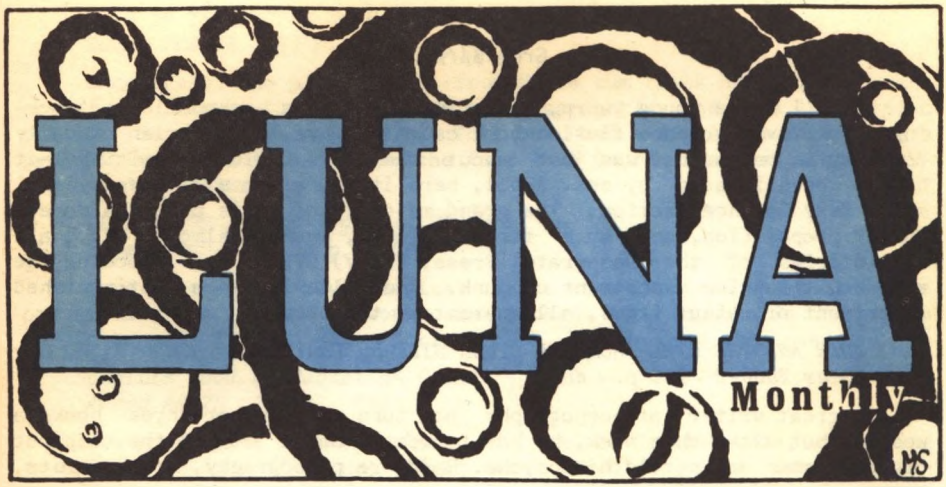

No. 16 September 1970

Vacation Issue

Editorial

Just as a person would not be satisfied with one newspaper, or one magazine, or one radio or TV program, so too a person should not be satisfied with just one magazine for complete coverage of the science fiction/fantasy field, which is what we're devoted to. No one magazine can, or should attempt to, cover the whole field in full detail. Only an editorial team could handle the job adequately, and these just don't exist in our field. Fan magazines are usually the product of one or two persons, their personal venture in publishing, which explains why there is also such a high turnover rate.

Trying to cover more of the field than we do already would only tend to spread our present coverage thinner, as it would be necessary to cut something else to accommodate the additions. It would also result in a duplication of effort, since in all cases the material suggested (this being the raison d'etre behind this discussion) is already being carried in other major fan magazines. Since this seems to indicate these people don't know about the other fanzines, we are listing a few of the more regularly published ones at the end of this editorial.

In LUNA Monthly we are trying to present material which we personally like to carry, and/or which we believe is important to the field. To an extent we personally show through, in our selection, and layout of material, in the occasional items which we have to write up, and in these infrequent editorials. But some people appear to believe that we should be visible on every page, that a more "fannish" approach should be used in our presentation. This is perhaps a valid point, if our objective were to produce a "fannish" magazine, and if we had the time to write the reams of material this would require. But since we're not really proficient writers, to begin with, and as we are already devoting most of our time to the things we do best, we prefer to leave the "fan-

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SEX IN SCIENCE FICTION!

by Greg ~~Bear~~ Bear

When I was a young twerp, wandering through a bookmobile and picking up whatever science fiction book caught my eye, a librarian casually confided in me that sf was just about the only field of writing that hadn't been invaded by sex. Well, here it is, after all these years, ssf. Sexy Science Fiction. The grand majority of it is purely a money-making proposition, and such firms as Tower, Award, Belmont, etc., all subsidiaries of the Desperate Press, (very) LTD., are flooding the stands with a wide assortment of junk. The following is a distinguished assortment of select items, all guaranteed to corrupt.

XUAN AND THE GIRL FROM THE OTHER SIDE by Paul A. Bergin
Tower T060-8 138 p. 60¢

A great writer of pornography can turn out two or three books a week -- but after that week, he has to rest a month to get the crap out of his system and settle his psyche. Hardcore pornography, at that rate, has to be a demanding business, since the writer not only prostitutes whatever meager talent he may have, but his very soul, as well. All for the call of that filthy lucre. This book isn't hard-core because it doesn't drag the young or the furry (or feathered, for that matter) into the plot for spice. Whatever plot there is here, involving TELIX and OMEGA and Xuan and that other-side girl, is pure fabrication to provide a framework for you-know-what. The price is cheaper than usual, and the cover is mild, to allow for supermarket distribution.

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Australia A$5.25 Great Britain £2 Japan ¥2100

Europe £2/6- sterling, £2/9/9 foreign

LAID IN THE FUTURE by Rod Gray
Tower T095-1 157 p. 95¢

Once again, the plot is Man-from-Uncle cum Frank Harris, but this one moves faster than *Xuan*, far more sprightly, and one in a series called The Lady from L.U.S.T. This one has a suggestive cover and a prohibitive price to advertise the fact that your corner drugstore probably won't be carrying it.

WEIGHTLESS IN GAZA by Fred Shannon
Tower T060-12 138 p. 60¢

More pretentious psychological tripe here than can be swallowed in one sitting. A man and a woman are locked in a capsule in deep space for an experiment with sex. Boring, hack, better dead than read.

CAMILLE 2000 by Sebastian Grant
Award A457S 155 p. 75¢

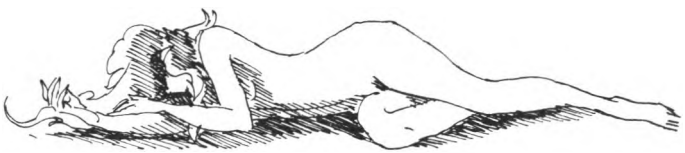
I suppose this is a re-telling of the old Camille tale, attempting to shine a science fictional light onto its older, more tarnished aspects. I suppose the movie this was adapted from made a little money, because it went out of its way to be graphically sexy, and I suppose in the long run there's nothing wrong with these things. There is something wrong, however, with trying to disguise a weak and sagging plot with flourishes of (b)pathos, with wallowing in self-pity and writing a book that ultimately ends up a jumble of disconnected and meaningless aphorisms. Victorianism and pornography and science fiction make strange and unsuccessful bedfellows.

DRACUTWIG by Mallory T. Knight
Award A488S 156 p. 75¢

On the other hand, in contrast to the pretentious volume previously dissected, we have here something rather refreshing. *Dracutwig* is the story of an emaciated Twiggy-type, sired by Dracula on a lusty wench, and made legitimate by a wooden-stake wedding. Her success in the fashion field is, of course, a tautology. There's a lot of good crude wit here, no attempt at being serious, making this a nice minor entertainment not necessarily worth waiting for, but not to be shunned, either.

BILLY AND BETTY by Twiggs Jameson
Grove Press Zebra Book Z1036 224 p. $1.25

Billy and Betty are brother and sister, but don't get any crude ideas, because Billy has a physiological problem. Betty has a problem, too, namely trying to pawn Billy off and solve his problem, and she's dedicated, but hardly devoted. Everything here comes in two dimensions only, an exercise in what some have called "black humor," but here it turns out more like what young kids murmur to each other, the proverbial and irrepressible bathroom talk. If you're wondering what this one's doing in an sf review, well, it takes place in the future, no two ways about it. The jacket says it does.



Coming Events

September

1 FANATICS MEETING at home of member at 7:30pm. For info: Quinn Simpson, 977 Kains Ave, Albany, Calif. 94706

2 WOODCHUCKS MEETING at home of member. For info: Greg Bear, 5787 College Ave, Apt. 37, San Diego, Ca. 92120 (ph:286-4736)

3-7 TRIPLE FAN FAIR at Howard Johnson's, Detroit. Adv. reg: $3, $4 at door, $1.50 supporting. For info: Detroit Triple Fan Fair, 14845 Anne St, Allen Park, Mich. 48101

4 VALSFA MEETING at home of member. For info: Dwain Kaiser, 390 N. Euclid, Upland, Calif. 91786

4 WSFA MEETING at home of member, at 8pm. For info: Alexis Gilliland, 2126 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, D.C. 20032

4-7 TOLKIEN CONFERENCE III/MYTHCON I at Claremont College, Calif. GoH: C. S. Kilby. Reg: $3 to David Ring, 1510 N. Euclid, Upland, Calif. 91768. For info: Glen GoodKnight, 6117 Woodward Ave, Maywood, Calif. 90270

5 BURROUGHS BIBLIOPHILES luncheon meeting at Detroit Triple Fan Fair. For info: Mrs. Rita Coriell, 6657 Locust St, Kansas City, Mo. 64131

6 ALBUQUERQUE SF GROUP MEETING at Los Ranchos Village Hall, 920 Green Valley Rd, N. W., Albuquerque, N. M. For info: Bob Vardeman, P.O. Box 11352, Albuquerque, N.M. 87112

6 ESFA MEETING at YM-YWCA, 600 Broad St, Newark, N.J. at 3pm

11 LITTLE MEN MEETING at home of member at 7:30pm. For info: J. Ben Stark, 113 Ardmore Rd, Berkeley, Calif. 94707

11 NAMELESS ONES MEETING at home of member at 8:30pm. For info: Wally Weber, Box 267, 507 3rd Ave, Seattle, Wash. 98105 (ph: RO7-6243)

11 PSFS MEETING at Central YMCA, 15th & Arch Sts, Philadelphia, at 8pm

12 CINCINNATI FANTASY GROUP MEETING at home of member. For info: Lou Tabakow, 3953 St. Johns Terr, Cincinnati, Ohio 45236

12 MINN-STF MEETING at home of member at noon. For info: Frank Stodolka, 1325 W. 27th St Minneapolis, Minn. 55408

13 NESFA MEETING at home of member For info: NESFA, P. O. Box G, MIT Branch Sta, Cambridge, Mass

15 FANATICS MEETING, see Sept. 1

16 WOODCHUCKS MEETING, see Sept. 2

18 VALSFA MEETING, see Sept. 4

18 WSFA MEETING, see Sept. 4

19 CHICAGO SF LEAGUE MEETING at home of George Price, 1439 W. North Shore Ave, Chicago, Ill. 60626, at 8pm

19 DASFA MEETING at Columbia Savings & Loan Assoc, corner of W. Colfax & Wadsworth, Lakewood, Colo. at 7:30pm. For info: Camille Cazedessus Jr, P. O. Box 550, Evergreen, Colo. 80439

19 DaSFS MEETING at home of member at 8pm. For info: Tom Reamy, Box 523, Richardson, Tex. 75080

19 LUNARIAN MEETING at home of Frank Dietz, 655 Orchard St, Oradell, N.J. at 8pm. (ph:265-7810)

20 MISFITS MEETING at home of member at 3pm. For info: Howard Devore, 4705 Weddel St, Dearborn Heights, Mich. 48125 (ph: LO5-4157)

25 LITTLE MEN MEETING, see Sept.11

25-27 THE SYMPOSIUM at the Edgewater Hyatt House, Long Beach, Calif. For info: Lee & Barry Gold, Box 25240, Los Angeles, Calif. 90025

26 CINCINNATI FANTASY GROUP MEETING, see Sept. 12

26 MINN-STF MEETING, see Sept. 12

26 OMICRON CETI THREE MEETING at home of member at 8:30pm. For info: Joe Isenstadt, 821 N. Hamilton Ave, Lindenhurst, N.Y. (ph:516-TU8-8327)

27 NESFA MEETING, see Sept. 13

27 OSFA MEETING at Museum of Science & Nat. Hist., Oak Knoll Pk at Big Bend & Clayton Rds, St. Louis -- the Science Bldg, 3d floor, at 2pm. For info: Doug Clark, 6216 Famous Ave, St. Louis, Mo. 63139

27 OSFiC MEETING in Toronto. For info: Peter Gill, 18 Glen Manor Dr, Toronto 13, Canada (ph:694-0667)

October

4 OPEN ESFA in Newark, N.J.

16-18 SECONDARY UNIVERSE CONFERENCE III at Queensborough Community College. For info: Virginia Carew, English Dept, Queensborough Community College Bayside, N.Y. 11364

November

13-15 PHILCON at the Sheraton Hotel, Philadelphia. Principal speaker: Larry Niven. For info Kathy Surgenor, 3950 N. Fairhill St, Philadelphia, Pa.19140

April 1971

9-11 EASTERCON '22 in England. GoH: Brian W. Aldiss. For info: Peter R. Weston, 31 Pinewall Ave, Birmingham 30, U.K.

16-18 LUNACON at the Commodore Hotel in New York. Adv. reg: $2.50 to Devra Langsam, 250 Crown St, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225

MEETINGS HELD EVERY WEEK:

BALTIMORE SCIENCE-FANTASY GROUP: Sat at homes of members. For info: Jack Chalker, 5111 Liberty Heights Ave, Baltimore, Md. 21207 (ph: 301-367-0605)

LASFS: Thurs at Palms Playground Recreation Center, 2950 Overland Ave, W. Los Angeles, at 8 pm (ph:838-3838)

NOSFA: Sat at homes of various members at 7pm. For info: John Guidry, 5 Finch St, New Orleans La. 70124 (ph:282-0443)

PORTLAND SOCIETY OF STRANGERS: Sat at homes of members at 7:30 pm. For info: Mike Zaharakis, 1326 SE 15, Portland, Ore. (ph:232-8408)

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SF ASSOC: Sun at 2pm at homes of members. For info: Linda Bushyager, 5620 Darlington Rd, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217 (ph:421-0185)

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

Mike Gilbert

OF REVIEWS AND REVIEWING
by J.B. Post

The first obligation of a reviewer is to describe the work reviewed. This is very easy to forget; we all know of reviews which praise or damn a book without giving any indication of what the book concerns itself with. In the case of fiction the story line should be briefly sketched: "Doc Schwartz and his band of five (5) loyal freaks journey to the heart of Africa seeking the treasure of the Deathless Pharoah only to be trapped by agents of the Kaiser." In reviewing factual writing, a brief description of purpose of the work is in order -- the briefer the better (if brevity is a virtue, reviewers tend to be a virtueless lot) -- if the work in question has a purpose, that is: "The author attempts to describe the rise of modern science from the Dark Ages to the present, an attempt which is mostly successful until he tries to prove that Roger Bacon discovered nuclear fission by citing passages from Shakespeare." There will be readers who just love lost race stories and readers who can't abide them so it is only fair to at least mention something about the general kind of story it happens to be. Likewise, a history of science may interest some folk and bore those who think the past has nothing to teach the present.

Having fulfilled his (or her) first obligation, the reviewer has others. In fiction there is a tendency to declare a book good or bad. While it exists, the objective basis (or bases) of criticism is (or are) rather shaky. All judgments are subjective -- I think. It is perfectly all right to say that you like a book or dislike it -- this is any reader's privilege. A reviewer has the obligation of telling the world why he likes or dislikes a book. "It's all about a lost race of dwarves in Central Park; I think lost race novels are stupid, so this is a stupid book" is not a valid criticism of a book. It indicates the reviewer's blind spot but tells us little about the book. By all means tell what you like and don't like but don't raise these biases to a level of absolute standards good the length and breadth of the Cosmos. On the other hand, there are plenty of stories which are rightly damned. A good indication of a bad story is if you like lost race novels but this one just turns you off. There will usually be a whole group of reasons for liking or disliking a work of fiction: story line, writing style, sense of reality, etc. It is quite possible to get a poorly written book which has a fine story, which catches the proper mood, and which raises a major ethical question. The virtues of the work can't erase the deficiencies or the flaws cover the good points.

Poetry, and to a lesser extent drama, probably should rarely be reviewed in sf circles because short of brief descriptions ("a ballad chronicling the exploration of Saturn by six generations of Atlantaens") criticism becomes very technical.

With nonfiction one shouldn't attempt to criticize unless one knows something about the field covered. Most nonfiction encountered will be science writing for the intelligent layman or possibly an historical or archaeological work of interest to fans. A reviewer should not lament overly long over what a work is not but concentrate on what it actually does, though omissions should be mentioned.

To recapitulate: a review should describe the work being reviewed, tell what and why the reviewer liked about it, what kind of reader would

Continued on Page 12

Lilliputia

THE ROLLING RICE BALL by Junichi Yoda Illus by Saburo Watanabe
English version by Alvin Tresselt
Parents Magazine Press, Nov. 1969 Abt. 32 p. $3.50 Age level: 7-12

THE WITCH'S MAGIC CLOTH by Miyoko Matsutani Illus by Yasuo Segawa
English version by Alvin Tresselt
Parents Magazine Press, 1969 Abt. 32 p. $3.50 Age level: 7-12

RUSSIAN TALES OF FABULOUS BEASTS AND MARVELS by Lee Wyndham
Illus by Charles Mikolaycak
Parents Magazine Press, Nov. 1969 96 p. $3.95 Age level: 7-12

Parents' Magazine Press, like so many other publishers for children, has discovered the retold folk tale. Stories such as these have always been around, but in the past year or so the market has really been flooded. And, although you could justify including such stories with science fiction by reasoning that folk tales are fantasy and fantasy and science fiction go together, I really wonder if we should even try to keep up with all this material which is a separate genre in its own right. However, if folk tales are your kids' thing, by all means see that they are exposed to plenty of it, but use your library instead of your pennies. Libraries like folk tales, and even the smallest will, in all probability, own quite a few titles of this sort.

The three books at hand are standard fare -- not bad, but not outstanding either. The first two consist each of one Japanese folk tale presented in a picture book format, while the third is a collection of five Russian tales, simply told, but not in picture book format. *The Rolling Rice Ball* is about a poor woodcutter whose rice ball rolls down a mouse hole and who is rewarded for his kindness to the mice. A greedy neighbor is not nearly as successful. *The Witch's Magic Cloth* is about the poor villagers living at the foot of a mountain who are rewarded when they send food to the kindly Witch of the Mountain who has just given birth to a baby boy. The compiler of *Russian Tales of Fabulous Beasts and Marvels* claims familiarity with these tales since she heard them first as a child living in Russia. And she does manage to carry over to the reader a Russian feeling in these tales about a talking fish, a magic boat, a clever fox, a magic acorn and a firebird. At the end there is a short glossary of Russian names and words with pronunciations given.

--Joyce Post

THE FAIRY THORN by Gerry and George Armstrong
Albert Whitman & Co., July 1969 Abt. 37 p. $3.50 Age level: 9-12

Irish tradition has it that May Eve is the fairies' night to make mischief and that it is always bad luck to break a white hawthorne, also known as the May Tree or the fairy thorn. This story is built around these legends. Owen O'Flaherty's father must pay an impossible debt on May Day or lose his farm. So on May Eve a dejected Owen sits under the fairy thorn and plays a simple tune on a fiddle that once belonged to his grandfather. Suddenly Finvarra, the King of the Fairies, appears before him and takes Owen to his home in the Hill of Knockma. Here he earns more than enough gold to pay off his father's debt but only after performing some unusual feats with the fiddle. A very pleasing story with illustrations that will appeal to heroic fantasy readers of all ages.

--Joyce Post

THE WILY WIZARD AND THE WICKED WITCH and other weird stories by Godfried Bomans Transl. by Patricia Crampton Illus by Robert Bartelt
Watts, Oct. 1969 180 p. $4.95

This is a collection of fairy tales in the Grimm tradition, which was first published in Holland in 1965. I have not read the original, but the translation is done in good, idiomatic English, so one can assume that the stories have lost little or nothing in Customs. As for the stories themselves, they are peopled with the usual kings, princes, fair maidens, witches, elves and children lost in the forest. There is, however, an element of the down-to-earth which is all too often lacking in the older fairy stories -- the witch and the wizard of the title fall in love with one another and therefore stop pestering the townspeople; a king throws his son out of the palace because the youth is too demanding as re. the beauty of his prospective bride; another king, besieged by a dragon, is disturbed because the bakers and the postman cannot get in. Two of the stories ("The Three Wise Men" and "The Meeting") have strong religious overtones, and the latter is a modern-day parable about three clergymen caught in the Deluge.

This is the sort of book that aunts and grandmothers give as Christmas and birthday gifts, and any such lady who buys this one is on the right track -- the stories are lively, well-written, and (dare I use the word?) moralistic (not preachy), and the illustrations capture perfectly the varying moods of each tale. The Cinderella and Snow White set will love it! --Charlotte D. Moslander

THE ADVENTURES OF PECKY by Margaret Spath
Vantage Press, 1969 131 p. $2.95 Age level: 9 up

Pecky, the hero of the book, is a young woodpecker who sets off to find a teacher who can give him voice lessons. Naturally, he has lots of adventures along the way, finally learns to sing in the Underworld, and returns to the surface of the planet only to find he once more has a woodpecker's voice. Sounds like a pretty good plot for a juvenile, right? Wrong! A bright fifth-grader of my acquaintance has been known to write more sustained story lines with better developed characters and more logical and better related events.

The jacket blurb claims that Margaret Spath has employed the ancient "hero-myth" in describing Pecky's adventures. Homer and Virgil are probably spinning in their graves. True, the woodpecker does encounter various adventures and is helped in his quest by such unearthly types as the Four Winds and the Invisible People but the resemblance stops there. Each episode appears abruptly, is never developed to anywhere near its potential, and ends just as abruptly. The effect is that of one-thing-after-another, without any literary hyphens to connect them. Also, the very brevity of each encounter leaves much unexplained (such as why a group of bats would consider a woodpecker a spy from an enemy camp composed entirely of other bats). Also it is most annoying that Mrs. Spath was not content to dedicate her book to her "adored grandchildren," but insisted upon bringing them into the story. She should have been content to tell them serial bedtime stories and stay out of the publishing marketplace.

Lest this review appear completely negative, let me say a good word about the illustrator (even though Vantage Press did not see fit to identify him). The black-and-white line drawings are very appealing; in fact, they are more interesting than the story. --Charlotte D. Moslander

HARRY'S HOMEMADE ROBOT by Barbara Rinkoff
Illus by Leonard Shortall
Crown, Oct. 1969 Abt. 33 p. $3.50 Age level: 5-8

Oh, the trials and tribulations of Toppy Vernon, the friendly, family robot built by Harry Evans in his basement workshop. The rest of the Evans family just don't like him: he scared Aunt Gerta when she went to the basement to fix a fuse, his sound track got stuck when he tried to help sister Peg prepare for a spelling test, and he streaked the floor when he tried to help Dad out on a waxing chore. In the end Dad lends Harry a hand in getting all of Toppy's bugs worked out and then the family agrees he can stay. A welcome book, if only because there are very few picture books written about robots for the very young child just beginning to read. --Joyce Post

THE GHOSTS WHO WENT TO SCHOOL by Judith Spearing Drawings by Marvin Glass
Scholastic Book Services, 1966, reissue Jan. 1970 160 p. 60¢

THE MUSEUM HOUSE GHOSTS by Judith Spearing Drawings by Marvin Glass
Atheneum, 1969 181 p. $4.75

The "ghosts" in these two books are a sort of ectoplasmic Bobbsey family, except that there are no female children, just Father, Mother, and two sons, Wilbur and Mortimer.

The entire Temple family was struck by lightning one day and killed but they returned to do a rather pleasant job of haunting the old homestead and keeping the house and grounds in good condition. Unfortunately, this "haunting" business left the bank which had foreclosed the mortgage after the death of the last Temple holding an unsellable house. More about this later.

In *Ghosts Who Went to School*, Wilbur becomes bored and lonely just drifting around the house, so he and Mortimer set off (invisibly) to go to school. All sorts of confusion results from pencils that write by themselves, books that turn their own pages, and voices that come from thin air, but eventually, the boys are accepted by their teachers (the students think from the very start that ghosts are great fun), and school days proceed more or less normally for the rest of the book. Of course, Mr. Temple's account of an early election does not exactly agree with the version told by the head of the local Historical Society, a descendant of the victor in said election...which leads us to...

The Museum House Ghosts, which continues the story into summer vacation. The boy-ghosts play with their former classmates; their parents practice appearing and giving guided tours of the house; and they all try very hard not to upset the workmen who are converting the house to a museum. A distant Temple relative has bought the house and donated it to the town for a museum, and the banker has solved the "haunting" problem by hiring the Temples as guides and caretakers.

These two books are very light, rather inoffensive items (although the adult world may not appreciate the fun poked at it) and will delight the Bobbsey twins-Hardy boys crowd. They are definitely recommended over those two and most other "series." The illustrations are apparently adult attempts at third-grade art and, as such, not too successful, but the text describes the action and the characters so that those who are extremely annoyed by the pictures need not look at them. Children will probably decide they can draw better and proceed to do so.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

BABAR'S MOON TRIP by Laurent de Brunhoff
Random House, Fall 1969 Abt. 18 p. $1.95 Age level: 6-9

20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA from the story by Jules Verne, retold by Albert G. Miller Designed by Paul Taylor Illus by Gwen Gordon and Dave Chambers
Random House, Oct. 1969 Abt. 23 p. $3.95 Age level: 7-12

Even if you're an infrequent bookstore visitor, you've probably noticed the large selection of pop-up books now on the market for children. Two of these will be of interest to LUNA readers. *Babar's Moon Trip* features King Babar, an elephant, his Queen Celeste, and other inhabitants of Celesteville made famous in a whole series of Babar books by de Brunhoff. The incidents in Babar's trip follow those of Apollo astronauts very closely: blast off, course correction, space walk, moon landing, rock gathering and blast off from the moon. For interest there is a stowaway.

20,000 Leagues is a very much shortened version of the classic. Here the pop-ups, pull-tabs and turn-wheels are much more elaborate and scrumptious than in Babar, but Babar has more. To quote my husband, these books are "groovy."

--Joyce Post

NEVER-EMPTY retold by Letta Schatz Illus by Sylvie Selig
Follett, 1969 48 p. $3.95 Age level: 7-12

The evils of greed is a recurring theme in folktales. This one is from Africa. Hare worked hard in the fields growing food for his large family. Quite by accident he became the owner of Never-Empty, a magic spoon that gave all who called upon it a huge feast. One day, while Hare's children were left to guard Never-Empty, Elephant came along, forced the children to show him Never-Empty, ate the feed it produced plus the spoon itself. Hoping for another miracle, Hare returned to the spot where he happened upon Never-Empty and sure enough was presented with Swing-and-Sting, a stick which beat all who called upon it, and stopped only upon the recitation of a magic verse. Hare waited for Elephant, presented him with the stick, but never told him the magic verse. Elephant was never seen again and Hare went back to tending his fields.

--Joyce Post

OFF INTO SPACE! SCIENCE FOR YOUNG SPACE TRAVELERS by Margaret O. Hyde. Illus by Bernice Myers
McGraw-Hill, 1969 3d ed. 63 p. $3.95 Age level: 9-12

The young scientist is asked to imagine he is going to the moon via earth rocket, space taxi, space station, space taxi and moon rocket. All along the way the author, who has written many science books for children, describes, very simply, some of the many peculiarities of space science. Among other things, we learn about gravity and weightlessness, photosynthesis, space food, water purification, space weathermen, hydroponics (here, as with photosynthesis, the principle is explained without using those big words), moon transportation and the difficulties of playing lunar baseball. We are also told of the known characteristics of the other planets. Mrs. Hyde also describes simple experiments a child can do to illustrate some of the scientific principles involved. The black and white illustrations certainly make the book much more appealing than if it were just all text. The fact that this book is in its third edition indicates its success with young readers.

--Joyce Post

ANSWERS ABOUT THE MOON, STARS AND PLANETS by Frederick Smithline
Illus by Raul Minna Mora, James Ponter & Denny McMains
Grosset & Dunlap, Oct. 1969 61 p. $1.95 Age level: 9-12

FROM EARTH TO THE MOON WITH SPARTY SPACEMAN by V. Stinar
Exposition Press, 1969 25 p. $3.00 Age level: 0

The writer of non-fiction for children has many techniques at his disposal. Each of these books illustrates one of these techniques.

Answers About simply asks questions such as "How was the moon formed? What is an eclipse of the sun? What is Uranus like? How do astronomers measure distance? How can I learn the names of the stars and constellations?" etc. and then follows with a simple but accurate answer. The 52 questions are sometimes accompanied by illustrations (there could be more and they could be better) and there is a detailed index which greatly enhances the book's usefulness. A good buy at this price.

Sparty Spaceman is a fine example of how not to use another technique. If a writer knows his craft well he can weave his facts into a good story and thus, while being primarily entertaining, he also informs. Unfortunately V. Stinar fails miserably in her attempt to tell about the Mercury, Gemini, Surveyor and Apollo spacecraft. The illustrations contribute nothing, aesthetically or factually, and we constantly get written down statements such as "Surveyor is the moon probe which when leaving earth lands on the moon to get much information about the moon for the earth men." What so many people fail to see is that children can be presented with quite complex information -- witness Captain Kangaroo's explanation of the Apollo spacecraft and mission. The binding is very poor and the cost of $3.00 is exorbitant. Yes, you guessed it, Exposition Press is a vanity publisher. Friend Sparty promises to return someday to tell us "the story of how the earthmen [will] go into space to Mars and to Venus and outer space." We will all be watching for him, won't we?

--Joyce Post

THE MERMAID'S DAUGHTER by Joyce Gard
Holt, Oct. 1969 319 p. $4.50 Age level: 11 up

Astria has been chosen as the mermaid's daughter -- the representative among her people of the Great Goddess, to whom the Scilly Islands, on which they live, are a shrine. Led by the spirit of her dead nurse, she finds a young Iberian prince half-drowned on the shore, helps restore him to life and health, and marries him. Because of her vow never to leave the islands, she remains behind when he returns to Iberia to lead a guerrilla band in a tribal feud, and, hearing that he has died in battle, later marries her cousin Justinius and is released from her vows to travel to Britain where he is stationed in a Roman garrison. Justinius is killed during an uprising, and Astria returns to her home island to find that her Iberian husband is very much alive and has returned to her.

Joyce Gard has produced a very good story here, and the elements of romantic love, coupled with suitable dashes of action and suspense, are sure to attract the young-teen girl readers. There is a problem, however, when one considers the background of the decaying Roman Empire against which the story is told. It is doubtful that the readers who will enjoy the plot will have the necessary background in history to understand the political turbulence and social instability to which references are made, and this may discourage youngsters who would otherwise enjoy the book immensely.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

THE WIZARD OF WASHINGTON SQUARE by Jane Yolen Illus by Ray Cruz
World, Oct. 1969 126 p. $3.75 Age level: 7-11

This delightful fantasy about David, who just moved to New York last week, Leilah, who is a native, and the second class wizard who lives behind the little black door in the Washington Square arch will be enjoyed by just about all children, but most of all by Manhattan children, and very most of all by Greenwich Village children. The plot is a slight, amusing one, and even the villain is not really frightening, but rather funny.

Ray Cruz has captured the "feel" of Washington Square in his illustrations, and Jane Yolen's description of the blase native New Yorkers, the fainting lady tourist, and the bearded men and long-haired women are priceless, as is Leilah's statement that you don't read a petition in the Village, you just sign it.

Incidentally, Leilah tells David that her name means "dark as night" and reminds him that she is just that, but nobody makes a fuss over it.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

CHARLOTTE SOMETIMES by Penelope Farmer Illus by Chris Connor
Harcourt, Brace, Oct. 1969 192 p. $4.95 Age level: 10-14

Charlotte was Charlotte in the present when she fell asleep on her first night at boarding school, but the next morning when she awoke she was Clare, and the year was 1918 -- Clare had taken her place in the present. Clare and Charlotte exchanged places on alternate days until Charlotte and Clare's sister Emily were sent to lodgings with the Chisel Browns and no longer slept at the school. So Charlotte was caught in Clare's time and Clare in hers. Charlotte generally adjusted well to life in 1918 until she and Emily were sent back to school in disgrace for such misdemeanors as breaking up a seance and going off unescorted to join the Armistice celebrations. Charlotte slept in Clare's bed once more and the next morning was back in her own time. They never traded places again.

This is an intriguing story which examines the possibility of time-transference from a somewhat different viewpoint from the one usually encountered: Clare and Charlotte have similar but not identical personalities, both have a younger sister, both have lost one of their parents and both are sleeping in the same bed in the same room at the same boarding school. However, by Charlotte's time, Clare has been dead for a long while so her presence does not bend reality by her existing twice at the same time. While reading the book, one is willing to accept this phenomenon as a possibility, and it seems logical that time should turn upon itself once again in the end and a grownup Emily send Charlotte the toys given to them so long ago by Miss Chisel-Brown. Definitely a book which imaginative little girls will enjoy.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

OF REVIEWS AND REVIEWING *Continued from Page 6*

like the book, and from whom and where the work is available if not published by a major publisher. A review may be witty in its own right but never at the expense of clarity. The basic function of a review is to tell enough about a book to enable readers to decide whether or not they want to read it. To carefully dissect a work and make value judgments is to leave the world of reviewing and enter the world of criticism, a far different kettle of fish, a related world but still different. A famous sage once put it "a reviewer tells you if you'll like a book; a critic tells you if it's good."

Reviews

THE AVENGERS OF CARRIG by John Brunner. Dell 0356, Oct. 1969. 157 p. 50¢

The author likely conceived this story as a swashbuckling adventure on a primitive world, but unhappily it doesn't come off, buckling where it should swash. The major problem is that most of the plot promises are never developed. The giant pterodactyl-like creatures who seem to be the very nub of the story are completely neglected. The girl who is introduced as a main character -- the secret agent on this world -- gets lost in the shuffle, and most of the other events sort of solve themselves with the aid of a very minor character in an offhand way. The result is a kind of sagging all around. Nor does the writer's style add any buoyancy.

--Samuel Mines

LAND OF UNREASON by Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp. Ballantine 01814, Jan. 1970. 240 p. 95¢ (hardcover: Holt, 1942)

This book is for the part of us that never really grows up. An adult would find it enjoyable; a child of ten would too, although he might find it a bit long for his attention. This book would be useless to anyone however, no matter what his age, if he had lost his Sense-of-Wonder.

Fred Barber, a grown-up, is kidnapped by the Little People to amuse Queen Titania. The book chronicles his adventures through Fairyland and its provinces. As far as I can tell there is no moral, no logic. It is purely for the delight of the imagination.

I am very glad that this book has been reprinted. It is marvelous, and it's a shame it has been out of print as long as it has. I'm not sure why this has been called "adult" fantasy -- much of its beauty is its almost childlike innocence. I hope all of Lin Carter's Adult Fantasy has this high quality. Recommended.

---Jan Slavin

ORBIT 5 edited by Damon Knight. Putnam, Sept. 1969. 222 p. $4.95 (paperback: Berkley Medallion X1778, Dec. 1969. 75¢)

Knight's anthologies of original sf have up to this point been almost consistently entertaining, and sometimes brilliant, but ORBIT 5 falters a bit. In some places it falls flat on its face. There are several fine stories here, such as Kate Wilhelm's haunting "Somerset Dreams," Carol Carr's superbly ethnic "Look, You Think You've Got Troubles," Ursula LeGuin's "Winter's King," and Kit Reed's "Winston." There are a few mediocre pieces (take 'em or leave 'em) such as Avram Davidson's "The Roads, the Roads, the Beautiful Roads," R.A. Lafferty's "The Configuration of the North Shore," and Philip Latham's "The Rose-Bowl Pluto Hypothesis." Then there are some outright flops. "The Time Machine," by Langdon Jones, is muddled and sexy and vaguely educational and rather boring. "Paul's Treehouse," by Gene Wolfe, is a bit of paranoia of the "look-the-world's-going-to-hell-and-here-come-the-storm-troopers" variety. "The Price," by C. Davis Belcher, is just a teensy bit science fictional and largely ludicrous. "The History Makers," by James Sallis, is (to me) poetic but incomprehensible. "The Big Flash," by Norman Spinrad, is fast-moving and entertaining but totally unbelievable.

Good stories here, worth reading, but sometimes in bad company.

--Greg Bear

THE MYSTERY OF ATLANTIS by Charles Berlitz. Grosset & Dunlap, Oct. 1969 ix, 205 p. $5.95

Sigh. For years I have been lamenting the fact that L. Sprague de Camp's *Lost Continents* is out of print. I continue to lament. Charles Berlitz is not a complete nut about Atlantis and many of the wilder statements are prefaced with "it is believed by some Atlantologists that...." Still, to find that about three-quarters of the book rephrases information found in *Lost Continents* reinforces my belief that a reprint is in order. Mr. Berlitz's book is available and half a loaf is always better than none. It also has the virtue of being rather up to date. The popular belief about lemming migrations is brought into the discussion of drifting continents and, of course, the eels figure in things but even if the book tends to be pro-Atlantis, it still is a reference source for beliefs on Atlantis. Useful, but as a stop-gap until *Lost Continents* is reprinted.

--J.B. Post

THE CONJURE WOMAN by Charles W. Chesnutt. University of Michigan Press, Sept. 1969. 229 p. $4.95, $2.45 paper

As social historians or as literary historians we can profit from these stories. A Northerner goes south after the war of the Rebellion for reasons of health and settles in North Carolina. Each of the seven stories is told within the Yankee's story by Uncle Julius, an elderly Negro who attaches himself to the narrator and the narrator's wife as a coachman. Julius is a crafty old fellow who is full of stories, stories with a ghostly slant which alter the narrator's actions for Julius' interests. A story of metamorphosis of men into mules results in the narrator buying a horse from Julius' friend; a story of a haunted tree made into an out building gets the building given to Julius' church group. The narrator's wife also sees horror in the casual mention of families being broken up by slave holders (the stories Julius tells always take place before the War). The stories told by Julius are rather hard to read because they are written in dialect. Being a child of my time, I am also offended by Julius constantly calling himself "jus' a po' nigger." Admitting that this is a very useful and important book in some circles, especially because of the introduction by Robert Farnsworth, we can also admit that it probably has no place, or a very minor one, in fan canon.

--J.B. Post

THE SLAVES OF LOMOORO by Albert Augustus, Jr. Powell Sci Fi PP 189, October 1969. 203 p. 95¢

In a word -- NOWHERE. No serious reader of sci-fi should consider wasting twenty-five cents, much less ninety-five cents, on this trifle. The author's combination of a hackneyed plot and a failure to resolve the novel's basic conflict contribute heavily to the ennui. Briefly, three passengers barely escape the explosion of their space craft to become marooned on little-known Lomooro. Immediately after landing, their emergency craft is destroyed which prevents them from obtaining any off-world assistance. This is precisely their situation at the end of the novel. They spend the major portion of the book in a slavery that they could have easily escaped. The author allows them to ignore their only chance of escape; little effort is made to contact another emergency craft that also landed on Lomooro. In short, I found Mr. Augustus's first attempt at sci-fi dismal and not worth the money.

--John F. Osborne

THE NEW SPACE ENCYCLOPAEDIA: A GUIDE TO ASTRONOMY AND SPACE EXPLORATION. Dutton, Sept. 1969. 316 p. $13.95

The third edition, and the first one published in this country, of a rather good, if overpriced, book is one of those titles everyone should look through. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs and paintings by David Hardy (who is almost as good as "C.B."). Pretty much standard format: alphabetical entries, cross-references, diagrams. The information is as correct as anything can be in a changing field. A good, solid reference book for us space-happy folk.

--J.B. Post

CARDER'S PARADISE by Malcolm Levene. Walker, Oct. 1969. 184 p. $4.95

In some utopian future, leisure has become good and work evil, and those atavists who dare to suggest that man needs work for the good of his soul are promptly bundled off to an island penal colony where they are handed a sledge hammer, escorted to a pile of rocks and bidden to make little ones out of big ones.

Personally I found myself applauding the sentence on each of these characters -- a dreary and wordy bunch at best. They talk a great deal and seem to suffer a lot, especially when they find a prison break is being planned; but they evoke precious little sympathy. They lost me early.

--Samuel Mines

THE SHIP WHO SANG by Anne McCaffrey. Walker, Dec. 1969. 248 p. $4.95 (paperback: Ballantine 01881, March 1970. 95¢)

Not formally a "novel," but rather a series of closely interrelated novelettes, this one is still a winner. The title story (from the April 1961 F&SF) introduces Helva, a human brain taken from a useless infant body and wired into a space-going ship. Each ship so equipped is a "partnership" -- the human/mechanical brain and a selected "brawn," or pilot. The book relates Helva's relationships with various brawns, the first of which she makes the "mistake" of developing affection for and suffers a trauma upon losing him.

"The Ship Who Mourned" (Analog, March 1966) teams Helva with her first female pilot and their mission, a truly female one, restores some of Helva's confidence and gives her encouragement, encouragement which is almost lost when, in "The Ship Who Killed" (Galaxy, October 1966) Helva is teamed with a death-wish driven brawn and must also face the problem of a sister ship gone mad.

"Dramatic Mission" (Analog, June 1969) has Helva acting as transportation for an up-tight group of thespians, whose personal problems threaten to wreck their performances. Shakespere's *Romeo and Juliet* was never performed in such a manner as it is here! "The Ship Who Dissembled" (as "The Ship Who Disappeared", If, March 1969) and "The Partnered Ship" provide a happy conclusion as Helva finally gets over the shock of losing her first brawn and finds a brawn she would want permanent partnership with.

I don't generally enjoy books such as this, that is a collection of interrelated novelettes, generally preferring one long smooth flowing narrative. I am of the belief that these novelettes could have been rewritten into such a narrative. However, considering the outcome as it appears in *The Ship Who Sang*, I cannot say that I am truly disappointed. The main point is that the personality of Helva comes through strongly and she becomes real, and this is a measure of Anne McCaffrey's-genius.

--David C. Paskow

AGENT OF ENTROPY by Martin Siegel. Lancer 74-573, Oct. 1969. 189 p. 75¢

I am not much of a *Peanuts* fan, but I seem to recall one series of strips in which that idiot beagle, Snoopy, is writing a novel, and it goes something like this: "The night was dark and stormy. A muffled figure slunk down the street. Suddenly a pirate ship appeared on the horizon. A shot rang out. The Maid screamed." You get the idea? The blurb says *Agent of Entropy* was never before published. It shouldn't have been published this time either. --Samuel Mines

THE COSMIC EYE by Mack Reynolds. Belmont B60-1040. Sept. 1969. 157 p. 60¢

This is Mack Reynolds' version of *1984* -- I mean Orwell's *1984*. Reynolds uses the super-spy state as a platform to expound various social ideas, but although his heart is in the right place, there didn't seem to be anything startlingly novel or original about them. Nothing you haven't seen many times before. The action in this story limps and when it comes to the climax I would guess that Reynolds simply didn't know what to do with his main character -- the rebel against the Big Brother society -- and so finishes him off in a rather unsatisfactory manner. Not too successful. --Samuel Mines

THE ICE SCHOONER by Michael Moorcock. Berkley Medallion X1749, Oct. 1969 207 p. 60¢

A simple adventure tale of a time when a new ice age blankets the entire earth with a thick sheet of ice. Transportation, what there is of it, is by sailing ships equipped with ice runners, most technology being lost. The trouble with this tale is mostly lack of plot. Very little happens in its 200 pages of quest for the fabulous buried mythical city of New York. What does happen is painfully predictable and the author drags it out interminably. Writing is pretty much old fashioned pulp. --Samuel Mines

LOST WORLD OF TIME by Lin Carter. Signet P4068, Nov. 1969. 128 p. 60¢

As Carter says himself in LUNA this is one of the "sword and sorcery" genre in which he is apparently specializing. Although the locale is Zarkandu, lost world of time, the accents are strictly feudal England complete with knights, castles, much swordplay and even a band of merry outlaws in Lincoln green holed up in the wildwood, whose long bows and arrows come to the rescue of the beleagured garrison in the very nick of time. Granted this is well enough done, if somewhat purple in prose, it is straightforward cut-and-thrust stuff with no faint resemblance to science fiction. Fighting is continuous blood and adjectives flow like borsht and every move is about as predictable and stereotyped as it is possible to get. As to sorcery -- there is only one small hint of it and that points up a kind of flaw in the plot. The barbarians are beating at the gates, but they can't get through the narrow pass more than one or two at a time, which gives the outnumbered defenders something of a chance to hold them back. But the barbarians have a magic doorway through which they come to kidnap the princess and then go back again with her. Why didn't they use their magic doorway to funnel a lot of soldiers in and attack the defenders in the rear instead of beating their brains out against the pass? This might be useful for a train ride, if you are so inclined -- you can read it in less than an hour.
--Samuel Mines

ORWELL'S FICTION by Robert A. Lee. University of Notre Dame Press, 1969 xvii, 188 p. $8.50

Mr. Lee believes that the writings of George Orwell have been examined only from the viewpoint of thoughts they contain. He attempts to redress the balance by examining Orwell as a writer. One cannot avoid describing a writer's life and thoughts when describing and dissecting his writings but Mr. Lee does give greater stress to the usual literary canons of imagery, style, metaphor, and the rest of the garbage than critics have heretofore. Mr. Lee sees a definite line of development in Orwell from the earliest fiction (*Burmese Days*) to *1984*. He contends that while the press was always suspect, it took the Spanish Civil War to force Orwell to finally admit that truth and fact are not absolutes to which one can cling. A rather good book on Orwell and one which should at least be scanned.

--J.B. Post

SPLINTERS: A NEW ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN MACABRE FICTION edited by Alex Hamilton. Walker, August 1969 (c1968) 237 p. $5.95

The authors of these stories (Jane Gaskell, Michael Baldwin, Hugh Atkinson, Derwent May, William Trevor, Anthony Burgess, John Brunner, Richard Nettell, Patrick Boyle, Montague Haltrecht, John Burke, J.A. Cuddon, Peter Brent, and Alex Hamilton) have only rarely given us science fiction and only occasionally ghostly fiction (any fiction is really fantasy). The term "macabre" does describe the off-beat nature of these tales rather well, they are mostly sickies of one sort or another. As a couple of instances, Jane Gaskell's "Jane" tells of a family which ignores the daughter of the house and lavishes its affection on a snake which finally eats them, and Montague Haltrecht's "Indoor Life" chronicles an English Jewish Mother's destructive obsession with a home. All in all, a collection for entertaining reading but wait for the paperback.

--J.B. Post

TO LIVE AGAIN by Robert Silverberg. Doubleday, Sept. 1969. 231 p. $4.95

Bob Silverberg could give writing lessons to a lot of professionals churning out books these days. *To Live Again* is a tight little gem and a delight to read. It fills admirably every basic need of both science fiction and the novel form, combining a plot inseparable from science with good writing, action and character development. The plot idea, in fact, is fairly novel, with an original approach to immortality, or shall we say, man's dream of immortality. Briefly it works like this: people with money enough to afford the expensive process, have themselves taped at intervals, setting down their memories, ideas, dreams, desires -- everything about themselves. A third dimension is added -- in this outpouring of a mind, the personality comes through as well.

When they die, others may choose to take on their "personna" or personality. In so doing they add the deceased's mind and experience to their own, while the dead person lives again, sharing the mind and body of a new partner. The wealthy are able to carry four or six such personalities with them.

To Live Again recounts the struggle for the personna of a financial tycoon between his blood heirs and an arrogant outsider. The action is brilliantly handled and even the sex, of which there is considerable, plays a role and is not dragged in by the nearest appendage. Don't miss this one.

--Samuel Mines

INVASION OF MARS by Garrett P. Serviss. Powell PP173, August 1969. 201 p. 95¢

This is the first paperback edition of *Edison's Conquest of Mars*, which ran originally as a serial in the *New York Evening Journal* in 1898 as an unauthorized sequel to H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*.

The hero is, of course, the intrepid Thomas Edison, who with the backing of such world leaders as Queen Victoria, Kaiser Wilhelm, and the King of Siam, puts together a fleet of 100 electric-powered spaceships and blasts off for Mars.

The book has a quaint, old-fashioned charm to it -- sort of like an old Sears Roebuck catalog. It's fun to read, and especially to see how the writers of the 1890's coped with the problems of space suits, death rays, communicating with aliens, and interplanetary war.

--Joe Schaumburger

MOON FLIGHT ATLAS by Partick Moore. Rand McNally, Nov. 1969. 48 (big) p. $5.95

For one dollar less Rand McNally also sells a great collection of photographs of the Earth taken on various Gemini Flights (Around the World) which I think is a great bargain. Not that any great thing is wrong with Mr. Moore's work. It's sort of a big picture book with very good drawings and good photographs, easy to understand text telling us all sorts of things about the Moon, Mars, and space flight, and a certain enthusiasm for the subject. I think what makes me so cool toward it is the gimmicky feel of the book: oversized, section headings in IBM machine-readable typeface, more picture than text, etc. Not a bad book for a precocious little kid to get as a gift. --J.B. Post

THE WIND IN THE ROSE-BUSH AND OTHER STORIES OF THE SUPERNATURAL by Mary Wilkins Freeman. Garrett Press, 1969. 237 p. $9.95

Volume 53 of the "American Short Story Series" is a straight reprint of the 1903 Doubleday edition with the Peter Newell illustrations. The six stories ("The Wind in the Rose-Bush," "The Shadows on the Wall," "Luella Miller," "The Southwest Chamber," "The Vacant Lot," and "The Lost Ghost") are all dated and all genteel: ladies' stories. Literary historians might have to own this reprint but the rest of us can read the stories in the pages of Doc Lowndes' magazines -- when we can get them. --J.B. Post

KRAZY KAT by George Harriman. Madison Square Press, Distr. by Grosset & Dunlap, Sept. 1969. 168 p. $7.95

The comics of the past have come back to us. Oh, for years we have had *Pogo* and *Peanuts* books and I'm deliberately ignoring the Big Little Books, but of late we have had older strips brought back to us: both Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon are preserved in hard cover. And now we have Krazy Kat. While the adventures of Krazy are not strictly speaking science fictional, they will be enjoyed by anyone except the most jaded sophisticate who is above simple slapstick. The story is rather simple but so many variations have been worked on the basic theme that we can call it a cycle of myth. Ignatz the mouse throws bricks at Krazy Kat, bringing down the wrath of Officer Pup. Simple? Hah, just look at the variations. Not all of the strips were brilliant, but on the whole the balance rests on the side of clever funniness. I only wish someone would give Krazy speech lessons. --J.B. Post

BRAK THE BARBARIAN VERSUS THE MARK OF THE DEMONS by John Jakes. Paperback Library 63-184, Sept. 1969. 159 p. 60¢

THE LOST CONTINENT by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Ace 49291, Sept. 1969. 124 p. 60¢

John Jakes' Brak the Barbarian, born in the pages of the old (1963) Ziff-Davis *Fantastic* returns. Brak continues onward toward Khurdisan but this time his journey is interrupted by the inhumanly deadly warriors of Quran. Though Brak's sinewy thews see him through, a terrible curse follows him in the desert, a curse which strikes without warning leaving its victims horribly branded. In his first adventure, Brak battled a sorceress and won over the powers of the supernatural; can he repeat his victory? Read John Jakes' introduction.

The Lost Continent ("Beyond Thirty") is a reissue of an earlier Ace edition, only ten cents more costly. The story is of a devastated Europe and the "Thirty" of the original title refers to longitude. Jefferson Turck flies past this longitude on a voyage of discovery and peril. With a girl, Victory, Turck soon finds himself a futuristic Tarzan as he battles the perils of a barbaric Europe.

So-so Burroughs is, to some, very good, and the package is quite handsomely adorned with a Frazetta cover.

--David C. Paskow

TWO DOZEN DRAGON EGGS by Donald A. Wollheim. Powell Sci Fi PP181, Sept. 1969. 207 p. 95¢

Twenty-four short stories gleaned from Wollheim's collection over the years. Forry Ackerman's blurb on the cover calls them "masterpieces of sci-fi literature" but I find it difficult to agree. Most of them are fragments built of a very thin morsel and most of them are curiously old fashioned. This may be a strange adjective to apply to story ideas which ideally should be timeless, but that is just the point -- these ideas are not timeless and they show their age, appearing now to be relatively unsophisticated and innocent. True, there is a certain humor in the thought of a man building a space craft (to fly to the moon) out of boards and sealing it with tar, but it is stretching the humor too thin to accept such outrageous naivete. Most of the stories are like that and while I argue with no man who considers them gems, they undoubtedly are only for the true collector who cherishes every bit of science fiction's past.

--Samuel Mines

THE LIQUID MAN by C.B. Gilford. Lancer 74-560, Oct. 1969. 222 p. 75¢

One day, Billy Pearson saw a man (or was it a man?) walk into a pool of water...and disappear. Shortly after this, Paul Vandrak returns home to his father Dr. Gerald Vandrak and more strange things begin to happen. Spots of water take on a life of their own. Paul Vandrak undergoes a strange transformation...and a nightmare begins.

Paul Vandrak, as a scientist at the Space Agency, had been conducting some experiments with rats when one of his subjects literally melted before his eyes. Now Paul has the same ability, only to his horror, it is out of control.

How does one stop a man with the ability to turn himself into a completely fluid form? And what if that man were mad?

An interesting premise and an interesting, if somewhat overly melodramatic novel. Nevertheless, there were times when I found this one extremely difficult to put down.

--David C. Paskow

LILITH by George MacDonald. Ballantine 01711, Sept. 1969. 274 p. 95¢

Ballantine, in its reprinting of old fantasy classics, has been developing a consistently excellent series. Not only does it do fans a service in bringing back volumes they're never likely to read otherwise, but it keeps in print for the general public books which represent an almost lost era in the history of sf and fantasy.

Lilith is a true gem. Coming from an author of Calvinist "persuasion" who tried his hand at the ministry, the book is as much a surprise as *Alice in Wonderland* is coming from Charles Dodgson -- some of the things that occur in it are entirely unexpected. For the Victorian psychoanalyst there's symbolism in magnificent quantities. For inveterate freak-outs there's all the dreaminess of a hashish binge, without the hash -- in short, something for almost every type of fantasy fan.

The plot cannot be described justly. Comparisons with other suthors -- Hodgson, Carroll, Kafka -- is inevitable, but unsatisfactory. MacDonald, in *Lilith*, is his own man, and thanks to BB for bringing him back.

--Greg Bear

MASQUE WORLD by Alexei Panshin. Ace 02320, Sept. 1969. 157 p. 60¢

This is the third Anthony Villiers novel, and not one of the better ones (if there are any). Anthony Villiers is a "gentleman adventurer among the planets of the interstellar Nashuite Empire," vaguely based on The Saint (Villiers' title is Lord Charteris) but somehow, the whole idea never quite works out.

The plot is hard to describe, since the whole book is so New Wavish that you need a microscope to find one. The book continues Villiers' adventures on Delbalso, a planet whose peculiar laws and people generate enormous amounts of confusion. As usual Villiers' companion Torve the Trog (a giant toad-like creature) lacks proper travel documents, and a considerable portion of what little plot there is, devotes itself to Villiers' attempts to remedy the problem.

If you're looking for another *Rite of Passage*, this isn't it. On the other hand, if you suffer from insomnia, you'll find this book far superior to any sleeping pill on the market.

--Joe Schaumburger

THE FARTHEST REACHES edited by Joseph Elder. Pocket Books 75456, Sept. 1969. 177 p. 75¢

This anthology is another in a series of collections of never-before published stories and a fine one it is. Several of the selections (Poul Anderson's "Kyrie," Brian Aldiss' "The Worm that Flies," and Terry Carr's "The Dance of the Changer and the Three") have since appeared in the Carr and Wollheim edited *World's Best Science Fiction 1969* (Ace 91352, 95¢). Besides Anderson's tale of archetypal love and destruction among the stars, Aldiss' beautifully evocative tale of an alien ecology and Carr's equally fascinating evocation of alien life, there are nine other stories by Ballard, Brunner, Clarke, Jakes, Laumer, McKimmey, Silverberg, Spinrad and Vance.

Of these, if I had to choose favorites (and this collection doesn't make that easy) I'd select Ballard's "Tomorrow is a Million Years," a time movement story in the vein of the author's *The Crystal World*, Keith Laumer's mini-epic "Mind Out of Time" and Jack Vance's "Sulwen's Planet" which is, for want of a better description, "typical" Vance.

Not a bad apple in the bunch. This is one of the better buys.

--David C. Paskow

THE WARLOCK IN SPITE OF HIMSELF by Christopher Stasheff. Ace 87300, Sept. 1969. 285 p. 75¢

Here, at last, is the first successful blend of science fiction and sword-and-sorcery -- and one of the most delightful stories I've read in many a year.

The hero, Rod Gallowglass, is a galactic secret agent for SCENT (Society for the Conversion of Extraterrestrial Nascent Totalitarianism) sent to the planet Gramarye to root out any remaining pockets of PEST (Proletarian Eclectic State of Terra). For assistance he has one defective robot in the shape of a talking iron horse. And the planet he lands on is like something out of a fairy tale -- knights and princesses, witches, elves, ghosts, and werewolves. They're not hallucinations, or tricks, but the real McCoy. And the beggars are all on Welfare.

Mix in some rabble-rousers from PEST, a legion of evil time-travelers, and a little sex, and you have the ingredients of one of the most entertaining stories you've read in years. Don't miss it.

--Joe Schaumburger

THE LAST CONTINENT by Edmund Cooper. Dell 4655, September 1969. 156 p. 60¢

Edmund Cooper has written some fine novels in his time. Among them are *Deadly Image, Seed of Light* (both available in Ballantine editions) and *All Fool's Day* (Berkley). Recently a sex fantasy of his, *Five to Twelve* (the ratio of men to women in a future matriarchal society) saw publication in a condensed version in (ready for this?) *Cosmopolitan*, with hardcover by G.P. Putnam's Sons and paperback by Berkley.

Now we have *The Last Continent*, apparently an original from Dell (who have taken to issuing at least two sf titles monthly after having a relatively limited sf line, memorable mostly for Judith Merril's annual *Year's Best SF* anthologies). For an original *The Last Continent* can more than hold its own.

The time is an unspecified future when our planet is a ravaged nearly burnt-out husk. The last vestige of civilization exists on Noe Lantis (New Atlantis). Kymri is one of the inhabitants of Noi Lantis when he is "kidnapped" by "aliens" from space -- dark skinned aliens, providing a contrast to Noi Lantis's all white society.

It soon develops that these strangers are really natives of Earth, blacks who, after a racial war devastated our planet, fled to an outpost on Mars where they, armed with knowledge of science and technology, built a civilization similar to that existing on Earth before the conflict, a civilization now far superior (and thus "alien") to the feudal society of Noi Lantis.

Interrogation of the savage Kymri reveals that he is not quite as inferior as would be imagined. Kymri's chief interrogator, the female Mirlena, is sympathetic to Kymri's predicament and a growing bond between Kymri and Mirlena culminates in Mirlena convincing her fellow scientists to return to Earth and Noi Lantis for further investigation, an idea opposed by Lord Vengel, who despises the Earth savage and wishes all traces of (white) civilization on Earth destroyed.

Vengel is overruled and the "Martians" return to Earth, to encounter many surprises from the inferior civilization existing there. *The Last Continent* is one of those books where the reader reads on, spurred on by an intense desire to discover "what happens next"; the answers are always interesting.

--David C. Paskow

LADY OF THE SHADOWS by Dorothy Daniels. Paperback 63-255. Jan. 1970. 159 p. 60¢

Here is a ghost story which is somewhat unusual in that it is set in the 1890's (a fact which seems to have escaped the cover artist). Gabrielle Fanchon is brought to the Brady mansion ostensibly to teach the family French, and encounters a ghost that looks just like her. This book is nothing to rave about but it might be a good way to spend a little time.

--Joni Rapkin

MACROSCOPE by Piers Anthony. Avon W166, Oct. 1969. 480 p. $1.25

A stunning tour de force. *Macroscope* recaptures the tremendous glamour and excitement of science fiction, pounding the reader into submission with the sheer weight of its ideas which seem to pour in an inexhaustible flood. Faithful readers will remember the excitement of Smith's *Skylark* series which, whatever their shortcomings of style, overwhelmed the reader with new ideas in exactly the same way. The effect is one of opening up the mind to tremendous new horizons, to see worlds one never dreamed of and to struggle with concepts that enlarge the universe to frightening dimensions. Young readers stumbling onto science fiction for the first time experience this effect -- as though their minds were being washed clean of petty earthbound beliefs and prejudices, and their eyes were suddenly being opened to the unbelievable infinity of the universe.

One might pick at *Macroscope* -- it is probably a little too long and could be trimmed, but how many writers would dare to encompass in one book all of galactic history (not merely Earth's) a good deal of mythology, with bonuses of poetry and art? Anthony, moreover, has a good try at something which eluded Smith in the Skylark stories -- the creation of real characters instead of cardboard heroes and villains. If not entirely successful, his people are, at least, a great deal more interesting and quite a bit more credible.

If any fault could be found it is perhaps in just that attempt to give us too much. A long sequence when our intrepid quartet of space travelers at last penetrates the capsule which houses a mysterious "destroyer" which blasts Men's minds from outer space, was almost too much. The dream sequences here, in which each travels to other times and places, seem more keyed to pushing the author's curious hang-up on astrology than in advancing the plot. And the love story, entwined in all this, is not the most convincing part of the tale. But these are minor criticisms. *Macroscope* is an impressive piece of work and is not to be missed by anyone who enjoys science fiction.

--Samuel Mines

STAR GIANT by Dorothy Skinkle. Tower 43-275, 1969. 154 p. 60¢

An idea which crops up every now and then is that Earth is the penal colony, or the mental illness colony, for the rest of the galaxy. In *Star Giant*, Earth is the Devil's Island where political prisoners are banished from the planet Liban. The natives of Liban are giants -- seven to eight feet tall -- which makes the banishees outstanding on Earth, and has given rise to a considerable mythology of giants, from Polyphemus to Goliath and Hercules. Now this is an interesting concept -- that all the giants had a common origin -- but unhappily the author is not equipped to do justice to the theme. It comes out a banal and rather juvenile semi-suspense tale for the space opera set.

--Samuel Mines

SECRET OF THE BLACK PLANET by Milton Lesser. Belmont B75-1054, Oct. 1969 157 p. 75¢

For a pure space opera, this novel is outrageously overpriced.

With that out of the way, it's synopsis time. John Hastings, alias the Strong Man of Jupiter, has a nagging identity problem. He is not really sure who he should be -- John Hastings or Bok-kura, Strong Man of Jupiter. What he soon found out was that whoever he was, someone was trying to kill him.

So John Hastings ventures into space, in company with assorted Venusians and Martians as well as fellow Earthers to escape a peril that he's not quite sure of. His journeys lead him to the far reaches of space and to the remembrance of an artificial satellite, asteroid size, from which all life may have sprung. And it is here that his destiny awaits him.

Pure space opera, good reading but overpriced.

--David C. Paskow

THE UNENDING NIGHT by George H. Smith. Tower 43-304, 1969. 138 p. 60¢

This horrid specimen was once, in 1964, one of Monarch Books' offerings. Now, five years later it is "A Big T Science Fiction" from Tower Books, whose last legitimate sf offering was Jack Williamson's *Dragon Island.*

In incredibly stilted prose, this is the story of Lee Rilke and his sweetheart Miranda. Now Lee's uncle is a bit unwell in the head and, if left alone, will bring about the destruction of our planet. Of course, this is a no-no, so Lee must save the world himself.

If you're even tempted to buy this, peruse page 104 first; if you can take this kind of writing, you deserve to loose sixty cents.

--David C. Paskow

THE WEALTH OF MR. WADDY by H.G. Wells. Southern Illinois University Press, Dec. 1969. xxiii, 198 p. $5.95

Unless one is an ardent Wells collector or scholar my advice is "don't bother." This is the original draft for *Kipps*. Variants, corrections, and other matters are indicated, making this not the book to read for pleasure. Some of the chapters are merely sketches. Very useful for scholars, fans may ignore.

--J.B. Post

SHADOWS OF IMAGINATION: The Fantasies of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams ed. by Mark R. Hillegas. Southern Illinois University Press, 1969. xix, 170 p. $4.95

In 1966 an MLA conference discussed Tolkien and Lewis and from this sprang the book in hand. It is understandable that Williams should be included (for those who don't know his work, it's sort of literate Dennis Wheatley). They were all part of a group at Oxford with similar views and outlooks: they often read works in progress to each other. All three wrote fantasy (among other things). How perfect a book for a university press -- a collection of essays about the fantasy elements in these three authors. Well, gang, it isn't worth buying for most of us but some of the essays are worth reading. "Auld Hornie, F.R.S." by J.B.S. Haldane is once more brought back into print. Since Williams has been strangely neglected in fannish circles, the essays concerning him are informative. Strictly to be borrowed from libraries.

--J.B. Post

THE MENDELOV CONSPIRACY by Martin Caidin. Meredith Press, August 1969. 274 p. $5.95

The flying saucers -- pardon me, flying disks, not the winged sausages and other malarkey -- are real, and mechanical, and come from a hideaway deep in South America, 'way back in the inaccessible mountains and jungles. Really. And that's not all the plot Martin has managed to stuff into this marvelously concocted novel. A scientist, you see, has discovered a nicely scientific (though nicely pseudo) and "new" power supply -- that is, squeezing an atom's electron orbits, thus storing energy, and letting them spring back. Thus releasing the stored energy. So what a group of nice scientific types do is utilize this power supply to provide energy for an electrogravitic (or is it electromagnetic? Something electro) system that pushes against the magnetic field of the Earth. Or something like that. They build flying disks. They decide to save the world from imminent nuclear self-destruction by crusading incognito around the globe and presenting the nuclear powers with ultimatums -- disarm, or prepare to be blown to bits.

So along comes a nosy reporter, hot on the trail of a UFO that hovered over a SAC base and drowned all power systems. He discovers the Mendelov Conspiracy, which is headed, of course, by a well-known anthropologist-sociologist named Mendelov. And, after he's kidnapped, he tells them that their scheme isn't worth a plugged nickel. It would appeal directly to the suicidal atavistic brains of those in nuclear command. It would be like lighting the fuse instead of cutting it off.

With much consternation, the scientists decide he's right, and use his plan instead. Which is to utilize the power source to provide a laser-like beam scaled up to shoot neutrons and detonate stored nuclear weapons from a distance. Not only do they blow up missiles in their silos (with but a fraction -- say one-tenth -- of the maximum megatonnage) but also nuclear reactors. Not only do they not discriminate on where the damned things are when they blow them up, but it seems like they chose some of the most hideously inconvenient areas to do it in. Like residential districts in Moscow. Like places where radioactive fallout can drift over heavily populated cities. The theory is, that if these "accidents" keep on happening, the whole world will disarm, and thus mankind will be saved.

Caidin's logic in this insanely readable novel is the logic of a desperate madman, granted he believes what he writes. First objection: so many of these "accidental" detonations are carried off, one wonders what the ecological side-effects might be. We're just beginning to find out about that little aspect. Like -- infant mortality rates going up a hundred percent or more? Strontium 90 deposit chains working their wily way into mankind's more important foodstuffs, or turning ocean food into inedibly "hot" material? First objection, part two: God (Mendelov? The reporter?) knows how many people are killed. Certainly in the millions, and all because a bunch of people in high places believe that nuclear was is absolutely one hundred percent inevitable, given enough time.

Pooh. If the world is going to be saved by people thinking like that, maybe it should be allowed to follow its private path to hell in a handbasket.

Second objection: How the devil did this thing get published? The plot is hackneyed, deceptively filled with jargon from a high-school physics book, and full of the aforementioned rotten logic.

Besides, Caidin, like Crichton in *The Andromeda Strain*, and like innumerable others, doesn't know the generic difference between a planetary system and a galaxy. Please! *Learn it!* --Greg Bear

THE INQUISITOR'S HOUSE by Robert Somerlott. Avon W160, Dec. 1969. 351 p. $1.25

Here is a "Bridge at San Luis Rey"-type story, except that the bridge becomes a seance and the accident is a flash fire. Little by little, the stories of the five who died and several who didn't, are pieced together along with the history of the house they were in, to make something more than an ordinary ghost story. This is not the kind of book that you can read in an hour and forget just as quickly.

--Joni Rapkin

CREATURES OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS by Roger Zelazny. Doubleday, Sept. 1969 187 p. $4.50

Segments of this appeared in *If* and *New Worlds* in 1968. If you missed them, this is the basic scenario: Human immortals, some with genetic alterations, dominate the inhabited worlds and control the tides of Life and Death. In-fighting, plots and counter-plots occupy most immortals -- the masses either don't know what is going on, or don't care. The deposed ruler of the old order, the most powerful being in the hierarchy, is sporadically occupied with destroying a Thing that may, or may not, be God. His father and son -- one person -- manages to escape his current role as a tool of the new establishment in time to help against the Thing, and to aid in overthrowing the current order.

Some of the characters are Sun-eyed Set the Destroyer, Thoth Hermes Trismegistus -- The Prince Who Was A Thousand, Brotz the Norn, Vramin -- mad poet and fallen Angel of the Seventh Station, and Dog-Headed Anubis -- Master of the House of the Dead.

From this you can see that, like earlier Zelazny books, this one too exhales the fascinating mythological dust that links past and future. But this book succeeds -- and fails -- in different ways from *Lord of Light, This Immortal,* or *Isle of the Dead.*

The major causes for these differences are the ways Zelazny has chosen to tell the story: the lack of a single character with whom the reader can empathize -- as one could with Sam or Conrad; pacing which, with the exception of the first long segment, reflects the now-current mosaic pattern -- either early *Zanzibar* or late *Mission: Impossible;* and a variety of styles, ranging from spare under-statement to lyrical descriptive flights, to blunt slang, to run-on stream-of-(un)consciousness, to poetry.

The results? Zelazny's god-like characters remain at a distance from the reader, sacrificing empathy but, at times, taking on the flat, monumental power of Egyptian art. But the occasional slang jars this mood instead of relieving it. Some scenes take on a high, awe-filled majesty -- such as the description of the Citadel of Marachek-Karnek, that opening sequence in the House of the Dead, or Set's battle with The Nameless Thing that Cries In The Night. And yet, occasionally, the capitalization verges on a put-on. Style switches make for an uneven texture. At times the book seems almost an epic from an oral tradition -- but at other times it struck me as a stylistic exercise for its own sake or a deliberate self-parody. The basket-weaving of incident can be effective, but it never allows the plot to become more than a backdrop for wonder.

In sum: A better than average book, in the Zelazny tradition -- but one that makes me wish it could have been still better. Read and enjoy it as a well-sketched exercise... but, a few hours later you may be hungry again.

--Allyn B. Brodsky

THE PRESIDENTIAL PLOT by Stanley Johnson. Paperback Library 64-191, Oct. 1969. 159 p. 75¢

Plots against the President are a popular theme in books today -- factual and fictitious plots. This is a rather clever, highly fictitious plot, contained in a book that is closer to speculative fiction than science fiction. Basically, the CIA is trying to take over the office of the Presidency and thus the country, for the sake of the country and the people. Details would only spoil it for a prospective reader. The details, of which there are many, are ingenious, and often highly amusing. The only fault I found was that in places, events become too contrived -- I can imagine a Negro becoming President (it's been done before in fiction: Irving Stone's *The Man*) -- but not a rabble-rousing Black Panther type, not in the near future. Besides, is it really necessary for the plot? I think not. There is not as much suspense as in most novels of this sort, but it moves enough to hold the reader's attention. I would recommend it for straight rather than sf reading -- it's not entirely escape, now that the moon landing is a reality.

--Jan M. Slavin

DAMNATION ALLEY by Roger Zelazny. Putnam, Oct. 1969. 157 p. $4.95 (paperback: Berkley S1846, June 1970. 75¢)

Roger Zelazny is the master of expressionist mythology. He doesn't merely fill a story with "symbols" and "archetypes" -- he makes them stand for-something. *Damnation Alley* may be his most accomplished novel to date. Science fantasy rather than science fiction -- in that it alters present reality more to accommodate a timeless moral theme than to extrapolate or speculate about the future -- it breaks fresh ground in a sub-genre rarely properly exploited.

In Hell Tanner, Zelazny has created his most unusual hero: the last representative of Hell's Angels, a hardened criminal, and just about as unsympathetic a protagonist as one could imagine. That he can be transmuted into a figure whom the reader can feel with and feel for is a measure of Zelazny's talents -- and forms the basis of his parable of moral salvations.

Damnation Alley takes place in a post-atomic war world where, for some reason, the only remaining centers of population are in California and New England. The skies are wracked by storms that rain garbage everywhere, and mid-America is a nightmare land full of giant reptiles, radioactive craters, volcanoes and other dangers.

None of this makes any sense, taken literally -- but it doesn't have to. The chaos of Damnation Alley, as the continent's mid-section is called, is an expressionistic projection of the moral chaos within Tanner, an archetype of the "outsider" who rejects all the moral standards of humanity, who rejects humanity itself.

Tanner becomes a hero-by-necessity when a dying messenger from Boston brings word to California that New England is stricken with the plague and has no serum. With no other Good Samaritan available, a reluctant California pardons Tanner all his crimes to persuade him to carry the serum back across the Alley to Boston.

In an epic journey across the continent, the spiritual and the physical battles become one. As Tanner struggles against the Chaos without, he is also struggling against the Chaos within, to reassert a humanity he had almost forgotten. Just as he must at last abandon the armored car in which he has braved the nightmares of the Alley, he must emerge from the spiritual chrysalis he has built about himself.

Zelazny, taking his cue from Antoine de Saint-Exupery, relates the theme of salvation through duty to man's need to assert purpose in contrast to the chaos of nature -- this is made clear in the "setting without plot or characters," one of the passages added in expanding the story from the novella originally published in *Galaxy*.

The added material is by no means padding. The scenes of plague-stricken Boston, Tanner's dialogue about the "Big Machine," and his dream-vision about his mission as he nears Boston all add to the novel -- both in creating insight and heightening the epic sense of the theme.

Mythology is more than a catchword to Zelazny. He knows what it is -- and what to do with it. That makes *Damnation Alley* must reading -- and well worth the hardcover price.

--John J. Pierce

T ZERO by Italo Calvino. Harcourt, Sept. 1969. 152 p. $4.95 Trans. by William Weaver

The "t zero" in the title symbolizes "time zero" in a sequence which views everyday activities as the series of still frames which make up a motion picture. The question is, will lion and arrow meet before lion and man? and would it be better for the man to stay forever in the uncertainty of time zero or take the risk of a possibly unpleasant certainty in t^1 or t^2? This mixing of logic and probability with fiction is representative of the third part of the book. The first section presents more adventures of Everycell, otherwise known as Qfwfq, in which the soft moon drips all over a chromium planet, and the primal sea merges with today's mammalian "sea within." Part II speaks of that process basic to life itself -- reproduction. The cell describes its impressions upon dividing for the first time, then the narrator, (now a more complex, multicellular creature) falls in love. The chapter titles "Mitosis," "Meiosis" and "Death" are descriptive of the topics examined.

T Zero cannot be read in a hurry; it must be savored and considered in order to be enjoyed. It is definitely worth the effort.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

PRICKSONGS AND DESCANTS by Robert Coover. Dutton, Oct. 1969. 256 p. $5.95

This is a collection of stories by the author of *The Universal Baseball Association, Inc. J. Henry Waugh, Proprietor* (reviewed in LUNA Monthly 6, November 1969). Most of them are of only marginal interest to sf fans and I certainly would wait for the paperback edition if I were going to read this collection at all.

Coover's stories are madcap fantasies, sometimes horrifying for all their surface innocence, sometimes amusing, often whimsical. And sometimes, as in the case of "Seven Exemplary Fictions," horrifyingly whimsical. None of the stories are easy to read in the sense of being able to determine a plot structure and follow it through. In "The Magic Poker" you start out not knowing where you are, you continue through not quite certain of what is happening and finish up not knowing where you've been.

The credits tell us that some of the stories originally appeared in *Playboy, Olympia, Esquire* and *Evergreen Review*. To get any of them into F&SF would be stretching things a bit much, unless Judith Merril were editor, for only under her broad interpretation of 'sf' could Coover's collection fall into the genre.

--David C. Paskow

FLAME WINDS by Norvell W. Page. Berkley X1741, Sept. 1969. 144 p. 60¢

From the fourth issue of *Unknown* (June 1939) comes this tale of swords and sorcery. Against a lush almost Arabian Nights-like background, ex-Gladiator Prester John (Wan Tengri) comes to carve himself a fortune. To do this, however, he must face the wrath of Bourtai and his companion Wizards of Kasimer, who control the deadly flame winds (I wonder if this is where John Norman got his inspiration for the weapons of his Priest-Kings in his Counter-Earth series?).

Blood-and-Guts throughout, with a Jones cover in the Frazetta vein.

--David C. Paskow

THE TOUCH OF DEATH by John Creasey. Walker, Aug. 1969. 192 p. $4.50

Another in the Dr. Palfrey series, this pits Palfrey against the sinister substance known as (are you ready for this?) "fatalis." "Fatalis" is an ultra-deadly uranium refinement. Palfrey and his international organization recruit the services of Neil Banister who apparently harbors an immunity to the substance in an effort to trace the steps of the now dead discoverer of fatalis. Someone killed Professor Monk-Gilbert, the discoverer, whether they know they were successful or not. Someone is manufacturing fatalis. Banister's mission is to try to make contact with the unknown assassins. Banister's immunity and his relation with the late professor's niece are all that Palfrey and his super organization Z-5 have going for them; if they were to lose Banister, the world would be at the mercy of fatalis.

Corny at times, *The Touch of Death* is, nevertheless, another enjoyable thriller from the talented and many-faceted John Creasey.

--David C. Paskow

ALL HALLOW'S EVE by Charles Williams. Avon Bard YQ13, Dec. 1969. 239 p $1.45

THE GREATER TRUMPS by Charles Williams. Avon Bard YQ12, Oct. 1969. 221 p. $1.45

Before reading these two novels I had never heard of Charles Williams, even though I am an English major and in their introductions T.S. Eliot and William Lindsay Gresham speak highly of his abilities. Thankfully, I do not find myself in a position where I'd have to take exception to these distinguished critics' views.

All Hallow's Eve is a nightmarish tale of life beyond death, of two women who have died and found themselves in a strange afterlife, with glimpses into the world of the living. A third woman, under the influence of a Svengali-like Father Simon is able to cross the borderland between life and death. In a totally eerie and moody setting, good and evil are locked in a struggle to determine who will live and who will die. Not a pleasant novel to read and not recommended for people easily depressed, *All Hallow's Eve* is a first-rate spine-tingler.

The Greater Trumps is more mysticism than horror and never achieved the impact of *All Hallow's Eve*. Tarot cards, a gathering of people in a secluded spot and the fickle finger of fate combine to form a story of Man versus Destiny. Once again a moody atmosphere pervades the book and a fatal fascination compels the reader to continue reading to the last page.

The books are expensive, but they are packaged quite handsomely and worth the price, though *All Hallow's Eve* is more worth the cost than *The Greater Trumps*.

--David C. Paskow

THE REBEL WORLDS by Poul Anderson. Signet T4041, Oct. 1969. 141 p. 75¢

The well-known Ensign Dominic Flandry is now a Lieutenant Commander and in charge of his own ship. The assignment is to investigate, and if possible, settle a rebellion in a strategically important part of the Imperium. Trouble is, there is evidence that the governor has been bleeding the people, and has been guilty of atrocities, so that the rebels have good cause. Flandry manages to get rid of the corrupt governor settle the rebellion and romance a beautiful woman, all in his dashing, if unorthodox, style.

Galactic empire and its problems is a popular sf theme and Anderson handles it well. This book has plenty of excitement; the plot moves smoothly, though not as fast as it might in some places. The characters are individuals, with natural and entertaining interplay. The writing is good enough to be absorbing, light enough to be diverting. This is high-quality straight sf which I recommend to everybody.

--Jan M. Slavin

SPACE: A NEW DIRECTION FOR MANKIND by Edward B. Lindaman. Harper & Row, Oct. 1969. 158 p. $4.95

Edward Lindaman is obviously pro-space program: he sees a multitude of benefits, from commercial adaptations of the products of the new technology through the end of international conflict arising from cooperative ventures. In this book he has written what amounts to a series of quasi-religious essays on various ramifications of extraterrestrial exploration, including the historic value of discoveries made by visual observation and radiotelescope; the one-world effect of communications satellites; the growing awareness among laymen that our home planet is as much an enclosed system as the astronauts' capsule, and, like the capsule, will become a lethal prison if it is overcrowded or its air and water filled with the poisons of pollution; and the possibility that people will be allowed once more to expand across an apparently limitless horizon and challenged to be wise in their treatment of what they find.

The essays are well written, but their religious orientation tends to be somewhat dull in spots: however, they are certainly no worse than any other series of meditations, and are far better than many. The very novelty of the approach (scientific inquiry is in no way dangerous to organized religion, provided the latter is not over-laden with superstition) makes the book interesting from a literary point of view, but I doubt that it will have widespread appeal amongst the general reading public.

--Charlotte D. Moslander

BEST SF: 1968 edited by Harry Harrison & Brian W. Aldiss. Putnam, May 1969. 245 p. $4.95 (paperback: Berkley S1742. Sept. 1969. 75¢)

Anthologies are notoriously uneven and *Best SF of 1968* is no exception despite the brave title and the even braver introduction by Harry Harrison. In fact I wouldn't say there are any really memorable stories in the collection which makes me just a trifle dubious about Mr. Harrison's conviction that sf is better than ever. As to the New Wave vs. the Old Wave schools of writing -- the only answer here is a kind of shrug. Every art form owes it to itself to experiment with new forms; those of value will endure, those which merely strain for effect will die. There's nothing either new or unusual about this and on the whole it is good.

One of the better stories in the book is *Budget Planet* by Robert Sheckley -- a look at Genesis from the engineer's viewpoint. The satire is particularly apropos since it makes the same point, in a way but quietly, that Gene Marine's white hot diatribe *America the Raped* does. Harrison compares "Final War" by K.M. O'Donnell to *Catch 22* but O'Donnell lacks Heller's humor and I found "Final War" tedious and repetitious. In the immortal words of Samuel Butler, the author continued to lead on up to the point long after the reader had arrived there.

The reviews of *2001: A Space Odyssey* were helpful to me since I am perfectly willing to admit that I was anything but clear about the murky symbolism of the Kubrick opus, but I don't know exactly why they should be in an anthology. However, John MacDonald's "The Annex" which I read in *Playboy* originally, was no better on second reading than on the first. Perhaps it is just what it seems to be -- the curious flow of thought through the brain of a dying man but it didn't prove anything I could see.

For me the best thing in the book was Brian Aldiss' afterword, with a fine analysis of the philosophies of sf. I liked it better than the Aldiss story, "The Serpent of Kundalini," a mildly psychedelic effort but without particular point.

--Samuel Mines

THE IMAGE OF MAN IN C.S. LEWIS by William Luther White. Abingdon Press, Oct. 1969. 239 p. $5.95

William Luther White, chaplain of a small Methodist university in the midwest, discusses C.S. Lewis' role as a Christian "remythologizer." Lewis, he says, had "a sophisticated theory of religious language," and developed mythological systems with which to present Christianity to Western man in the twentieth century. White takes care to explain the theological issues to which Lewis addressed himself, and denies that Lewis was a "fundamentalist;" in a chapter called "A Critique of Some Lewis Critics" he deals with some of the "patterns of misinterpretation" which have grown up around Lewis' work.

Many contemporary readers of Lewis' stories, and of those of the other "Oxford Christians" (Tolkien, Williams, etc.), lack sufficient familiarity with Christian beliefs and images to understand them fully. To such readers I would recommend this book, as a most useful guide to this most Christian of fantasy writers. The author has a readable style, and the book's valuable appendices include a detailed bibliography, a chronology of Lewis' life, and a note from J.R.R. Tolkien on the origin of the Inklings.

--Fred Lerner

SELECTED WRITINGS OF E.T.A. HOFFMANN edited and translated by Leonard J. Kent & Elizabeth C. Knight. University of Chicago Press, Oct. 1969. 2v. (v.1 The Tales 315 p.; v.2 The Novel 363 p.) $20.00

Sure, Hoffmann is a writer worth reading; sure, the illustrations by Jacob Landau are quite something; sure, the volumes are well made -- but twenty bucks worth? No, I'm afraid this little set is just too much for the fannish pocketbook. I don't know German so I can't comment on the quality of the translations but the English used is certainly readable. Again, the illustrations are really striking and deserve to be looked at in their own right. While I don't think the time is ripe for a Hoffmann revival, I confess that the stories were enjoyable to read for atmosphere and mood. Yes, read Hoffmann but don't buy this edition.

--J.B. Post

THE HIEROS GAMOS OF SAM AND AN SMITH by Josephine Saxton. Doubleday, August 1969. 138 p. $4.50

Because I am an old fuddy-duddy and cannot perceive the deep metaphysical significance of this novel, all I can do is describe the story. The boy has been wandering in a wilderness for ten years, since the age of four, when he picks up a newborn child. Together they wander for many more years in a land which seems devoid of humans though the vending machines still miraculously work. They live for a time in a large department store and the boy sees an old woman once from afar. When the girl grows up they wander some more and copulate, receiving a congratulatory telegram. When they have a daughter, they decide to go home, so they hop a bus and go home. In a flurry of small talk, disgustingly middle class small talk, the novel ends.

--J.B. Post

THE SEVERAL MINDS by Dan Morgan. Avon V2302, Sept. 1969. 190 p. 75¢

Apparently one of a series, this is a dip into ESP, and a pretty unconvincing one to me. Locale is England, where a group of investigators are carrying on (no pun intended) where Rhine evidently boggled. They have a couple of sensitives and they apparently can do more than communicate telepathically -- they can control and they can exchange personalities -- it says here. To add some kind of suspense, the author introduces a baddy -- a lecherous newspaper man whose only ambition in life is to bed as many females as he can. He does fairly well at it, never realizing that his success is due to his own latent ESP powers. When he finds out, golly, he goes after the group with tongue hanging out, in the hope they can increase his powers so he can bed twice as many girls as before. No red-blooded male could quarrel with such an ambition, but I found the whole business pretty stiff and synthetic.

--Samuel Mines

EDITORIAL *Continued from Page 1*

nish" approach to others who can do a better job.

The same reasoning holds true for our companion magazine, LUNA', in which we present transcripts of convention and conference speeches and discussions. We have a large file of recordings from which to work, however the time required to transfer this material onto paper prevents us from doing more than just publishing the speeches as given.

BEABOHEMA - Frank Lunney, 212 Juniper St., Quakertown, Pa. 18951. 60¢ ea 4/$2 approx. bimonthly. articles, reviews, letters

FOCAL POINT - Rich Brown, 410 - 61st St., Apt. D4, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220 Arnie Katz co-editor. 8/$1 biweekly. news

LOCUS - Charles Brown, 2078 Anthony Ave., Bronx, N. Y. 10457. 10/$2. biweekly. news, reviews

SF COMMENTARY - Bruce R. Gillespie, P.O. Box 245, Ararat, Victoria 3377, Australia. 20¢ ea, 18/$3 Australian. approx. monthly. articles

SFWA BULLETIN - George Zebrowski editor, subscriptions to Quinn Simpson, 977 Kains Ave., Albany, Calif. 94706. $4/year bimonthly. Official bulletin of the Science Fiction Writers of America

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