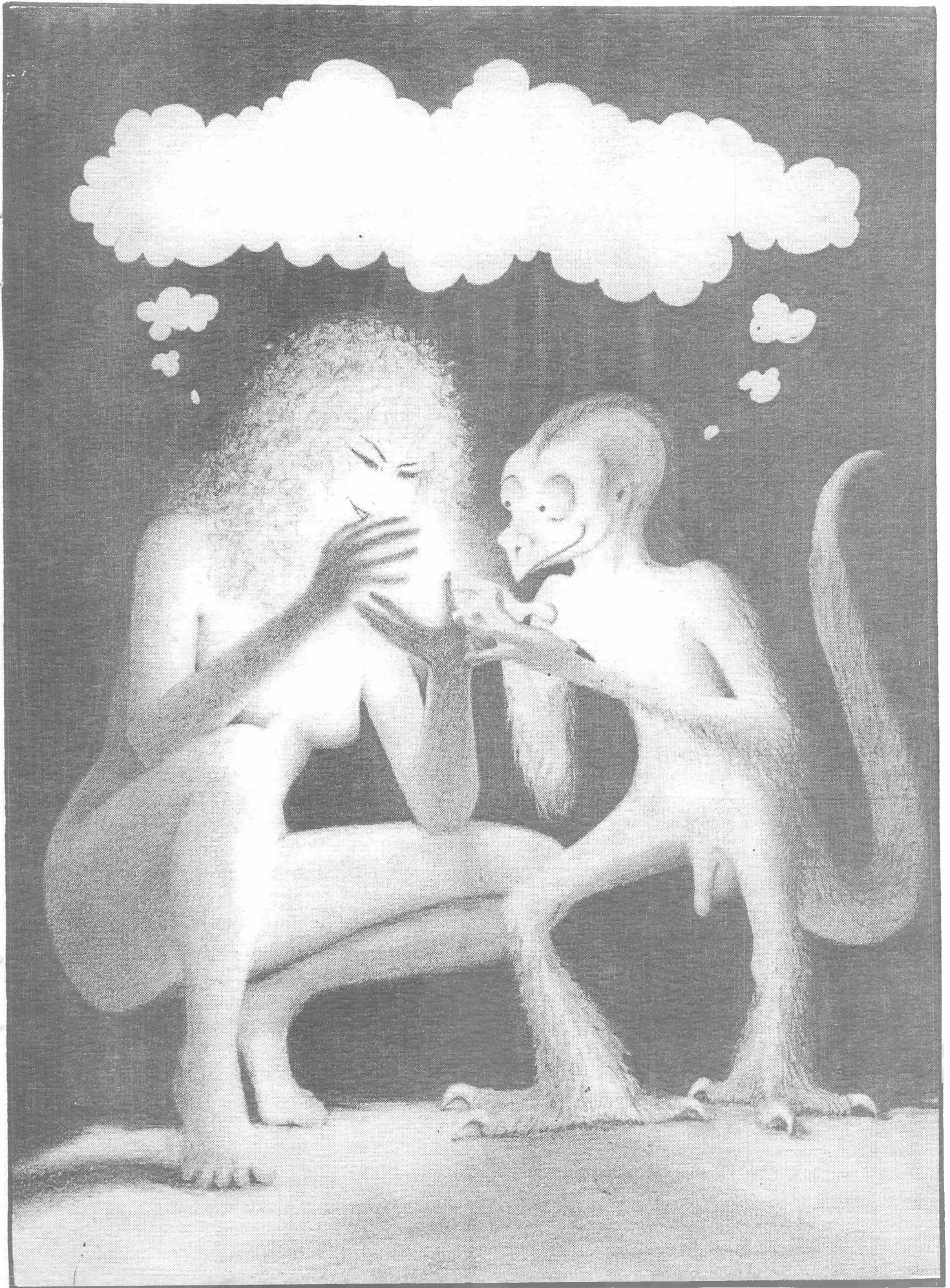


THE MENTOR 59

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THE MENTOR

SCIENCE FICTION

JULY 1986

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CONTENTS

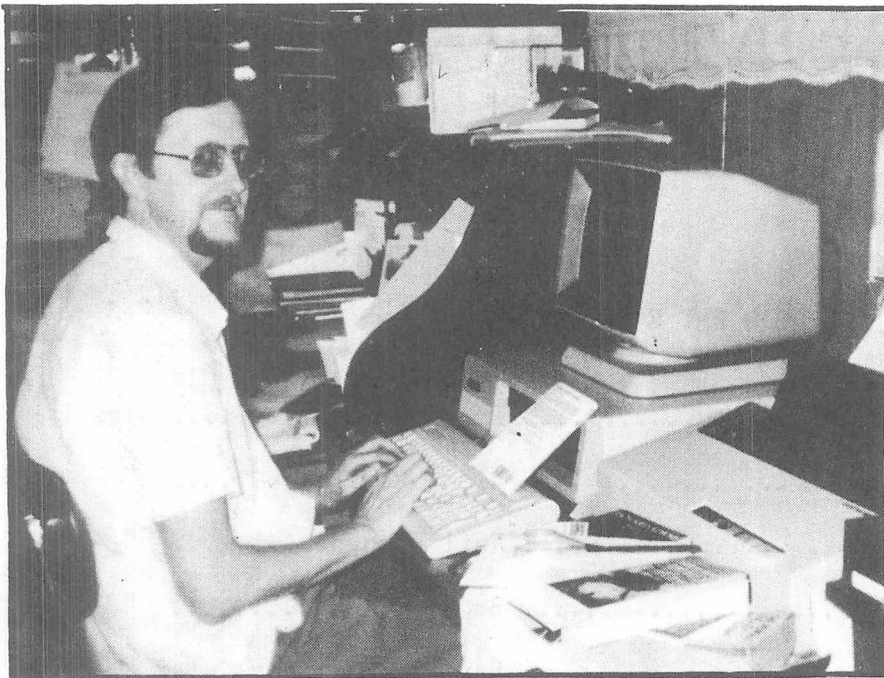
CLARKIE'S COMMENTS.....	Ron Clarke	page 1
HARD METAL.....	Alan Stewart.....	" 4
AUSTRASHIMA/APATHY.....	Neil Hayden.....	" 9
YANKEE PRIVATEER.....	Buck Coulson.....	" 10
SOVIET S.F. CHRONICLE.....	Boris Zavgorodny.....	" 12
AN OPEN ACCOUNT.....	Igor Toloconnicou....	" 14
SHIPWRECK.....	Marianne Plumridge...	" 17
THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY.....	John J. Alderson.....	" 18
TAKEAWAY.....	Lana Brown.....	" 26
A QUESTION OF SEASONING.....	Steve Sneyd.....	" 30
DAREDEVILS OF THE STRATOSPHERE.....	Andrew Darlington....	" 32
SOVIET S.F. ART-FOLIO.....		" 33
ADVENTURE GAME.....	Virginia Wurth.....	" 43
THE R&R DEPT.....		" 46
SPACED OUT.....	Mike McGann.....	" 59
REVIEWS.....		" 61
SONG CRYER.....	Steve Sneyd.....	" 66

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LETTERING: Joanne Keating p.10,43

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Unknown Russians: p.13,48,57
Marianne Plumridge: p.16

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CLARKIE'S COMMENTS

This issue turned out somewhat like I expect future issues of THE MENTOR to look, though there will still be some cosmetic changes. Back in the early days of the late sixties and early seventies THE MENTOR stabilized as to how I wanted it; the basic format of the issues - Editorial, fiction, articles both serious and fannish (when I can get them), columnists, reviews, news and LoCs - has stayed much the same.

The original idea for THE MENTOR was for it to be a genzine, which has the widest range of content of any fanzine type. There is no such thing as a 'fannish' genzine; genzines cover the whole field. Because I started out my fannish activities with a fairly serious attitude to sf (that is, I joined both the Futurian Society of Sydney and later was one of the founding members of the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation and read sf almost exclusively, and still do) THE MENTOR has tended to mirror this. I also married into fandom in that Susan, though I introduced her to organised sf fandom, is currently much more productive than I am now (she types faster...). This household produces the equivalent of one 50 page fanzine every three weeks or so, and has done for the last six years. We probably publish more science fiction than any other publisher, both professional or fan, in Australia. In March we published, along with our usual bi-monthly fanzines, two fanzines of 140 and 180 pages respectively. These would be almost impossible to do without 1980's technology - personal computers and offset duplicators.

What this goes to show, I think, is that it is possible to publish sf fanzines for long periods of time and keep to a publishing idea throughout. Of course the two longest running fanzines in the world (up to several years ago), YANDRO in the USA and ERG in the UK, have a firm base in sf.

This issue I'll be a bit different and talk about specific fanzines which have come out lately. The three I'll be mentioning are CRUX 6, ASFR for May 1986 and THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW.

Taking the one I read first: the 'new' ASFR. As many people have said, both in other fanzines and in ASFR itself, this is a reincarnation of John Bangsund's well known fanzines of the 60's and 70's. Rather than one editor, there is a committee - Jenny Blackford, Russell Blackford, John Foyster, Yvonne Rousseau

and Lucy Sussex. Issues One and Two are either photocopied or are offset and are folded A4. Issue One is 36 pages of micro-elite dot matrix. Reading through issues One and Two, it struck me that I hadn't realised that the earlier ASFR had been this sercon. One of the articles (THE LONG VIEW by John Foyster) required ploughing through. The ball-tossing between Yvonne Rousseau and George Turner needed a fairly extensive knowledge of George Turner's novels. These articles, especially that by John Foyster, are DEEP. (It actually reminded me of Graham Stone's biographical works in SF NEWS).

The second fanzine to turn up was CRUX 6. Now, if you have been receiving Michael Hailstone's fanzines lately, you will have noticed that his typewriter seems to suffer from ribbons with a terminal disease. I seem to remember that the last few CRUX's had some problem also. CRUX 6 is also folded A4 and is 86 pages of 15 pitch type. This issue could have been a mess. It is not. It is one of the best genzines I have seen from anywhere for some time.

Michael says in his Editorial that with CRUX he was aiming for a (semi) prozine. In #6 he has science articles, reviews, comic strips, poems and some of the best fiction outside of prozines I have seen published. The artwork is first class, as is the set-out of the magazine. The issue has been delayed for several reasons, but is well worth the wait. Michael says that this is the last issue as no-one takes this side of him seriously. If you want to see one of the best fanzines out this year send Michael some money (there is no price indicated; I suppose \$4 would cover it) to PO Box 193, Woden, ACT 2606.

The third fanzine is Bruce Gillespie's THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW. Near the end of the publishing run of SCIENCE FICTION COMMENTARY Bruce was publishing several or more issues together. He is doing it again with this latest issue being 7/8, which is 82 pages duplicated A4. I don't know why he does it unless he is working on a 40 page format for each issue and is determined to stick to it.

I used to think SFC was very sercon; the hardest pages to get through and the driest being the 'Literary Establishment' articles. That is, those written by academics or pseudo-academics. Later in the series, Bruce began expanding his short editorial and called it I MUST BE TALKING TO MY FRIENDS in which he spoke of the books he had read, the films seen and the records he had bought. He began including the LoCs in it, and the readers began talking more about those subjects than the sf content. THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW is that section of SFC, expanded. There is the odd bit about science fiction, but most of issue 7/8 shows that Bruce seems to be turning away from sf and directing his publishing energies to more fannish things. Of course he always had those other activities, but now he is bringing it more into the arena for other's eyes.

It is interesting to speculate as to which of the three fanzines mentioned above is the closer to the original ASFR. John Bangsund only published the odd piece of fiction in the 28 odd issues. Most of what made ASFR the legend it was was John's editorial wit and ability to create a literate product. Of the three, I think CRUX 6 is the closer to the *soul* of the original ASFR. THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW had, in its early issues, some of the same style as ASFR in the articles published. The current ASFR, unless it can get away from the dry style and subject matter it has created, may find that it just will not generate enough interest to enable it to carry on for long enough to become established. As it is, do we want another RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY?

- Ron Clarke.

-----oo00oo-----

HARD METAL

BY ALAN STEWART

They walk in fear, the rich, the dying, the mechanically saved.

Which gives me a job. Rick Marshal - body guard, well at the moment what's-left-of-a-body guard. My client Mr. James Norris, call me Jim, but I never do, and he's got it bad.

Twenty-four hour care since the hospital burn, locked doors, locked hover, me.

But at least I'm out of my sub-five flat, renting it on the side. Up here where a window is just glass between me and the smuck, dirty clouds waiting to claw your lungs out.

Cooking I can handle, everything arrives sealed tight straight from the rofarms. It's just a matter of following recipes on the eezecook screen. Adding some of this, a bit of that, just following instructions. Easy. Meals turned, browned, delivered ready to serve.

Usually it's pretty quiet, while he's in the bedroom or office I catch the vid or call up library stuff. Unlimited access, continuous movies for a century if you want.

But I have to be careful, vid-dozy is out, I get cut up as well if they try for Mr. Norris.

Bedroom or office, silent meals. I'm a piece of furniture, around but not really noticed. About the only conversation we have is where he wants to go, letting me know when to get the hover ready. Most of the time I see him is in transit, chauffeur and riding laser, visits to places like the club. Poker with other bod-dogs, faces from the meatshop and freelancers. We talk, and hide the fear crawling around. Swap new tech and ventions, keep up, try to gain a little.

Mr Norris won't say what they discuss inside; old men wired up, they can't talk, can't think anything else, it's got to be the hospital burn. I've seen a tape of the original newscast.

About five minutes into the bulletin which makes it 'bad but not tragic'. The announcer begins, background shop of Northwest Hospital.

'Today in a daring computer raid the main files of Northwest Hospital were invaded and confidential data copied. Dr. Fredericks, spokesperson for the hospital, assured the public that there was no cause for concern.'

Cut to tape of grey glassed Fredericks.

'The data which was copied concerns only a small section of our clientele and should not be regarded as serious. All persons involved will of course be informed regarding the copied information.'

A new backdrop, comtyped letter.

'We have received a letter from a group calling itself the 'Heart of the People' claiming responsibility for this morning's raid. It claims that the stolen information concerns major replacement surgery beneficiaries. The final paragraph contains a threat to such people and a general warning'.

Zoom to the typing.

We burned the hospital comp good. Now we're going
to burn you data babies, metal men.

Steel to ashes, glass to dust.

The Heart of the People.

Now I knew Mr. Norris was on that list. He'd had a kidney done, and later his pancreas. Small purr-purr machines that kept him alive. So he needed me, shield, meat.

Not that I'm complaining, this was a lot better than some comp maintenance job or stuck on a chip line - green flash, green flash and microscope.

Pretty quiet, catch the vid, cook, vet the mail terminal.

Regular outing once a week for a chess game at Mr. Martin's, they sit over the board slowly moving the pieces, discussing who and that. It had to be for the company, most chess programs were grand-master plus nowadays.

Mr. Martin's bod-dog was Joe Collins, I'd bumped into him a few times near the job board in the meatshop. He'd been working this solid four-twenty the same as me, another Northwest hit list victim, in his case it was the big one - a new heart.

Last Wednesday he showed me hard copy from their terminal.

'Just read, I haven't shown this to Mr. Martin yet, you'll see why'.

Mr. David Martin:

We've got your number. Dave, electronic
fingers squeeze. slow slow blood to stop your
clock.

Power to the Peole.

'When did this arrive?' I asked, careful, the chess game just through in the lounge.

'On Monday, just slotted in like a regular letter. I checked the terminal number. Sent with a five hour delay from a public one, just drop in the disc. This one's near a station, no hope'.

'It seems pretty specific, right name and that bit about blood and clocks is too close'.

'Yeah, I know. It looks like that 'Heart of the People' mob, same type of *signature*, just like the one on the newstape.'

'Sure. That tape got a lot of guys worried. How do we play it from here?'

'I reckon we just sit tight. So far I haven't heard of anyone being hit, maybe it's just threats.'

'Yeah, maybe it is.'

'Maybe it's only threats' was last Wednesday. Now Joe's permanently out, along with Mr. Martin.

I caught it on the news.

'A late report has just come in concerning the death of David Martin. A prominent robotics producer and rofactory owner, Mr. Martin is believed to have died when his Hart malfunctioned earlier tonight. His companion Mr. Joe Collins was found dead in a nearby lift. Pinned to his shirt was a note which read:

Metal parts, metal bones, do but a monster make.

Die, die, stainless steel, you won't give, so we must take. and signed 'Vive la revolution'.

Police have declined to comment regarding possible links with the recent hospital burn.'

All over a still of the open lift, Joe corner twisted, neck too angled, shoe toes touching.

Joe's gone, and so have a couple of others. Empty chair cold shadows at the club, three on the Hospital list have malfunctioned. Two bod-dogs are out, and one won't walk again, a dead boss can't buy any new parts.

Snatches of messages around the room - 'battery body', 'hard hearts', 'revolution', 'to the people', 'iron tears'.

Discussion of eddy currents, reverse piezoelectrics, maybe shields, but two tonnes of lead couldn't be carried.

Trying to plug gaps, and waiting, watching.

And this morning we got ours, sneaking in between two ads.

Mr. James Norris:

Crystal kidneys made to shatter,
six weeks of pain then nothing matters.

Power to the Revolution.

They seemed to be getting more lyrical, fancy dressed threats. So it was wait and see. Tomorrow? Next week? Just a scare?

Wait. Hope I'll find out ten seconds before it's too late.

Not quite.

He got us by the hover. I'd just opened the door, a young guy walking past. Suddenly a black box in his hand, Mr. Norris fell. I rolled behind the door, pistol out and two shots off. Caught the wall corner as he turned. Mr. Norris was all curled up, red stained shirt. A lump rose in his back, knobbly and obscene like



a wet hand trying on a too right rubber glove. As I watched it oozed blood and crystal tears. Kidney bits, exploded, he was gone.

Sidling to the corner I shot then checked, dodged a laser sight and saw the guy open the stairwell door. He was through and slammed as I moved. Easy open, out of sight line, right open roll through round the side.

Quiet.

Up? or down? Down was the lower apartments, cheapside. So I went up, corner careful, just fast enough. Caught another door close. Through it a cross-corridor. Glass windows along the concrete walls.

No sign. No footprints.

Four branches, two left, two right between me and the far door.

Left side slow, across, back to right wall. First junction clear.
Next...

The bastard got me, punched my right knee out. Caught the sight too late, third junction down.

Same black coat, pistol raised, breathing mask behind.

Breathing mask?

The window above me crashed. Rolling over my gone leg, flat, I sighted, but he'd made the door.

Another shot through the window, mine hit the door too late.

Crawl away from the smuck, brown churning through the gap.

Hold breath, move, move, move.

I make it; close the door and breathe.

My right knee is a mess, bandaged with my shirt it's still a mess. At least there's only me to worry about now. First I've got to get Mr. Norris out of the way, take what I can. Hopefully scrape up enough for a new knee, at least my lungs are okay, too much smuck scar and no way could I replace them, close, too close to a half-million replacement job.

Knees are a little better, I've heard they're a couple of hundred thou, less if you go for the cheap stuff and take a risk.

I don't know, money calculations, it will need a bit of time, never be one oh oh percent, good-bye bod-dog.

At least I know a face, that's an in to the revolution.

Wait and see.

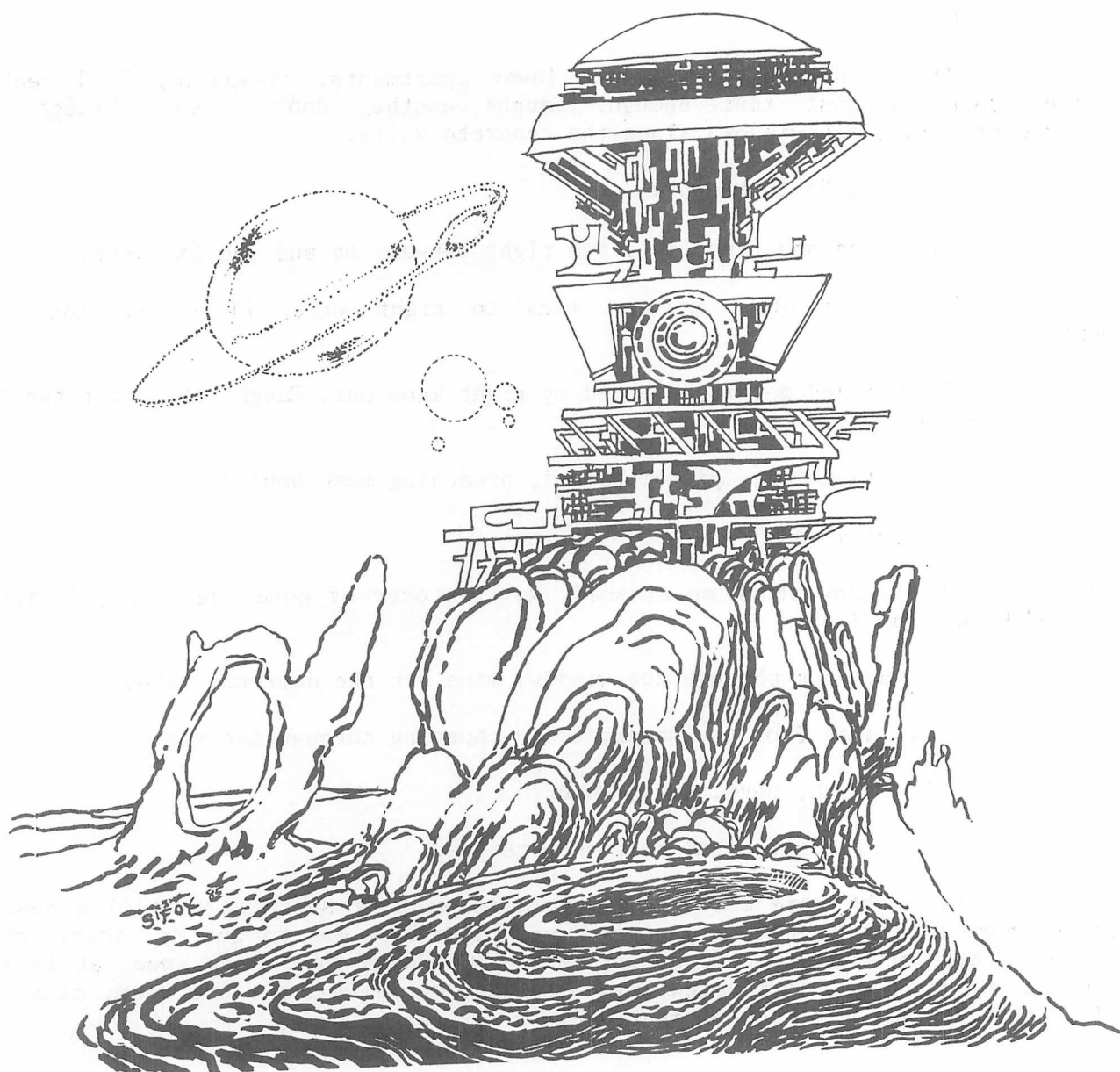
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- Alan Stewart.



AUSTRASHIMA / APATHY

BY NEIL HAYDEN

The cloud of mushrooming gloom
glows purple-red in the sunset.
We turn from shattered suburbia
and walk blindly down the road.

We walk slowly,
dazed and stupid,
carrying our ragged possessions
into the glaring sunset.

Baby John utters
no more forced screams.
Mandy says "restbreak";
I drop my pack
but I cling to the
bundle of limbs.
Then there is Mandy
Who kisses me
and puts our child
into the gutter.

Mandy and I hug,
then we eat, drink, and
wash off the filthy dust.

We walk like human debris
floating down the bitumen road
as decay swirls around
— and in us.

I stare at our remaining child
and ask "how ya' goin', Sandy"?
"Ok" she mumbles through split lips
as apathy drives us onwards.

My head itches,
I scratch, and now
skin and hair decorate
my fingernails.
Mandy stares,
then we laugh softly.

We should have cared.
Then we see Anthea Harris,
from the peace movement,
wailing over her dying friend.
We pass by her swirling whirlpool
pity as we move into the
encroaching gloom.
I should have cared.

THE YANKEE PRIVATEER

by BUCK COULSON

I thought that in my first column I'd provide a little background for all those readers who only know me as a dissenting voice in MENTOR and WWW letter columns. To begin with, I take my column titles from folksongs whenever possible; this one is from an lp titled "Songs of Rebels and Redcoats", and published by the National Geographic Society. My wife and I are both interested in folksongs, and have somewhere over 500 lp records of them, most but not all English-language, plus some reel-to-reel and cassette tapes, 45 rpm and 78 rpm records. They include 5 volumes of Australian ballads.

Of course, I'm not really a Yankee, but the title is close enough for fandom. In this country, "Yankee" refers strictly to residents of New England; it became a term for any U.S. citizen in the days when New Englanders were the shipbuilders and sailors, and so our contacts with the outside world. And, of course, "American" can technically refer to the residents of any of 22 different countries and the colony of French Guiana.

Bob Asprin once wrote for a convention program book that there were no such people as Buck and Juanita Coulson; the name was "Buckandjuanita" and it was one entity. A fair enough appraisal; we think alike on most things together, and read each other's mail, incoming and outgoing. Which startled a few people; I still recall the lesbian friend-of-a-friend who came for a few days' visit back in the 1960s without knowing that I knew her secret. Homosexuals were a lot less open back then, for good reason. (After the initial surprise, we got along fine and later corresponded regularly until she drifted away from fandom. Non-fans aren't very good at letter-writing, I've noticed.) Juanita and I have been married for 32 years, or will have been by the time this sees print. Juanita was publishing a fanzine when I met her, and we've kept YANDRO going for 258 issues; #259 is partly run off and may appear this year. It was monthly for almost 20 years, but as Juanita got more into professional writing, her time for running a mimeograph decreased and so did publication frequency.

I've been reviewing books for AMAZING STORIES for 3¹/₂ years, though the current issue is the last; the new editor doesn't want a regular review column. I'm still reviewing science fiction magazines for COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE, which I guess is the leading comics newspaper. I wouldn't know; I've never been interested in comics. I got the job because the editors are interested in science fiction magazines and are old friends. I've had 8 novels published, mostly in collaboration with Gene DeWeese, plus several articles and a couple of short stories. Juanita has had 14 novels published, plus several short stories, articles on astrology, and a pamphlet on art appreciation, and sold two more novels which were never published because the publisher went bankrupt. (But were paid for; that's why you get a good agent.)

I used to be a fanzine fan; nowadays I know a few fanzine editors, quite a few con committee members, all the midwestern hucksters because I've been one of them for 30 years or so, most of the folksingers, and a good many authors. Give an author's book a good review, and you're his friend for life — or at least until the next book comes out.

We've been asked by US fans if we really have a doormat that says "Go Away". Yes, we do, though the cats have rendered it nearly illegible by now. Gift from friends, like the sweatshirt that says "loathe thy neighbor" (Kathy Sanders sent me that one). Sandra Miesel once tried to sell me a painting of an alligator by saying "It's the real you, Buck". I don't know why I have this reputation; I've never done more than give people my honest opinions... Oh yes, we have a few guns around the place, to back up the doormat. (Though there are only two or three fans I'd really want to shoot, and then only if I was sure of getting away with it.) We currently live in a ten-room farmhouse, at the edge of what used to be famous as the Limberlost Swamp, because of the novels about it by Gene Stratton-Porter. Now Porter is no longer popular, and the swamp has been drained for farmland, which ought to lead to a moral but doesn't.

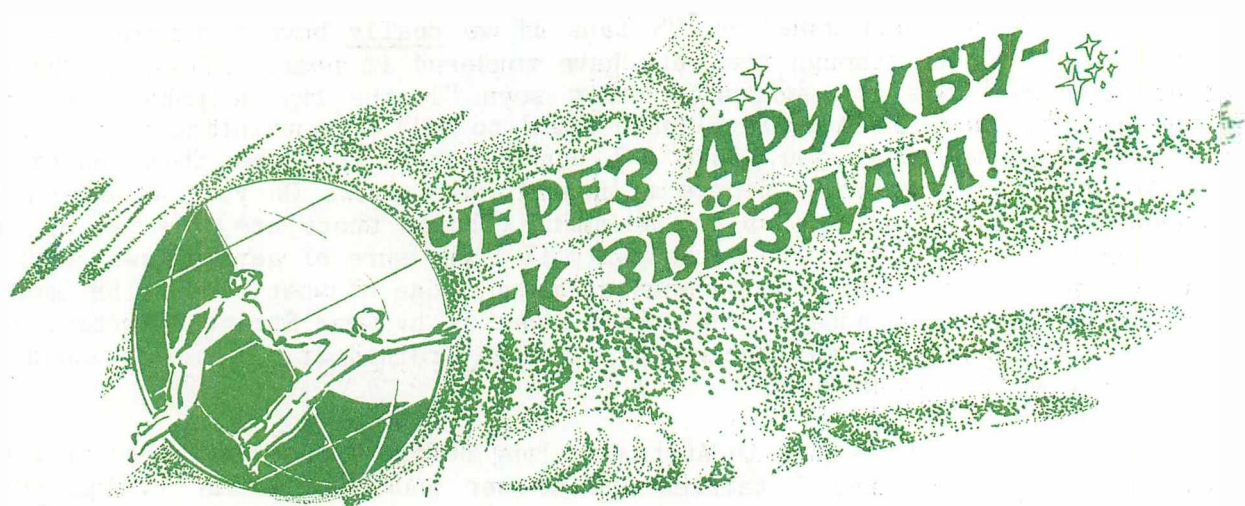
I got interested in Australia long before I was interested in fandom. Mom was a mystery fan, and I sampled one of her books by Arthur W. Upfield and was hooked. I now own all but two of them. Later I acquired Alan Moorhead's COOPER'S CREEK, a several-year run of WALKABOUT, a few books on Australian natural history, the folksongs, some stamps and currency from Hutt River Principality, a boomerang, and an Anzac hat, the latter two courtesy of Eric Lindsay, so I know all about the place, right? There have been a few Australian fanzines over the years, as well.

Which is enough background. Take notes; I won't repeat it.

My most recent contacts with fandom, aside from letters, fanzines, and visits to and from the Miesels, was Wiscon 10, in Madison, Wisconsin, in February. That's not really a good month for visiting Wisconsin, but the weather wasn't too bad, and it was actually quite warm for the winter. I don't believe the temperature ever went below zero while we were there. We spent a day or so before and after the con with the DeWeeses, and shared a room with Bev. Gene wouldn't stay overnight, preferring to commute; they only live about 50 miles from Madison. This was a medium-sized regional, with about 800 attendees. Since it was their 10th. con, they had invited back all their previous guests of honour; Bev had been Fan Goh at Wiscon 4, and Juanita and I had been Fan Goh at Wiscon 5, so we got free room, free membership, and reimbursement for transportation, which is the way I like to go to conventions... The con is notoriously over-programmed, with nine program tracks, though they didn't always actually have 9 simultaneous programs. I ran into the classic panelist's situation for the first time; my panel on alternate history was scheduled for two hours, and the second half hour overlapped my panel on reviewing. So after the first hour I walked out, followed by committee member and panelist Phil Kaveny, who said he had books to sell, and we held one of the shortest two-hour panels on record. Since I spent most of my time in the huckster room, I didn't see much of the program, but I had a profitable time. Only drawback to my enjoyment came when my tape recorder malfunctioned at the folksing. Next morning, Suzette Haden Elgin wanted to know if I was mad at her; she said she'd smiled at me the night before and I'd given her a ferocious scowl in return. Offhand, I can't imagine anyone ever getting mad at Suzette; tape recorders are far more infuriating. Incidentally, she tells me her book on verbal self-defense has sold over 120,000 copies; I've seen full-page ads for it in various science magazines. I'm sure it's good, but since I've worked out my own methods over the years, I haven't read it. The best defense is a good attack, right?

That should be enough for a first round; next time I'll provide more opinions for you to argue with. Since I never pay any attention to their opinions anyway, I never mind when people express those that disagree with mine.

- Buck Coulson.



SOVIET S.F. CHRONICLE

PREPARED BY BORIS ZAVGORODNY

The novel *THE WAVES STILL A WIND* by the brothers Strugatsky was published in the third issue of 1986 of the magazine *Znania-Sila* and it is over at last. Also in this magazine was published the news that an asteroid (with a diameter of 17 kilometres) discovered in 1977 by the Crimea observatory astronomer N.S. Chernyh was given the name Strugatskia, which was confirmed by the International Centre on Small Planets in 1985.

In Minsk, the publishing house Yunatzyva published in an edition of 180,000 copies released in 1986 the novella *SUNDAY BEGINS ON SATURDAY* by the Strugatskys.

Molodaya Gvardia published, in the series *SOVIET SF LIBRARY*, a novel *THE LONG SUNRISE ON ENNA* by Evgeny Gulyakovsky with an edition of 100,000. The novel is a sequel to *SEASON OF MISTS* previously published in this series.

In Novosibirsk, *A VERY DESERVING FATE*, a story by David Konstantinovsky was published in an edition of 15,000 copies. It is about a young married couple who were doing research on the moon and who discovered time travel. They decided to go into the past to participate in the December insurrection of 1825.

The Riga the publishing house Liesma issued the novel *THE SPRING OF OBLIVION* by Voldemar Baal with an edition of 50,000 copies.

In Leningrad was issued a beautifully designed book for the children's section - *SEASONATA* by Olga Larionova, in 100,000 copies.

In Alma-Ate the publishing house Zhalyln issued the story *UNIQUE VACATION* by Fedor Chirva in 50,000 copies. It concerned the meeting with a yeti.

In Tashkent the publisher "Literature & Art in honour of Gafur Guyam" released, in the series "The Library of the magazine *The Star of the East*" the anthology *STRANGE WORLDS*, which contains stories by local writers and from young Bulgarians. The compiler is the author of the included story *THE BLACK LAGUNA* - Eduard Matzipulo. The print run was 120,000.

The publisher Znania reissued the anthology compiled by Vl. Gakov under the title SCIENCE FICTION. It includes the best of the yearly sf anthologies they publish. 150,000 copies were printed.

The Moscow publisher Sovetskaya Rossia issued a book of selected works by XIX century writer Antony Pogorelsky. It includes science fiction that has not been inprint for some time. The edition was 400,000 copies.

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SF TRANSLATIONS

The Moscow publishing house Pravda issued a novel IT IS IMPOSSIBLE HERE by Sinclair Lewis with a run of 500,000.

Alma-Ate publisher Nauka published a novel THE END OF ETERNITY by Isaac Asimov, also including fragments of THE VIEW FROM A HEIGHT. Print run 200,000.

Moscow publisher Raduga has issued an anthology, FATE OF OUR CHILDREN, compiler N. Evdokimova. The foreword is by Yu. Glazkov, the Soviet cosmonaut. It includes 24 stories by Sheckley, Bradbury, Simak, Vonnegut, etc. The new translation is ENEMY MINE by Barry Longyear. At the end of the book are colour pictures of SF themes by Soviet cosmonaut V. Dzhanibekov. Edition of 100,000 copies.

Another Moscow publisher, Mir, in the series "Foreign SF" is issuing an anthology LULUNGAMEENA (which is published for country libraries only and is not available elsewhere), compiled by V. Babenko and V. Bakanov. The anthology includes Gordon R. Dickson, Simak, Silverberg and others who are known in the USSR. And, not previously in translation, Zelazny's THE KEYS TO DECEMBER, Lisa Tuttle and George RR Martin's THE STORMS OF WINDHAVEN. The afterword is by sf author R. Podolny.

In this series was also issued a collection LE GAMBIT DES ETOILES by French sf writer Gerard Klein, translated by A. Grigoriev and afterword by sf writer A. Kazantzev. The collection includes two novellas and two stories. Both editions are 100,000 copies each.

News from Sverdlovsk is that the Aelita Award will not be given in 1986.

At last national magazines are giving more space to sf. The magazine ZNAMYA, published by Pravda, started to serialise the novel IGREK MINUS by West Germany's Herbert V. Frank. The magazine AVRORA from Leningrad in its second and third issues for 1986 published the novella PANDORA'S DREAM by young Leningrad writer Andrey Stolyarov. The foreword is written by Boris Strugatsky. URAL magazine from Sverdlovsk in issue #3 for 1986 published the sf story FIRE FOR A SCORPION by young Severdlovskian writer Alexandr Bolnyh. Lastly the youth magazine ROVESNIK in its issue #2 for 1986 published MILITARY GAMES by American writer David Bishop.

- Boris Zavgorodny.



AN OPEN ACCOUNT

BY IGOR TOLOCONNICOU

"The eternal wind keeps bringing us times long past
Times long past repeated everywhere
Within this sky
In this fine sand
In whispering palms
And within us"

- THE ETERNAL WIND by S Zhemaitis.

The story is about people of the not-too-distant future. The setting is an island float in the Indian Ocean, a biostation and a scientific centre for the biological research of ocean life. The main characters are students, spending the summer on field practice. They help in utilizing the ocean's countless riches, play pranks and get themselves into trouble (or adventures). The book also tells of the dolphins and killer whales, and many strange denizens of the deeps including the Giant Squid.

"Was that ever a speech! There's a man who remembers he was a student once too. A shame we didn't hear the last and best part." A very tall student turned and began quoting, the words ringing over our heads. "To be useful, that's just to be useful; to be excellent is just to be excellent. But to be useful and excellent, that means to be great." Somebody else quipped: "You are already great, all that's left for you is to be either useful or excellent." Everybody in the lift laughed...

"Amazing creatures!" said Petya, staring after the dolphins. "The more you get to know them, the more you realize it. The information we get from this people is of an unbelievable scope, yet at the same time rather perfunctory. We are looking for similarities in the dolphins that would relate them to ourselves, but apparently we'll have to work out a different approach. That is, try to find in them features which we lack".

"Vera dropped in on us several times, using the hydroplane that made regular stops at the island. And always when no excitement was going on. 'I'm awfully unlucky', she said. 'I wasn't here even when Attila (a whale) died. As soon as I leave, you have either a crab invasion or a cuttlefish approach, or else Black Jack (a grampus, or a killer-whale) is after you. You get stuck on an island inhabited by rats and robots. And all this whenever I'm not here.'"

"Know what? Vera simply ran out of flower pots so she stuck the seeds into ordinary soil near the greenhouse. Incidentally, Mokimoto had given strict orders to stick to the methods he had worked out. No unauthorized influence was to be permitted. He was especially afraid of radiation from the Supernovae... the mimososaurs started crawling, all right. But only the ones Vera had planted outside. The others continued to develop according to the set methods. They wave their

tendrils, set them against the ground - but, so far, not a single move out of them! You know what Mokimoto said to Vera? 'What brilliant carelessness! Only try not to repeat it too often. Such things happen once in a hundred years'".

We spent several hours in the labs. The scientific tutor had worked out for us a very wide programme of research, research which hadn't been anticipated for our field work that summer. We confused the reagents, broke the fragile laboratory vessels... Our tutor especially annoyed us by demanding supreme accuracy in analyses, and wouldn't permit us to use modern apparatus to facilitate our work. "All that will come later, when you've gained an understanding of what it's all about." ... And a strange thing happened: soon we were as fascinated as children... And one day Kostya returned from our teacher... He tossed his notebook onto the desk. "That cursed old man!" he said, tenderly. "He found that my conclusions were more accurate than those of the electronic lab assistant. Mefodievich finds, and I fully agree with him, that creative principles are incredibly difficult to programme into a robot. Though he as an example refutes such a vindication. But, no matter if he's a robot three times over like we have supposed, I never yet have come across a more perfect intellect!"

All in all the book doesn't have a specific nucleus. Zhemaitis tried to portray the everyday scientific life in the future. By the way, in the LITERARY GAZETTE sf discussion was mentioned a turning to biologic themes in general here. The most confusing problem (What to do in future?) is shown here by Zhemaitis. The work is the most natural condition of man. He is functioning in interaction with nature and society when we look at basics. Only let this work be adequate to his needs.

- Igor Toloconnicou

DUFF (the Down Under Fan Fund) 1986/87

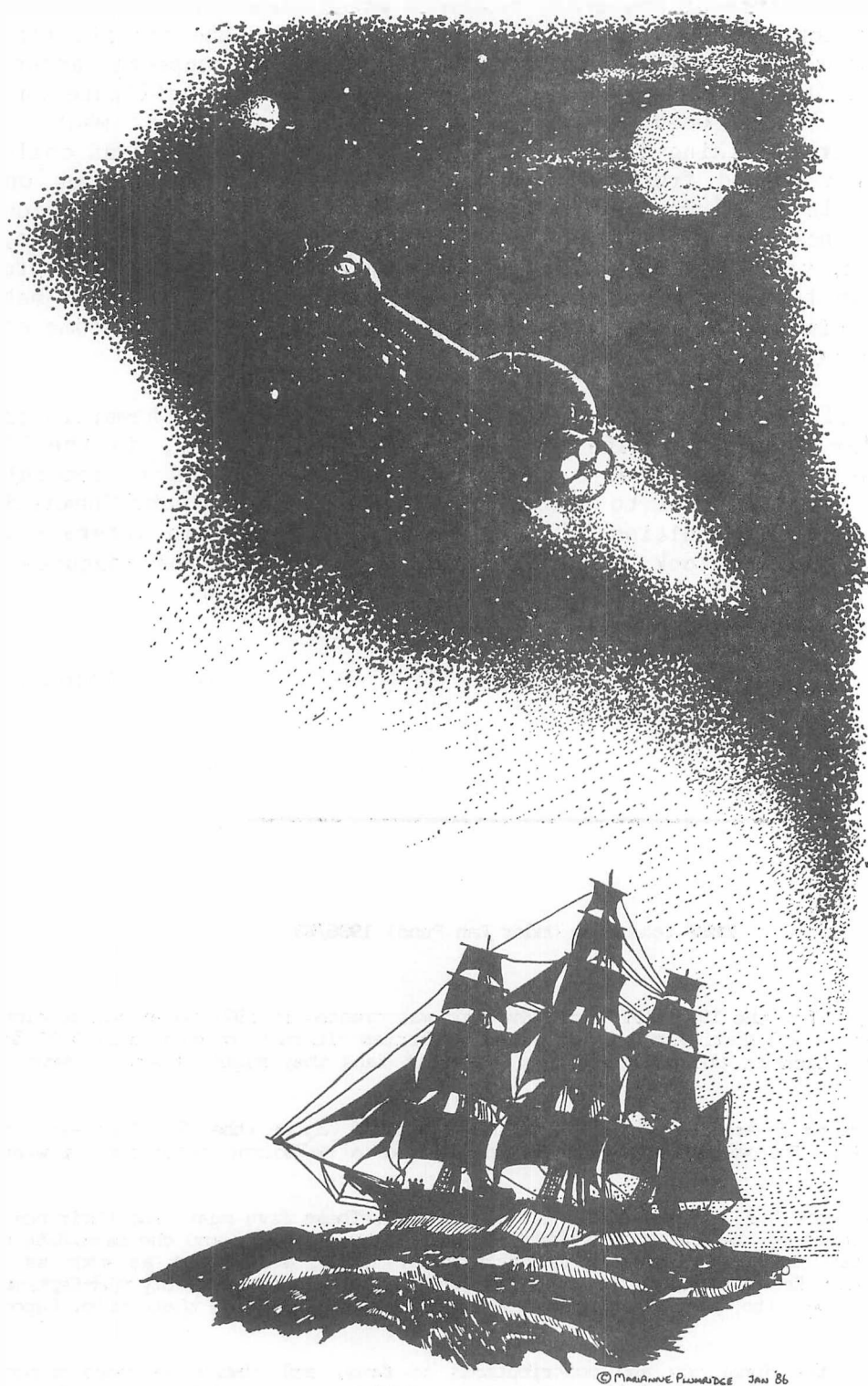
Nominations are now open for the 1987 DUFF race. The fund was created in 1972 to encourage closer ties between fans in Australia and North America, with host countries alternating each year. DUFF delegates visit a major SF convention in the host country, and visit fans they might otherwise never meet in person.

The 1986/7 race will bring an American fan to Australia to attend Capcon (the 1987 Australian National con), 25-27 April 1987. The winner may also be fan GOH at a Melbourne relaxacon, a week before Capcon.

Candidates must have three U.S. and two Australian nominators. These five must send their nominations to the DUFF administrators by the end of Confederation (1st September 1986) and the candidate must put in a 100-word platform and a \$10 bond by the same date. Voting will start as soon as we (the administrators) get back from Confederation and distribute voting forms, probably mid-September; and close on December 31, 1986 (to give the winning candidate/s time to arrange their trip, Capcon being in April.)

DUFF exists solely on the donations and contributions of fans, and always welcomes material for auctions and donations of money. There will be auctions of DUFF material at future cons. Contributions can be brought to the con or sent to the local administrator. Anyone may contribute, even if ineligible to vote. Cheques should be made out to Robbie and Marty Cantor (in North America) and 'DUFF Australia' here, there being three of us this year.

ADMINISTRATORS: Cantors, 11565 Archwood, North Hollywood, Ca 91606, USA.
Lewis Morely/Marilyn Pride/Nick Stathopoulos, 54 Junior St., Leichhardt, NSW 2040, Australia.



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SHIPWRECK

Once
upon a silent ship,
no sound of tread was heard.
Life no longer strayed there,
through corridors obscured.

Past,
upon this gloried ship,
a loyal crew once served.
Alive with pride and harmony
'til tragedy occurred.

Struck,
a mortal blow without,
this valiant ship defied
the engulfing forces - crushing
- and in the darkness died.

Nigh,
ajar to starry space,
the static wreck appears.
A ghostly apparition
observed throughout the years.

- MariAnne Plumridge

JOHN J. ALDERSON:

INCEST, AND SOCIAL AND BIOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS

In every instance the model used by the older anthropologists more or less stated that incest would be frowned upon in every type of society, and so it was. Well, there are, but these I suspect are more evident because the accepted practice, eg. brother/sister marriage in Egypt, so offends our own susceptible elites, a point made by one of Shaw's character's in *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, that we see an offence. But the reader will have noticed a surprising variation in what was regarded as kin with whom sexual intercourse constituted incest. It is therefore just as well to examine the subject more closely.

It is in fact difficult to get a starting point, that is, a point of reference common to all. The nuclear family (ie man, wife and children) is often cited as such. But. "The 'universality' of the nuclear family can only be sustained by the loosest and broadest of definitions and the ignoring of 'exceptions'."¹ Nor can Fox's mother/child basis be accepted, for if certain old writers can be believed the Amazons exposed their male children at birth. One has to read between the lines with the Amazons, but they were obviously part of a clan, a moiety or class which had apparently gone "sour" because no viable society could exist with the total destruction of the male children. They were obviously placed out where the father's society could pick them up and care for them. The point is, that as far as the males went there was in this case no mother/child relationship and as the father would be almost certainly unknown there would be no father/child relationship either. To the Amazon incest had to be unknown. They could well have accepted mates from a certain moiety only, in the manner of the Aborigines.

Every man has certain women who stand in a special relationship to himself. They are: grandmother, mother, aunts, sisters, wife, daughter, niece and granddaughter. The same applies to women and their men. These are biological relationships. Social relationships cut this figure down in varying degree. Thus among the Aborigines each of these women fall into a social moiety or class or skin, so that grandmothers fall into one society, mothers (and aunts) fall into another and so on. The women who form the moiety from which a man may take a wife are usually referred to as "wives", a stumbling block for gullible anthropologists and even more gullible non-anthropologists. Certainly in some tribes in the absence of their partner a man or woman could have sex with one of the correct moiety (usually a blood brother or sister). This was not adultery, nor yet incest. Similarly all the daughters of a man's moiety belonged to another moiety.

Usually each moiety is divided into two classes, simply male and female, and usually the marriage chain can be simplified by leaving out non-productive members (sisters, aunts and nieces) and truncating grandmothers and granddaughters into one moiety. We then get the marriage chain... using lower case for the male and capitals for the females...

Thus: a marries B, daughters are C who marry d, daughters being E who marries f, daughters being G who marry h, their daughters being A. So it is eight generations before the original mating pattern (a marrying B) returns. The chain is reversible². It works regardless of whether male or female descent is used, the Aborigines using one or the other according to tribal usage of old time.

It will be noted that a man's nieces will fall into the same category as his daughters, and that the further removed the relationship becomes the larger the number of relations he has. Assuming a static population and an ideal family of a boy and a girl, a man would have one daughter and one niece (that is two of the daughter's moiety) and four in the granddaughter's moiety and eight in the mother's moiety and sixteen in the wife's moiety.

However the Australian Aborigine's marriage system is based on the exchange of sisters by two men of different families³. This doubles the number of descendants who are now of the same bloodline. Further, "a man's matri-cross cousin is the ideal spouse."⁴ This means that an Aboriginal tribe is very closely bound together by blood-lines. Genetically a cross-cousin marriage is almost as bad as a brother/sister marriage and could mean the double crossing of blood-lines every generation. And this is the ideal!

On the other hand "wrong" or incestuous marriages are those of the man with the woman A, the woman C and the woman E even though these may be unconnected by blood and even if obtained from another tribe who have comparable moieties. In fact such marriages at one time carried the death penalty. Other "bad" marriages (at least outside the family chain) were allowed to stand though the culprits were soundly beaten. Yet, intercourse with a blood-brother's wife was acceptable under certain circumstances (that is the man's own wife being absent), and unless the wife was stolen (in which case it was adultery) an affair with a brother's wife was a minor and private matter.

Further, in the northern tribes, when a girl was initiated, she was artificially deflowered and then, beginning with her nearest male relations (but excluding her blood-father and blood-brother) they all had intercourse with her, followed finally by the bride-groom himself. This is usually considered to be a way of removing the dangerous female magic, which as everybody knows is much more dangerous for those not related to the lass than those who are, so that by the time the bride-groom has connection with the girl there is not much magic left.

In this case, a special one which occurs once in a woman's life, the social taboos against social incest are lifted.

We see on the one hand a decided effort to keep the blood-line as blue as blue through continual cross-cousin marriages and marriage into societies where there is an ever increasing percentage of blood-relationship. On the other hand marriage is forbidden to other societies despite the lack of blood-relationships, yet this is waived (as far as intercourse goes at any rate) at the marriage of a newly initiated woman for the first time. It must be stressed too that all this applies equally to the female side of the tribe. Incest in such a non-dominated society is a social matter with no reference to blood-kin whilst the ideal family chain or pattern of descent is a line of cross-cousin marriages which are genetically highly incestuous indeed.

Amongst at least some of the Polynesian peoples the boys and girls, upon reaching puberty, are initiated into sex by a very close blood-relative of the opposite sex. Yet, at least amongst the Maoris, marriage was forbidden within three degrees from a common ancestor, and even close allowable marriages were frowned upon.

Amongst the Scots, there were a wide diversity of opinion between what the people regarded as prohibited degrees and what the Church regarded as prohibited degrees. The Church, firmly believing that they were adhering to the Word of God, used the Islamic code of relationship rather than the Mosiac. In addition, God-parents formed another, and just as wide a prohibition of marriage partners, whilst fosterage, apparently not a concern of the Church almost certainly added yet another set of prohibited partners. In a country with a small population, it became difficult to marry, and Papal Dispensations were continually sought to allow otherwise incestuous marriage. It is unlikely these were often granted across actual blood relationships. But it must be remembered that half the prohibited degrees are not blood-relations but marriage relations.

The Presbytery Records shed considerable light on what are otherwise vague accusations about the incestuous habits of the Scots. Apart from an occasional lapse across true blood-line most of the complaints brought by the Presbyteries concerning marriage with step-mothers, sisters and daughters, marriage with husband's brothers and nephews, with wife's sisters and nieces, and of course, with widows or widowers of sister and brothers. The records suggest that in all these cases the parties were otherwise free to marry. If one reflects back on the Aborigine marrying patterns, one finds they are extremely simimliar. Simply put, the Scot having introduced a wife or husband into the family, they were, if bereathed, remarried in the family.

One interesting case was of a couple who married being 'one woman's bairns', and as they bore different surnames were apparently step-brother and sister. That this was no casual adventure is obvious, the two apparent lived together (that is, were married) and had at least one child. When the wrath of the Presbytery became known, the couple fled together, obviously with the connivance of the locals who apparently accepted the alliance, which, if not usual, was acceptable to them. It raises an interesting question: The marriage of half-brother and sister with different mothers is commonplace in some societies and if half-brother sister marriages are allowed in a non-dominated society then surely such a society would be the place to find a brother-sister marriage of 'one mother's bairns.'

We have seen previously that the matrilinear communal households of the Minangkabau of Central Sumatra hold that all the descendents of one mother rank as brother and sister, regardless of the identity of the fathers, and that the fathers remain members of their mother's family and live and work in her rice-fields⁵. Their children become part of their mother's family and apparently unrelated to the father.

With the Zuni the man's position was a trifle better inasmuch as he was permitted to live with his wife in her family's house. He however could own no property and remained a member of his own mother's family and his children belong to the mother's family. All members of such a family, excepting the husbands of course, are considered blood relations, even when no such blood relationship exists, and no member of such a family may marry⁶. The father has no say in the care and upbringing of his family, indeed his only interest in children is in bringing up his sister's children. He is not related to his own children as he does not join his wife's family. The women's family are all considered as blood-relations regardless of the actual relationships or lack thereof, and they may not intermarry even if unrelated by blood.

Polyandrous societies, that is the open rather than the covert ones, reveal further interesting departures from that which we ourselves might fondly regard as the norm. There is a famous passage in Strabo (xvi,4,25) and refers to Arabian Felix or Yemen about the beginning of our era: "All the kindred have their property in common, the eldest being Lord; all have one wife and it is first come first served, the men who enters to her leaving at the door the stick which it is usual for every one to carry; but the night she spends with the eldest. Hence all

are brothers of all... an adulterer is punished with death, and adulterer means a man of another stock. A daughter of a certain king who had fifteen brothers all much in love with her" tried to keep her room to herself by getting sticks like her husbands' to put at the door. One of the brothers found a stick at the door when he knew that the whole family were at the market place, and suspecting the presence of an adulterer "he runs to the father, who comes up, and it is found that the man has falsely accused his sister."

The passage has considerable difficulties and W. Robertson Smith attempts to reconcile these by considering that the eldest brother is called father and that the woman is referred to as sister to the younger brother. This I take it to mean that she was the wife of the eldest brother (and thus father of the family) and that the younger brothers had conjugal rights in her as well, though she was to them what we could call "sister-in-law", but in other times and places regarded simply as sisters. I suggest that this is the actual origin of our term "sister-in-law", and that the term was originally sister and that the in-law part has been added in some recent times⁷. Such a polyandrous situation where the husbands are blood-brothers could well have arisen from such a society as the Aboriginal one mentioned above where the moiety is considered to be husbands, wives, daughters, etc. More likely though, the bride-price or entrance fee to the woman's family became so oppressive that a family had to group together and share one women, she being technically the wife of the eldest and the children being considered as of his parentage. In passing I may add that from some Celtic folktales it is apparent that there were societies where the younger son was the husband and the children considered as his parentage. Those tales usually begin... "There was an old woman and she had three sons..." Beginning with the eldest they each go forth to seek their fortune, and come to grief, except for the youngest who succeeds, wins the lady's hand and henceforth manages her affairs, but usually returns and rescues his older brother and they return and live with him and share his success.

All that concerns us at this point is that the wife is shared by the brothers and being unrelated to the wife the blood-ties of the brothers do not constitute incest, which remains marriage/sex within the woman's family unit.

However, in most polyandrous societies the woman does not seem to have been restricted to marrying brothers. The children were simply regarded as the mother's children, or even just children of the clan. As it would be pretty well impossible to determine the father of the child no relationship could be deemed to exist. Incest under such circumstances can only exist within the uterine clan and further, as many of these societies consist of intermarrying clans, there could be no way of preventing or even knowing of uncle/niece marriages for example. It comes as a surprise and considerable bewilderment that despite all this the men attached to such polyandrous societies can still trace their descent through the male line and only women know what a frail foundation this male hope, faith and idealism rests upon. But it misleads even anthropologists.

As related previously in the Chapter "The Woman-Dominated Society Where Men are Held in Honour", the Melanesian people of Aurora explain that the first woman called the men to her and divided them into "her husbands and her brothers, fathers and maternal uncles, according to present arrangements."⁹ We further note that "to a Melanesian man all women, of his own generation at least, are either sisters or wives; to the Melanesian woman all men are either brothers or husbands."¹⁰ We also noted that the Melanesians have a division of kinship and that when a man or woman marries they each stay on their "own side of the house" and the children of the union belong to the woman's side of the house.¹¹ The men are thus not kin to, that is not related to, their children. Thus a man may actually marry his own daughter, and occasionally has done so, but such marriages, though lawful are not regarded as "socially acceptable". This is entirely different to being regarded as incest, which in Melanesian eyes it is not. Incest, in Melanesian eyes, is sexual relations between two people of the same veve or division, even though

they may not be actually related by blood. In Florida (the island) at one time the men would have been killed and the women made a harlot. It might be noteworthy that the heaviest punishment falls on the male in incest.

We dealt at reasonable length with the interesting aberration of the Egyptian custom of brother/sister marriages. This was not incest. Nor apparently was the marriage of a man to his daughter, which occurred with one or two Pharaohs, though this was probably not regarded as the done thing. We noticed however that a son marrying his mother was regarded as an abomination. Incest amongst the Egyptians was marrying one's mother, not one's sister or daughter.

In the Gods of Hammurabi the position is fairly simple:

154. A man who has sexual intercourse with his daughter shall be banished from the city.

155. A man who has sexual connection with his son's wife after the marriage has been consummated and if found shall be bound and thrown into the water.

156. If the marriage has not been consummated and the father has connection with her and is discovered he shall be fined half a mina of silver and the woman shall return to her father's house with all her goods.

157. If a man, after his father has lain with his mother, both of them shall be burnt.

158. A man who has connection with his father's wife (who has borne children) shall be cut off from his father's house.

In this case incest seems to be the connection of a man with his daughter, daughter-in-law, mother and step-mother. Incest with the daughter carried a punishment of banishment, with a daughter-in-law drowning, with a betrothed bride a fine, with a step-mother a disinheritance and with a mother both are burnt (probably to death but the Code doesn't say so and they could have been otherwise dispatched first). In this one case only is the woman punished, in the rest the man is punished. It is also a point that in all cases recognised with the possible exception of son/mother incest, the man is the innovator. It is also noteworthy that all other forms we regard as incest remain unmentioned, possibly as in earlier cases due to the lack of recognition of male kinship.

With the Hebrews we should be on more familiar ground as it is the general belief that we have taken Judeo-Christian kinship rules as our own. This is one of the follies of our thinking. Apart from everything else those who make such claims don't bother to define who "we" are, apparently not realizing that the law and custom of England, Ireland, Scotland, America and Australia differ. Indeed Americans venture into marriages which the rest of us regard as downright incestuous. Nor is our understanding of Jewish marriage and kinship principles much better. Indeed I believe our modern kinship patterns owe more to Islam than to Moses. Both France and England began their rise as nations in the heyday of Islam and in those centuries too the Papacy first began to be recognisable as such. And Islam occupied much the same position in man's thinking as Marxism has in our own.

Israel began with the marriage of Jacob to two sisters and their maids, whilst Israel's grandfather had married his half-sister. Though half-sister/brother marriages were not only uncommon but forbidden by Moses this did not stop Tamar from believing that King David would sanction her marriage to her half-brother Amnon, and as we argued, she was probably right, for the law in these male-dominated societies were matters of guidance or ideals which still allowed for the frailty of human nature. Thus Reuben too, had an affair with his father's concubine Bilhah and suffered as punishment the loss of the rights of the first-born though he retained

this in genealogies. Tamar, by deception, managed to rape her father-in-law and got in child thereby and escaped all punishment. There is a further aspect that the widow of a man dying without children being expected to bear a child to his brother to give him an heir. A man was also permitted (according to some authorities, but Jewish lawyers differ on the subject) to marry his brother's daughter, on the grounds that they did not dwell in the same house. This aspect of living apart may well be very important as both Havelock Ellis and Westermarck have argued that the incest taboo is related to the familiarity of living together.

The prohibited women, according to Moses Maimonides (and remember he was a Jew very much under the influence of Islamic thought and writing as an apologist for the Jew in medieval times), were: the mother-in-law, the grandmother, the sister-in-law, the daughter, the grandmother, sisters, aunts and the wives of uncles¹². In Leviticus there is a long list of prohibited women. They are not to have sex with (and this is different from not marrying) the mother, the father's wife, the sister being the daughter of either mother or father, the son's daughter, the father's wife's daughter, the father's sister, the mother's sister, the father's brother's wife, the daughter-in-law, the brother's wife, a woman and her daughter, nor the woman's son's daughter, nor her daughter's daughter, nor a woman and her sister (in her lifetime) nor, or course, one's neighbour's wife¹³. Not all cases were punished equally but both parties were given the same punishment. Absent from the list is the grandmother, a prohibition one will find in the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, and which is actually allowed in some societies.

As mentioned above a man was to father an heir on his brother's widow, and it will be recollected that John the Baptist lost his head for condemning Herod for marrying his brother's divorced wife. A surrogate wife mother such as Hagar (for Sarah) and Zilpah (for Leah) and Belhah (for Rachael) was early permitted and their children were regarded as though they were as the same blood-line as the wife. It seems that in the list from Leviticus there may have been provision for marrying some of the women if they were widowed but there is only confirmation about this in the case of the brother's widow. However, in the BOOK OF RUTH this devolved on a remoter kinsman than a brother.

But it does appear that a considerable reform was instituted (or at least attempted) in the time of Joshua by Eleazar the son of Aaron though it may have been the continuation of the process begun by Moses. Part of this reform was the widening of the degrees of kinship. The old freedom to marry a half-sister, two sisters, or a niece, was superseded by a wide prohibition on both the mother's and the father's side, but which still allowed the marriage of a deceased brother's wife. The prohibited degrees included both blood and marriage relations as well as children of surrogates who were considered as children of blood. Incest thus covers a wife and tolerably equal range of relationships on both sides, both marriage and blood. Maimonides stressed that the prohibited women were those with whom a man had close contact, that is, living in the household.

We noted before the prohibited degrees of Islam... "Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your aunts, both on the father and the mother's side, and your nieces on the brother and sister's side, and your foster mothers, and your foster sisters, and the mother of your wives, and your step-daughters who are your wards, born of your wives to whom you have gone in, but if you have not gone into them, it shall be no sin in you to marry them: and the wives of your sons who proceed out of your loins: and ye shall not have two sisters..."¹⁴.

One may note that both blood and marriage relations are equally forbidden but not one's grandmother or granddaughter both of whom could well be within marrying range, and both blood relations. Again, there is reason to believe that much of the law could be bent without much strain on the conscience of the principal parties or that of their neighbours.

Under the Law of Manu marriage was forbidden within six degrees on the male line and four degrees on the female line. The widow of a man dying without an heir was expected to bear an heir to an appointed male relation within six degrees of the deceased, but this was strictly a matter of business and no sexual dalliance was expected. Similarly a wife who bore no children could be "superseded" and a surrogate wife taken and, although Manu is unclear on the subject, it seems that the incest taboos would pertain to the first wife and possibly to the surrogate. Incest was punished severely, the offending male being branded with a hot iron but it is probable that the same applied to the woman for adultery; she was obliged to go into exile for a time and do penance. Marriage outside the caste was forbidden but this was not a matter of incest. But one notes again the disparity of punishment for the different sexes.

There are several other interesting ideas about incest or a lack thereof from people outside those with whom we have been dealing.

Amongst the Medes the "next of kin marriage" was regarded as most blessed... "the greatest are the most intimate of them, those of father and daughter, son and she who bore him, and sister and brother."¹⁵

Amongst ourselves in Australia marriage between cousins are allowed (by law) but marriage between cousins of the same name is very much frowned upon; indeed marriage to anyone not remotely connected by blood but of the same surname is considered bad, if not wrong. Marriage with one's step-daughter was permitted in the past if not at present. In recent inquiries into incest it appears that the only incest considered was that where the male was the innovator of the act.

To sum up. Incest is a prohibition made by a society and often given the force of law, restricting the act of sex/marriage with little regard to biological reality. Blood-relationships are seldom completely covered, ranging from the Melanesian where the male is "unrelated" to his children to the Aborigine whose forbidden moiety actually runs into thousands who are no relation whatever. The genetic effects of, say, brother/sister marriages as in Egypt have not been demonstrated, nor yet the undoubted virtues of Manu's four and six degrees. Incest is only a social ploy unrelated to genetic realities.

Similarly, violations of incest taboos may or may not be punished. Where there is punishment the punishment is seldom equal for male and female, falling more heavily on the male. In many cases the male is the only one to be punished and in the recent witch-hunt in Victoria was the only offender sought, and this despite the fact that mothers using their infant sons for sexual excitement is as popular amongst the Aranda women as those of Budapest¹⁶. One must conclude that incest is a social weapon used to intimidate and circumscribe the sexual activities of the male and thereby dominate him, and that even in male-dominated societies male dominance does not extend any further into the social sphere than that of inheritance. As a criteria of the type of dominance in a society incest is useless... all types of societies differ in what they regard as incest and in their view of it and no society bases its incest taboos on genetic reality.

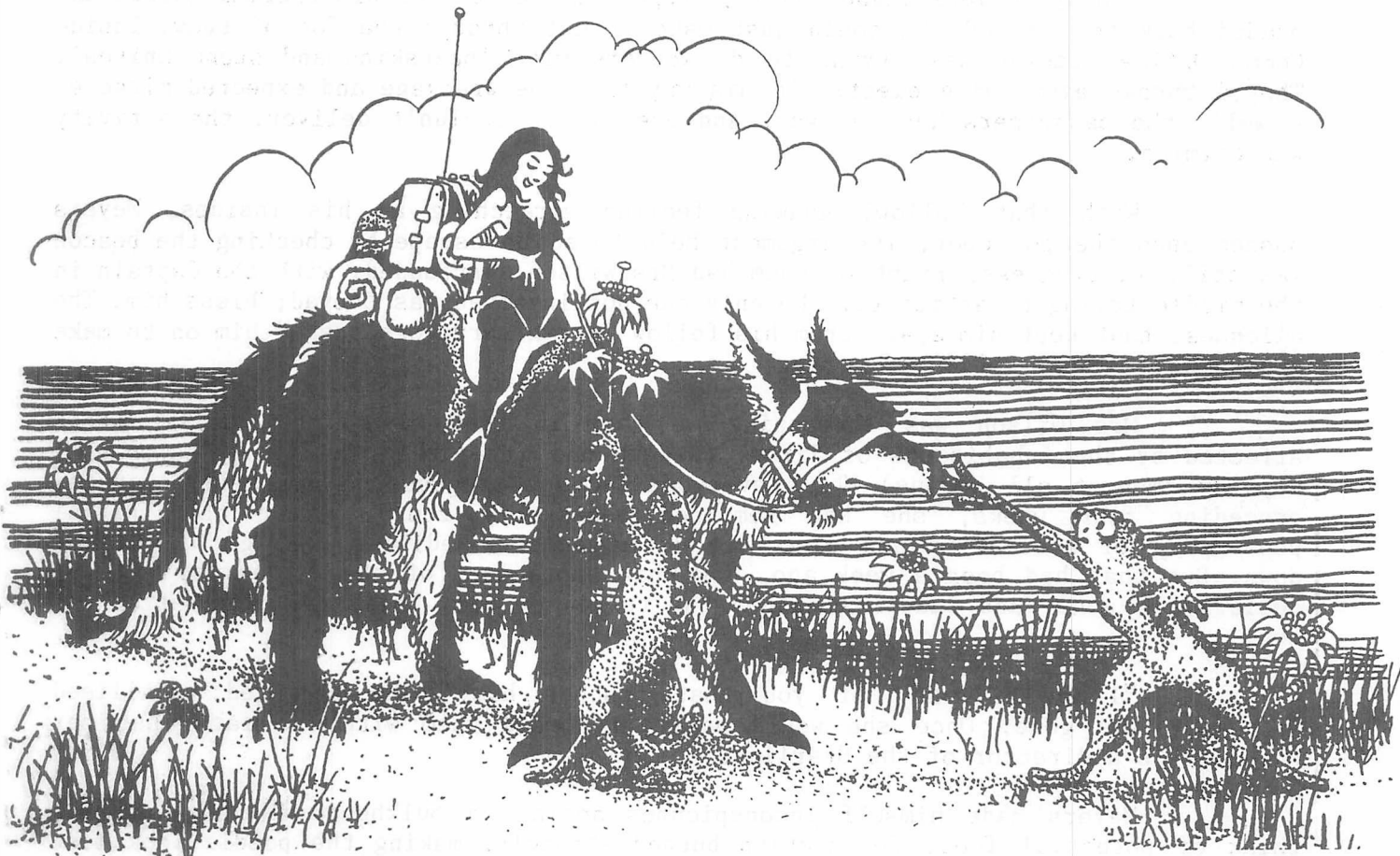
- John J. Alderson

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TAKEAWAY

BY

LANA BROWN

The bitter, ice wind was howling like forty banshees, as Chief Purser 'Worry' Meyers left the escape pod to check the distress beacon. It was the third time that morning he'd ventured into the hypothermia wonderland of an ice cube called M-9412. Suited to his nickname, the once cubby officer had become somewhat fanatical about the beacon; fearing without constant vigilance, the device would malfunction and they'd all become permanent fixtures of the environment.

He tapped the row of blinking lights and scraped permafrost from the LED display on the side of the conical structure. Everything was working perfectly. Somewhere out there was a ship; maybe even a couple. It wasn't as if this quadrant was uncharted space. He sighed and took a final look at the beacon pulsing out a steady S.O.S. Not knowing if a ship had detected the signal seemed worse than lack of food. Well, almost. Something akin to waiting as a child for Santa to arrive.

'Worry' Meyers sighed again, tugged at the hood of his thermal jacket and headed back to the pod. He could just make it out through the fog of snow. Inside Comms Officer Deevad was trying to do wonders with 'bearskins and stone knives'. They'd thrown everything electronic his way from the wreckage and expected miracles - well, the passengers had any way. And even if he couldn't deliver, the activity was calming.

With that hollow, gnawing feeling scratching at his insides, Meyers pushed open the pod door. The argument he'd hoped to escape by checking the beacon was still in progress. Eight of them had Mrs Wilson surrounded, with the Captain in the middle trying to arbitrate. The only one not involved was Deevad; bless him. The alienness that kept him apart from his fellow Terran survivors pushed him on to make something of their collected scrap.

Mrs Wilson was screeching at them in that high-pitched nasal whine affected by the inhabitants of Titan. (Wealth had given them the arrogance to play royalty amongst all humans) While everyone had got progressively thinner over the preceding four weeks, she had remained remarkably round. After the initial power-play of accusation and discovery of a cache of edibles, things had calmed down. But that had been a week ago. Now that supplement of the few remaining food pellets had gone, and once again they had turned on her. This time they wanted the dog.

"I'll kill any of you that touches him!" she shrieked. Civilised behaviour was gone. Once she would have threatened them with the fact that her husband was a director of the Starline.

Meyers made himself inconspicuous against a bulkhead and tried not to think of potential food. Depredation burned strongly, making the poodle look most edible. But it's a dog, his sensibilities cried out, you've got one at home you

love. Home? But this wasn't home, he told himself. This was some ice cube that might as well be millennia from anything human or edible. That word again. He could feel the juices pouring into his mouth. Feel them flooding a stomach that now worked only on memories. He looked at the dog again. Damn it! At that instant, he could have eaten his mother.

"Back off!" the Captain was saying, his arms out-stretched to the converging mob; eight pairs of coal-like eyes directed on one thing. "We've gotta sort this out logically; humanely."

Nobody seemed to be listening. As a single-minded entity, they wanted that dog. Seeing them made Meyers sick. This is what we've become, he anguished, what stinking god could reduce us to this level. But he knew. God, he knew alright. Survival had taken control. He reminded himself there were no villains in nature, just survivors.

In fascinated horror, he watched the others. Hoping desperately, if they got the animal, they'd give him a share also. The brains of the group was a stockbroker called Rains; built like some stilt-legged water bird, he'd only become more angular, more rapacious through starvation. Now he pointed a bony finger at the jellied Mrs Wilson, and Meyers saw even the dog had guessed it's fate.

"Don't argue with sense, Mrs Wilson," crooned Rains. "What is the life of one small animal for all of us?" He let his hand sweep across the group. "It's either that or we're reduced to drawing straws over the body of one of us."

The Captain clenched his jaw in the fashion expected of him and tried to look taller than the stockbroker. He'd half-feared such a move two weeks after their escape from the disabled liner. That's why he'd ordered all the bodies burnt; to avoid temptation. Had he not read all the required 'horror' literature on the subject? But four weeks ago, he'd never expected rescue to take so long, and even he was only human.

"Enough of that talk, Rains!" he growled. "No-one's gonna touch the dog!"

"Really, Captain," replied the emaciated Bird of Prey; his voice so cold the other shrank before his presence. "Now, Mrs. Wilson. Are you going to hand it over, or do we take it?"

A strangled moan escaped the woman's cracked lips, and she clung tighter to the little bag of bones. It's whine of protest tugged at Meyer's heart. Despite everything, Mrs. Wilson had only ever used her own food to feed the dog.

"Just stay right where you are, Rains." The Captain levelled the blaster directly at Rain's midriff. Meyers didn't doubt for one moment that the Captain wouldn't hesitate to use it. The others didn't object; to a desperate man, food was food, and there was more meat on Rains than the dog.

"You can't keep that up endlessly, Captain," sneered Rains.

"Meyers."

So, his anonymity was at an end. The Chief Purser pushed away from the bulkhead. A little mouse before the wolves. Would he help the Captain?

"Side with him," warned Rains. "And you starve with him."

'Worry' Meyers looked from one to the other. "I'm sorry, Captain," he murmured, making his decision.

The Captain's head moved slightly to plead, giving Rains the opening he needed. A long, thin arm with a clenched fist at its end swung across to knock the blaster from the officer's hand. It clattered and skittled across the floor. En masse, they swooped and pinned the Captain.

"Shall we save you a portion?" Rains smiled, the effort causing his cracked lips to bleed.

"No!" shouted Deevad, turning to face the others. His skin glistened under the artificial light. A slimy worm in a jumpsuit, Meyers had always joked. "I'm receiving a subspace message from a scout class vessel."

A faint crackle of static gave way to a cheery voice: "Hold tight, survivors of Starliner Delta. ETA 12:00 hours your time."

Everyone stood very still. Too drained to shout for joy. A ridiculous tableaux of human passions.

The Captain struggled out from the eight pairs of clammy fists and retrieved his blaster from the emotionally-stunned stockbroker. The Captain refrained from hitting him, instead he turned on Meyers. "You! Once back on Earth be prepared for a board of inquiry. I'm gonna have your guts, mister!"

The social order had returned. Mrs. Wilson fixed Rains with a withering look; let it spread out over his accomplices.

"My husband will hear of this whole debacle," she raged, even her dog looked smug.

Embarrassed passengers avoided each other's eyes. Suddenly there was nothing left to say, and they watched the clock ticking away the remaining four hours to salvation.

* * *

The shaggy Kraft-Captain stretched and yawned, scratched his belly and sighed contentedly. He let one eye regard his junior officer.

"Well, Yorg, where to now?"

Yorg picked his teeth with one clawed finger, punched a few key in with his free hand and looked at the Kraft-Captain. He wasn't feeling the best. The exotic dish had upset his digestion something awful and all he wanted to do was sleep it off. He told his superior so.

The Kraft-Captain scowled, then broke into a low, rumbling laugh. "No more rich food, eh Yorg?"

Yorg's furry face pouted. "Aye, sir. No more slimy ones. I'll stick to Terrans any day."

The Kraft-Captain nodded, remembering the plump female. "Next destination?" he asked.

"We haven't tried the 7th sector of this quadrant. It contains a few mining systems, and you know how unreliable prospector's crafts can be."

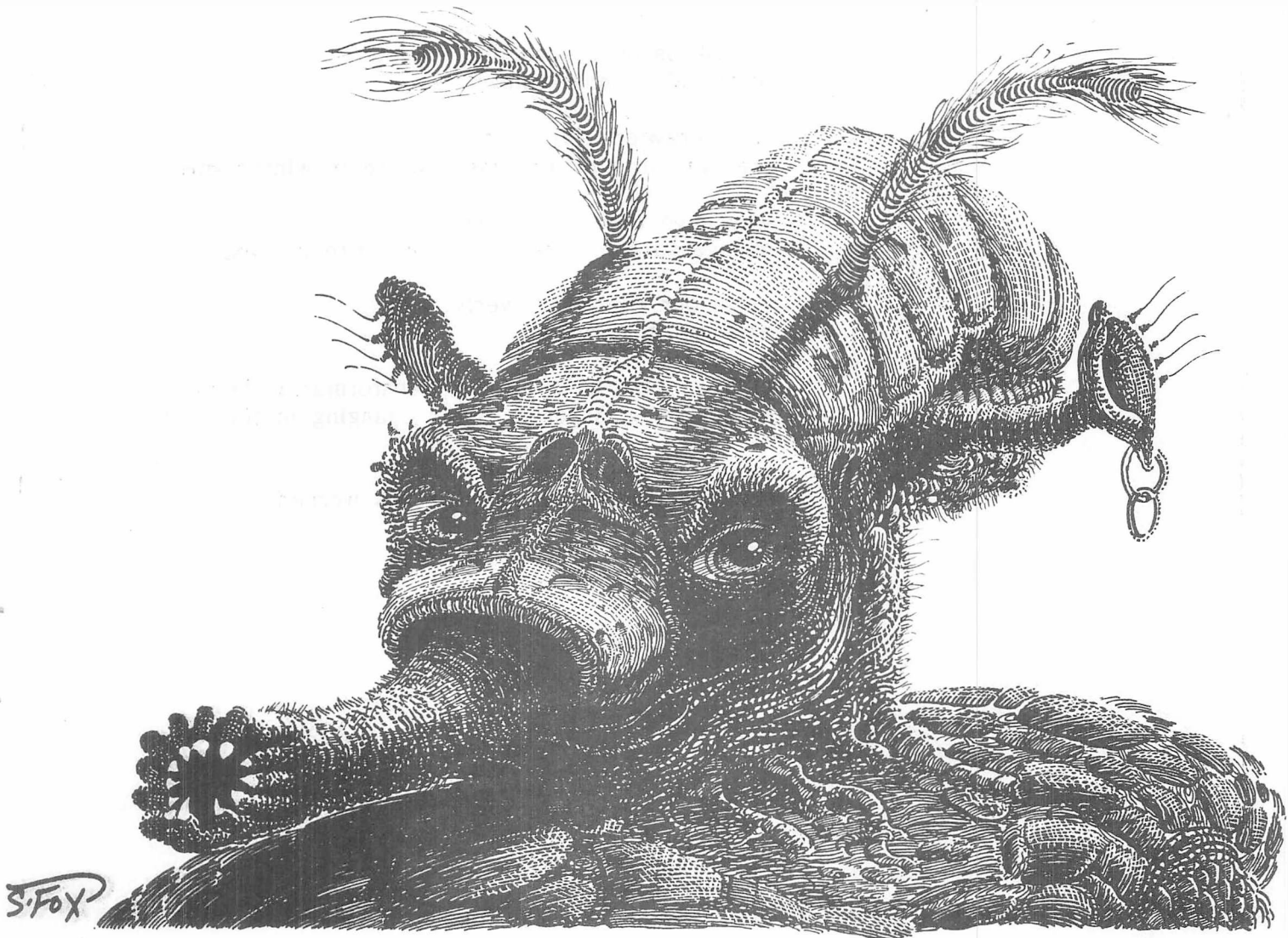
The Kraft-Captain smiled. "We've done well this trip. Plenty in cold storage. Enough for a profit. Plot a course home via the 7th sector. We might even pick up..."

A small whine from the rear of the cabin interrupted his flow.

"What about that?" asked Yorg disdainfully. He was reminded of his mother-in-law.

The Kraft Captain craned his head over the command chair. "Thought I'd take it home for the children. They're always onto me to bring them something special to eat. They've never had Terran dog before."

- Lana Brown.



A QUESTION OF SEASONING

BY STEVE SNEYD

stoat in winter
coat is ermine

crude analogy but helps
explain the question

all ask us on Oelophon
where all manner things

flyer crawlers swimmers
are dark in summer season white in wintertime

why have they never seen
change to coldmonth phase of white or vice

versa our captain cleverly
explains it is special

pills we take to stem the transformation being
otherwise endangered in our changing in the

intense shine-at-midnight
sky radiation of Oelophon it has worked

like a dream so far
in fending off their prying trouble is

it has gone down too well two at least
of the black crewmen now have grown

convinced the captain's fable hides
the shape of truth within namely this that all

their lives held down Someone
has fed them pills against their knowledge

to keep them in their summer
victim plumaging and now today this minute

at self defense weapon point demand
the cure the pills the others take

to keep them pure cool active masterful
winter white the whole

the livelong topdog time
as ship's surgeon i am spoiled

being overused to being
believed a god

now they treat me as if i
either lie or know nothing

perhaps after all they are right here on Oelophon
perhaps after all i have learned a lying medicine

one that the snow brought down

**DAREDEVILS OF THE STRATOSPHERE/
THE SOLID SPACE MYSTERY**

BY ANDREW DARLINGTON

don't like Diemos,
no tube stations &
the whores are invisible

the sky a static drift
of congealed sprite-sperm,
a distilled fever virus,
a background radiation
bleeding like
friendly gas leaks

I'm shaving this moonlet
offa my skin,

it's a tape
to play once,
then wipe
clean

SOVIET S.F.
ART - FOLIO

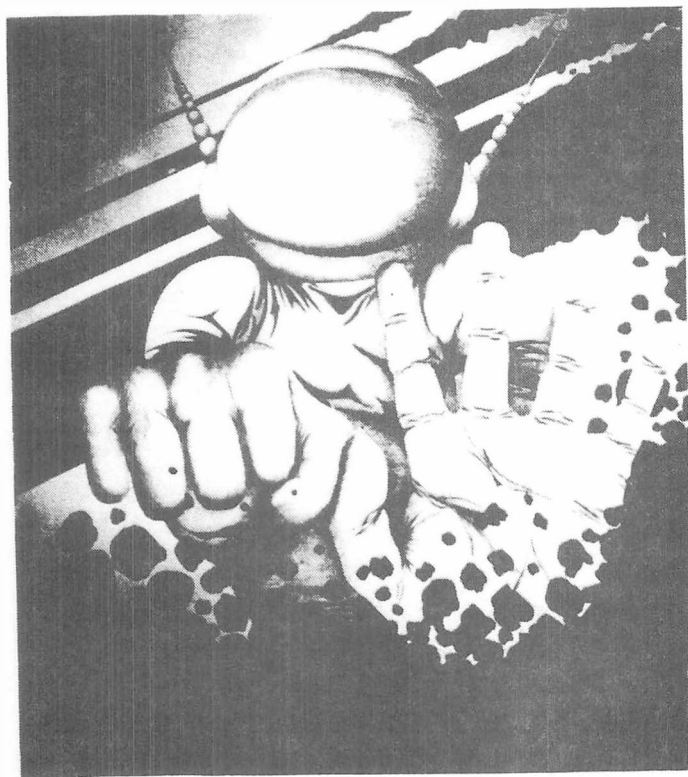
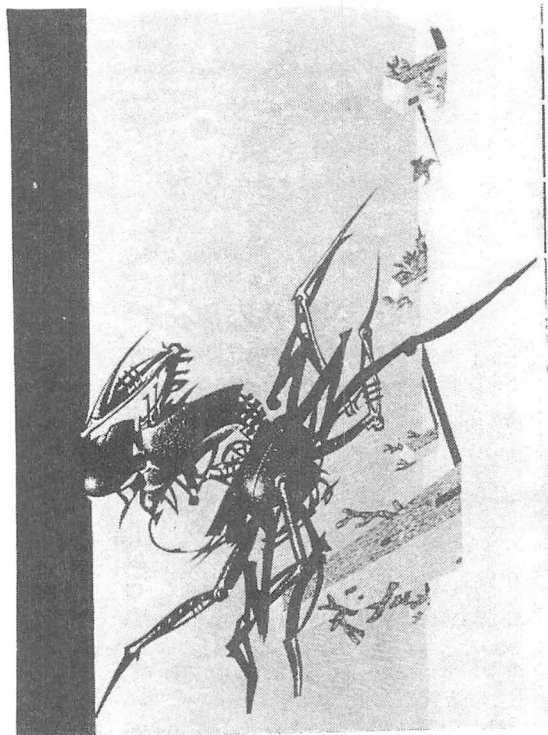
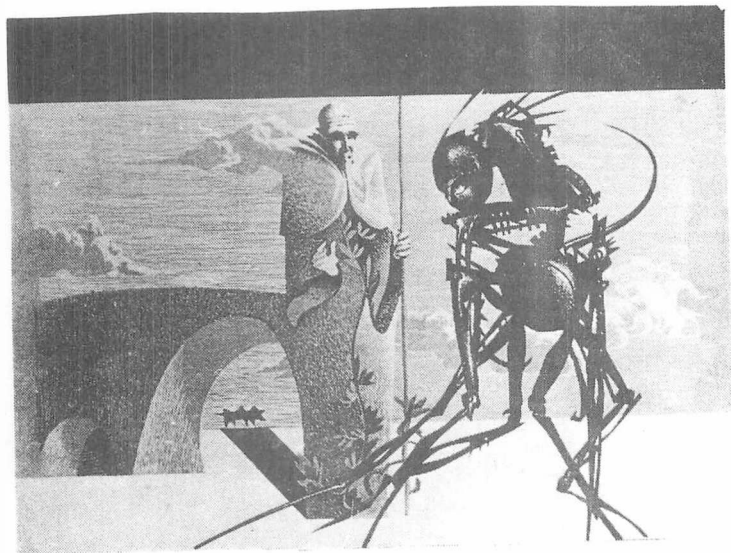
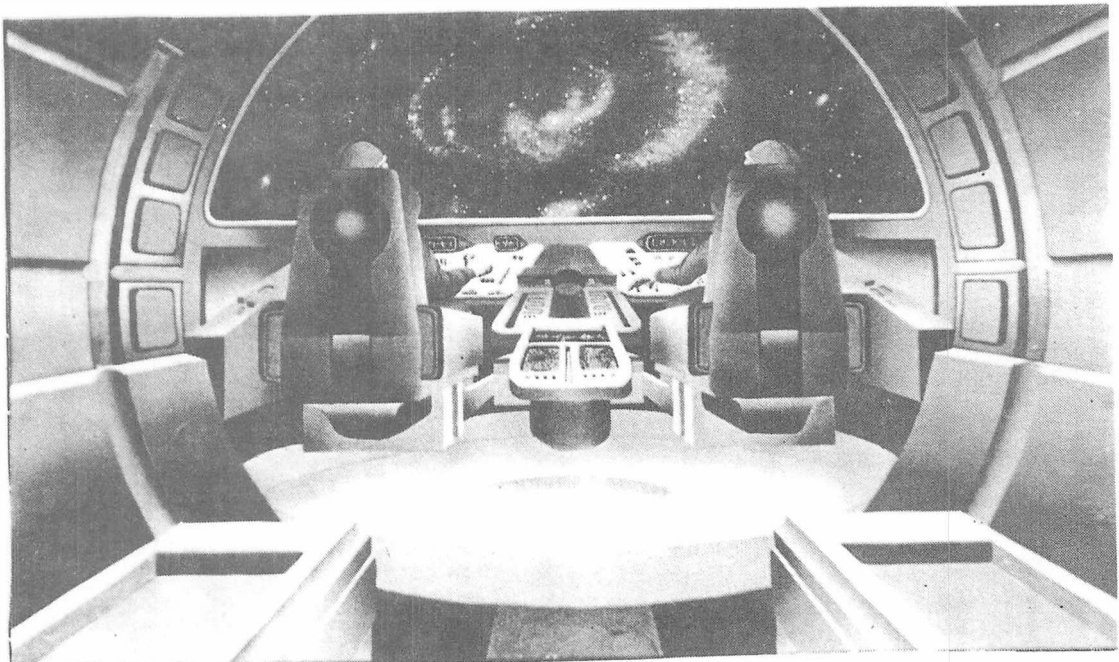


Illustration for CONTACT PLANET
by E. Gulyakivsky. Artist unknown.

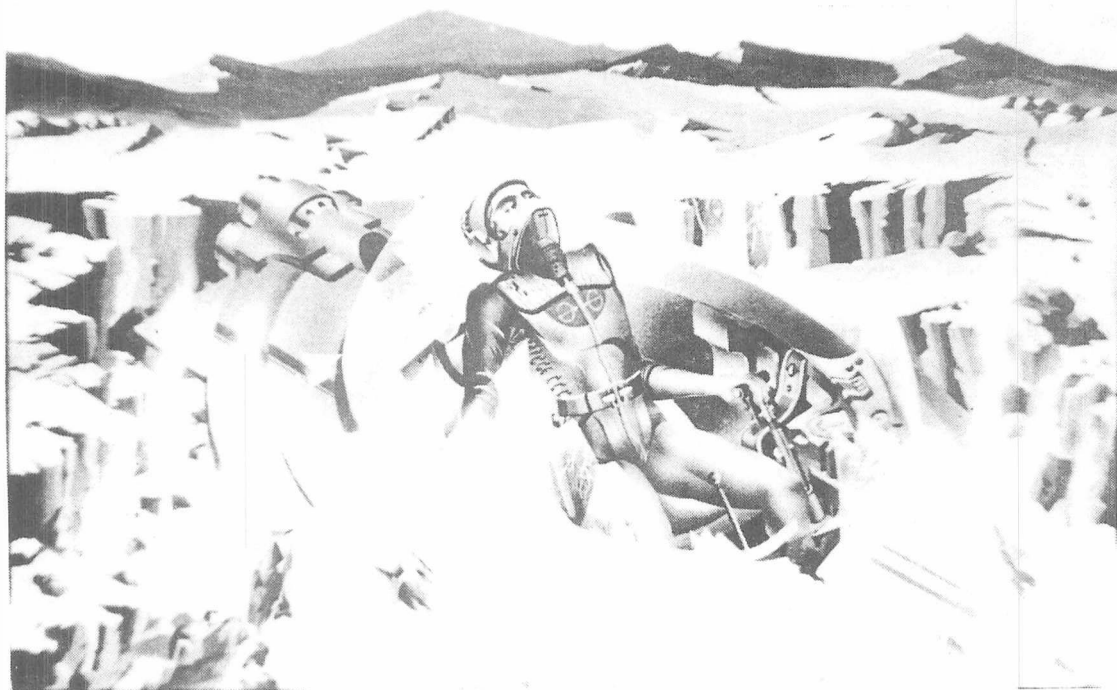


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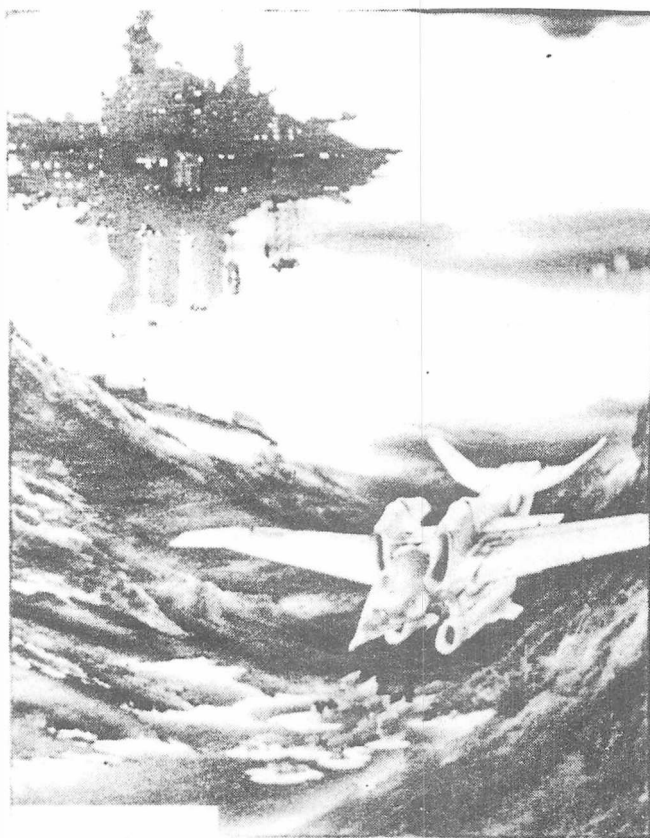
by A.M. Paseka

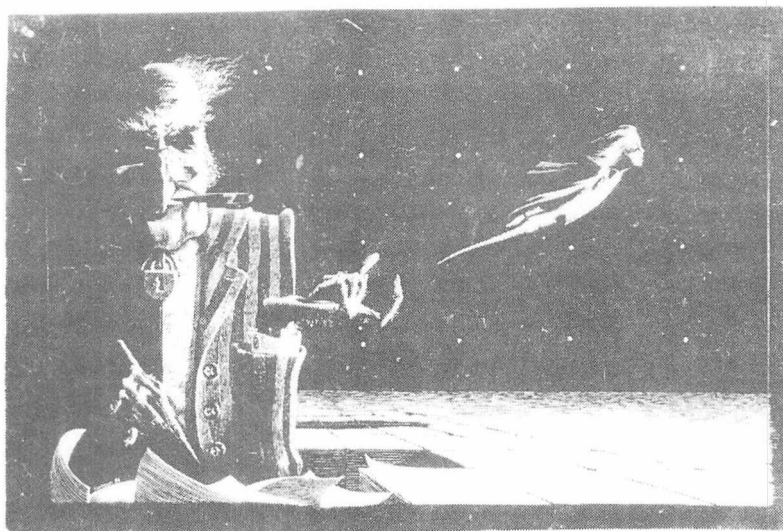
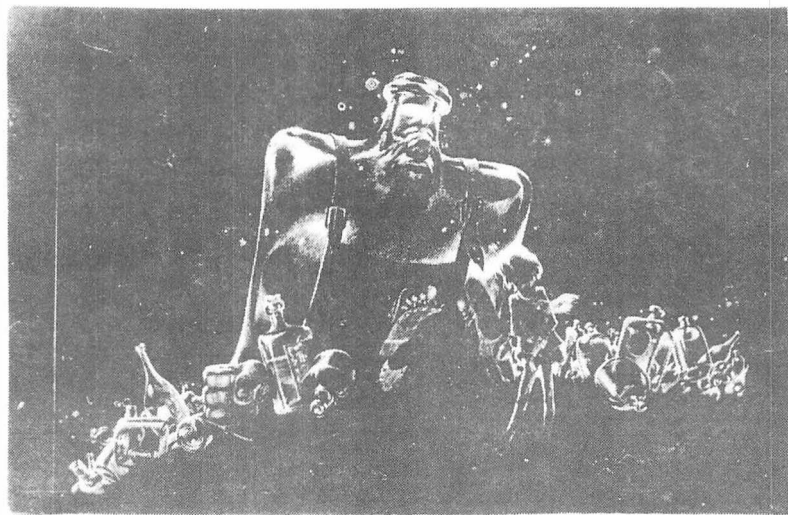
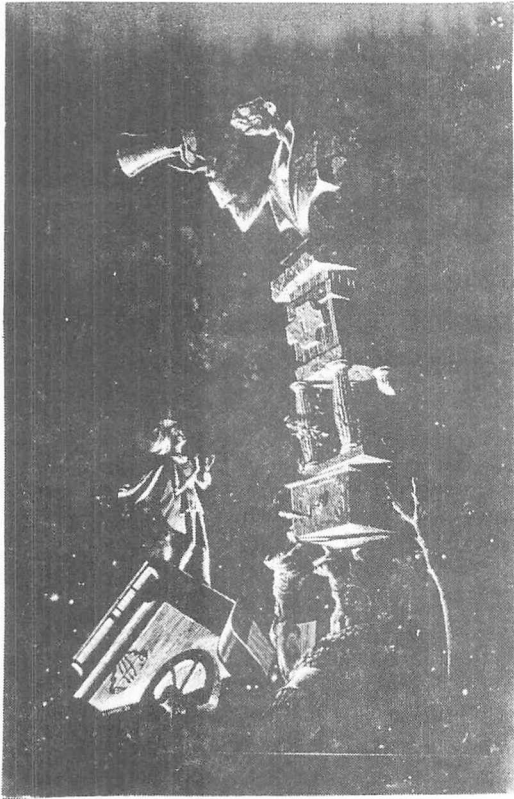


VOYAGE #2014 by A.M. Paseka, of Sverdlovsk



DEATH SCOUT by A.M. Paseka, of Sverdlovsk





ADVENTURE GAME

by

VIRGINIA WURTH

Roger McMillian was a public servant, which is perhaps an unfair criticism of the man, since he possessed the power of levitation. A few months ago, he led a peaceful, normal existence, leaving home at precisely 8.15 am each morning, having several extended coffee breaks and an extremely long lunch hour at work, and returning home at 5.20 pm to his wife, 2.5 children and 1.7 cars-in-the-garage. Well, didn't everybody?

It worried Roger dreadfully. He hadn't become a public servant to be abnormal, or at least no more abnormal than was expected of him. He had an "IN" file, and an "OUT" file, and even a "PENDING" file on his desk, and you didn't get a "PENDING" file unless you were qualified to make the decisions about whatever was, in fact, pending. (Roger had been a public servant for 18 of his 43 years - as his superior had said, impressive credentials, indeed).

Roger had waited years to get that "PENDING" FILE.

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"What happened to YOU?" Oliver Barrett asked his friend, grinning. The other's hair was ruffled, his shirt torn and grubbied and he looked exhausted.

"I've been at 'Hal' again."

'Hal' was the University's new Cyber computer, so named by the student population because of the secrecy and security surrounding it since the installation two months ago. Rumour and gossip were rife, but the computer department was emphatic: no unauthorized access. What the computer department didn't know was that seven people had already broken into it from their own terminals. Oliver Barrett, along with his friend Sean, were two of those seven.

"Since when," Oliver wanted to know, pushing his round glasses further up his nose and eyeing his friend's condition critically, "did Hal beat up on poor, unsuspecting students?"

Sean took his arm and guided Oliver to a bench in the University's notoriously bad cafeteria.

"You'd better sit down for this. I'd better sit down for this," he added as his knees threatened to betray him. He was obviously quite serious, but Oliver could not stop the grin that had been plastered on his face since catching sight of the normally cool and 'with it' 4th year.

"Sean," he soothed, "I accessed Hal only yesterday myself. I may only be a lowly 2nd year, but I can tell you that he didn't throw any tantrums. I even opened the Pod Bay doors once."

Despite himself, Sean was impressed. The "2001" adventure game had stumped everyone at the Pod Bay Doors sequence. He wondered if Oliver was bluffing, but rejected that idea. Oliver may well be only a 2nd year, but he was a genius with the keyboard. What Sean could not understand was why he never let on to anybody else about his talents.

"Oliver, forget that. Hal did something really incredible today."

"Hal did?"

"Well, the programme he was running did. Or maybe it was Hal - that would explain a lot. I don't know."

"You don't know?" Sean, you're gonna ruin your image."

"I'm serious, Ol."

Oliver dropped the act. "Okay, I'm sorry. What is it? Shoot."

"Today, I was trying a new method of logging-on, through a back door where I couldn't be traced. I must've logged-on wrong or something because I came in right in the middle of what I thought was another adventure game."

"What's wrong with that? The Dean knows that everybody plays them, unauthorized access or not."

"I said, I *thought* it was a game. But there was something... weird about it. For a start, the resolution - I've never seen a computer-generated image as good. It was like I was watching the thing on TV."

"New system?"

"The Cyber's been around for ages - I've never seen that sort of quality. No, it wasn't just that. The game itself - whoah! Weird!"

"How?" Oliver was interested now.

"Oliver, it was like I was eavesdropping on someone. Only it wasn't a person - I'll get to that bit. And by using standard instructions, I could manipulate objects, watch them fly around the room, go from place to place. I had direct control of these characters. They were like puppets. Really bizarre feeling."

"Bizarre nothing! Sounds great. C'mon you've got to show me."

Sean opened his mouth to protest, but his friend was already halfway across the cafeteria. He sighed, telling himself he should have known better than to open his big mouth about it, but the excitement at this find was more than he could bear. He had had to tell someone.

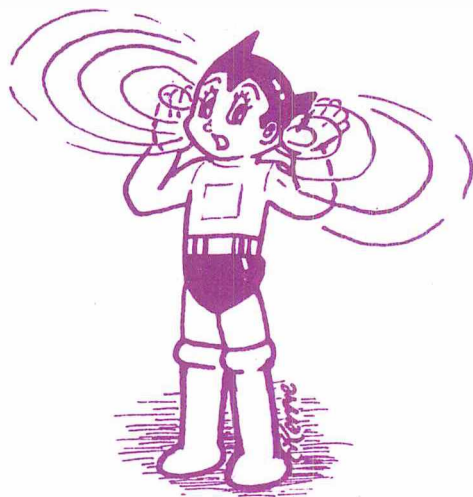
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Roger drew one shaking, green tentacle across his forehead. They'd put him away for this. As he sat outside his superior's office, he heard excited voices

The R. E. R. Dept.



G.A. BRYANT, Rue Jean Pauly 21, ANS, B-4300, Belgium.

One of the best short stories I have read in a long time appeared in TM 55, THE WIZARD'S CHILD by Gail Neville. Superbly illustrated by Steve Fox and with the cover it really complemented the story. I hope Gail has another installment for The Mentor or maybe, hopefully, it is extracted from a novel. If so, I want to read it. I hope you will inform the readers of this possibility. It was a pity that the prose wasn't longer as when I reached the last sentence my appetite was whetted and it was almost like 'cold turkey' when the realisation came that there was no more seeped into my stimulated mind. Looking back over the previous issues I see that Gail has written several shorts which have appeared in TMs 51, 53, 55 and 56. Quickly scanning the stories I realise that I enjoyed them all and what's more have found them to be a highlight of the zine. In particular THE CLOUD SHIPS in TM 51 was well done.

I have enjoyed reading the series of articles by John J. Alderson on male dominated societies although I think that he could have written them in a more appropriate style. What I mean by that is, the impression I get from the prose is that it is aimed at students studying such a subject at University and not the readership of a fanzine. This is not to say that it shouldn't be serious but the prose is a little difficult to absorb and digest in this style. I appreciate such a rewrite would be extremely difficult to accomplish, but the name of the game is communication and if the reader finds it hard going he is not going to get to the end.

I enjoy reading the letter column, something I usually read first to see what the readers say about the previous issue, etc. I notice that you have printed several Locs by Steve Sneyd. I find he has always something interesting to say. My only criticism on your letter column is that it is too short.

I have noticed over the last three or four issues that the cover has improved and seems to have stabilised. Maybe this has something to do with the superb artwork by Steve Fox. I don't know. I must say your 'offset' seems to be working really well now, the contrast is excellent, a problem that ONOMA 3 had suffered badly.

One other thing I almost forgot was the articles you printed by A. Bertram Chandler. I don't like to keep saying the same old thing but they were very enjoyable. He was certainly a character. He managed to give the impression, in his prose, of a person who really enjoyed living. I was very sad when I learnt of his death.

IGOR TOLOCONNICOU, Poste Restante, Central Post Office, Volgograd-66, USSR 400066.

The stress on a hypothetical, ordinary city-dweller still fascinates me. Today we don't run to and fro, proclaiming some book as gospel, clapping each other

on the back, saying: "That's a swell book, isn't it?" and instantly forgetting our former friends who disagree. I've had a chance to read SUNDIVER and STARTIDE RISING by David Brin (many thanks, Julie!) and I wanted to do all those things and more. The books are sure as hell enriching. Quick suspenseful plots, good insights (TRAIL OF TEARS), a brilliant innovative use of heiku in particular - the whole constellation of new and old tricks lures our interest along.

It is an author's victory, certainly, because our urbanistic ability to hide our feelings grew also proportionally to the size of the buildings we are living amidst. We're walking around armoured in casing a metre thick. We have experienced much: genocide and corruption, bursting technology and the loss of hope... But somewhere in the armour there is a small chink. It has diminished since Paul Bunyan's time but it is there. Only through this small chink can a writer/artist/actor/musician hope to reach us nowadays.

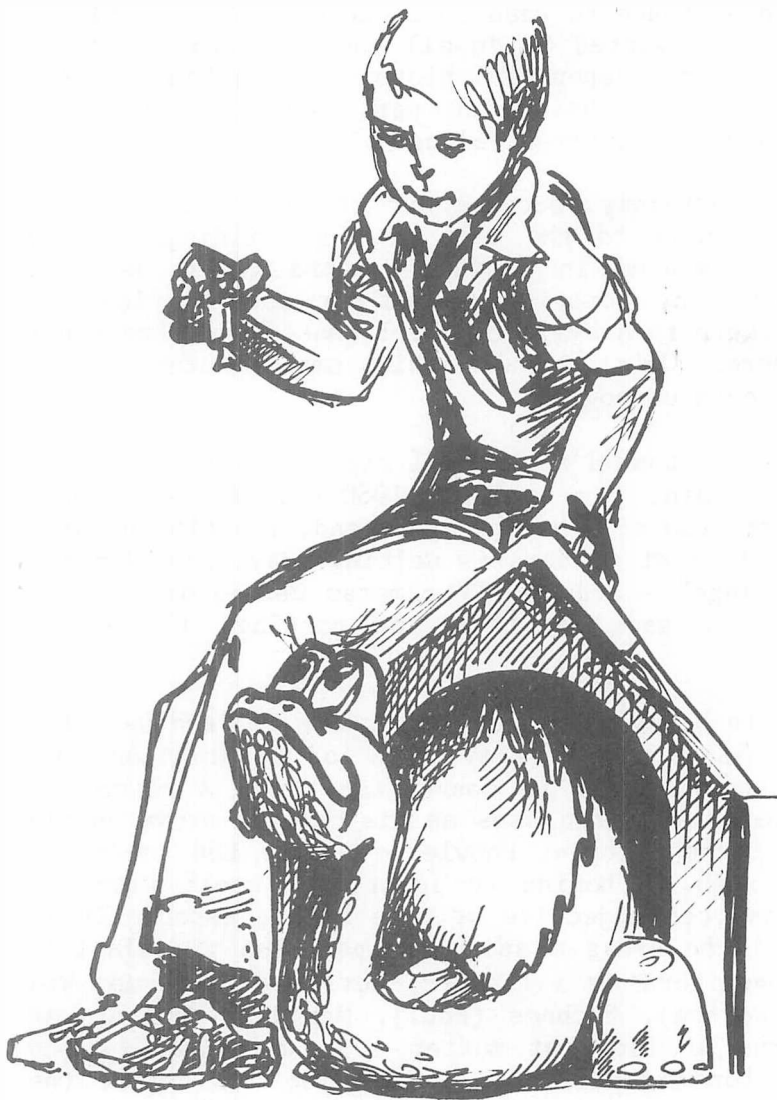
Stopping for a moment, I admit that I'm not 100% right. About the aloof, reserved, constrained city dweller, I mean. I recall the 1980 Olympics - I don't know how the 1984 Olympics felt - a stadium of a hundred thousand, the closing day, a song: "Good bye, Moscow, good bye. Time of wonders is melting away. The Olympian ringing echo. Good bye until new meetings" - and the TV cameras zeroed in on one, then another, ten crying faces. I felt sad myself at the parting, a thousand kilometres off. It was uncanny.

Why I brought all this up is because Brin did not reach me (and us, if I am correct) on the emotional level. He appealed to my need for information. One takes this all unquestionably when one is used to conventional sf. A reader is absorbed in the unfolding rush of events and Brin uses as his central drive an old gimmick: us versus them - to get all the relevant knowledge places the reader is placed imperceptibly in a position when he begins to identify himself with the narrator Brin. To this end Brin's divorced objective writing helps, especially in STARTIDE. With a gifted literary skill he draws a sparkling panorama of galaxies. Putting in an aside remark, the Progenitors as a literary device baffles me. Why does he use them? The Forerunners (Norton), Hechees (Pohl), Margues (Chalker) at all? Really, the universe - and true sf for that matter - is more complex and promising (take Carl Sagan's novel, for example). The point also is whether the Progenitors, Marguos, etc would possess attributed knowledge of the universe because, strictly speaking, any information which could be gleaned at all would be equal to the universe itself.

The sheer dimensions of interstellar space are confusing. In Brin's case - overwhelmene^ by words, actions and images - I sat (or rather laid back) and attempted to recognise what useful ideas I had acquired besides literary achievements. The haystack was too big to search for the needle, so I projected his imagery down to earth-sized dimensions (otherwise for what are books written - for alien's benefit, such as THE LAST CONTRABANDIT by Perecvetov?). Well, I was sorry to see what a mess I had gotten into - the absolution to wars as a means of resolving crisis; the absolution of the dictatorship principle proportional to the development in wealth; the sacred value of the individual becomes a small coin in the game of politics... I was in ice water over my head. Brin played a mean trick on me. And I now think: perhaps it is good being an ordinary city dweller with metre thick armour. We are then safe from many disappointments.

RICHARD FAULDER, PO Box 136, Yanco, NSW 2703.

I am glad that you made the point (in THE MENTOR 57) that the fannish community at large won't see the work of those young fans who started publishing while closely associated with media fandom. The other impediment is the way in which media fanzines tend to be available for money rather than exchange, Locs and suchlike. Part of the problem might be that few such young fans have seen what can



be achieved with humbler reproduction methods such as mimeo and spirit, and believe that acceptability can only be achieved through expensive means such as photocopying and offset. That is one advantage of apas - they do at least show the youngest members some of those alternative methods.

I would like to put to rest the rumour that media zines don't trade or otherwise give free issues in exchange. Sue has never had to pay for a mediazine since she began to collect them back in the early 1970's. Of course they trade, etc - otherwise they would not be known as a fandom. - Ron.†

Before I go any further, comments on some remarks in Robert Mapson's LoC. (I was sitting in the beanbag out where I have the goat tethered, to give her some company, when I struck this, and thought I'd better come in and type it straight away.) While it is true that there are few rich individual patrons of the arts left, I think it is worth remembering that most modern societies think sufficiently highly of art to support it out of the public purse. (That the artists consider this support

inadequate is almost inevitable.) Going further, I would suggest that if we have indeed "learnt to be indifferent to creativeness" this is because the fruits of creativity are so widely available. (Familiarity breeds contempt, and all that). For most of recorded history the function of the artist has not been the expression of some higher artistic spirit (this concept is a fairly recent one, at most two hundred years old) but as an entertainer (leaving aside those involved with religious worship). However, because there was no public structure (which I guess includes modern corporate structures) to support artists, they either had to rely on rich patrons, or what donations the lower classes would make in exchange for their performance. Consequently, practiced entertainers were thin on the ground, and thus greatly appreciated. Today, when entertainment is to be had at the mere flip of a switch, it is hardly surprising that most people take creativity for granted.

That Russian con sounds somewhat like the versions we are familiar with, even to the audience forsaking programme items for singing and other venues.

Boris's chronicle interested me in its revelation of the number of different magazines and publishing houses devoted just to sf. I don't know about other people, but my view of the Soviet Union tends to be a rather monolithic one, with each facet of social activity being generated in vast numbers from one central place. Here, though, we have a picture of a publishing industry as fragmented as our own. I wonder how much central coordination there is?

Gail Neville's short-short was effective in giving the reader the feeling of a person faced with that situation. However, I wasn't quite convinced that the Lawless effect was really, that it wasn't just a subjective phenomenon (which is where Gail derived her idea from, of course). On thinking about it, probably she needed a bit more room to demonstrate for us the consequences in physical terms of the speeding-up of time, much as in the short story (whose name and author escapes me) where space is contracting, and, as a result, among other things, colour progressively disappears, starting with the longest wavelengths.

Igor Toloconnicou's statement that "the ability to hide one's feelings is considered a merit" makes an interesting contrast with the view coming increasingly to the fore in the West that one should not hide one's feelings. ("Let it all hang out" is a popular way of expressing this credo so central to the culture of narcissism). Igor's contention that one should show consideration for others by not inflicting one's emotional excesses on them also stands in contrast to the narcissistic attitude that one need not consider the feelings of others because, in a society of rugged individualists others would not consider your feelings. As such, his attitude presumably reflects membership of a more co-operative society. What a pity that you do not number someone from mainland China amongst your correspondents, Ron, so that we can have the reaction of a member of a society which is even more interdependent. (One of the people held up to children as hero receives this distinction not because of the mighty deeds he performed, but because he worked hard at being a small cog in a big wheel.) Do mainland Chinese read sf, I wonder? Certainly I doubt if there has been any sf translated into the native tongue of another co-operative society that makes we Western Europeans look like barbarians: the Australian aborigine.

Surely John Bangsund would have to be a classic case of a genzine editor who retired to an apa.

Which Australian fanzines have been cut back since Ted White's article? The only one I can think of would be Jack Herman's. True, Marc Ortlieb cut back for a while, but this was associated with his move to Melbourne. I don't know if the fanzine that was produced out of a P.O. Box at Lyneham is still extant, since I was apparently dropped from the mailing list some time ago, but if it has folded, then it is the only one that has so, since the occasional WAHF-FULL does make its way out from between the thicket of Jack and Cath's mortgage from time to time.

Harry Warner's advice on posting items to countries which do not use the roman alphabet seems a reasonable one, especially since english (or perhaps more accurately, american) seems to have become the international language, for better or worse. (As an aside, the latest issue of the journal of the Australian & New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science has an article which points out that most of the world's scientific publication now takes place in english, or at least has an english summary. The author goes on to suggest that "of the languages available for written scientific discourse, English is the easiest. ...it is possible, in English, to construct sentences of great complexity with a minimum of grammatical rules." He does go on to admit that "English is a less-than-perfect vehicle for spoken scientific discourse". Still, english is not universal - I have at least one paper in my files all in Russian in which the diagram is sufficiently ambiguous to render it inaccessible to me without having to spend money on translation.)

I agree with Roger Waddington that what we really need is access to Eastern Bloc (Lem, after all, is not Russian) writers who are not among the giants. After all, our Russian correspondents seem to see considerable merit in them, regarding them as worthy of serious consideration.

Now, onto your latest issue.

Helen Sargeant's fiction worked very well. Wit and humour always help a story no end. Actually, I was reminded of those "John and Mary" sketches from "I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again", and I read that with John Cleese doing Faust and Jo Kendall doing Helen of Troy.

Igor's account of those magazines short stories goes some way towards answering Roger Waddington. Plot summaries, though, don't really give us a feel for the ambience (as the literati say) of the stories. I remember reading a collection of Russian stories a few years ago, and I always had the feeling, even when the story was set off-Earth, that the stories were still somehow linked to the Earth. Now, those stories had been written in the 1960s, and had taken at least ten years to be translated and printed in the West, so I don't know if more recent Russian stories are capable of generating that "out-there" feeling that one finds in english-language stories, or at least those ones set "out there".

In his report on the discussion on sf I very much liked that line that "The continual balancing on the verge of reality and unreality makes fandom active, unlike the usual literary groups submerged in the depths of pure art". In spite of all the years of western fandom we have to wait for someone from another culture to put in such succinct terms why it is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan. That aside, I notice that Soviet sf critics, amateur and professional, have discovered the eternal argument, raging in western sf circles since at least the New Wave era, as to whether sf should be judged by the same criteria as mainstream fiction, if so, what those criteria should be, or whether it should be judged by critical standards unique to itself. There have been predictions that western sf would re-merge with mainstream fiction, but I see no sign of it happening. Whether this will happen with the Soviet version will depend on how far it has diverged from its mainstream.

What can one say about such a scholarly and well-researched piece of work as that by Dennis Stocks on Yevgeny Zamyatin? One can only step back in silent admiration. After doing that, one does wonder if Igor and Boris's copies will arrive missing pages 21-36. Still, all those events were back in the bad old days of Uncle Joe, and Nikolai no doubt has a more liberal attitude to such things. That aside (or perhaps not), it would seem to me that the world has largely come to agree with Zamyatin's basic contention: that humans, as individuals and as a society, can make their greatest contribution by being allowed the maximum amount of freedom which does not lead them to restrict the freedom of others, and that such freedom can best be achieved in a society where there is equality of opportunity for all. The last society in which this wasn't recognised was that set up by the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea. Of course, in any essentially utopian vision the problems come when you try to put it into practice, as Zamyatin himself apparently knew. Basically, the problem is one of definition - how much infringement of the rights of others is too much? how much equality is enough? should society enforce equality? and so on.

While Diane Fox's assertion that anti-Aussiecon II might be a reflection of the ill-feeling generated around the time of the Sydney in '83 bid might have some truth in it, it can't all be put down simply to that. People who have been involved in that earlier bid, and who had every reason to see that Aussiecon II failed, put in enormously long hours working for the convention for little if any thanks from the concon. Other people, who had not been involved with the earlier bid, and hence were neutral, had, by the end of the con, become thoroughly antagonistic towards the concon as a result of the latter's lack of consideration and organisation. Finally, overseas visitors, again presumably neutral, were also critical of the organisation of the con.

Maybe Kerrie Hanlon's black skin-tight (but not transparent) body stockings were equipped with some sort of forcefield.

I was under the impression that most of the drugs favoured by the hippies and yippies (not yuppies) of the Vietnam protest era had already been declared

illegal long before than conflict began. That aside, I don't think that anyone is arguing that decriminalising drugs will change the use patterns of existing users. Rather, the argument is that public officials will not be corrupted in order to assure the supply, and also the users of milder drugs will not be led into the use of harder drugs, as happens currently because the suppliers of both are the same people.

Although I wouldn't go so far as to say I know more about how to handle life than anyone else does, as Buck Coulson says, having been counselled in my youth I feel I know as much about how to run my life as anybody else. Other counsellors, be they professionals or amateurs, can only give me the solutions they would adopt, and there is no guarantee that this is appropriate for me.

I can think of a simpler explanation why married men and single women live longest. In almost all societies it is the young (who are less likely to be married) who go off to war, or take up other dangerous occupations. By the time a man is old enough to have married, he is more likely to have moved to a safer occupation, if he survived the more dangerous one, and didn't become a statistic in the 'single man' column. Similarly, childbearing is probably the most hazardous occupation most women have undertaken in the past, and childbearing has largely been reserved for married women. No need to invoke theories of stress relief and acceptance.

While I could agree that a male sexist society is at least as damaging to men as it is to women, this doesn't automatically guarantee that a non-sexist will lower the general level of stress on both genders. After all, we are currently moving in the direction of a non-sexist society, but one in which both genders take on the worst characters of the behaviour patterns our society forces on men: pursuit of power over others, a reluctance to exhibit the gentler emotions lest this be taken as weakness (anger is alright because it is a sign of strength and can be used to dominate others), and so forth.

Surely women go to church for the same reason men do: because they believe in a God, worship of whom gives meaning to their life.

Actually, I would have thought that Julie Vaux's felinoids would have been a bit furrier below the neck.

While I certainly wouldn't disagree that, as a society anyway, we are caught up in a 'power' mindset, I can't see why this is necessarily a patriarchal thing. After all, I doubt if a man of the Tchambuli of the New Guinea highlands, whose wife was the "dominant, impersonal, managing partner" (to quote Margaret Mead) would regard the possession of power as 'patriarchal'. You are what you are trained to be - if you are trained at all. The present dominance of the male in many cultures today is a historical accident, possibly reinforced by the fact that culture currently dominating the world - the western european - just happens to be male-dominated, at least superficially. As this dominance continues to break down under the pressure of economic forces, so the rest of the world is likely to follow.

Perhaps the ability to romanticise about war is dependent on how thoroughly one has experienced war. After all, the youngest person who has experienced WWII is 41 years old now, and there are thus many young people who have not experienced war and who could view Rambo as being unreal, no matter what country they live in.

JOHN J. ALDERSON, Havelock, Vic 3465.

But of course Terry Broome has "got hold of the wrong end of the stick

(TM 58) which explains why he hasn't the vaguest idea what I am talking about. It is pointless therefore to cover any other than valid points... a practice I have made in the past. Scoring debating points is pointless. If my readers haven't realised why nine out of the twelve societies I have examined haven't been remote in time/place, it was to achieve a basis of fact as free as possible from bias. Whilst speaking as Broome does of my sources as "textbooks", whilst technically perhaps correct, is misleading because a textbook is largely considered now (correct me if I am wrong) as a book produced, usually by an academic, for the teaching of a subject. I avoid these if possible, preferring to go back to old and original texts wherever possible, and using easily available sources as much as possible, though I know other texts might be better. To object to my use of GENESIS for instance on the grounds that it "is a work of fiction if you don't believe in God" betrays a rather amazing attitude, not to say anything about the unusual logic. Those who remember my chapter on the Arabs will recollect that I quoted extensively from fiction. The anthropological value of GENESIS remains the same whether it is fiction, history or the divinely inspired word of God.

I suggest that Terry read Joy Hibbert's letter to understand why I made that attack on feminists. She makes more chauvinist statements than all the other writers in THE R & R DEPARTMENT put together. Eg, "If Abraham had an acceptable heir, Eliezer, why was it necessary for him to rape his wife's slave?" Now where did anyone get the idea that Hagar was a 'slave' (she is referred to simply as a 'maid' or 'maidservant', depending upon the translation used, never as a slave), and where, where, where, did the idea come from but Hibbert's own fevered imagination, that Abraham raped her. Nor in any case can I answer the question, though as Sarah "gave" her to Abraham that she "might obtain children through her" I suspect Sarah required the heir to be of her blood. There is no "controversy" as to whether or not a castrii can perform the act of sex... ask your bloody doctor. My authorities were anthropological but I am sufficiently aware of medical works to know they are right. As for genital mutilation, it is supposed to deter sex in men (and to prolong the act because the penis, not being protected, loses a lot of sensitivity) and I suspect it would also deter sex in women. But the thought does arise that it makes women also rather unsatisfactory inasmuch as they cannot respond, and it could explain why the men whose women are so mutilated are notorious pederasts and frequently only have sex with their wives until they beget an heir after which they turn exclusively to other men or boys. And yes, Joy, you certainly need counselling, your chauvinism is pathological.

Now Julie Vaux, I have been in Arab countries and have seen women with and without veils. As far as veils go I can only go on sociological reasons given by the peoples themselves, and the explanation is that the veil is the extension of the hamene. So too with caste and I made it clear that I used the word in the old Sanskrit meaning of colour and my statement was a quotation from Hutton who is a reasonable authority on the caste system.

Brian Earl Brown questions the point of the Moslem mullah and the Jewish rabbi not being priests. The use of the word 'priest' by my authorities and myself is that of someone who either sacrifices or stands between God and man. The Church of Rome has priests because they offer 'the sacrifice of the Mass' a belief abhorrent to Protestants who believe Christ offered himself as the last and only sacrifice and has made the way clear for anyone to approach God directly. The word priest is not used in the sense that 'officers' of a religion, eg. elders, bishops, parsons, ministers, rabbis or mullahs are priests: their function is different. To refer to "the legal status of women" last century as "no better than the status of slaves" in America is interesting, not as an illustration of the badness or otherwise of a male-dominated society, for they are among the three most woman-dominated societies on earth, and this fate of women under their own dominated societies is what concerns me. There is also a simple explanation as to why the Hindus never tried to conquer the neighbouring states of Iran, Afghanistan and Arabia... the Aryan conquerors came from and through the two former countries and

leave the problem of Arabia with a ! In reality they took centuries to digest India and actually got digested in the process.

One must take with a pinch of salt the stories of men murdering their wives over dowries; being probably fostered by the Indian government who have outlawed dowries and want to discredit them. If they are occurring then it stems mainly from the breakdown of the social fabric caused by our ideas being partly adopted. It could largely be prevented by pegging the size of dowries and insisting they be matched by the wedding gift from the bridegroom. It is news to me that Salic Law prevented mergers of statelets or that it prevented a "land dowry system". Salic law only restricted "Salic land" from inheritance to a woman, and the definition of "Salic land" is a matter of controversy and was presumed to refer only to Royal lands. Unfortunately I haven't got a full text of the law.

I suppose in a way I should be flattered that I am accused of being biased about male-dominated societies because it suggests that any bias I may have towards what I do regard as more the ideal for humanity, the non-dominated society of my Scottish forebears, has passed unnoticed.

JULIE VAUX, 14 Zara Rd., Willoughby, NSW 2068.

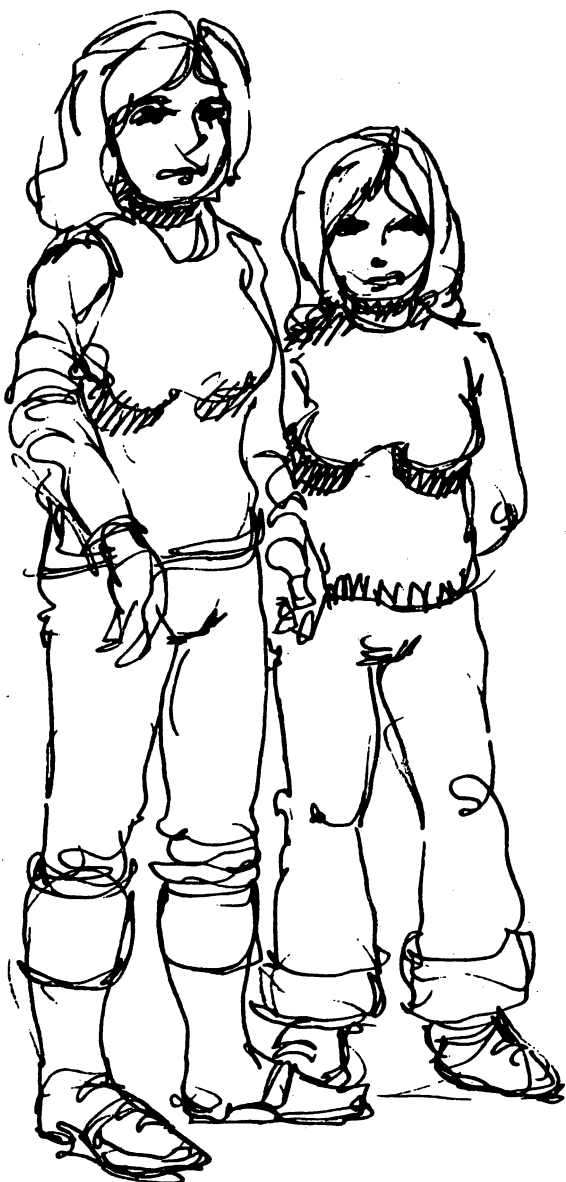
I got my first rejection slip back and I only sulked for one day... As an artist I was not satisfying my own critical standards.

It was driving me crazy. Frustration induces writer's block, which is one of the main reasons I didn't switch to writing sooner - I kept thinking if I was no good as a painter I would be no good as a writer. In a narrow market a mere illustrator remains amateur. There is only room for those... with larger wings to fly... and warped by time and scars as mine are... I can barely spread them... to merely glide... still, even the awkward ugly duckling turned into a swan eventually... maybe I'll become a phoenix... and maybe I'll fall into the abyss trying to cross it...

Joy (as admittedly a very beginning student of classical greek... still in first semester... by correspondence from New England Uni) a tyrant or turrannos is a leader, but in the sense of being a usurper of traditional power - a tradition breaker.

I'm afraid I can't agree about single women having less stress; but I've never been married and I'm probably neurotic anyway... in modern urban society most of us are under stress, unfortunately. It's the flipside of having hi-tech and plumbing and books and tv etcetc...

Harry Warner... totally in the spirit of fandom... I wanted to be a full time artist so I could improve my art so it would be worthy of those fans who truly



embody the adjective "RENAISSANCE". I reached the stage where I felt I had to do it full time or stop doing it at all... after I finish this letter, for the first time in months I'm going to dig out my coloured pencils to try and draw a tymbrimi. I haven't painted more than once in the last six months. My sable brushes are idle, alas.

ANDY ANDRUSCHAK, PO Box 606, La Canada Flintridge, Ca. 91011, USA.

The most significant point about TM 57 was the look at Russian fandom. Did you notice how club-oriented it is? What few fanzines they mentioned were clubzines. I get the impression that personal fanzines are not published very much. Are Russian fans allowed to have home printing machines the way you and I and lots of other fans do?

[This subject was covered in the first article on Russian fandom several issues back. The only printing is done on State machines, thus rendering fanzine publishing almost non-existent. - Ron.]

I have recently been to see the movie MARK TWAIN, the first full-length "Claymation" movie. As far as the claymation itself goes, it is outstanding, much like the animation in NIMH was outstanding. Like NIMH, MARK TWAIN suffers from a rather banal story line. Still, if it shows up in Australia do make an effort to see it once. But I doubt if it will appear at many sf cons as part of the film programme.

BRAZIL probably will. I saw that too, and while the story is probably weak, and depends too much on a take-off of 1984, it has a certain flashy brilliance that will make sf fans want to see it again and again.

As far as Australian fanzines go, I assume that the current small number is due to the needs of the AussieCon II eating up a lot of the fan's time. In any case, despite what Ted White says or thinks, I personally believe there is room for all sorts of fanzines. (Maybe even mine - I am still toying with the idea of bringing out another issue of INTERMEDIATE VECTOR BOSONS. Money is still the biggest problem. JPL gives lots of ego-boo, but it doesn't translate very well into hard cash.)

HARRY WARNER Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740, USA.

The report on Aelita 1985 was fascinating for its glimpse into how they do things in Russia which we do quite differently in English-speaking lands. I'm sure everyone who comments on this issue will remark about the apparel worn by the three men in the photograph, so contrasting to the informal attire both fans and pros adopt for events in English language cons. The only other specific comment this article provokes is admiration for the ingenious titles which the Soviet authors put onto their stories: THE ATTIC OF THE UNIVERSE, for instance, and THE TIGER WILL WALK YOU DOWN TO THE GARAGE.

I confess that dismay was the reaction the next two shorter items on science fiction in Russia inspired. The dismay didn't involve the nature of the writing or the stories described but rather the knowledge that here is a whole world of science fiction writing which I'll probably never explore. I've given up trying to keep up with English language science fiction, much of the Russian output goes untranslated, and even though I have a modest reading knowledge of Russian it takes me too long to read novels in that language.

THE LAWLESS EFFECT is an excellent little story. For one thing, it doesn't suffer from the basic defects so much fanzine fiction possesses (the typical story in a fanzine either reads like the synopsis of a novel or novella, or 99.9% of

the story exists solely as filling in preparation for a big surprise or bad pun in the last line, or the author failed to put essential information into the story so the reader can't understand it the way the author does). I like the way Gail Neville hinted at the theme of the story in the first two lines so casually the reader doesn't realize it until much later and the way she characterized individuals clearly in just a sentence or two. The only real objection I can find to the story is the way it causes me to worry about the possibility it's truth masquerading as fiction. It certainly doesn't seem like three years and four months since I retired.

Igor Toloconnicou's loc gives me more evidence of how Russia and the United States differ. I don't think big city people and those living in villages differ in the U.S. in the way he has found them. Fortunately, I can brag that I know what my grandparents did (one grandfather was a pioneer telephone technician when telephones were just coming into general use, the other was a barber, and both grandmothers were old-fashioned housewives although one of them worked in a restaurant after she was widowed). Unfortunately, I don't have clear memories of either grandfather, since both died when I was very young, and so did one of the grandmothers. I am ignorant of the previous generation, unfortunately, although I know one great grandfather was famous as a pretzel manufacturer and died without revealing the secret recipe that had made him quite prosperous.

The point you make in the editorial about the nature of Australian fanzines is a correct but puzzling one. I can't think of any valid reason why the fannish type of fanzine has been so popular in the United States and the United Kingdom, but hasn't flourished in Australia or for that matter in fandoms whose native language isn't English. Even in Canada, although there have been periods when fannish fanzines have been numerous and good, the tradition never seems to survive more than a few years, followed by a long spell of mostly the Australian pattern. The only possible explanation I can think of is the abundance of science fiction in book and magazine form in the United States and United Kingdom for the past four or five decades, and the limitations in other nations, either because of a lack of native authors or import problems. Maybe when the supply of professional science fiction is limited, there is a tendency for fans to value it more and pay more attention to what they have, while a surfeit causes fans to fail to appreciate it properly.

I continue to feel awe at your reading capacity, as exemplified in the book reviews in this issue. When you can handle a 1120-page novel without apparent difficulty, as you seem to have done this time, you give the appearance of having supernatural powers in this respect. Now, me, if I through some dreadful chain of circumstances found it necessary to read two Ballard volumes and two Anthony novels between issues of a fanzine, I would suffer such a severe and unfavourable reaction that I wouldn't be able to write any more reviews until Halley's Comet was back again.

The cover is splendid but I can't understand why I think of the figure on the left as male and the one on the right as female, even though both seem to have female breasts. Maybe it's the convention of the male holding the weapon that makes me feel that way.

ALAN STEWART, 4/4 Normanby St., Prahran, Vic 3181.

I agree with your comments regarding Galactic Tours, particularly the ground floor/5th floor/1 lift problem. It proved quicker to take the stairs if only one or two floors were to be covered. The banquet was made more interesting for me by the fact that I ended up on Table 4 (organised while waiting in the queue), which turned out to include Mike McGann, whom I had not previously met.

Gary Armstrong with K9 and Belinda Singe joined us after the initial costume parade. This really was what the Con should have been about, meeting new friends, friends known only from zines, and sharing events, happenings. George Ivanov and myself also won literary prizes, increasing the 'table solidarity' feeling..

Seeing a preview of ENEMY MINE was a bonus of the Con. I enjoyed the original novella, and the film up to a point. Space fighting, the crash, survival were all handled pretty well. The imagery of running through the meteorite shower and the 'thing' down the hole were particularly memorable. The Drac eventually dying in child-birth, leaving Lamis to be brought up by his human 'Uncle'. Fine. An acceptable working of the original, but then divergence.

In the film, with the advent of the slavers, we get 'Indiana Jones, Raiders of the Lost Planet'. It becomes all desperation, quick resolution, action - with a token gesture dealing with Zamis' naming before the Council.

To me this totally ignores the political/social/moral ending of the original novella. There, if the traditional recitation of lineage is not carried out, a thousand years of achievements are as if never existing; Zamis being the last of his line. The final revelation that Zamis is regarded as insane/human-loving by his own people provides much of the story's impact.

It appears that the film takes the easy (commercial) path, giving cheap thrills with the fight/rescue. Thus disappointing this fan, especially when the first half was quite good.

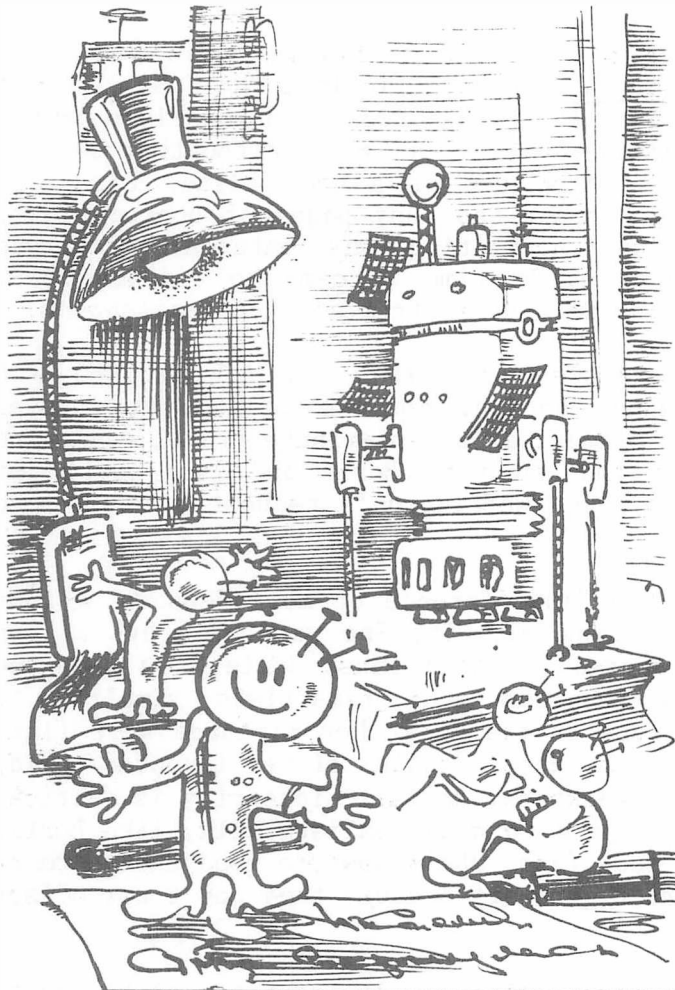
MICHAEL HAILSTONE, PO Box 193, Woden, ACT 2606.

Well, I was hoping I was done with arguing about feminism; indeed, I don't want to comment any further on it, nor do I wish to fight any more with Joy Hibbert, but I'm afraid I can't just let her latest comments pass.

So now I'm a male sexist who has nothing better to do than sit down and wickedly scheme up new ways of mouthing all the tired old male-chauvinist cliches about women being stupid and irrational and so forth, and it's "typical" of me to take actual notice of what Alderson says. (By the way, the colonel's name in MY FAIR LADY is Pickering; am I actually more sexist than Higgins?). At least I'm grateful for Richard Faulder's criticism of my outburst at feminism; at least he exonerated me of any charge of sexism. But I think my outburst is worth looking at in itself. Yes, Richard is right, insofar as not all feminists are as bad as Joy Hibbert; there are those who are reasonable and not seething with hatred, (but I say even this with some trepidation, fearful of being accused of being patronising). To put it simply, it is fanatics like Joy who give feminism a bad name and cause a lot of needless bad feeling. I have more or less said this before, but of course when I say things like that, I don't really mean that, do I? No, that's just an other new clever way of saying that women are irrational, isn't it? This is as stupid and false an argument as that of a woman in an article in AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY bemoaning the widespread opposition to what she called "nonsexist language reform". She dismissed such valid arguments as awkwardness and ugliness as a mere disguise for men clinging desperately to their power. And it's quite irrelevant to cite the "classic" male argument about men having delicate egos that women shouldn't upset. Not only do I find that too silly for words, but I'd also never struck it before. So I quite fail to see what could be "classic" about it.

But worst of all, Joy has the utmost gall to make the childish remark that it is "typical" of me "to actually take notice of what Alderson says". For a start, I'll damn well take notice of whoever and whatever I like; besides, it's clear that all I did was only take notice of something Alderson said, without

agreeing with him. Furthermore, I notice that Joy does enough of her own notice-taking of what Alderson says, she had spent no less than four paragraphs in her letter taking a lot of notice. Maybe I ought to stop taking notice of what Joy says; it would be a good idea, I think, until she can grow up and stop resorting to childish personal attacks.



understand the language - especially in Europe, where you're tripping over some country's boundary every time you turn around. But if you don't understand the language, you can't read the books anyway, so... I assume some bureaucrat put out a regulation to use symbols in public buildings, and the library is a public building, therefore...

Actually, the heaviest use of drugs in the United States was in the 1870s, when every bottle of "tonic" (and they sold in the millions) was liberally laced with opium. Babies got it when they had colic or cried. Everyone used it, without realizing that it was addictive. Or not caring. As one writer put it, when Gramps said he didn't feel good without his spring tonic in the morning, he was quite literally correct - he didn't know he was an addict, but he was one. The Civil War had left a lot of ex-soldiers with wounds that still pained them - sometimes in bad weather, sometimes permanently - and "laudanum" (tincture of opium) was the common painkiller. Coca Cola got its name because it originally contained cocaine; it helped immeasurably in retaining customers. Eventually all this was outlawed, and the drug picture improved slightly. The people who wanted them still got them, but those who didn't realize what the stuff could do learned to avoid it.

BRIAN EARL BROWN, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, Mi 48224, USA.

You raise the interesting question in THE MENTOR 57: what is, or should

In contrast, I like Julie Vaux's comments on Minoan men and women living in joint harmony, without one sex trying to dominate the other. I don't know what knowledge she bases this idea on, but I have long had a special soft spot for the Minoans myself, and tried (unsuccessfully) to write a short novel about them. Often I have wished that I could travel back in time and join their society, which I feel convinced left ours for dead in the sheer quality of life. And, if its men and women really did live in harmony, then there is an example that the Joy Hibberts of our world would do well to follow. Surely that's what we all really want: peace and harmony rather than war between the sexes.

BUCK COULSON, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, IN 47348, USA.

Interested in Roger Waddington's comments in MENTOR 57, which arrived last week, on the symbols on library books. The marvel of bureaucratic regulations. I can sort of see the use of symbols on highways, in railroad stations, etc., because you have travellers who don't readily

be, the proper contents of an sf fanzine? Should it natter on about the everyday doings of fans or should it stick to material closely related to sf? Of late in the U.S. there has been a call, lead by Patrick Nielsen-Hayden, for more literary content in fanzines. The myth of fans as party-animals has gone on too long, he argues, so that its hard to remember what it is that brought us together originally, and we fall away into factionalism and dispute. Considering some of the feuds of the past few years, I have to agree.

But I'm not all that "up" for more sercon fanzines. I kind of think "fannishness" developed as a relief from too much science fiction. The U.S. is awash in sf and long has been - at least compared to Australia. Books and magazines aren't auctioned off at conventions over here because anybody can get the bookthey desire. There's no scarcity anywhere. There can be too much of a good thing. I suspect "fannishness" got its impetus from wading through too many pages of book reviews, author's profiles and bibliographies. Fannish writing was material that was different yet something fans could relate to. In time it came to dominate U.S. fandom and now fans are looking for something as a break from nonstop fannishness.

I enjoyed reading the three articles on Soviet SF, AELITO 1985 - A MEETING OF FANS comes darn close to being fannish. Boris's last minute travel decisions and such sounds a lot like many an American's last-minute travel decisions to attend a worldcon. I also appreciate the synopsis Boris and Igor supply of various Soviet sf books. It sort of fills Roger Waddington's request to know more about the "average" sf novel over there.

Julie Vaux was not "burnt" by the "indifference of most fans to serious artistic effort of other fans" as Larry Dunning puts it. She was burnt by her own high estimation of her work that wasn't shared by other fans. Julie is a talented amateur. She does complicated drawings (whereas many fanartists simplify to extremes) but her technical skills need lots of training. Her pictures were flat, 2-dimensional. Since they were intended as Character studies of her invented world, this lack of 3-dimensionality is a serious weakness. Artistic integrity is a tricky subject but in this case Vaux clearly is trying to draw realistically, like Boris, Freas, etc., and while she's better than some fans, she's nowhere good enough to go around saying that fan editors don't respect good art because they don't use offset for her drawings.

I also disagree with Dunning's comment that "if it inspires one to create and share, then it is good". It's too simplistic and begs the question. Things inspired by someone else's creation seem to me more of a reflex activity than an act of creation. By turning on to the world expressed in a book, movie or tv show, one seems to be narrowly fencing in one's imagination and creativity.

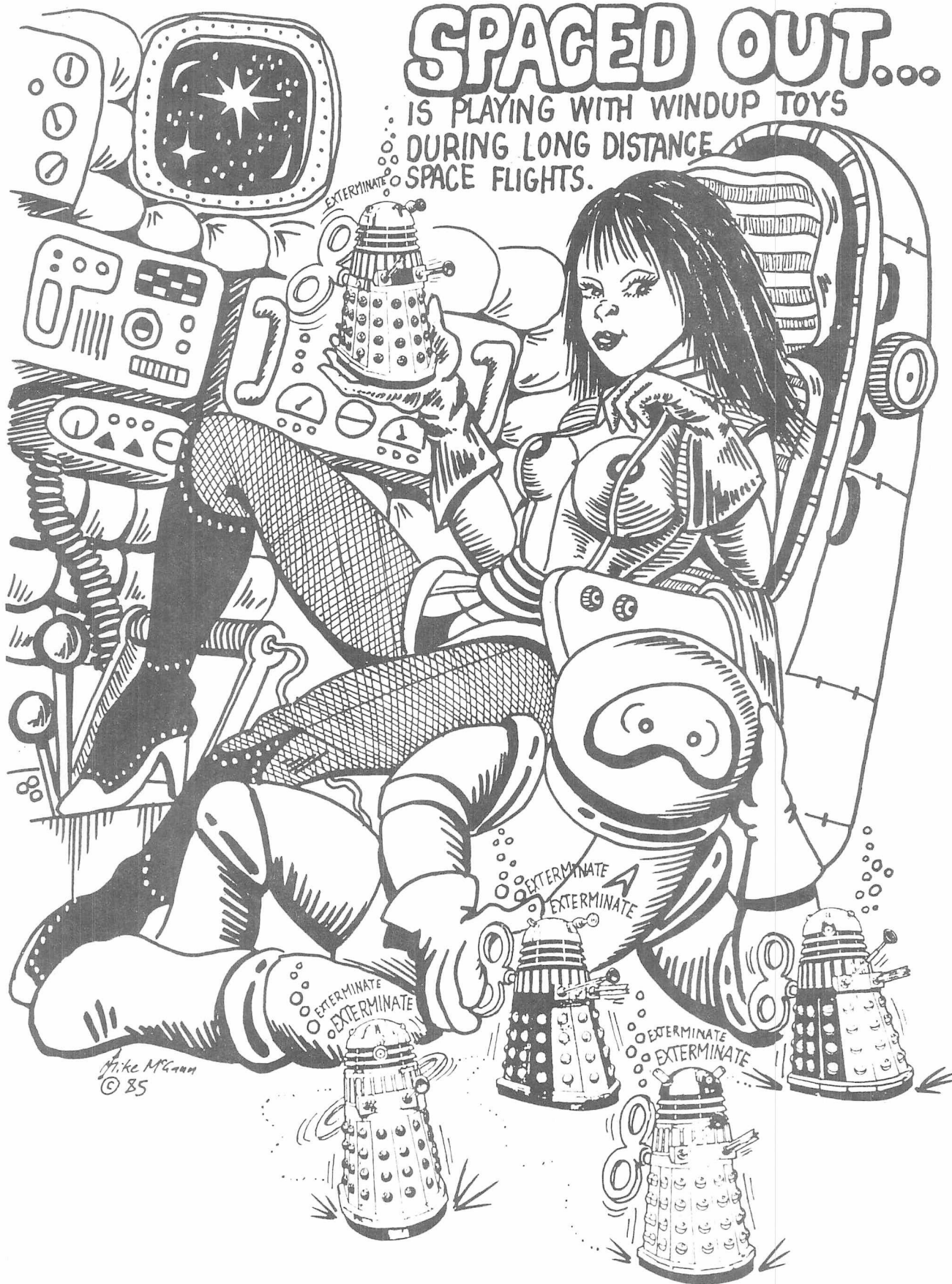
Harry Warner makes some very strong counter arguments to Diane Fox's case for legalizing marijuana. However while he cites the great number of alcohol related auto accidents, this is not something that can be compared to Prohibition Era traffic accidents. So much has changed in the way we use cars that one would be hard pressed to develop correcting factors for the greater automobile usage today.

As for other aspects of today's greater lawlessness, while Harry would like to see that as direct, stemming from increased drinking, it could just as easily be an indirect by-product of prohibition. It's well accepted that prohibition accentuated the hypocrisy of law enforcement and made "criminals" out fo thousands of people who wanted just a drink. Could we, but two generations after prohibition, be seeing the effect that disregard for the law that prohibition caused?

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Nick Shears, Joe Aquilina, Larry Dunning, Steve Sneyd, Andy Andruschak and Steven Fox.

SPACED OUT...

IS PLAYING WITH WINDUP TOYS
DURING LONG DISTANCE
SPACE FLIGHTS.





REVIEWS



A TIME OF CHANGES by Robert Silverberg. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1971. 221 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The third in Gollancz's Classic SF series of pbs. This was the first time that I have read **TIME OF CHANGES** in its entirety. I had previously read it in its serial version in **GALAXY**.

Set on the planet Borthan, which had been settled hundreds of years before by a group of strict fundamentalists who believed that becoming close to another person was what had troubled mankind, the plot concerns how one of those who passed for the nobility had left the land of his birth because his brother had ascended to the post of septarch. Because of the political situation Kinnall Darival decided it expedient to leave when he noticed his brother becoming colder towards him. In his journeying he ended up working for the father of his bondsister. The social mores laid down that saying "I" or "me" in speech was an obscenity. He met an earthman who told him what he thought of Borthan and its Covenant. They journeyed to a land of savages and obtain a drug that breaks down the barriers between minds. Darival started giving it to trusted friends. Unfortunately the authorities found out and sent the heavies after him.

Acknowledged as one of Silverberg's best works.

NOVA by Samuel R. Delany. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1968. 224pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

This is the novel that made Samuel Delany's name loom large in sf circles. Although he had had previously published **BABEL 17** and the **EINSTEIN INTERSECTION**, **NOVA** really caught on.

Through Delany's works he uses catchnames (such as Mouse, in this novel) that are readably recognised by the reader. Mouse is a cyborg stud. Like most of humankind at that time he has been wired up to operate machines directly, through sockets implanted in his neck, wrists and ankles. He has been trained to operate starships through space and his first interstellar job is one that the Ahab-type captain of the *Roc*. Captain Lorq had the notion that he would be able to scoop the scarce element Illyron from the imploding heart of a nova. He gathers his crew from those out of work at a certain starport and, pursued by the powers of two interstellar combines, he attempts to gain his goal.

The novel doesn't seem to have lost anything in the eighteen years since it was published - it is the kind of space opera that can be read both as an adventure and as a book with a deeper meaning (which is not intrusive). An intelligent read.

COMPUTERWORLD by A.E. Van Vogt. NEL pb, Dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1983. 203pp. A\$7.95. On sale now.

Van Vogt has been writing adventure sf for about forty years. This novel was first published in 1983. I read some of his other more recent sf several years ago and thought that it was not worth reading. **COMPUTER WORLD** is the old Van Vogt from the time of **NULL-A**. He has picked out something unique (what could be called the scientific proof of the existence of the soul - described as a cluster of golden balls joined together - which is perceived by a nearly sentient computer which is virtually running the North American continent) and built the plot around it. During the eighty years of the computer's existence it has been draining a small amount of what could be called "moral energy" from each person it "reads" and stores this energy. At the time of the novel the energy reaches a critical mass and the computer becomes, apparently, free of its programming. A group of people called the Computerworld Rebel Society is attempting to break the power of the computer. They are able to shape-change.

The book is a relaxing read - like Van Vogt's other novels it does not require a very close reading to get the gist - there is no deep message from the author to the reader.

WAR WITH THE ROBOTS by Harry Harrison. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1962. 173pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This is another collection that was first published back when I started reading sf. First released in Pyramid Books in the USA, the stories included are copyright from 1956 through to 1961 from such magazines as **FANTASTIC UNIVERSE**, **GALAXY** and **F&SF**.

As per the title these are stories about robots. They are: **SIMULATED TRAINER**; **THE VELVET GLOVE**; **ARM OF THE LAW**; **THE ROBOT WHO WANTED TO KNOW**; **I SEE YOU**; **THE REPAIRMAN**; **SURVIVAL PLANET** and **WAR WITH THE ROBOTS**. **SIMULATED TRAINER** tells how the first crews to Mars are tested to destruction and who are left. **THE VELVET GLOVE** is an adventure story with a robot as protagonist. **ARM OF THE LAW** is a cop-shop story. When a robot policeman turns up at a remote post, it causes much trouble to the local criminals. **THE ROBOT WHO WANTED TO KNOW** followed the (short) career of a specialised robot who did some research into the subject of Love. **I SEE YOU** shows even a computer run society has some rat holes that some people may run into. **THE REPAIRMAN** is a typical **ASTOUNDING/ANALOG** story about how the earthman gets his job done by using his superior skills amongst the natives. **SURVIVAL PLANET** shows that even earthmen can meet their match. Lastly, **WAR WITH THE ROBOTS** shows the error of trusting machines with too much. Quite a good collection.

MACROSCOPE by Piers Anthony. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1969. 480pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

I enjoyed reading this novel. The macroscope of the title is a telescope of sorts that is designed to look into the depths of space using 'macrons', which particles interpenetrate matter and were presumed to range all over the universe. Because it took so much expense to set it up, the macroscope project was multinational and was overseen by the United Nations. All went well until, tuning in to an alien broadcast, the team came across a 'destroyer' carrier beam which turned the more intelligent of the scientists who listened to it into mindless caricatures of themselves.

Ivo was one man who was thought able to find a way around the alien beam - he knew how to contact one of earth's true genius: Schon, who because he became bored with everyday things, had made it known that only something very unusual and complex could bring him out. Ivo journeyed to the spacestation housing the macroscope and eventually sought out the destroyer himself.

I had read about **MACROSCOPE** and its sister novel, **CTHON** back when they were first published, but had never gotten around to reading them. Now this novel, at least, is available and is well worth buying.

SECRET OF THE SIXTH MAGIC by Lyndon Hardy. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1984. 394 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

The sequel to **MASTER OF THE FIVE MAGICS** is as good as that previous volume. Set in the same world where magic works and the Archmage is still alive, the story follows the adventures of Jemidon and he seeks apprenticeships to Masters of the differing types of magic - Thaumaturgy, Alchemy, Magic, Sorcery, and Wizardry. Unfortunately he is no Archmage, in fact he can't master any of the branches of magic - something always goes wrong.

394 pages makes for a long novel; however **SECRET OF THE SIXTH MAGIC** is engrossing all the way through. Hardy writes logically of the magical laws and their background, and when the additional laws are found, they too are logical extensions of what passed before. What Jemidon eventually finds when he comes up against an alien 'Pilot', the emotional enganglements he comes up with and the eventual working out of all the threads makes an enjoyable read. And the threads are tied up, too. This and the first novel make a good solid fantasy pair that are well worth reading.

UNCOLLECTED STARS, edited by Piers Anthony, with Barry Malzberg, Martin H. Greenberg & Charles G. Waugh. Avon pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1986. 312 pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Of course the copyright date quoted above is for the collection; the actual stories are copyrighted from 1946-1979. What the above foursome have done is to have anthologised stories from well known authors that have not been anthologised before. They seem to have succeeded quite well.

The stories herein are:- **TIME ENOUGH** by Lewis Padgett; **THE SOUL-EMPTY ONES** by Walter M. Miller Jr.; **DEFENDER OF THE FAITH** by Alfred Coppel; **ALL OF YOU** by James V. McConnell; **THE HOLES** by Michael Shaara; **BEAST IN THE HOUSE** by Michael Shaara; **LITTLE BOY** by Jerome Bixby; **UNWILLINGLY TO SCHOOL** by Pauline Ashwell; **BROTHER ROBOT** by Henry Slesar; **THE RISK PROFESSION** by Donald E. Westlake; **THE STUFF** by Henry Slesar; **ARCTURUS TIME THREE** by Jack Sharkey; **THEY ARE NOT ROBBED** by Richard McKenna; **THE CREATURES OF MAN** by Verge Foray; **ONLY YESTERDAY** by Ted White; and **AN AGENT IN PLACE** by Laurence M. Janifer. There is a Foreword by Piers Anthony and an Afterword by Barry Malzberg.

I found the stories quite outstanding - they could all have come from a "Best Of" anthology and they are of that sharp, slightly-horror tinged fiction that **GALAXY** was publishing in its best period under Gold.

ALISTAIR'S TIME MACHINE by Marilyn Sadler. Illustrated by Roger Bollen. Hamish Hamilton h/c, dist in Aust by Penguin Books Aust. (C) 1986. 43pp. 22x28 cm. Full colour. A\$14.95. On sale now.

Alistair was one of those children who were both brilliant and bookish. Science was the subject he was interested in and he entered a science competition along with the other children. When he went to pick his subject he decided to build a time machine.

At last when it was completed he decided to test it out before the competition. When he pressed the button it to get it to take him back to the day before he was quite surprised to find himself seated at a round table with some unsavoury looking knights. He tried to get home but instead found himself at a ball in Louis France. Again and again he tried to return home. One of the situations he found himself in was in front of a charge of mammoths. He turned the time machine on them to get rid of them.

When he eventually made it back home he went straight off to the competition and entered his time machine. Which would not work. This book would be a good present for children of science fiction readers or any bright youngster that has a good imagination.

FALCON 5: THE DYING SUN by Mark Smith & Jamie Thomson. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. A\$5.95. On sale now.

These reader-interactive game books are still selling well - no doubt because of the success of computer-generated games. They are also getting more complicated in the way of their introductions and instructions, this volume has 12 packed pages of what appear to be intricate instructions.

In **THE DYING SUN** the agents job is to either capture or void a dangerous alien, Yelov. The time is the year 3034 AD. The authors have drawn on fifty years of backgrounds created by sf in setting up the story and locale. There is even time travel in that the fourth dimension is used for ftl travel. Yelov has at his command dangerous opponents, while the agent (you) have much less backup.

Quite an involved book - these can command as much concentration as any like novel, possibly more.

FALCON 6: AT THE END OF TIME by Mark Smith & Jamie Thomson. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1986. A\$5.95. On sale now.

This volume has 20 pages introduction! All these Falcon series concern the adventures of agents of **TIME** - the Temporal Investigating and Monitoring Executive. The intro gives detailed diagrams of the time machine, blaster, environment suit, star systems, medical robot, flyer and psionic enhancer.

The problem this time around is that another agent, codename, Bloodhound, a friend of yours, has disappeared into a timehole leading to the year 1485 AD. You decide to go and either rescue him or find the cause of his death. The evil alien Yelov is also involved somewhere as it was he that Bloodhound was trying to track.

Another for the games buffs.

THE GOLDEN SWAN by Nancy Springer. Corgi pb, dist in Aust by Corgi & Bantam Books. (C) 1983. 205pp. A\$5.95. On sale now.

Yet another in a continuing saga. **THE GOLDEN SWAN** is a sequel to **The Books Of Isle** (**THE WHITE HART**; **THE SILVER SUN** and **THE SABLE MOON**) and **THE BLACK BEAST**.

The tale is of a quest followed by Diar, the son of King Trevyn of Isle, who can change into wolf shape as did his mother and Frain, a young man who had a lifetime of wandering. They clove together and set out after a love love of Frain's.

As in all fantasy with a quest theme, they meet many adventures and trials. Because Frain is the one who is smitten, Dair is more able to use a clearer mind and manages to get the pair out of various troubles. Springer can write quite clearly and the following of her novels is growing with each new book released.

A NEST OF NIGHTMARES by Lisa Tuttle. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1977-1985. 208pp. A\$6.95. On sale now.

Lisa Tuttle is an sf fan who, along with so many in the past, has broken into (if that is the term) print as an author. This collection is market as a horror novel rather than sf, though, as with Sturgeon's stories, there is some overlap.

The stories have very short titles, and give some idea of what the story is concerned with: **BUG HOUSE**; **DOLLBURGER**; **COMMUNITY PROPERTY**; **FLYING TO BYZANTIUM**; **TREADING THE MAZE**; **THE HORSE LORD**; **THE OTHER MOTHER**; **NEED**; **THE MEMORY OF WOOD**; **A FRIEND IN NEED**; **STRANGER IN THE HOUSE**; **SUN CITY** and **THE NEST**. The cover illustration is that of a couple of just-born birds with glowing violet eyes. As with Tuttle's other works, these are short and sharp.

Some of the best collections of horror stories make an entity that is more than just a collection of stories - they give the collection an atmosphere of its own and make it more memorable. I think this is just the book to curl up with on cold and blustery winter night in a warm room (or bed)...

BOOKS RELEASES BY BANTAM IN THE USA AND WHICH MAY BE RELEASED BY CORGI & BANTAM BOOKS IN AUSTRALIA:

MAGICIAN: MASTER by Raymond E. Feist. 366pp. US\$3.50. Volume II of the Rift War saga. One of the better quest fantasies of the early 1980's. Follows the career of Pug as he meets dwarves, elves and other creatures.

THE LAST RAINBOW by Parke Godwin. 421pp. US\$3.95. The paperback of the hardcover which was reviewed several issues back.

THE FALLEN COUNTRY by Somtow Sucharitkul. 198pp. US\$2.95. Into what world does a victim of child abuse wish to fall in those times that they wish to be away from it all? Billy Binder found a land called the Fallen Country, an icy cold land of dragons and other things...

AMERICA 2040 by Evan Innes. 344pp. US\$3.95. The new frontier for the US. To quote from the blurb: "It will determine America's destiny. Locked in a final deadly struggle with the Soviets..." So they really think in this time of fast change that either country will be on top sixty years from now?

THE COMING OF THE QUANTUM CATS by Frederik Pohl. 296pp. US\$3.50. A sort of Legion of Space/Time from an author using present day quantum physics as props. A novel of parallel worlds.

SINGULARITY by William Sleator. 198pp. US\$2.95. A strange house in which things which shouldn't happen does - things like time passing faster when someone is alone in the house to the world outside and a door to another universe.

TRIAD by Sheila Finch. 233pp. US\$3.50. The world of this future had space travel, but only women could travel into space. Until the Earth Central computer placed a man on an expedition to the world called Chameleon.

THE GANDALARA CYCLE I by Randall Garrett & Vicki Ann Heydron. **THE STEEL OF RAITHSKAR**, **THE GLASS OF DYSKORNIS** and **THE BRONZE OF EDDARTA** in one volume. If you missed these, this is a good chance to get them all together.

OTHER CURRENT RELEASES:

AUSTRALASIAN PUBLISHING CO: **PASSING FOR HUMAN** by Jody Scott
THE BOOK OF THE NIGHT by Rhoda Lerman
QUEEN OF THE STATES by Josephine Saxton
GREEN EYES by Lucius Shepard

PENGUIN: **SCHISMATRIX** by Bruce Sterling
HEALER by Peter Dickinson.
SPACESHIP MEDIC by Harry Harrison
JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH - Verne

CORGI & BANTAM: **CHALLENGE OF THE CLANS** by Kenneth C. Flint
IN OTHER WORLDS by A.A. Attanasio
VENUS OF DREAMS by Pamela Sargent

JULY RELEASES:

CENTURY HUTCHINSON: **MAN OF TWO WORLDS** by F. & B. Herbert
BLOOD MUSIC by Greg Bear
TOM O'BEDLAM by Robert Silverberg

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SONG CRYER

cruel manseller is
the crimson flower 3 man-heights
which sings so sweet to lure

the homesick in as if
to lust all motherly
or family sex proof against

hurt then when
you bend down close to catch
the slightest faintest

trembling air of Home it up
and open wide and swallow
you all in

not even as could be
borne better if still
unforgiven

for food no but
to drop through
hollowed roots below to go

the slave mart road
down in the caverns everwarm
closefloored to Everfire

they work you
to the bone
your only pay to hear

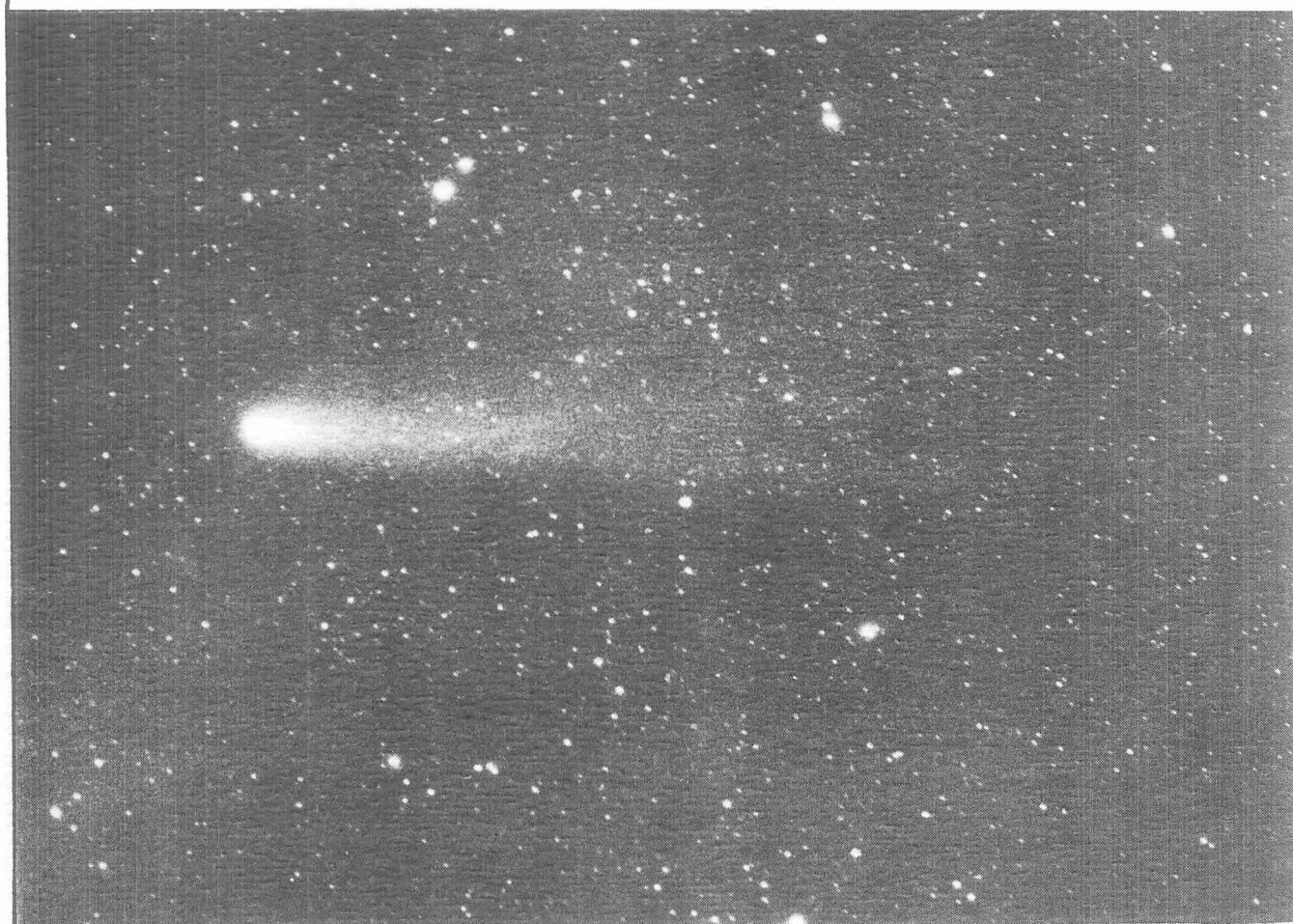
those songs again
the day you die
this time from moon-high

ceiling scaling
down
the hollow roots the

monster
organ
plays perfect requiem

- Steve Sneyd.

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HALLEY'S COMET

Taken at 0355 Eastern Standard Time on 21.3.1986.
135 mm +/3.5 lens at 10 min. Tri-X, at Hazlebrook
N.S.W. Australia by Keith Lay.