. B. Post

AND WALK NOW GENTLY THROUGH THE FIRE AND OTHER SCIENCE FICTION STORIES edited by Roger Elwood. Chilton, 1973. 185 p. $6.95

It's a nice collection to have in paperback but you really wouldn't want it in hardcover. The ten stories are all quite good: "Stella" by Ted White has some new thoughts on alien life; "Making It Through" by Barry Malzberg is another madmen in space; "And Walk Now Gently Through the Fire" by R. A. Lafferty deals with new apostles after the wars; "The Gift of Nothing" by Joan Holly is a (perhaps too) neatly resolved confrontation between a Euroamerican colonial survey team and an aboriginal society; "Forever and Amen" by Robert Bloch has a Blochian twist to immortality; Robert Silverberg's "Caught in the Organ Draft" is a classic extrapolation of current trends to a nightmare world that is much like our own world but with a different nightmare; "...And the Power" by Rachel Payes is a short piece about faith and vanity; Pamela Sargent's "A Sense of Difference" is a different look at a clone group; Philip Jose Farmer's "Mother Earth Wants You" deals with a future Gravesian matriarchial society; and K. M. O'Donnell's "Chronicles of a Comer" is about statistics and the Second Coming. Mostly a collection of sf as she should be writ.

—J. B. Post

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS AND WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE by Lewis Carroll. Illus. by Ralph Steadman. Centennial edition. Clarkson N. Potter, 1973. 144 p. $7.95, $3.95paper

This is a sophisticated child's *Alice*—complete with a move-by-move explanation of the chess game upon which the story is based. The ingenuity of making a chess game into a story for a young child is still delightful to ponder, but how many children play chess nowadays?

Let's not have another dissection of *Alice*, though, let's just consider this particular edition. It is, by virtue of sheer physical dimensions, a two-lap book, which would lead one to believe it is intended for preschool or primary-grade youngsters. Yet, the illustrations are not the usual cheerful blobs of color—they are stark black-and-white line drawings with a great deal of fluid motion in them. The chessboard motif is carried throughout, but the squares waver and shift, then disappear into the distance like some immense tile floor which is melting from the heat. Alice herself is a gangly, long-faced, terribly solemn child whose hair flies about the page in silky, slender individual strands. The looking-glass world was surreal before the term was coined, and now it has a set of surreal illustrations to go with it.

The story has lost none of its delightful attributes of fantasy and satire, but I wonder if children would like the illustrations. I should not have, as a child, although I like them very much now.

Perhaps, after all, this is not an edition for children, but rather for *Lookinglass*-loving adults, who can always use the illustrations as an excuse for having it in the house (if they really feel they need an excuse). —Charlotte Moslander

THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY 11: WHO'S THAT LAUGHING IN THE GRAVE? by Vance Stanton. Curtis 06184, 1973. 160 p. 60¢

I have come to the conclusion that this book, and probably the others in the series (not to mention the TV show) were written for children who don't read books. If so, this book fulfills its purpose admirably. I would suspect, however, that most fans are as familiar with that type of person as they are with spies or doctors who make house calls. Therefore, I suggest that if you are reading this review, you don't want this book.

—Joni Rapkin

SUPERNATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE by Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Dover, 1973. 111 p. $1.50

Dover gives us a reprint of the 1945 Ben Abramson edition of Lovecraft's major study of the weird tale, substituting a rather perceptive essay on Lovecraft for August Derleth's introduction in the Abramson edition. The index is retained (making this a useful reference work rather than merely a rambling essay) and three explanatory footnotes are added. Whatever HPL's deficiencies as a writer of weird tales, he was an astute reader of them and had the makings of a fine critic. In his introduction E. F. Bleiler notes "Structurally it is an accomplished tour de force, since it transmuted what might have been a catalogue with opinions into an organic unity. It reveals a mind of power and subtlety, a fine critical sense, and a feeling for development and cultural milieu that any historian might envy. Very few of Lovecraft's judgments have been overturned..." Lovecraft at his best, an important study. And a bargain at the price.

—J. B. Post

THE SKY IS FALLING / BADGE OF INFAMY by Lester Del Rey. Ace 76960, 1973. 121, 124 p. 95¢

This is the type of book review I dread writing. First of all, there are two stories in one book and one could be good while the other could be bad. Such is the case here, but more on that later. How do I, a critic (hopefully), tell you the reader that only half of this or any other book is worth buying. The second reason I dread this style (although lots of people like Ace doubles) is that I like Lester—he is a good story teller and does not become profound (thank God) very often. How do you say, "Lester, in *The Sky Is Falling* you become profound, and you blew it."

Since I opened by saying that one of the stories was bad, I will review that one first—*The Sky Is Falling*. This is a story of a man who was brought to another sphere of existence, after he is dead and buried, to rebuild the sky. First, his retrievers got the wrong man, thinking that he was his architect uncle. Second, he has too much of a questioning mind to believe all they tell him about his surroundings. Dave Hanson has ended up in a world ruled by magic and astrology that is falling apart. Astrology is the root science and since the sky (like an egg shell) is falling, the basic facts (axioms) of nature are unstable. This holds true for all natural laws that this world knows and also for all the inhabitants' personalities. To complicate matters, there is a rebel group trying to cause the break-up of the sky to occur faster, feeling that they are like chickens breaking out of an egg. After many adventures and misadventures, Dave comes through with a most improbable cure and moral. It hits the reader hard, fast and is totally unbelievable. If you feel masochistic one afternoon, plow through this one, but finish it in one reading; you will not want to pick it up again.

The second story is much better, for Lester Del Rey goes back to story telling. A doctor is thrown out of his union and exiles himself on Mars. There he further complicates his life by breaking the law and practicing medicine without a union card. This could cost his life, but as a doctor, could he do no less. He, incidently, busts Mars loose from earth/union control. This is an action packed, fast moving story that does not preach. I was left feeling that this was worth rereading in a few months.

A story telling ability is something that should be savored and preserved. I only hope Mr. Del Rey remembers this. You see, this is his gift, and it is of great value, as it is, to this complicated world of ours.

—Scratch Bacharach

VALLEY BEYOND TIME by Robert Silverberg. Dell 9249, 1973. 223 p. 95¢

The four stories collected in *Valley Beyond Time* are excellent action-adventure yarns from the late 1950's. Unfortunately, Silverberg's introduction might tend to give the reader another impression. The author categorically rejects any need to apologize for the contents. He then spends three pages in apologetics for what the younger Silverberg was forced to write to keep the wolf from the door.

In fact, no apology is needed. The collection provides an entertaining example of science fiction adventure—little cerebration but action galore. In the title story representatives of the galaxy's human and non-human inhabitants are gathered together as zoo specimens in a strange valley where manna falls from heaven, youth returns, and death is only temporary. A young man, in "The Flame and the Hammer," must uncover the truth behind a legend—a legend that might free his world forever from the galactic empire's rule. The last group of loyalists try to escape a planet-wide revolutionary dictatorship in "The Wages of Death," while one man discovers his own potential. In "Spacerogue" one man stands alone against a world in accomplishing a bizarre vengeance. "Valley Beyond Time" is the strongest story, but all four have the same capacity to captivate the reader in the manner of all good escape literature.

As Silverberg, himself, notes, "There are some readers who prefer the earlier writer to the present one because they find more entertainment in his work..." Right on!

—B. A. Fredstrom

JAPANESE GROTESQUERIES compiled by Nikolas Kiej'e. Tuttle, 1973. 261 p. $10.00

Having assembled a cut-and-paste job myself I know the pitfalls. This collection is an assemblage of illustrations showing the dark side of Japanese art—pictures of ghosts, ghouls, demons, fabulous creatures, etc. Interesting from an artist's standpoint and enhanced by a 22 page introduction by Terence Barrow (Ph.D.) on the gods, ghosts, demons of Japan, the book is still rather less than first priority for most people. Of the 155 illustrations, it should be noted that the picture of the Nore Onna (wet woman) appears twice (no. 25 and no. 56). Pedantry aside, the collection is worth browsing but not buying.

—J. B. Post

THE WITCH'S BIBLE by Gavin and Yvonne Frost. Nash, 1972. 310 p. $7.95

I have been told that the Frosts are very reliable and very authentic; they run a correspondence school in Wicca from out in St. Charles, Missouri, and are, I gather, very personable. I have a feeling, however, that the person who vouched for them hasn't read the book.

The Frosts represent something called 'Celtic Wicca.' Granted, it is perfectly right to call your beliefs anything you like, but I feel that titles that tend to be contradictory in terms should be avoided: according to the best sources, the Celts didn't have too cohesive a religious system, and the Druids, most known form of Celtic religion, were pretty bloody types. Aside from that, the sexual practices of the cult tend to be somewhat questionable. I am quite prepared to accept a liberal, enlightened attitude toward sex, but the possibilities for a ritual not rigidly monitored turning itself into an orgy are considerable; as for the thing with the two phalluses—well, that has to be read to be believed. (I know the plural is 'phalli,' but the differences between one of them and the other made me prefer a more separated plural form.)

I tend to assume the Frosts are sincere about their practices, but the strong emphasis on sex involved seems a bit more than the usual run of modern Wicca thought warrants. Perhaps, however, they are simply stating publicly what other branches prefer to keep quiet; I honestly don't know.

Aside from the more explicit sexual content, the book seems rather like most of the more articulate modern Wicca publications; it is well and simply written, and slightly sanctimonious in tone. It can be considered to be reasonably authoritative in regard to its own milieu. If you have an interest in 'Celtic Wicca,' this is probably the best game in town. Come to think of it, this may be the only game in town.

—Michael McQuown

ALSO RECEIVED:

The Ancient of Days: The Chronicles of Ronstrom the Builder, by Irving A. Greenfield. Avon 14860, June 1973. $1.50

The Aquanauts 9: Evil Cargo, by Ken Stanton. Manor 95248, 1973. 95¢

The Aquanauts 10: Operation Sea Monster, by Ken Stanton. Manor 95309, 1974. 95¢

Artery of Fire, by Thomas N. Scortia. Popular Library 00535. 95¢ (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $4.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 49)

Atlantis: The Antediluvian World, by Ignatius Donnelly. Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1973. $2.95 (reissue)

Best Science Fiction Stories of the Year, edited by Lester Del Rey. Ace 05475, August 1973. $1.25 (hardcover: Dutton, 1972. $6.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 46)

Beyond Control: Seven Stories of Science Fiction, edited by Robert Silverberg. Dell 2112, Feb. 95¢ (hardcover: Thomas Nelson, 1972. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 46)

Beyond Earth: Man's Contact with UFOs, by Ralph and Judy Blum. Bantam T8374, April. $1.50

Children of the Lens, by E. E. Smith. Pyramid N3251, Nov. 1973. 95¢ (10 ptg)

The Correspondent, by Ruth Shimer. Popular Library 00517. 95¢

Cosmic Memory: Atlantis and Lemuria, by Rudolf Steiner. Rudolf Steiner Publications, 1971. $1.95. (orig: Aus der Akasha-Chronik)

The Cresselly Inheritance, by Jane Blackmore. Ace 12170, Feb. 95¢

The Diploids, by Katherine MacLean. Manor 95-228, 1973. 95¢

The End of the Dream, by Philip Wylie. DAW UQ1079, Nov. 1973. 95¢ (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 50)

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sorcery*, by Arlene J. Fitzgerald. Manor 95244, 1973. 95¢

The Forgotten Legend of Sleepy Hollow, by E. R. Welles & J. P. Evans. Learning, Inc., 1973. $2.00

The Giant All-Color Book of Fairy Tales, retold by Jane Carruth. Golden Press, 1971. $5.95

The Hero From Otherwhere, by Jay Williams. Dell 3542, Oct. 1973. 95¢ (hardcover: Walck, 1972. $5.50. reviewed LUNA Monthly 50)

Ice, by Anna Kavan. Popular 00538. 95¢ (hardcover: Doubleday, 1970. $4.50. reviewed LUNA Monthly 34)

An Informal History of the Pulp Magazines, by Ron Goulart. Act 37070, Sept. 1973. (hardcover: Cheap Thrills. Arlington House, 1972. $7.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 44)

The Languages of Pao, by Jack Vance. Ace 47042, 1974. 95¢ (orig. 1958)

The Left Hand of the Electron, by Isaac Asimov. Dell 4717, March. $1.25 (hardcover: Doubleday, 1972. $6.95)

The Lively Ghosts of Ireland, by Hans Holzer. Ace 48531. $1.25 (hardcover: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967)

Mad in Orbit, edited by Albert B. Feldstein. Signet T5068. 75¢

Mind to Mind: Nine Stories of Science Fiction, edited by Robert Silverberg. Dell 5652, Feb. 95¢ (hardcover: Thomas Nelson, 1971. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 38/39)

The Moon Men, by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Ace 53752. 95¢

The Occult in the Orient, by Christopher Dane. Popular Library 00516; 95¢

Orbit Unlimited, by Poul Anderson. Pyramid N3274, Jan. 95¢ (4 ptg)

Perry Rhodan 41: The Earth Dies, by Clark Darlton. Ace 66024, March. 75¢

Perry Rhodan 42: Time's Lonely One, by K. H. Scheer. Ace 66025, March. 75¢

The Science Fiction Bestiary: Nine Stories of Science Fiction, edited by Robert Silverberg. Dell 8139, Feb. 95¢ (hardcover: Thomas Nelson, 1971. $5.95. reviewed LUNA Monthly 44)

Strange Destinies, by John Macklin. Ace 7886. 95¢ (orig. 1965)

The Swords of Lankhmar, by Fritz Leiber. Ace 79221. 95¢ (orig. 1968)

Tarzan of the Apes, by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Grosset and Dunlap, 1973. $2.95

Under Pressure, by Frank Herbert. Ballantine 23835, March. $1.25 (orig title: The dragon in the sea)

The Universe Maker, by A. E. Van Vogt. Ace 84581. 95¢ (orig. 1953)