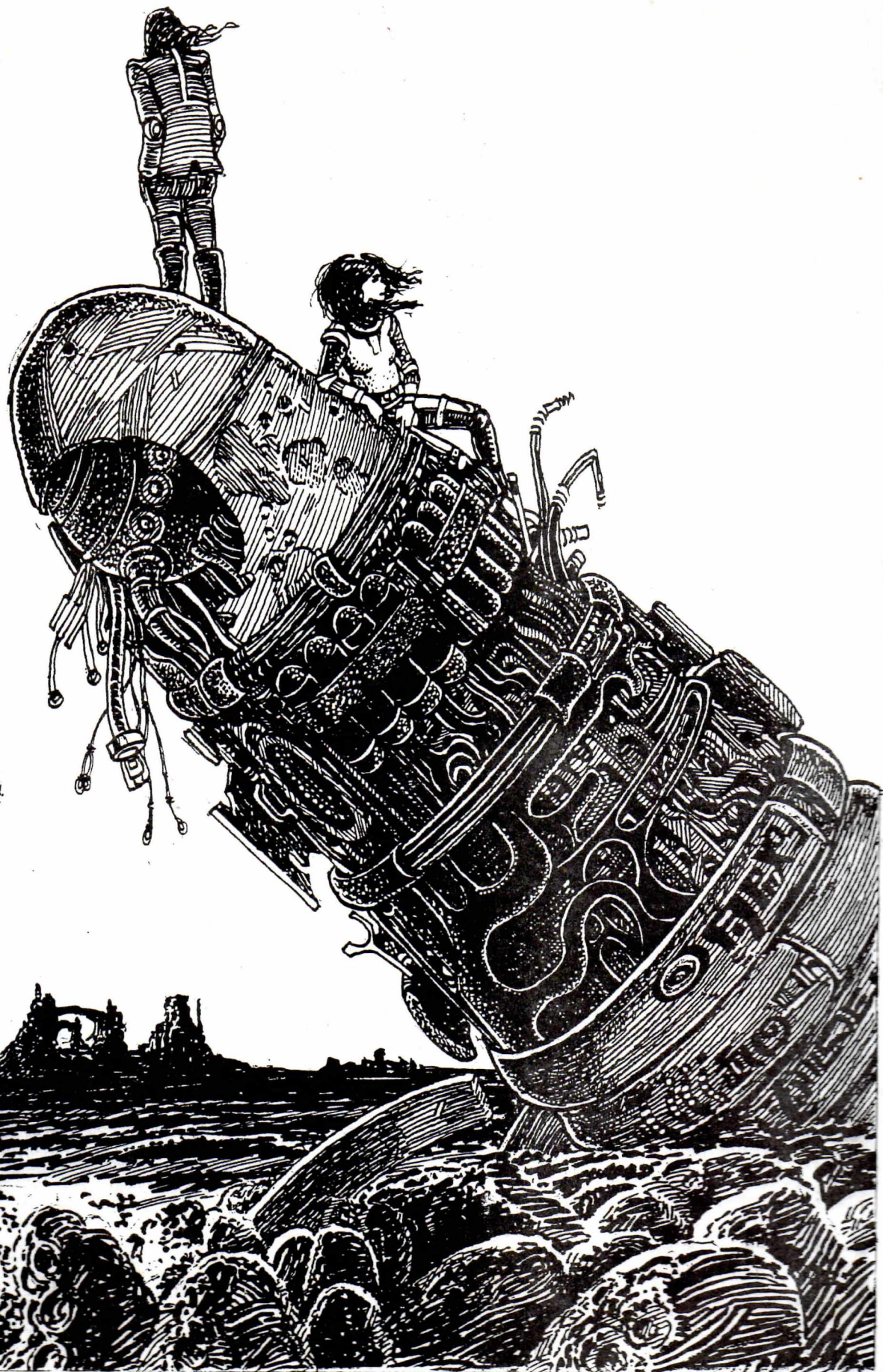


THE MENTOR 64



C O N T E N T S

AUGUST 1989

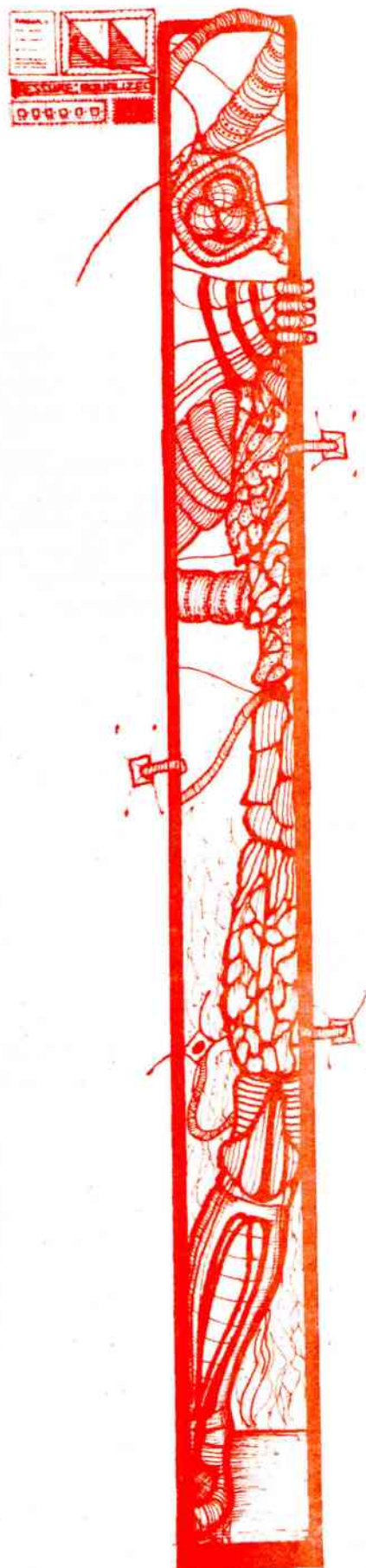
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EDITORIAL

REPRODUCTION: THE NAME OF THE GAME

THE MENTOR started off life as a roneoed high-school fanzine. Later in its career it had one issue spirit duplicated, and then went back to roneo. When I got a co-operative going and got together enough money to get a table-top offset duplicator I thought that that was that. Then I discovered that one needed a press with two inking rollers to reproduce good artwork - so I got what I am using now - a reconditioned AB Dick 360 offset duplicator, of the type used in Instant Press establishments. I still can't do all what I would like - for instance it can't handle A3 (double A4 size), which means I can't have a saddle-stitched A4 zine. I can do a folded A4 zine, but I haven't got a guillotine to cut the edges that stick out when one folds it.

To get good repro with an offset press (or electrostenciller, if it comes to that) you need to use carbon ribbon. Or else, we have found, an Imagewriter with a newly re-inked ribbon (I found that there is a company in the USA that sells ribbon-inkers for about \$150. And with the number of zines we put out, it is well worth it. We are about half way through the quart bottle of ink we bought with the machine) gives quite a good image. With a dot matrix printer you must use a new or re-inked ribbon, otherwise the reader can see the dots in the letters.

To do the early Mentor's I bought a second hand Roneo 100 (I think it was) which was motorised and worked beautifully, until the drum went and there were no replacement drums. It was about thirty years old at the time, and lasted about five years. The replacement machine was a Roneo 250, which was not motorised, but with which I obtained really clear work. I still have the machine sitting here, with about 10 pound bottles of ink. Because Susan wanted to go offset with her media zines (because most of the US ones are) and because I wanted better repro with my artwork - our co-op electrostenciller decided to quit, and neither Eric Lindsay or my brother-in-law Chris could fix it, being a valve job - so we decided to go offset.

Susan bought a Brother golf-ball typewriter which could do right margin justification and I bought a clone Apple II+ and a Brother HR 15 daisy wheel printer. I had always wanted to get right margin justification. With the Zardax word processor and the Brother daisy wheels the issues looked very good indeed. The typeface was clear and the proportional type looked professional, even if it were 10 pitch size. Unfortunately about that time the Apple IIe's were coming out and the II+ couldn't handle Prodos, the computer language all the new programs (and games) were written in. I sold the II+ to Edwina Harvey and bought two IIe clones - one for me and one for Susan.

We used (and still use) Appleworks for the word processing and Susan got an Applewriter II to print it. Our enhanced Appleworks has a ram drive Timeout menu which pops up inside Appleworks which includes a speller, thesaurus, page preview - shows you what three pages look like on one screen - word count, note pad, calendar and calculator. A year ago we replaced the two clones with two 'real' second hand enhanced IIe's from the TRADING POST, and over the past twelve months have upgraded them so they now have a 2 meg battery-backed up ramdrive each, with a total capability of 5 megs ramdrive. And now I see that a 10 mhz speed up chip is available for the IIe...

I have noted that both Australian newzines (THYME and SWEETNESS & LIGHT) use Desktop Publishing for their format. They are then both electrostencilled, but either their electrostencils

aren't dead on, or (as I think is more the case) their mimeo machines can't quite handle them. I had no trouble with elecros with the Roneo 250, but I have noticed that Gestetners seem to have trouble handling them. They nearly always come out grey and/or faint. The latest issues of those zines are getting better, tho.

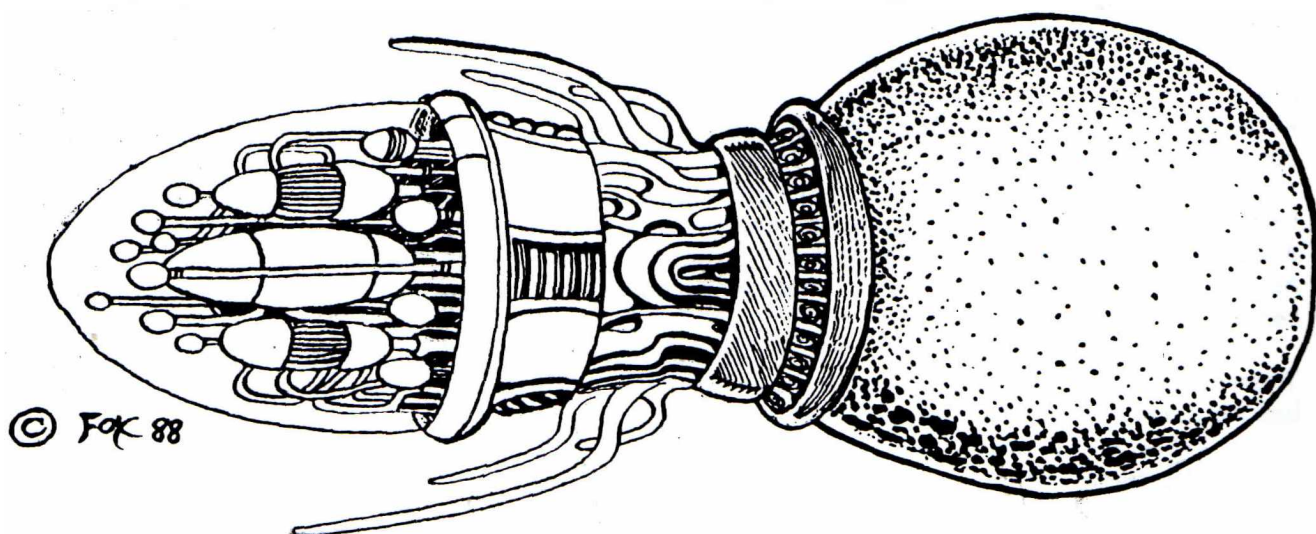
There are desktop publishers, such as PUBLISH IT! 02 and GEOS, that can drive a laser printer from a IIe, and I would love to be able to afford a Postscript compatible laser printer, even a second hand one. However even second hand ones are about \$3500, and I would need one with some built in fonts. I wonder how many fans with Amigas or Apples or Macs would like to join a laser printer co-op for \$500? Susan assures me that there would be none such, and anyway they would have to drag their computers up here if they didn't have a IIe to print stuff. On the other hand, the zines would look lovely laser printed and offset.

I now know what Eric meant when he said he had a house full of computers. At the moment we have two genuine IIe's, two clones (anyone want to buy one, with a half meg ramdrive and monitor?), two printers, three mono monitors and one colour and odds and ends of peripheral cards.

With our three room addition to our house Susan now has a room of her own upstairs for a study. I have the garage. I insulated it and put cork tiles down and pine ply on the walls. I am sitting there now, facing east. To my left is the roll up door, up against that is one cupboard full of 60's and '70s prozines and Aussie fanzines from 1966 on. To its right are two open shelves full of Susan fanzines, both for sale and her library. To my left is a two seater couch, then a computer table with the clone and HR 15 (temporarily out of commission with a fault), then this desk with the IIe and disk box, then a two drawer filing cabinet on top of which is an Applied Engineering RamCharger and the books I have read and am to review. Then is the kitchen table I scavenged from the house with the program manuals and THE MENTOR's contents files. To my back is three metres of paperback bookshelves floor to ceiling; at right angles to that, to the right of my right shoulder is a two by three metre bookshelf. The other third of the garage holds a three metre floor to ceiling shelf with about 190 reams of copier paper for printing, as has the cupboard under the window. In the far corner is the shelf with the plate maker and fuser and under the shelf which I use for etching are the chemicals for plate making and printing.

Right in the middle of the floor of that end third is the dull grey offset duplicator covered by a black cloth. There is a small two speed fan on the 'heat' setting on the shelf under the window, as it is 9.45 at night and 17 degrees C in here even with the fan heater going. I have just finished typing in all the contents of TM 64 and have the Contents Page to go. It is July 29, and with any luck this issue will be printed in a couple of weeks and will be in the mail in three weeks.

- Ron.



THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

BY SUE CARTWRIGHT

"Hello? Hello? Is anybody there?" James called out, staring into the mirror that somehow wasn't really a mirror.

Kneeling in the musty earth, James was in the secret hide-out that only he knew. The softly glowing object beside him gave off a light of its own - a strange, shimmering attraction; like the flicker of a TV in a darkened room. It seemed so warm and alive; yet when he touched it, it was cold and motionless. How did it do that? he wondered. He frowned with uncertainty. Should he mention the mystery to his teacher, or perhaps his parents?

James glanced toward the mirror, and a thought echoed forcefully through his mind:

'No!'

James nodded as if settling the matter. That's right, he thought to himself. This was his hide-out and his secret. Besides, there was something about the mirror: he wanted to keep it safe.

"Hello?" he called again, but there was no reply. "Is anybody there?" James voice faded into a whisper as he continued to stare, fascinated. He felt drawn, hypnotized by the shimmering light.

His mind went back to when he first discovered the mirror. Weeks ago he found the cave in the bush near his home - it had seemed like the perfect hideaway. Crawling inside, he had immediately felt compelled to dig. At first he thought that it was his own idea, to make his cave bigger. After a few weeks however, (when the expansion of his hide-out looked more like a tunnel), the truth had suddenly struck him. It was the mirror, it had been calling him: it wanted to be free.

"James!" a call came through the bush. "Time for dinner!"

James sat up, instantly alert, like an animal catching the scent of danger. The voice was that of his mother. Luckily she was still far away.

Unwilling to leave, but afraid of discovery, James scrambled out of the cave. "Coming!" he replied. He stopped only to cover the mouth of his hide-out with a branch before running off toward home.

The smell of chicken permeated the air as James entered the comfortable wooden farmhouse where he and his family lived. It was Saturday, and Saturday evening supper was always chicken. He wondered which of the chooks had had the privilege of gracing the table. It was his older sister's job to pluck the chooks. So far he was too young for that distasteful chore. James smiled wickedly. Mara hated the job and he was secretly glad that she had to do it. May he remain seven forever! He thought happily.

The table was loaded with food when James finished washing his hands and strode rapidly into the dining room. He hesitated, momentarily disturbed by the sight of his older sister already seated at the table. Mara had that sly, cruel look on her face. He'd better be on guard. She looked as though she had thought up an unpleasant surprise and was just waiting for the right moment to carry it out.

He sat down next to his younger sister Cary and bowed his head while his father said grace. Then he began to eat, hardly stopping to chew. If he hurried he may be able to return to the mirror before dark. He wouldn't be allowed out after sunset.

"What's the rush, James?" his mother asked.

"Nothing," he mumbled, his mouth full.

"Well, for goodness' sakes, chew your food!" she admonished.

"James just want to hurry back to his hide-out," Mara jeered, her voice cutting. "Hide-outs are for children."

Mara's comment took him completely by surprise. Did she know about the cave? Had she seen the mirror? Afraid that he might somehow give his secret away, he remained silent.

Mara watched James closely, noticing his reaction. "That's right, isn't it? You have a little hide-out, don't you. Baby!" she taunted.

The insult was too much. "I am not a baby!"

"Mara!" Father said, his tone severe. "Leave the boy alone." He looked toward his son. "You'll not be going out after dinner anyway, James. It's winter darkness setting in now, and it's your turn to clear the table and do the washing up."

"But Dad..." James began to protest.

"Not another word," his father ordered. The rest of the meal finished without incident, the conversation returning to small talk. Eventually his parents began speaking of this year's crop. Father had predicted the market correctly by supplementing wheat with lesser animal fodder. He expected a handsome profit which, as far as James knew, was usual. Bored by adult discussions, James's thoughts returned to the cave - and the problem with Mara. He slowed down and ate properly, finishing his meal at the same time as the others.

While clearing the dishes, Cary spoke to him privately. "Don't worry, James," she reassured him. "Mara doesn't know where your hide-out is."

James smiled back, grinning conspiratorially. Cary was only six years old, but he and she understood each other completely. Cary made life with Mara tolerable. Strangely enough, she and Mara seemed to get along all right, too. The fact was, Cary got on with everyone. James felt certain that she was his father's favourite, but he didn't mind. He deeply loved his little sister, and she adored him.

The next day, when Mara was safely out of sight, James returned to the cave and crawled back inside. As he made his way down the tunnel he was relieved to see the soft glow from the mirror. Mara hadn't discovered his secret after all. The mirror was untouched; it was shimmering as it had been since he had uncovered it. The blue shining light seemed to glow brighter in recognition as he came closer. It seemed so alive!

"Hello?" he voiced, but the mirror was mute. James frowned, his eyes dark and thoughtful. Perhaps if he leaned over and looked straight into it... could that make a difference? James leaned. The position gave him a strange sensation, a feeling of vertigo. He distinctly felt that he might fall inside.

"Is anyone there?" he asked.

To his surprise and disbelief, the mirror answered back. "Hello!" it said cheerfully. "I've been trying to talk to you for ages!"

James couldn't speak. The strange looking glass glowed even brighter now - as if a wall of dirt had been cleaned from the other side.

"Can you see me yet?" the mirror said.

James stared and suddenly a reflection materialized. It was a reflection of himself!

"Why, you are a mirror!" he said.

"Well, not really," the mirror replied, but it was the boy inside the mirror who was speaking. "I'm a person, just like you are. The reflection that you're looking at isn't your reflection. Not really. It's me. Isn't that funny? We sure do look alike!"

"I don't understand," said James, but he could see that it was true. Even though the boy in the mirror looked like him, he did not mimic him, nor was he wearing exactly the same clothes.

"What's your name?" the boy in the mirror asked politely.

"James," he replied.

"Hey!" said the boy. "My name is James, too! But my folks call me J.J. Want to play a game?"

It was all happening too fast for James, but he didn't want the strange boy to go away. He felt oddly attracted to him... yet slightly repelled at the same time. "Ah.. OK," James replied.

J.J. explained how to play. The mirror was very clever, he said. The mirror made it possible for them to see and speak to one another. Even though they couldn't play directly with each other, they could with their mind. It all seemed very complicated to James, but J.J. assured him it was easy.

"All right, James," J.J. said. "You first. Think of something, something nice. Really concentrate on it and try to send the thought to me."

James shut his eyes and almost instantly a picture came to mind. He recalled a pet possum that he had once had, an animal named Fingers. Fingers was riding on his back, chittering. He sure had loved that old possum.

"That's great, James!" said J.J. "What a cute little possum!" And what a good name, Fingers!"

"How did you know what I was thinking?" James demanded, his eyes wide with fright.

"Because of the mirror, silly," replied J.J. "And because you wanted me to." J.J. ignored the fear that was apparent in James's expression. "All right," he added. "My turn. Shut your eyes."

James did and a vision instantly popped into his mind. He was sailing on a small, blue boat named 'Gull'. He couldn't see the name of the vessel, but he knew for certain that the 'Gull' was its name just the same. It was a sleek little craft, capable of great speed. James could feel the wind in his face, and he rocked with every wave as it skipped and danced over the gentle swells. The sensation was indescribable, and completely real. Even the lake seemed familiar. It was so much like the large reservoir near his home, a place called 'Prospect'. Suddenly the vision ended.

"Did you like that?" J.J. asked.

"It was great!" James blurted out enthusiastically. J.J. agreed wholeheartedly. Together they played the game for some time.

"I wonder what would happen if I thought I were you, and you thought you were me?" J.J. asked.

James hesitated. "I don't know..." he said.

"C'mon," said J.J. "What harm could it do? You're not some sort of baby, are you?" he taunted.

James was insulted. For a moment he was reminded of Mara. "Course not!" he replied.

"Then let's do it," J.J. said.

"All right," James agreed, attempting to hide his reluctance.

"Ready?" J.J. queries. "Set? Go!"

In the end, nothing happened. James looked around, but everything seemed the same. He looked at the boy in the mirror. J.J. was smiling at him but there was something odd about his smile. It reminded him of Mara.

"Well," J.J. said. "It's getting late. I'd better go home. See you around!" he said cheerfully. And then, with a wave, he disappeared.

James stared uncertainly at the empty reflection. The mirror was almost dim, now that J.J. was gone. Why had he rushed off so suddenly? He had hardly said good bye. Feeling bewildered and strangely lost and alone, James left the cave.

The first person he saw on his walk toward home was his older sister. James hesitated, and his eyes widened with surprise. Mara looked utterly furious, more angry than she every had before. James didn't have time to even think to run as she bore down on him.

"There you are!" she said, grabbing him roughly by the arm and shaking him. "You thought you'd get out of it didn't you?"

"Let go, Mara," James demanded, attempting to escape her grasp. "You're hurting me!"

Mara didn't flinch. Instead she began to drag him toward home. "It's Sunday, and don't tell me you'd forgotten! You need to pluck a chicken, remember!"

James finally wriggled free. "I'm telling mother!" he said. "You hurt me! And you're crazy! Plucking chickens is your job! And we had chicken last night anyway!" James ran off ahead, leaving Mara staring after him, open mouthed. Mara looked surprised, but he didn't think anything of it at the time. He wanted to get home to tell his side of the story to mother first.

It was as he was running up the back steps that James finally noticed the change. The house was different, more run down somehow. The large machinery shed wasn't there, in its place was a dilapidated old truck. Amongst the confusion, James's mother came out of the house.

James stared, horrified. His mother's face was lined with age, and her hair was grey!

"Mother!" he said, but she didn't seem to notice the fear and confusion in his voice.

"And where have you been, J.J.?" she asked tiredly. "You're supposed to be plucking that chook; skinny runt that it is. It will be enough to feed us, no doubt, what with your father drunk again."

James was speechless. It was suddenly clear to him what had happened. He was not home. Somehow he had changed places with J.J. Filled with dread and panic, James turned and ran. He had to get back to the mirror! He had to contact the real J.J. and get home again!

It was Mara who stopped his headlong flight. She caught him with a hold that made him wince. "And where do you think you're going?" she said.

"This is all a mistake!" he began.

"Oh, no it isn't!" Mara said, pinching him hard on the upper flesh of the arm, causing James to cry out in pain. "You're going to pluck that chicken!"

James knew when he was licked. For now he would do as Mara said, but he would return to the mirror lately, at the first opportunity.

Dinner was painful. There was no pleasant small talk - no comments about the crop. His father stayed in the lounge, abusing anyone that came near. He had been drinking ever since James had returned 'home'. James ate silently with Mara and his mother, speaking only if spoken to. He had no intention of getting involved in what was really J.J.'s life. He would simply go back to the cave and return home. James shuddered. It would be like waking up from a bad dream.

It was impossible not to notice, however, that his younger sister was missing from the dinner table. Unable to withhold his curiosity, James had to ask. He looked up at the woman who looked so much like his mother, yet was so very different to her, and said, "Where's Cary?"

The question caused an instant reaction, but not the reaction that James had expected. Both Mara and his mother started at him as a muted hush hung over the room. Their frozen expression combined with their complete silence made him want to scream.

After what seemed like an eternity his mother said, in a small, strained voice, "Cary... Cary who?"

"My little sister, of course," James said impatiently.

Just then, the moment was broken by the sound of heavy knocking on the door. No one moved. The knocking persisted, growing louder and more impatient.

Finally James's father called out from the lounge. "Who is it and what do you want?" he yelled abusively. "Come in and rest your bloody knuckles, for Christ sakes!"

Mr Saunders, a neighbour whom James vaguely recognised came in. He was red-faced with anger. Scanning the room, he stared past the lounge and into the kitchen until his eyes rested upon James. James shifted, instantly uncomfortable from the man's penetrating glare.

"I come to see you about your boy," Saunders said, shifting his gaze toward James's mother.

"What about him?" James's mother rose, instinctively protective.

"He wrecked something of mine," Mr Saunders said roughly. "Got witnesses to prove it. Didn't call the constable, us being neighbours and all. Want to give you a chance to settle this." His eyes fixed once more on James.

"What do you reckon the boy did?" James mother asked.

"Crashed my sailboat, the 'Gull'."

A rock formed somewhere in the pit of James's stomach. Suddenly he felt cold and ill, and his face showed it. He hadn't wrecked the boat. He hadn't! But he felt utterly certain that J.J. had.

His father swayed to his feet. "Did you wreck the boat, boy?" he demanded.

James's face damned him, and he knew it. "Yes," he lied, realizing the futility of telling the truth. "I'm so sorry!"

James spent the night in the barn, after the worst beating he had ever had. His father had broken the whipping stick and then had continued, using his belt. Lying alone in the straw, James felt that he'd die, but he knew better. He would be stiff and sore, but he would live. He would still get his chance to return to the cave... and the mirror.

As James lay in pain, he let the events of the day seep through his mind. He was in another world - a world gone wrong. His throat constricted as he recalled the words he heard while receiving his beating.

"You're no good! Do you hear me!" his father raged. "You've never been any good, J.J., and you'll be the death of us all - like you were to your sister Cary!" His father had looked violent, but his grief for Cary had stood out like a live thing.

James had been shocked as his father relived the past, speaking disjointedly in his drunken slur. Eventually he'd finished the beating and lurched from the barn. Sobbing, he had displayed his emotions fully and completely, without regard; as only a drunk can. J.J.'s father had left him feeling both physically and emotionally upside-down.

James's eyes narrowed with the memory. He remembered it so clearly! A day that might have been. He had been only four years old the day he decided to bring the candle under the baby's cot. His little sister had been asleep, and her room was darkened for her afternoon rest. But under

Cary's cot was best of all, kind of black and scary. He thought it would be fun to have a light shining there. He hadn't considered the consequences.

The day was cold, and he had lit the beeswax candle on the wood stove. However, each time he lit it and began his walk toward Cary's room, a strong draft of wind had blown the candle out. Eventually, after three attempts, he had given up.

Had J.J. done the same thing? James wondered, considering the possibilities. Of course he would have. J.J. and he were very alike. Had J.J. chosen a wind less day to light the candle? Were his drunken father and prematurely aged mother products of a still, becalmed day? Could a world be governed by something as simple as a gust of air, a single breath of wind - expelled as if from the mouth of God? And if this was one possible world, were there others?

The next week, James spent every spare moment in the cave. The mirror was dull now, barely giving a dim bluish glow. J.J. had gone, and the other side of the mirror was covered with dirt as it had been in the beginning. It made no difference. James almost lived in the cave, spending many long hours there; wanting the boy to come: wanting to go home.

One day as he stared, crouched over the mirror, he saw something. James shifted with excitement. Yes! The boy had taken hours to dig that tunnel, but James had been persistent. He had continued calling him, willing him to dig until he had uncovered the mirror. Finally, his efforts paid off. The mirror was no longer opaque. It shone brightly and gave off a distinct reflection: a vision of himself.

With one glance, James knew that the boy he was looking at was not J.J. It was someone else. He watched as the boy in the mirror's face registered surprise, amazement and then a shadow of fear.

"Hello!" said James, as cheerfully as possible. He didn't want to scare the boy away. "I've been trying to speak with you for ages! Do you want to play a game?"

Meanwhile in a different world, a universe away, another voice was speaking. It was J.J., the boy who now called himself James. He was speaking to his sister, Mara.

"I tell you, Mara," J.J. said. "I saw it! Just inside this cave. There's a girl in there, and she looks just like you! Go in and see for yourself!"

He watched in silent satisfaction as Mara entered the cave. It had taken days for him to convince her. Now he need only wait - the mirror would do the rest. There was no telling which Mara would eventually come out, but whoever it was, chances were that they would be an improvement on the Mara that went in!

J.J. placed a branch over the entrance to the cave, then turned and strode toward home. Yes, he sure liked it here. That boy James had had it pretty good. Now he was James, and he didn't have to pluck chickens, his mother was younger - more alive - and his father wasn't a drunk. Mara had gone into the cave and soon even that unpleasant part of his life would change for the better.

J.J. frowned with sudden concern. He must make sure that his little sister never found out about the mirror. He liked her just the way she was. He didn't want to take a chance on a different Cary.

Thinking of Cary made him smile, and without conscious thought, he began to whistle as he walked toward home. Already he loved the little sister that he had never had the chance to know. And besides, he thought happily to himself, she adored him.

- Sue Cartwright.





Not so long ago Y. Medvedev's story PROTEY was published by Molodaya Gavaridia Publishing House in the anthology AN USUAL SECRET (Moscow, 1988; an edition of 75,000 copies). And many Soviet readers read with great consternation the following words:

'Shervinsky: I cannot tell more about my divine enlightenment after this meeting with the 'brain'. I am thinking about the words: "And sea skunks' entrance under water..." I am not interested very much in sea skunks. But land skunks... I thought: "Can I have another opportunity to change an event in the past? I will utilize my chance!". During many years I have been agitated about mysterious death, and the loathsome events, which followed soon after the death of one of the world famous scientists and writers of the bygone century, who was a great traveller, historian, philosopher and prophet.

These events were thus: after a false denunciation a crowd of curious citizens with the appropriate certificates appeared suddenly in the deceased house. They turned everything upside down, looked through all manuscripts page after page, looked over books, letters, belongings, examined with a mine detector all the walls and even the urn with the ashes of the deceased. You ask, what did they look for? They looked for one and a half tons of gold, which the Master was thought to have brought from his far travels. Certainly this is nonsense and delirium, everybody understood this, and most of that curious crowd did, too, because money was nothing to the scientist, and the car, cottage, and expensive things, - oh, these were an illustration of the social and even intellectual prestige of that bygone century! You know this yourselves. So, all my life I tormented myself over the question, who denounced, scribbled, fabricated the story about the filthy lucre, and what object did he pursued, though the subject is very clear: his name was obliterated during the nine years since the house search, it was even struck out of crosswords. In medieval Russia this was called "The Death Deed".

The Chairman: You are distracted, Mr. Senior Inspector! These events really are loathsome, but not relevant for discussion today...

Shervinsky: But if they can happen after your death, or mine, are not they very important? You find that very difficult to believe, don't you? But his relatives, his friends, disciples - can they imagine such a monstrous blasphemy after his death?... Though, I am not finished... I saw those people, who devised this delirium, who urged on this base search. I saw two men, two relatives. One of them is skinny, acrimonious, exactly like an inquisitor. He excels in baseness, even within the heavens he established butchery on a Galactic scale, with hatred for everything which is imperishable, harmonious, beautiful and eternal. The other is corpulent and goitrous, like a turkey. He is an informer, a shouter, a player of everybody against everything, a drunkard, a representative of the tribe of ecumenical framers, a pen-pusher, a fiction writer and a translator. When the world famous genius was alive, they both reputed to be his disciples, and it happened that the teacher defended them, but after his death they never even telephoned his widow. I saw the ins and outs of business, the microstructure of envy. And for such discovery I may one day lose my life. Don't worry though, the small one took place with Magellan...' (Quoted from the AN UNUSUAL SECRET anthology. - Moscow, Molodaya Gvardia, 1988; Y. Medvedev, E. Grushko, A. Bachilo, anthologist M. Tkachenko, - (Yefremov's School) - 75,000 copies).

Really, any reader, if he knows fantasy even a little, can easily recognise this "world famous scientist and writer", whose house was searched after his death - of course, this was the classic Soviet Fantasy writer Ivan Yefremov (the author of the novels ANDROMEDA, THE BULL'S O'CLOCK; THE RAZOR'S EDGE and etc); and the writer described "Two relatives-Informers" - these are the two famous Soviet fantastic writers, the brothers Arcady and Boris Strugatsky.

The fan's reaction was stormy. The All-Union Council of Fantasy Amateurs' Club appealed with an open letter to the Director of the All-Union creative society of young fantastical writers V.I. Pishchenko (this society helped with the book). The letter was as follows:

"We and other members of the Fantasy Amateurs' Club have listened many times to your many assurances that you personally are an opponent of the principle of splitting Soviet fantasy. Besides, you repeatedly insisted that the All-Union creative society of young fantastical writers attached to Molodaya Gvardia Publishing House has given up using printed media for urging any non-literature struggle and the paying off of old scores.

But the publishing of Y. Medvedev's story PROTEY in the anthology AN UNUSUAL SECRET is indicative of something different. This story is an unprecedented attack on Soviet Science Fantasy. This tale is amoral, it slanders A. and B. Strugatsky, its denunciation is provocative and cynical, and it is so obvious that no explanation is needed. This is remarkable, but this is not the first occurrence, when Medvedev used such an unscrupulous method. Fantasy fans remember this author's story A BAKER'S DOZEN OF OSCARS - it is a disgusting lampoon about A.A. Tarkovsky. Such 'literature' illustrates how Medvedev's work rises directly from his position, which became very famous at the beginning of the 70th year. At that time Medvedev was appointed a Director of the fantasy section of Molodaya Gvardia Publishing House, and he began a rout of Soviet science fiction literature and persecution of its best presenters.

We are asking you on behalf of numerous fantasy fans: how do you connect your appeals for all authors and Clubs to "Live in friendship" with the publishing of Medvedev's story?

- All-Union Council of Fantasy
Amateurs' Clubs"

Many letters with demands to explain the situation have poured in to different publishers. But the official publishers have kept silent, only amateur magazines have published fan's letters (for example, "Vestnik CLF"). The fan's bewilderment blew over a little when the Strugatsky Brothers sent to all clubs the following letter:

"To the Council of Fantasy of the USSR
To the Council of Fantasy of the RSFSR
To the Council of FAC
To the Council of ACS
For All Fantasy Amateurs' Clubs.

1.

We must inform you all of the fact that Yury Medvedev in his story PROTEY in the pages of the anthology AN UNUSUAL SECRET numbers 3 and 4 proposes to remember an event in the search of I.A. Yefremov's flat after his death, not quoting names, but in the most unambiguous manner he accused us, Arcady and Boris Strugatsky, in as much as we had to write, as it has turned out, condemning the lying denunciation of our dead teacher and benefactor.

We understand that our numerous verbal and written published statements about Y. Medvedev's activity, which was destroying Soviet science fantasy - could arouse great enmity about us in him.

We understand that he could answer nothing against our statements, and this circumstance raised him to a final degree of hatred.

But there a limit - the slanderous lampoon with an edition of 70,000 copies is it! This is the answer of a dreg and a coward. This cannot be forgiven.

We haven't decided yet if would we bring the case before the law or not. The lampoon is completely skillfully, and the answer to the question "Who is who in this lampoon?" is very obvious for every 'fan', but it is quite not obvious for Justice, which is far from the knowledge of the history of Soviet Fantasy. However, in accordance with clause 130 of the Criminal Code of RSFSR: 'The libel in a publish work must be punished by imprisonment for a period of up to three years (only), or by corrective labour for a period of one year (maximum)'. So any soiler can hope to get off with a light scare.

But we are quite sure that all our 'fans' and all societies, which are connected in any case with Soviet Fantasy, would lend their weighty words even without the Justice.

We thus addressing to the Councils of all these organizations asking you to give careful consideration to author Medvedey's action and express their opinion of this slanderous lampoon and the authors discredited.

There is an old German proverb: 'Every swinishness can give a piece of ham', or, to take from the Russian, 'there is a black sheep in every flock.' Our lampooner brought to our memory that the strange search at the deceased's flat, and the following man-made oblivion of I.A. Yefremov - is today not only the blackest, but very secret event from the history of our fantasy. It seems to us now is the time to try to decipher this mystery.

We are inviting all the Councils to combine their efforts and address to the State Security Council an appropriate inquiry on behalf of all Soviet fantastic writers and all fantasy fans also. In point of fact, there is talk about the PUBLIC rehabilitation of I.A. Yefremov (the nonpublic one was enough time ago, thank goodness).

We want to have answers to the questions:

- What such terrible criminal act the greatest fantastic writer of the USSR commit, because of which his name was in fact under a ban for many years after his death?

- What was looked for in his flat - was it really gold or the manuscript of a certain secret novel? (This was also a version of the rumour).

- Everybody understands now that a certain mistake was made that time. Who is the author of the denunciation? What is his name? And where is he working? What punishment did he receive because of his falsehood and slander? And was he punished at all?

- Arcady Strugatsky
Boris Strugatsky

January 2, 1989
Moscow - Leningrad."

None of these questions have had a reply to the present time.

They remain open. And Yuri Medvedev didn't think the affair warranted a public apology to writers whom he slandered. It is vague now what events could be next. But we can say very definitely, that it is not admissible to use Soviet fantasy for slanderous purposes. One of the fans said: "After reading these pages I want to go and wash my hands".

- Andrew Lubensky,
House #1, Flat #13, Volkov St.,
Cherkassy-City,
USSR 257005.

THE YANKEE PRIVATEER



BUCK COULSON

(Editor's Note: The column below was written in August, 1988.)

At Inconjunction, in Indianapolis at the first of July this year, I got to meet Octavia Butler. I'd been wanting to see her, because Gene DeWeese met her several years ago, and immediately afterward wrote me to announce, "I've just met our heroine!". This was in reference to Kay Clark, lead female character in NOW YOU SEE IT/HIM/THEM... and CHARLES FORT NEVER MENTIONED WOMBATS. I figured it would be interesting to meet her in person, because we'd constructed her form the size and general appearance of Kay Anderson, and the coloring of Bev Clark. (The latter is now Bev Boles and is no kin to the Bev Clark who is currently writing letters to fanzines.) Plus the general personality of both of them. I'd never expected to meet her in the flesh, as it were.

Octavia is a fairly good match, though. Tall (though I never actually saw her standing up, so I don't really know how tall), sort of a medium black, and with a pleasant but quite forceful personality. I had some of her books to autograph, and gave her copies of my reviews of her most recent books. I also asked her what she thought about the cover artist on DAWN changing her black heroine to a white woman. I'd said in the review that she might be "quietly furious" about it; she assured me that "there was nothing quiet about it". (And I still don't know whether the change came from the artist or the company sales department. Even now, you don't see many blacks on book covers.)

Hmm. I've just been interrupted by the arrival of the mail - once that happens everything stops until I go out to our oversized RFD box and bring it in - and in a shipment from Bantam, there's a paperback with a black woman on the cover. But since the title is WALKABOUT WOMAN, there's not too good a way to get out of showing her...) (Author is Michaela Roessner, who isn't Australian, according to her backcover bio.) Gene and I had black heroines in four of our six co-authored books, but only once did any of them make the cover. Kelly Freas put Kari's face on GATES OF THE UNIVERSE, for Laser. But then, she was an alien black. (He also put Freff's face on the cover, if you want to know what Freff looked like some 13 years ago. Kelly is the one artist I know who Tuckerizes in his artwork.)

Incidentally, Kelly was one of the Guests of Honor at Rivercon, at the end of July. He was there with his new wife, Laura. She's much younger than he is, and a classical music disc jockey; she should get along well with Harry Warner. I talked more to her than to Kelly; he was surrounded by well-wishers most of the time. I'd heard that his wife's death had hit him pretty hard, but he seemed more or less his usual self at Rivercon. Laura was very pleasant, a refreshing change from the wives of some professionals that I know. Kelly seems to be very lucky.

I shot our dog, Kari (yes, named after our fictional heroine), last October. She'd been diagnosed earlier as having a malignant tumor - even vets prefer to not say "breast cancer", it seems. Inoperable, not that we could have afforded an operation anyway. The vet said that dogs don't seem to feel the pain of cancer as early as humans do, and that when she stopped eating, it would be soon enough to put her out of her misery. He didn't know how well Kari liked to eat; she never entirely stopped, even when the rest of her physical functions were falling apart.

Of course, the vet would have "released her from pain" or whatever the current euphemism is, and "disposed of the remains". Probably, for most city dwellers, that's the only humane solution. But I don't believe that a lethal injection is any quicker or more painless than a bullet in the head, and I won't dispose of a member of the family like so much garbage. (Well, not ~~family~~

members that I like, at any rate; there have been a few...) I gave her an artificial bone, and while she was eating it I petted her, and when she was done I put a .22 Magnum bullet behind her ear. It was overkill; Dad killed beebes with an ordinary .22 Short. But I wanted to be instantaneous and certain. We buried her out in the orchard and I dug out my old electric engraver and carved name and date on a chunk of blue rock for her tombstone.

I don't suppose many readers will have heard the old country song, "Old Shep", written and sung by Red Foley, circa 1940. It's a tearjerker about a boy who has to kill his old dog, and it has the right "feel" to anyone who has actually done the job. I thought about it a lot after the vet's pronouncement. Despite having owned a lot of dogs, I've very seldom had to end their lives. I've never had a dog when we lived in town, and never had one that came in the house, except on rare special occasions. Country dogs that run loose don't often last until old age, and when they do get old, they're prone to fatal mistakes.

Kari's acquisition was quite casual; she showed up one day when I was taking a puppy out for a run. She put up with the puppy, tolerated the outside cats, and in general behaved like a lady. Another stray showed up the same day, and we gave both of them a week's trial. At the end of the week, the other dog went to the local pound, and Kari stayed. She was a hound; a black and tan coonhound. At her peak she weighed 80 pounds, which was about twice what she looked like she weighed. We cured her of heartworm - well, we paid the vet to do it - which I assume was the reason her original owner dumped her. She climbed trees in her younger days, went after and killed raccoons by herself (which most dogs can't manage), and announced visitors to the house with one loud bark. After that, it was our affair; she figured she'd done her part. Eventually regular visitors were allowed in without an announcement. Either she had an exceptional sense of smell or she recognised the cars, since her usual announcement came when the car was some distance from her, and usually with all windows closed. On the whole, she was the best and smartest dog we ever owned, beating out another abandoned hound, Bat-Ears, who arrived a good many years ago and stayed until she was run over by a tractor. Now, 10 months later, I think I'm ready to see about getting another dog. I'll see what the local humane society has on hand, realsoonnow.

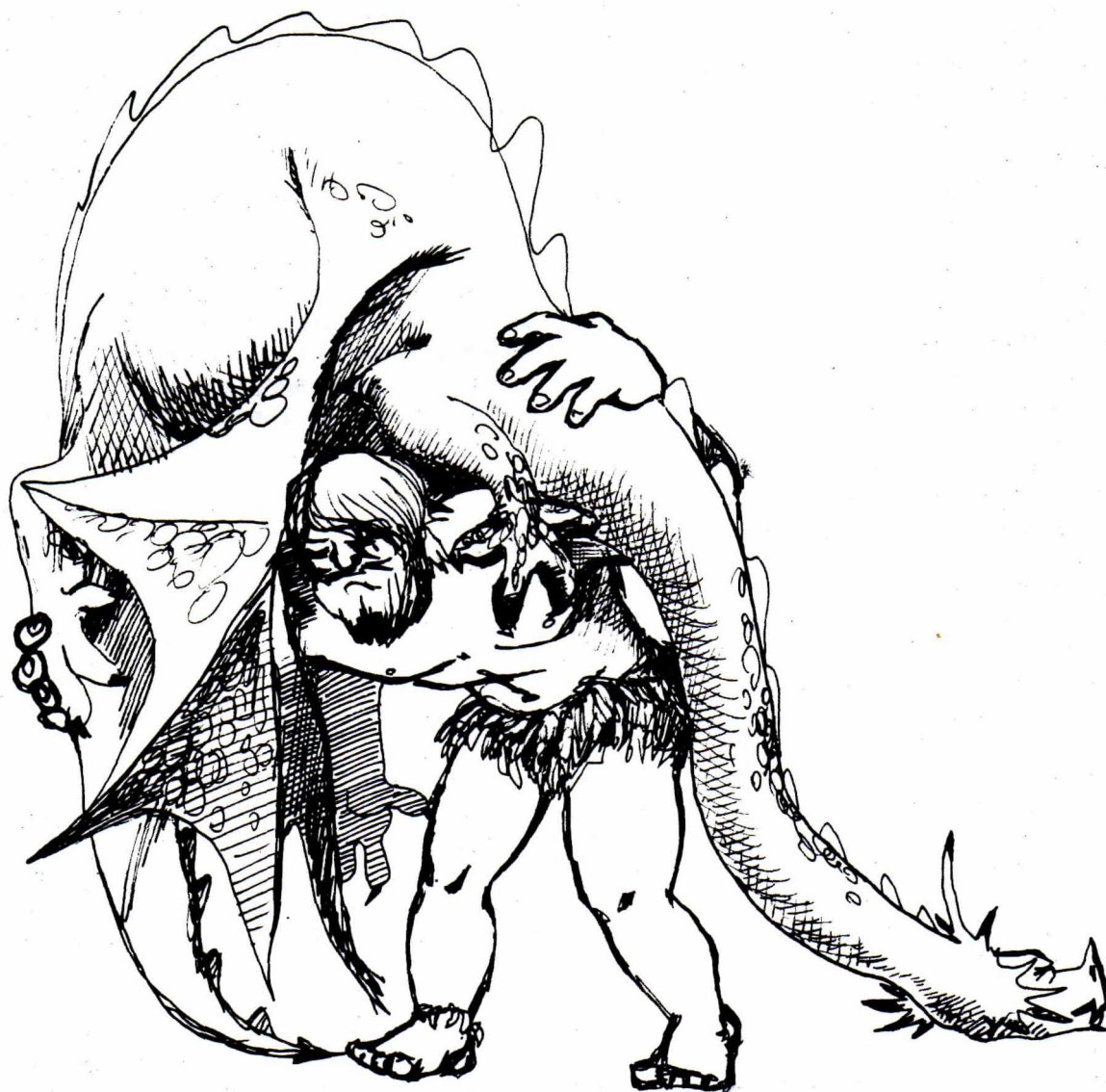
The filk tape that was recorded in our front room has now been published, as "Lovers, Heroes, and Rogues", by Michael Longcor - who is better known as Moonwulf. Doesn't sound exactly like we recorded it, mainly because Off Centaur added quite a bit of backup by various artists after the tape reached them. But it sounds pretty good. Sells well, too; Wulf is popular, at least in the midwest. It's a mixture of folk and filk; from "Pillar of Hell", the best song about the "Challenger" that I've heard yet, to the traditional "Tom O'Bedlam" and the bawdy "The Coachman". I'm rather proud of it; since I can't sing at all, I like to promote the people who can - especially if they're good people. Also, my chapter on filk for a new book on science fiction collectibles has been shipped off; no reaction yet from the editors. I'm continually amazed at the idea of filksinging as a source of income, and the fact that doggeral I wrote as filler for YANDRO 20 years ago is currently earning me eight or ten dollars in royalties each year. Stone the flamin' crows and other such phrases of astonishment. It does sort of settle the old argument about whether or not fanzine material is really worth the trouble of its production. (Gene and I also got paid this year for a parody we wrote for YANDRO in the mid-1950s - it's to be in an anthology published by Nolacon II - and of course 16 of de Camp's poems from YANDRO have been published professionally. There's gold in that thar mimeo paper if you wait long enough. Not much, but every little bit helps.)

Filking is even spreading beyond fandom. Juanita was invited as special guest to a conference on space because the concom wanted some filksinging. I gather that Julia Ecklar has been invited for the past couple of years, and again this year. One of the songs of Sally and Barry Childs-Helton was played on the "Dr. Demento" radio program this spring, and was apparently a hit. Sally and Barry paid a thousand dollars to produce their own tape, and a year later have their money back and the tape is still selling briskly. (Of course, it's an exceptionally good tape; not everyone can do quite that well.)

Personally, Juanita and I have been spending the summer going to a convention now and then, and, in between, sitting around watching the grass die. Hottest and driest summer since the "dust bowl" years of the 1930s; I hope this is restricted to a single year, and not continued, as the dust

bowl years were. The Marion, Indiana, paper has been running a daily column of "rainfall to date", comparing this year to 1987. By this time in 1987, we had received 30.68 inches of rainfall; this year Marion has had 15.57 inches, and they've had at least 12 inches more than we've had here. There have been record high temperatures on a dozen or more days - probably more - and the old records were all set from 1933 to about 1938. It's not been a year to encourage anyone to get out there and fight for success - or for anything else.

- Buck Coulson.



VAMPIRE

In that timelessness when night is spend,
and dawn is far from its conception ...
there, in that shadowed hour, thickened
with the ghostly strands of haunting
unknown fears ... she waits.

The courtship is over;
those niceties that have eased her
to this point will end.
She's sensed the sweetness
of death in his desire,
and has tasted the sting of destruction
in the passion of his kiss,
but still she waits, locked in his power.

So when he comes to her
in the darkness of her semi-conscious state,
her willing arms reach out for him,
her eyes feasting on the pallor of his skin,
the midnight blackness of his hair,
the arch of his eyebrow, the elegant
structure of his face as she
relinquishes to his Byronic beauty,
knowing this night to be her last.

Gently he takes her hands to kiss
her ringless fingers and her palms
savouring the salty apprehension.
He slides away her gown of virgin lace
and lingers at her breasts to tease her
into the bliss of wantonness.
She pulls him closer, softly murmuring
his name while practised hands explore
and teeth graze the smoothness
of her flesh, his kisses offered
to sooth away the pain.

Now she is his to move with him
until the pulsations of a myriad stars
shatter her senses into dense oblivion,
her love-scream provoking the death-bite
from which he drinks her soul.
Tenderly he holds her, drains her,
destroys her, but loves her still ...
this sacrificial offering,
this gift of life

- Patricia Khan

SOMEONE

By Teresa Sarick

Someone reached to hold me
But I was far fast gone
I'd walked through the solids of reality
Into the endless spans of possibility

I linked with the mind
That has searched me out
He knew me for the one
And we left the barren world

I vanished in a light beam
Protected by an inner force
I took my place in the far future
Linked and one with the endless man

The light shimmered once more
Abandoning the past
I flew forward
Forever free.

THE TRANSMITTER

BY LOUISE HOLLINGBERRY

I know nothing about radios, 'trannies' we used to call them. The different parts; wires and blobs of plastic are, to me, as incomprehensible as Russian or Chinese. My only real knowledge lies in the fact that if I switch the 'on' button to the 'on' position, I hear music and when I switch the 'on' button to the 'off' position, the music stops. Imagine then, if you can, my... er... delight(?) when I was given a build-your-own radio transmitter and receiver set. I did the only logical thing; smiled a thank-you and consigned the set to the darkest recess in my wardrobe... or, as least I would have, had not the giver been the man I wanted to marry. He was perfect; Tall, good looking, wealthy and had a pedigree, that was not only distinguished, but could be traced almost as far back as Adam. Except for one small fault - he was obsessed with radios. I thought that I could live with it.

For the first couple of weeks, I was able to fob him off. Whenever he asked, I made up some likely excuse. But he didn't give up, as I'd hoped. Four weeks after 'The Gift' I was no longer able to put him off and I was forced to find it and work out how to use it.

The set was one of those 'top of the range, spare no expense' types that devotees drool over and I cringed. The instructions were no help. Although the diagrams were pretty, with lots of blue and red pointing lines, they were written in Japanese, with translations into French and German - I only speak English. I won't go into the 'gory' details of my attempts, and failures. I'll just say, that in the three weeks I fiddled with the set, I managed to short circuit the house four times and more important, I grew to loath the set, with a passion I had no idea I was capable of. The only good thing about these weeks, was that I was able to use the 'shorts' as an excuse to show him my work. It was the Set v Me, and it was winning.

But, he was very insistent, He could not believe that anyone would have trouble with such an easy to assemble set. I tried to point out that I wasn't very mechanically minded but he would not, or could not, believe me. The day came when I could fob him off no longer, so I arranged a Saturday demonstration. Friday night I sat staring into a ferocious electrical storm, that raged about my house, mentally reviewing excuses I could use, then tossing them out - even I wouldn't believe some of them. Finally at the height of the storm, I turned to look at the set I'd built. It sat there glaring at me daring me to use it. It looked nothing like the accompanying diagram. Their's was sleek and flat, mine fat and bulky, with wires sticking out at odd angles. It was hopeless. If only it would work, maybe he would overlook the appearance. I decided to turn it on - one more time, maybe, must maybe, it would work. I crossed my fingers and... The Transmitter uummmhed and haaaarred, buzzed and whirred - the static was unbelievable. Then, to my complete surprise and amazement, my fifth "Hello, can anybody hear me?" was answered. Here follows a transcript of the conversation, minus the static:-

ME - Hello, can anybody hear me?

SPEAKER - Swarttueibety..Bte...Swarttueibity...Bte...(At least it sounded like that).

ME - Hello, can you speak English?

SPEAKER - (slowly) En-gl-ish?... (pause).. You are transmitting from a restricted planet. Cease transmitting immediately.

ME - (laughing) Restricted planet? I like it, yes, very funny, Who am I talking to?

SPEAKER - Cease transmission immediately.

ME - (Still laughing) Very funny. I finally get this thing to work and I've

got to get a joker. If you think I'm going to cease 'transmitting' after all the trouble I've gone to, to get this set working, you've got to be kidding.

SPEAKER - (Pause and surprised) You are a... native of the restricted planet?

ME - (Very bad impression of a robot voice) Yes, I'm a native of the 'restricted planet'. (Laughing). Where else would I be from?

SPEAKER - How did you access this station?

ME - Don't ask me. All I did was turn on my home built set... Who are you, anyway?

SPEAKER - This is impossible. The natives of this planet do not have the necessary technical level to access this station... You must cease this transmission.

ME - Why? And what do you mean by 'natives not having the necessary technical level'?

SPEAKER - (pause) You must cease this transmission.

ME - Oh? Must I? Well, forget it. Tell me who you are instead.

SPEAKER - Failure to cease transmitting will result in destruction of transmitting device.

ME - Hey, don't you think you're taking this science fiction role playing a bit too far? You couldn't possibly destroy my transmitter. I think you need help.

SPEAKER - Stand away from the transmitter.

ME - I will not. Why should I?

SPEAKER - Destruction at end of sequence...10...9...8...7...

(I must admit, I stood away from the set. I knew that nothing would happen, but, well, the speaker sounded so serious.)

SPEAKER - 6...5...4...3...

(I was laughing at the absurdity of the whole incident when he reached zero.)

SPEAKER - 2...1...0

My eyes were glued to the transmitter. I picked up the microphone and went to say "Very funny, you've had your joke," when the set started to hum and glow. I dropped the microphone and moved away. Then the humming stopped abruptly. I held my breath as my transmitter began to bubble and...then...it...it simply dissolved. One moment it had been a series of interconnecting wires, the next, a pool of melted metal and plastic... I don't know how it happened, and the smell was overwhelming, that in spite of the rain, I had to open all the windows. I waited until the red glow had vanished before approaching the set, or what was left of my set. Nothing else was damaged, only my transmitter.

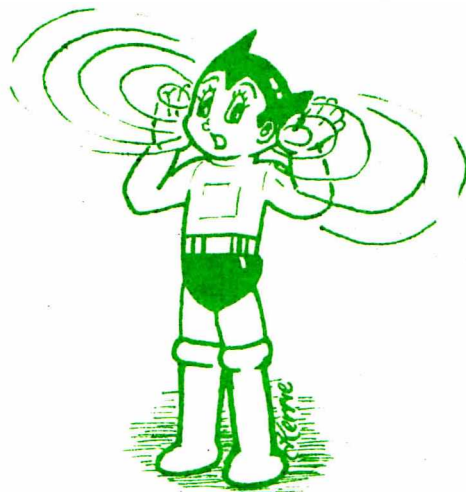
I didn't sleep that night. I kept going over and over what had happened. Finally in the wee small hours, I decided to make a written record of the events, hoping it would make more sense on paper. It didn't. There were so many unanswered questions; Who had I been talking to? What was all this nonsense about a 'restricted planet'? And technical levels? Why did whoever it was refuse to identify her/him/its self? I couldn't tell whether it was female or male. Why did it sound surprised when it asked me if I was a 'native'? Where did it think I came from? And more importantly, how and why, did it destroy my transmitter? Why was nothing else touched?... and how could I contact it again?

The reaction of my man, to what was left of my transmitter was laughable. He cried when he saw the remains of the set. Then he ranted and raved, accusing me of everything and anything. Refused to believe the truth. (Even though there is no way I could have made such a mess.) and nearly shattered my plate glass door when he left, vowing never to speak to me again.

I could have been upset, distraught that this man, who I had courted for six months, no longer wanted anything to do with me.. But I wasn't, through-out his entire bombardment of accusations and insults, I had not been listening. There were more important things on my mind, like trying to remember how I had built the first transmitter...

- Louise Hollingberry

The R. & R. Dept.



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

Well, now Sue has been to a couple of parts of the US that I've never seen; Hawaii and Louisiana. The Trimble's are great hosts. 696 Bronson isn't really terribly large for a US house -- especially one of that age. (And I'm not making cracks about age; our house is older - and bigger - and the plumbing doesn't work nearly as well.) For that matter, I've never been in Dallas, though I've driven across a corner of Texas. (I was offered a job in Dallas once; I turned it down. Just like I turned down the one in Chicago. I dislike cities.)

All the anti-Sydney talk I heard at various cons was on the order of "the committee is nobody you ever heard of before". (I could have said I'd heard of Sue, except that I didn't know she was on it.) Matter of fact, I also read that in some Australian fanzines. So I was anti-Sydney, though since I wasn't eligible to vote, it didn't make any difference in my case. (I suppose I'd read about Sue being on the concom in previous MENTORS, but apparently it didn't stick in my memory; since I wasn't going to attend the con and couldn't vote on it, it wasn't important.)

Seemed to be a lot of typos in this issue. I don't know if you or I have the responsibility for "U.S. clubs are far more restrictive", but what I meant was that US clubs are far less restrictive, due to our courts. (And did you leave out a line of my letter? Surely I never typed anything like "Tom Wade Wellman" and the rest of that doesn't make a lot of sense.)

US fanzines are not offset because mimeo paper is unavailable. Juanita has been running Harry Warner's HORIZONS (for pay), but will have to quit because of the lack of paper. We bought a case from Bruce Pelz, but it wouldn't work on our machine, which always required a very thick, fiber-type paper. No sort of mimeo paper is available commercially. I've noticed a much lower proportion of books and magazines in huckster rooms in recent years; now it's jewelry, sculpture, games, clothing, and in bigger cons, comics and media stuff. But there's no use trying to sell what nobody wants. We still handle books, but 90% of our sales are tapes. (I suppose partly because we're one of two major midwestern tape dealers, though Pegasus Music from Texas and some of the California outfits come to some midwest cons.) The old digest magazines are a drug on the market, and used hardcovers don't sell much better. There's some sale for used paperbacks, and some for the really old pulps, if one has any to sell. And Dick Spelman does very well handling new books, but that takes an enormous inventory. (He told me several years ago that he was taking in \$50,000 gross, annually, from convention sales. Of course, he goes to a lot of cons. The net would be a lot less, of course; I figure our net at around 20% of the total, or sometimes 15%, but we get breaks on expenses because we appear on the program at most cons.)

Several columns back, I mentioned basketball player Bobby Plump as the ultimate Hoosier hero. Just recently, the Indiana Historical Society brought out the first issue of their magazine of Indiana history. The back cover was a photo of Bobby Plump's "letter jacket" (given to athletes when they graduate), which has been donated to the Indiana State Museum. And the state athletic association is now selling videotapes of the final games of the high school basketball tournaments. Doing quite a business, too...

I agree with Harry that if you sell art, you're a pro rather than a fan. However, the Fan Art Show - in which the art is mostly offered for sale, though not-for-sale exhibiting is also allowed - is too well entrenched as a term to be changed now. Even though it's

drawing a lot of professional artists, because it's the major outlet for science fiction art these days.

I'm reading George Turner's DROWNING TOWERS. Excellent book, though certainly one of the most depressing near-future societies I've encountered. Mainly, it's depressing because one can believe that this is the way it's going to be; not just a possible future, but the future. The actual 'drowning towers' are perhaps less likely than the rest of the society; you can see that beginning to happen right now. I'll see if I can't give it a nudge toward a Hugo when I review it, though the Australian setting probably won't help it get votes; US fans are used to future US settings.

Harry Andruschak, PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309, USA.

I still work for the Post Office, and probably will until I retire 10, 20 or more years down the line. I have had a change in work schedule, and now work 3pm-midnight, with Tuesday and Wednesday off. This means I am unable to attend any fannish functions in person. So I mostly have my fanzines as a source of fannish contact.

I did get my ditto machine repaired, by the way. And yes, I did go on a 10 day vacation to Idaho, followed by going to Nolacon II. I did not see Susan Clarke there, as far as I can remember, but the con was so huge that it was not surprising.

As you know, Australia lost the 1991 bid. It is hard to say how much the fix that resulted in Holland winning the 1990 worldcon without allowing USA voters to cast a site selection ballot resulted in the loss. A lot of USA fans told me that they would not vote another overseas bid while this sort of swindle was going on.

By the way, if you consider the word 'fix' to be out of place, you may be interested to know that I wrote Kees van Toorn of the 1990 bid, asking him to put a full and complete explanation of the 1990 site selection story into the progress reports. He said no. If Holland has nothing to hide, why are they trying to hide it better?

In any case if Holland fixes the 1993 site selection to allow Yugoslavia to win, I thin the 1994 Australian bid has no chance whatever. Of course, if Yugoslavia does win the 1993 site, then maybe Australia could bid for 1996. This may very well be the easiest way for an overseas bid to win the worldcon.. don't let the USA voters vote.

[At last report, there will be a 'Not The Worldcon' convention (a Medtrek) in Sydney in 1991. Various US fans have indicated they will attend. - Ron.]

Ok, it has been a couple of hours since I typed the above; I read Susan's report again, and the rest of the zine. As always, Susan seems to have attended a slightly different Worldcon than the one I did, but that is typical of fannish con reports. I had a fairly good time at Nolacon II, and it seems as if Susan did. And the city certainly was fannish! I gained five pounds eating at the restaurants.

I haven't been able to read much science fiction lately, what with one activity after another in my life. I still do a lot of day hikes on my two days off, some with the Sierra Club, and some by myself. This does little to clear the table of fanzines and letters when I get back home.

It was a bit sad reading Coulson's column and his mention of T.O.M. Sopwith. A few weeks ago he died. Whatever else may be remembered about sopwith, he built some of the best fighter planes in The Great War, perhaps in both Great Wars.

MARC ORTLIEB, PO Box 215, Forest Hill, Vic 3131.

Regarding Sue's entry in the Guinness Book of Fannish Records (in THE MENTOR #62), while not wishing to denigrate anyone's publishing of trip reports, I'd like to note that my U.S. trip report, all 66 pages of Q36G, did come out three months after I got back from the U.S.

I'd certainly be interested in a copy of the history of South American Fandom. I already have a copy of your publication of Molesworth.

[The Molesworth history is to be reprinted after I do the Argentine history. Which was June. - Ron.]

Re Susan's piece allow me a pedantic aside. If the person referred to in connection with Jack Herman is his wife then she is Cath McDonnell.

I'm surprised to note Susan's comment that there is less division between media and mainstream fandom in the U.S., from my experience, the split is almost total. There are huge mainstream and media groups who scarcely recognise the existence of the others. Certainly there are people who cross over, as there are in Australia, but there are groups who actively discourage involvement by the others whom they see as either drobes or mundanes, depending on which group is under consideration. I doubt that there would be much media involvement in a convention such as Corflu. Evidence of this can be found in Sue's report. Of the people mentioned, I recognised few of the names, other than the Australians and those Americans who'd visited Australia. There were certainly none of the fans whom I'd recognise as strong mainstream fans, other than Elaine Pelz and Jan Howard Finder.

Buck Coulson describes another of the aspects of balkanized fandom. Here in Australia, filking has not gathered the status of a sub-fandom, persecuted by the rest of fandom. (At Denvention II I remember being a part of a bunch of filkers who were being continually moved on from room to room by hotel or convention security.) Most filkers in Australia are part of either mainstream fandom, media fandom or the SCA. (Sometimes all three. Australian fandom is still small enough for people to be involved in more than one aspect of fandom.) My favourites are Dave Luckett, Ann Poore and Terry Dowling. There are subflavours within filking. The SCA filkers tend towards real folk. The media filkers tend towards material based on their particular favourite series, while mainstream filkers tend towards humorous songs about fandom itself. (Yes, that is an overgeneralisation.)

Oh yes, and while I'm on my pedantic asides, my name is spelt "MARC". I guess that it's one of those things that people get a trifle touchy about. Who was it said "I don't care what they write about me as long as they spell my name correctly."?

While I agree that energetic new fans are needed, one problem with such fans is they often ignore or alienate the older fans who can supply information and assistance. If they decide to go their own way regardless then they have no grounds for complaint if the snubbed fans don't give wholehearted support for their bids.

SKEL, 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5NW, England.

I should be signing this letter 'Perplexed of Stockport', I guess, after reading Harry Andruschak's letter in THE MENTOR 62. Some time back I wrote to Dave Lock and Al Curry in the States, and Mike Glickson in Canada, bemoaning the fact that here in the UK we only had a single mail delivery on a Saturday, compared with the two daily deliveries Monday through Friday. They dumped on me en masse with the CanAm fans' equivalent of the old Monty Python 'Four Yorkshiremen' sketch (where four well-to-do Yorkshiremen sit around swilling their after-dinner brandies and one-up each other with over-the-top 'reminiscences' of their childhood poverty and hardships, on the lines of:-

"My Dad used t'mek us lick t'road clean afore breakfast."

"Breakfasy? You had breakfast? That were a luxury in our 'ouse, sithee." etc. etc. etc.)

Anyway, by the time my worthy correspondents had finished, I was left with the distinct impression that we poncey Brits were totally effete, and spoiled rotten, and that tough ex-colonials never whinged, and thought themselves lucky if they had a mail delivery every other leap year. They sure as shooting didn't get any mail at the weekend, and there was a strong likelihood that not getting mail at the weekend was what had made America great, whilst having our attention diverted by opening letters on a Saturday was almost certainly the main reason why Britain lost her Empire.

So why, I ask myself, if the US Postal system (I won't make the elementary gaffe of calling it a 'service') doesn't make weekend deliveries, does it require its workers to work weekends, and to take time off in the middle of the week, when it does make deliveries? Surely shome mishtake?

Obviously where I am going wrong is in not considering Postal System as on-going processes. Obviously a letter that is not delivered on a Saturday or Sunday has

to go through a lengthy process of not being routed around the country, of not being handled, and not being sorted, going all the way back to its not being collected or mailed on the Tuesday or Wednesday before. It's so obvious and logical when you stop to think about it. Of course this still leaves unanswered the question of just what it is the mailmen do on a Saturday and Sunday when they are busy not delivering the mail that they didn't collect the previous Tuesday and Wednesday. I suspect that upon the answer to this, the ultimate question, depends the end of human poverty, the banishment of third-world famine, and low-cost, limitless nuclear fusion. We might even discover who sawed Courtney's boat.

[In Australia the Post Office gave up Saturday and twice-a-day deliveries about twenty years ago. The only post offices open Saturdays are the Agencies - the one at Faulconbridge is only active because it receives 15 bags of mail a day while the 'official' office at Springwood gets 11 bags. Shows what fannish activities do. I would say that the reason Saturday deliveries were dropped here is because of the overtime pay involved. Either that or they would have to have employed two people on shift. - Ron.]

I read the poetry, but quiet frankly wished hadn't bothered. I did not read the fiction, on the grounds that I have only so much time available and prefer to read novels. Buck Coulson was interesting as ever, especially with his remarks about the sheer pace of technological development over the last generation. We tend to forget how little life changed, or how gradual were the changes, until relatively recently. For instance one of the most significant early changes in society was from 'hunter-gatherer' mode to agricultural, yet societies with a significant hunter-gatherer element were around in significant numbers still as recently as the last century, and still exist today in what we consider to be some 'primitive' peoples. "Is this significant?" I ask myself, significantly.

I enjoyed Susan's 'brief account' of her Nolacon adventure, and was amazed at her courage in setting off into the great unknown, for a month's stay, with only a hundred bucks in her pocket (or purse, or cleavage, or whatever). What's more, about £65 at today's rate of exchange? £75? I know the Pilgrim Fathers did wonders with a few beads and things, but the rate of exchange has moved a bit since those days, and 100 bucks leave you totally reliant on the generosity of the fans through whose hands and homes you pass. Of course we all know that fans are always prepared to provide prearranged guests with food and shelter at some level or another, but to head off to the States for a month with only 100 dollars strikes me about on a par with jumping out of a plane without a parachute because someone you know only through correspondence wrote that "On the way down you'll pass me, and I'll catch you". I wouldn't have the fucking nerve!

[Neither would I. - Ron.]

Most trip and travel reports are written by fan-fund winners, or folks who've been the recipient of special largesse, and it's nice to see a piece written by someone whose motive for the trip was somewhat different. I hope you can persuade her to share the rest of the trip with us in future issues. Besides, 'Europe on \$5-a-day' was overtaken by inflation years ago. "The USA on \$100-a-month" I just gotta see.

PAMELA BOAL, 4 Westfield Way, Charlton Heights, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EW, UK.

It so nice to be able to sit down with a zine that is clearly and cleanly reproduced with normal sized print, one of the few that my eyes will permit me to read from cover to cover without strain. I did enjoy Sue's trip report. Even though some of the photos did not reproduce all that well being too dark, it is good to be able to put faces to what could well be for ever paper names. Though I have a complaint, there should be a photo of the most important person, Sue herself.

I dislike being negative about fannish writings but if Julie Hawkins can take on board criticism and use it, she has enough potential to make it worth while offering it. She handles pace and general construction well. There is nothing wrong with using old and tried plots, after all what's good enough for Shakespeare... but there must be a fresh sparkle and an original interpretation. Sorry, but there is no sparkle about OLD BILL'S TALE, it reads almost like a schoolgirl exercise. Why is the tale so flat? Simply because it is impossible to believe in Bill, the insubstantial 'I' or the nameless sentence speakers thrown into to populate the bar. If the characters are dull and unbelievable the reader is hardly going to believe in or have much interest in the related events.

Terry Broome's advice is sound but I would suggest two more exercises. Firstly examine her own work and give it a test of her own common sense and logic. She states that; 'If there was some one out there after one of our own we wanted to know about it'. She also states; 'After one beer he would go home'. 'One of our own', obviously injured, acting out of character, and complaining he has been robbed, yet no one wants to investigate, no one suggests he seek medical attention, or that he go to the police. The 'I' brings back gold discs and reports strange burn marks, Bill cashes in the gold and there is no investigation, no Inland Revenue or other official wants to know what happened to his cattle or where he got the gold to purchase new stock. It simply isn't logical. Secondly I suggest that Julie watches and listens to people. When she gets home from work or an outing or what ever, writes down word pictures of as many people as she can recall and transcripts of conversations she has heard. Even watching TV can help if she asks herself why any conversation did or didn't work, why an emotion portrayed was or was not appropriate.

The poetry and 21st CENTURY DREAMTIME work well and I enjoyed the letters.

On the house front, I've always found the more you have the more you fill. You'd think Derek and I would rattle around a bit in a four bedroomed house, not a bit of it, we fill and use every corner and it's a major reorganisation job making room when children and grandchildren come to stay.

WALT WILLIS, 32 Warren Rd., Bonaghadee, BT21 OPD, N. Ireland.

Thank you for THE MENTOR, which arrived 11th April, having been postmarked on, I think, 9th January. I tell you this because we faneds are always trying to figure out the vagaries of the world's postal system, and with your experience you might be able to identify the particular lamasery along the Silk Road where it spent so much time.

Anyhow it was in good shape when it got here, and very welcome. I thought Susan's trip report was the best thing in the issue. In fact it was one of the best trip reports I have ever read. Mainly this was because she conveyed with such convincing honesty what she felt from moment to moment. Having written a report on our Tropicon trip a few months ago I understand how much more difficult this sort of thing is nowadays. The faster travel becomes, the duller it gets, a process which will no doubt end with us hurtling through interstellar space in suspended animation.

It took me two weeks to travel to my first Worldcon and there were all sorts of reportable adventures en route. But nowadays fans fly halfway round the world, over exotic places like Hawaii or the cliché-infested Timor Sea, and the most thrilling thing that happens is that they lose their luggage. The drama nowadays has to happen in the mind, and Susan has realised this.

On the other hand, the more interesting Conventions become, the more difficult they are to report. In the old days some fans actually attended the official program. Even if there was nothing in that worth writing about, it provided a period of calm to make notes: and afterwards the program booklet provided a structure, a sort of template into which other remembered incidents could be fitted.

It may be that there is no answer to this conreporting problem. I know people who have used a tape recorder to make copious notes or record actual conversations; but either the effort of transcribing these is too much for them or they induce mental indigestion; anyway the results never appear.

Another feature of Susan's report which was of special interest to me was the way in which old friends appeared unexpectedly among all these unfamiliar names. It's difficult to explain what a thrill it was to find that John and Bjo met Susan in Los Angeles, or the pleasure with which we learned that they too have a Golden Retriever. We think of them as good friends to whom to happen to have owed letters for some little time. It couldn't be 25 years.

JULIE VAUX, 14 Zara St., Willoughby, NSW 2776.

Firstly an error in my last LoC. I don't know whose fault is or was but the last sentence got mangled. It was meant to read 'Rhetoric also is only a tool'. Right.

Second - of pictographs and phonetic scripts. The first has a tendency to mutate into the second. By the time of the Rosetta Stone the Egyptian hieroglyphs had changed over 2000 years from purely ideographic system to a mixed system with the symbols representing both symbols and sound. It had also changed into hieratic - a "shorthand" and further into an alphabetic set of signs called demotic "people's writing". Hieroglyphs were seen as sacred whereas the demotic and hieratic scripts were secular.

On the question of Aboriginal Symbolic Communication, folks, who has seen recent Central Australian paintings? Many Aboriginal paintings on bark, canvas or cloth represent guides to performing rituals. They are reference charts to illustrate maps of dreaming paths, ceremonial sites, movements in dances, outlines of stories to prompt memory. They ARE Writing As Symbolic Art. The symbols are the Message. Remember McLuhan - the Medium is the Message!

Back to Pictographs. I agree the Chinese system seems to have evolved independently but it also seems to have followed a similar evolutionary process. The original ideographic system was replaced by a simpler system for two reasons.

MEMORY and MOVEMENT.

One - it is easier to learn half a hundred signs in a syllabic or phonetic script than it is to learn a thousand ideographs.

Two - the characters are easier to arrange on a page, be it written or printed. Note it was in a country with an alphabetic script that movable metal typefaces were invented. The Chinese had printing first, but they engraved whole pages onto printing blocks!

Alphabets don't automatically replace ideographs. Parallel or mixed sets of symbols tend to be created. The Japanese used a mixture of ideographic Kanji and syllabic Kana to write. The Kana are derived most probably from a shorthand version of Chinese. The Chinese plan to teach the Roman alphabet in schools alongside the traditional characters so as to make it easier for Chinese to learn foreign languages and be able to read technical material.

In Europe the Phoenician scripts were either derived or influenced by some form of Egyptian shorthand in secular use by traders and scribes. This replaced the Minoan script after the 'Dorian' dark ages in Greece because the Minoan scripts fell with the palaces - the scribes and priests who knew them were slain and the survivors had no use for them. The Linear B tablets survived because they were baked by the fire in palaces where no one built temples on top of the original sites.

There's a couple of hundred syllabic symbols in them whereas Greek and Hebrew use 22/24. O Cyprus the Mycean descended settlers went on using a script related to Linear B for some centuries for sacred inscriptions, ie memory of the dead - stelae etc alongside Greek.

Shorthand versions of existing signs are used to create a new system. The original symbols are not supplanted but modified, changed into a simpler system.

Pictures versus sounds. Memory vs. movement? Nope. Simply evolution. The older systems either remained in use for special functions as parallel systems of expression or died out like select species - slowly isolated by their specializations whereas the mutant form survives.

(I do so enjoy discovering biological models in language - linguistics supports the theory of evolution and the concepts of genetics with fascinating frequency).

Lastly on Language. Brian Earl Brown - I believe Ural-Altaic is the other language family you referred to. There are certain vocabulary items that suggest early intensive contact between speakers of the two groups.

STEVE SNEYD. 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield, W Yorkshire HD5 8PB UK.

Seeing the comment re John MacDonald starting with SF led me to dig out yet again my copy of his pback SF BALLROOM IN THE SKY - stil can't get into it, though, did Travis McGee ever read it, I wonder. Just been sorting through some ancient STAR LINES (Science Fiction Poetry Assoc mag) - came across someone in the early 80s expressing wish to network through to Oz, as if you were out beyond Oberon.

I was amazed at Terry Broome's 'review' of Julie Hawkins. The right/wrong of his view of the content of the story isn't my point, or the style, just the misplaced energy to try to

setup such a "crucifixion" - who gains what out of it? If he was screwing a pro writer to the wall, fairdos, the guy/woman gets paid for it, but this just doesn't make sense - yeah, we should all do 3 open University degrees in anthropology before daring to put pen to paper (and then put footnotes in) but, really, life isn't that long. A couple of paras to say he didn't like the story, or a couple of private letters to her with helpful advice, ok, but this: while he was writing that epic, he couldn't been proving his point by example by writing his own fic. epic instead? (I should, of course, admit a prejudice - Terry blew me out of the water for not writing a sufficiently interesting loc to a zine he'd spontaneously sent me; but I still feel that this is a case of "I couldn't find Stephen King's address so I'll hammer the next someone's else's head instead.")

R. Laurraine Tutihasi 5876 Bowaroft St., #4, Los Angeles, CA 90016, USA.

I enjoyed Susan's Nolacon report. It's always interesting to read about a con I've been to from a different point of view, especially a foreign point of view. It was unfortunate that it was quite full of typos and misspellings, such as Whiltshire instead of Wiltshire (Boulevard in Los Angeles).

There were three problems that I can see about the failed Sydney worldcon bid. First of all, there wasn't much publicity here, or in Australia from what I've heard. Apparently, the bid was heavily supported by mediafen and did not court the support of more fannish fans in this country or in Australia. It was interesting that the American fans that I knew among those Susan mentioned are all primarily mediafen. It was the fannish Australian fans that convinced me that the Sydney bid did not deserve American support because it had so little support at home. Most of the Australlians I know urged us to support Perth in preference to Sydney. Few Americans thought we should support both bids. When asked by neofen how they should vote, I gave them the above information. Thirdly, Sydney was unfortunate enough to bid against Chicago, which was a very strong and popular bid. I see that Marc Ortlieb has already expressed much of the same opinions in his letter later in your zine.

I'm pleased that Susan enjoyed the Universal Studios Tour. I went there myself during the Christmas holidays. This spring a new earthquake attraction opened, and I look forward to experiencing that.

I'm sorry that she found the Hollywood Wax Museum boring. It's too bad she didn't get to the Movieland Wax Museum in Orange County. I think she would have enjoyed that much more. I did.

Re Richard Faulder's letter, I attended the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas this January. One of the technologies discussed there was the Digital Audio Tape. Personally, I think it is a technology that is too little too late. I know that I heard about it at least six years ago. I'm not sure that the compact disc has quite pre-empted it yet. There is not yet available a consumer-affordable recording machine for the compact disc though I hear it's supposedly just around the corner. I'm not holding my breath. And I must agree with Brian Earl Brown that the Japanese economy certainly is not doomed if the Digital Audio Tape does not succeed with flying colours. It seems quite certain, though, that digital tape will be used in the computer field.

MAE STRELKOV, 4501 Palma Sola, Jujuy, Argentina.

I had almost slipped out of fandom when the postal strikes in this land went on and on for months, totally. Nothing I wrote reached anywhere; nothing came in. I got quite out of the habit, and I still owe now letters to dear friends of years' standing, in fandom abroad. I keep saying to myself: "I must get in touch now. They'll think I don't care. And I do." (And I really shall be writing them them realsoonnow.)

Interesting to learn that there is an Argentine fandom by now. Years ago, in Argentina, I couldn't find anyone who had any interest in becoming a fan, or being in touch with fans abroad. That was when we lived in Buenos Aires, and that was before 1960, to be sure.

I liked Grai Hughes thought-provoking story. I do believe the Australian aborigines are descendants of a most ancient people. Richard Faulder asks whether my work implies that it all

originated in the ancient Far East? I've no idea. Taking into account a host of worldwide old myths where the first ancestors "fell out of the sky", (in a big nutshell, etc.), and recalling that the Dogones of Africa insisted they came from a planet circling a dense star that circled Sirius, I take that possibility also into account. That Earth's languages are fragmented bits left over from the other planet's traditions and religions and sacred old terms that linger on so well. Astronomers have since checked the Dogones' detailed information (on the time it took their star to circle Sirius, etc.) and found it all correct, as I've read.

So I don't embroil myself with other hypotheses of any sort, believing as I do that we must look still further back. Over the BBC I just heard that in the Near East they've found the remains of modern man dating back to over 90,000 years ago.

I disagree with the suggestion that the Australoid did not actually communicate in written sign language. His stylized art, (so modern-looking) and the occasional words of their dreamtime I've come across that belong with the art, to my mind are simply older and fuller "illustrations" of what in China was already very abridged and stylized thousands of years ago. Thus the questions Richard asks: "why this? and why that?" I do not even try to answer, for anthropologists are more competent than I on such things.

No, "Mae" is not asking for "more consideration" for any hypothesis, unless you are prepared to consider seriously that Earth people originated from a star that was becoming a deadly sun. The Greek sea-gods had to "hide from the heat of Sirius" at midday, in deep caves along the sea-shore. (Obviously, as a distant star, you didn't have to hide from its rays, but rather from our own bright sun.)

Furthermore, Richard, unless you are also prepared to recognize as valid my search for evidence that "the Word in all Flesh" is at work always changing our negative, mindless state into one of intense awareness and mental vision, I guess you should just not bother with trying to figure out what I might say.

It's true, Brian Earl Brown, that I have to assume "more familiarity with the origins, formation and meaning of Chinese ideograms" than most folk have, not just fans. So I've got to find a way to simplify further the material so when I leave it to our children and their children, they can understand.

I have only one correspondent in fandom (in England) who studies modern Chinese and travels to Hongkong sometimes). You can imagine how I value hearing from him now and then. He has acquired by chance already a copy of my favorite textbook, Fr. Wieger's CHINESE CHARACTERS dating from the start of this century, still to me most valuable in its up-to-date Dover reprinting. I'm sure he'll fall into the temptation of wanting to know about the oracle-bone forms and Small Seal and all the rest, too.

My other favorite texts are the all-Chinese-language Chang Hsuan's 3000 CHINESE CHARACTERS (THE ETYMOLOGIES OF), with only the Wade-Giles spellings of each character provided also in our alphabetic forms. It gives the oracle-bone forms. Besides that I continually refer to Bernhard Karlgren's works, and by now must have totally memorised the lists in his Compendium of 3000-year-old pronunciations of Northern Chinese. I've been at this - more and more engrossed - for nearly 30 years already, practically full time. I doubt I'll see anything published (save in a fine fanzine like yours), but my own family do value the material - whatever I happen to report - so it won't all be lost when I go.

Yes, others are seeking the Ur-tongue, I too have been sent clippings on this, and they're doing very well. Whatever type of clues are followed will cast further light on it all. Myself, I believe, Brian, in the Earth-Mother as a real personality, and my religious outlook includes her in my thinking.

Dear Harry Warner! Yes, indeed. When languages fail us, when humans have no further dictionaries after an idiotic war that shouldn't happen, (and perhaps it won't, but what of the other dangers to our ecology?), we will be reduced maybe to ideographic forms of communication (Rotsler style) anew.

Ah, and hello, dear old friend John Alderson. I forgive you for owing me a letter long since, but what with our postal problems, (especially out in these remote sticks, believe me), I forgive anyone else too who owes me letters and am only grateful that an occasional fanzine does arrive with the latest fandom news.

You're right, John, about the Three Crosses or trident of South America at Paracas, Peru. It is the "Sprouting Divine Footprint" in the lost old beliefs I've been unearthing, and it is also the foliage on the World Tree. Trapalanda, the term for the magical "World of the

Ever Young", in Patagonia's lore; Tlapallan, Mexico's Quetzalcoatl's homeland, and so on. I've a whole ms. book on that done years ago. And, yes, John, it has to go back to that Stone Age when 90,000 years ago "modern man" existed in a Near East cave which sounded over the BBC radio like Shool. (Sheol?).

David's name apparently just means an army commander (as a title). The dawidum fighting men are mentioned in the tablets of ancient Mari of the Near East. Tiwad for "the Legion of the Pigs that Plunged to Destruction" is the old Chinese form. (Again, a book-length ms. on that exists among all my old papers.)

Yes, Julie Hawkins, I find the stuff mind-boggling still. The more I study it the more it boggles my brain, till it's turned into a sort of computer that brings to the fore automatically long series of echoes of any old character I happen to be studying. (I can almost hear the well-trained "wheels" within turn.)

And, ah, Tom Jackson, what welcome news re "Yang, Ching, Pao", in Oklahoma too. It's such a challenging and philosophical game, it has to come from early Stone Age times, so maybe the natives of Oklahoma remembered it too.

Ned Brooks: The second time you tried to send the Machen book it also never reached here. Another postal strike! I waited to write you in case it did arrive, and so the time slipped by. I really shall write you - also Eric and Kathy Mayer so very dear to be - realsoonnow. (I got so stirred up answering remarks on my Minotaur piece in THE MENTOR, right now I find I've turned long-winded suddenly again, after such a long silence.)

Terry Broome! No, I'll never, ever "adequately explain the symbols", because their depths are really inexhaustible. I keep finding new angles, till I almost despair at the inadequacy of our languages, our mental capacities, and what not. How will I ever write down what I see (in a sort of flash whatever I study by now)? Linear approaches just won't do. The Japanese or the Chinese would understand this, for each word of theirs is multileveled.

Is my English faulty? It was considered excellent till I reached the age of 18 and married into a Russian family. (Aged parents and only son). My parents were English on my father's side, (he gave me that rare "B minus" type of blood, which simply doesn't seem to exist in Argentina, as we found the couple of times I needed blood, and had to be given "minus O". Our kids, however, haven't got it. Vadim is "O-plus. A doctor who learned this declared "there was a lie somewhere", that a mother could not have had seven children who have that type of "plus" blood, (O-plus chiefly, though one or two had B-plus somehow). This doctor insisted since we obviously weren't lying and the kids were definitely of our own production, there "must be a mistake somehow" and left it at that. (I've been told by a British fan that 17 percent of Brits have B-minus. We're from the Northumberland region.) My mother, in turn, was from the USA, with forebears dating back to the 17th Century there, and as my cousins informed me, two "national treasures" in the lines of stately homes, were from our own past somehow. She traced the family tree and tried to get me excited, but I didn't even bother to keep the paper she made. She'd filled her living room with ancient photos refurbished in silver frames of these ancestors when she came across same in old boxes of my aged aunt. I was there when my cousin's beautiful daughter complained: "Oh, mother, do we have to have all these dead people sitting around all our rooms?" I was so charmed by her. Formerly, people had real old mummies propped up around their best rooms. (In coastal Peru, for instance. In other sites too, but we'll not go into all that right now.)

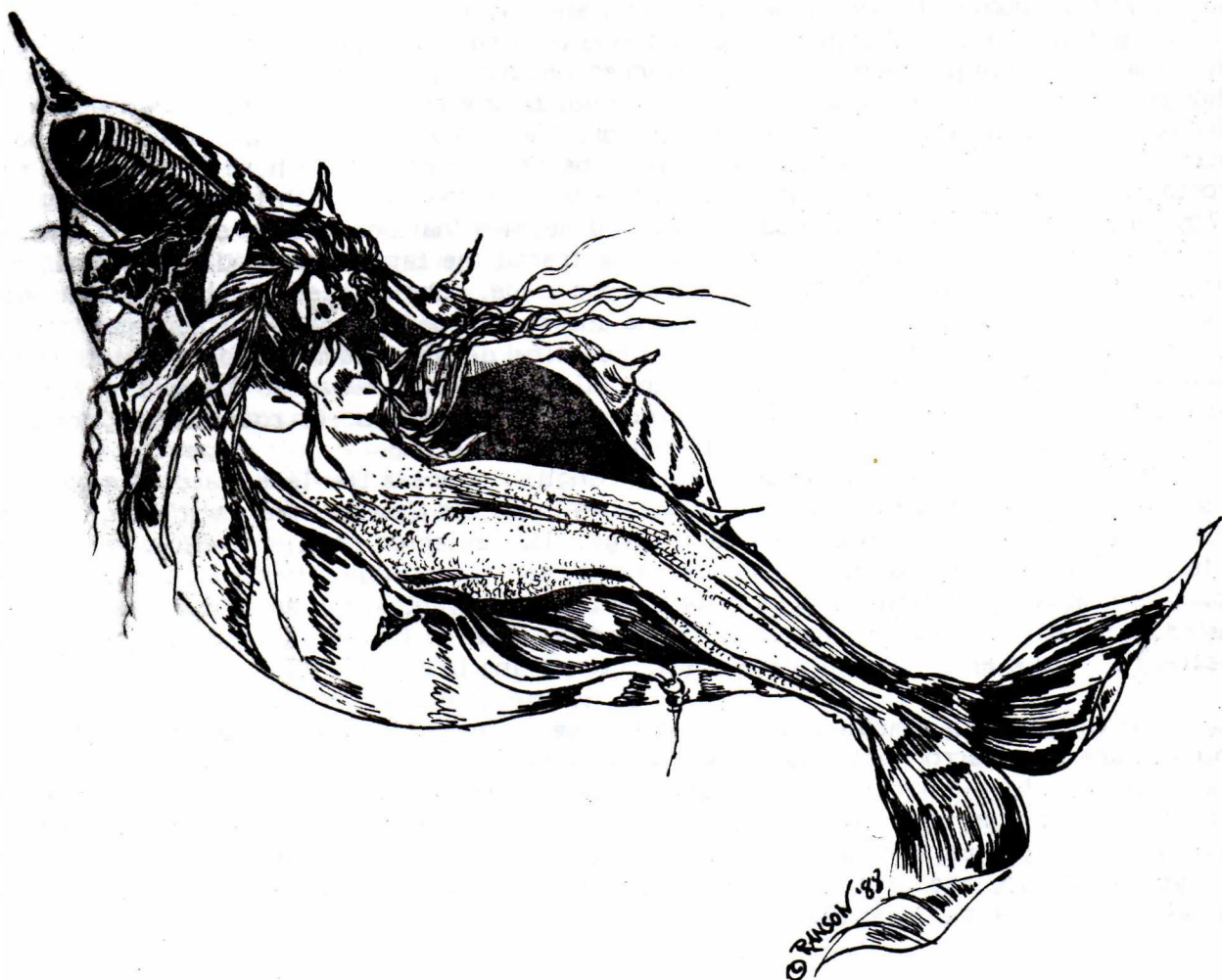
Anyway, Terry, I feel bad about my faulty English. I speak flawlessly accented elegant Russian from the St. Petersburg Era around 1900, thanks to my old Czarist parents-in-law, but I sure don't need it, and my Russian vocabulary isn't large. I'd neglected that. I spent a year taking Arabic into my very marrow, reading it like Christians read their Bible. Next, a year of Quechuan, so I found resemblances in both tongues constantly. As for Spanish, the ancient tomes I plowed through years ago, each sentence a page long, effected my English further, I'm afraid. Sorry, but does it matter? I'll try keeping my sentences brief. I am trying to do so lately!

Logic? Me, logical? I'm just intuitive. I have to hold on tight not to turn into a medium, last thing I'd ever wish to become. I stay away from that sort of thing in absolute terror, actually. Had too many brushes with spookines and always avoided any such contact. Nowadays life is nice and peaceful here, fortunately. No more spooks pestering. (It's this digging up of old key words that are partly to blame. From afar, through acquaintances, spiritualistic seances were getting messages to be sent to me, warning me I was stirring up "bad things", upsetting the status quo and must desist. "Spooks!" was my scornful reaction, and I ignored it. This was around 1964.)

The "link between Eve and her signature" is a reference to the Genesis account where the serpent is at her heel (or her seed's heel) and there are Chinese oracle-bone forms of it too, as well as Andean reflections. That FUGITIVES piece was the beginning of a book that went on to explain the things introduced in that first chapter. The trouble with the study is that you can't see the whole till you've all the parts of it neatly arranged in your "computer" mind. I still haven't, of course. There are lots of puzzles that haven't found their places still, in it all. But I think I've done some good sorting out of it last year and right now, and am hopeful I'll yet produce something easier to follow, and more "linear".

Finally, Terry, I avoid all discussions of "Atlantis". Too many thousands of books and papers have already been published on the topic. Yes, I think it points back to the Cretan Empire, but how? I can't guess. And yes, one does come across reports in those old STRANGER THAN books published at Ace by Donald Wollhelm years ago of occasional water-folk appearing on or shores by chance. (Bulging eyes, fin-like hands and feet). Why not? The Phorkyades of Greece (pig-fish types), I've traced back in many an old Chinese form, probably once located in the far north of China. (But again, that is for a book, not a short article).

Well, I hope I've answered everybody. I take the material too seriously to leave questions unanswered, so I do the best I can, which isn't much. Remember, I merely point out coincidences which I find exciting. I don't try to explain how or why. I can't. I have't access to anthropological literature in those lovely winds.








THE ROLLING HEADS OF TAO

BY MAE STRELKOV

"On Calvary's Brow", goes an old hymn sung during my childhood in China. Three crosses stood there, at that place called Golgotha - gul'gultha in Aramaic, for a skull. Calvary for a bald skull is the translation from the Latin form, Calvaria, "skull", Kranion in Creek.

Old Hebrew traditions recall that Adam's skull found a last resting-place there. Earlier, it had been among the treasured relics or teraphim which Rachel stole from her father Laban.



"Three crosses for thirty years", or the active period of a human life, you find in old Chinese forms. It could be written as a sprouting footprint formerly; and when it tops their three-branched, three-rooted Tree,  it represents the successions of leaves on the World Tree, as  generation followed generation. The concept of the prolongation of human life is also suggested, as the "sprouting foot or footprint" sends a downward shoot to represent renewal. This can also represent a Great Generation or an Age, hence the World. It's rather odd, that! A lot of things that I came across in this study of old Chinese forms versus their echoes, found the world over, are odd to the point, sometimes, of being uncanny.

Speaking now of the skull with the special brows of our pre-history, we might start off by studying the Chinese character for the honoured concept of Tao or Dao, "The Way", to Taoists. The modern character shows a hairy head "going along the way", but an older bronze example shows rather an eye with eyebrows or  eyelashes, "along the way".  Here is the Eye of which it could be said literally, "Thou, God,  seest me". Or as another old text has it, referring to God himself speaking: "I will guide thee with mine eye".

The "Hairy Head of Tao along the Way", if we think of it literally, must date back to a time when not only in the Near East, but most everywhere, ancestral skulls were treasured, the way we save photos of our own great grandparents nowadays. (With photos that vivid - even if they're as yet mere daguerotypes, who needs to carry actual skulls around, to remember what one's ancestors looked like. Besides, there were other ways to represent them... portrait jugs on the coasts of Peru, statues elsewhere, death-masks in olden Greece, and so on.)

The word Tao of China appears in their name for the yellow bunting, huang tao-mai, where stands huang for yellow, tao for the hairy head along the way, and mai for "eyebrows".

I wonder if any modern Chinese knows that this bunting was really, long ago, the symbol of a sacred head rolling or going along, and with a very special brows or eyebrows? Who would see the link?

TAO  MEI 

I don't have access to the vast amount of written material the Chinese produced through the millenniums, (just a few source books down here in central South America, in the loveliest wilds, but without any bookstores or libraries within reach, and anyway they don't have much on archaic Chinese, even if I could reach them). Still, I have as much clues as any archaeologist sifting ancient dust in some long ago burial in search of the spirit even more than the circumstantial facts, of bygone pre-history.

The clues so far include: 1) a bunting, named for the eyebrows of a hairy head along the way, and 2) it may be a "royal" bunting, if the concept of yellow in this sense suggested royalty.

Can we find such a bunting linked with a hairy head that still "goes along" and has very weird eyebrows, somewhere? Is there some ancient people who kept apart from the currents of migrations elsewhere on the globe, and so preserved traditions dating back perhaps to a Glacial Age when they shared a language and even a religion - or at least a workable old philosophy - in some forgotten homeland, where they sheltered and sometimes survived the Ice Age?

The place to look has to be in the land of the Eskimos for a start. Have they a bunting of the "Going Hairy Head with the Eyebrows"?

I'm grateful to say that I received a gift from a friend living in Canada (it was Susan Wood, sad to say. Such a loss to us all she is), namely "Eskimo Stories" Bulletin 235 of the National Museums of Canada. And there I had an actual photograph by a gifted Eskimo carver of this self-same old idea: a woman's head with the special eyebrows that link with the nose; there's a lot of hair on the head, and - moreover - it is topped with a snow-bunting. Therein lies a difference: in lands of ice the bunting had to fit in with the scenery: (snowy).

That's quite a coincidence, but the story doesn't stop there. Searching further, I came to realise that our "yellow hammer" is but a version of China's huang-tao-mei, and the reasons are these: firstly, the older name for this "hammer" idea goes back to the old High German amero for a bunting, which (via Old English forms such as amore and omer, then -ambre of velambre) gives us the term as we know it now.

Does tao-mei not sound like amero to you? But wait! The older pronunciation of the mei in tao-mei was mier over 3,000 years ago, as per the reconstructions of Sinologist Bernhard Karlgren. And D'og was the older reading for the Hairy Head that shows the Way.

Did the olden peoples of Europe know about mier eyebrows too? Well, there was the most ancient legend of a so-called "Chaos Man", a hermaphrodite named Ymir, who was so huge that when slain by the younger Aesir they turned his eyebrows into a wall surrounding the Earth, and his body (that bled so much a flood occurred) had to be jettisoned in space. (That is what they used, to create our globe in the first place.)

Mir for "World" is a Russian word still.

So Ymir's dual eyebrows wall us in; in China there's a sacred mount of "My Eyebrows": Omei of Szechuen, West China. I was born there in 1917, and will mention Omei again further along.

What was a bunting doing, perching thus on a rather spooky Hairy Head still rolling along in Eskimo recollection, till lately? I suggest it was viewed as the spirit of the sacrificed ancestor, (possibly, if she was sacrificed). Or else, she lived her full life to the end, then they simply saved her sacred skull, to carry it along on their travels.

However, she was not unaccompanied, for the skull of her mate was carried along as well. We can deduce this because the Eskimos insist that this type of entity travels about always with its mate.



UAGRUK or
THE Tunnit-Wakruk (of the Eskimos)

LAO-TZE'S SURNAME.

The Old Boy, or the Old One, supposedly the founder of Taoism long ago, had a surname, now read Tan, but the older form was Than, represented by what looks like a fleece hung up, (the post on which it might be hanging is now shown, but folks did hang up fleeces formerly to please their deities). Telipinu of the Hittites, for instance, once got so angry he put his right boot on his left foot and his left boot on his right foot, and it was very troublesome to placate him. When this was accomplished at last, he had to be kept soothed by setting up an evergreen before him, on which was hung the skin of a sheep.

It's a far cry from the Golden Fleece of Grecian mythology, but here is a possible old Chinese view of a boa that might well be guarding the sacred fleece of old Tham himself.



You do meet this "surname" Tham of old Lao-tze on the coast of Peru in the place name Pacatnamu, where tnamu (the fuller spelling often misspelt in source-books), stood for "the old one", supposedly. Tnamu versus Tham. There are old Sham counterparts also.

There's the old Chinese sniam for chantings and gestures that must be word perfect. (It's a mere nian now for "to read", especially aloud, formerly). It has to do with a concept of "Now in the heart", originally... a forceful delivery of magical chants, perhaps. Sanampa is an Andean equivalent for such signs and signals and gestures conveying meaning. But the most remarkable survival is the word snam for a type of spell once known to the American Indians in the USA. With such a chant, a dead, dried bird could flesh out, spread its feathers, and fly off alive anew into the blue.

S or Sh reappears in a Near East name for a very old god mentioned in the tablets found in the ruins of Ugarit: Shunem for "Father of Years" (supposedly).

The Tannim or Tannin of the Bible were sea monsters. The Hebrew Tanna'im were the Teachers remembered during the four centuries from 200 BC to AD 200. Related? Who can know?


But most striking in my view is the tham of China versus tnamu of Coastal Peru, for a very old god indeed.

Well, if snam type magic was linked with a Tnam or Sh'nm deity long ago, already we have another valuable clue to be added to the ancient picture of proto-Old Boy Ideas, in what seems to have been still a skull-worshipping time.

There was the wandering skull with the special eyebrows, (and preferably still hairy); there was the bunting linked with it. This was the way or "Head" of Tao, but it was also the Way of a clan's ancestral skulls found anywhere, Adam's included, or - in the Andes you've a place name such as Humanhuaca, (uma - "head", and wake, "tome or shrine"). There too a wandering clan's head was finally enshrined for good, long ago. We have place names such as Holyhead in Britain, and the Tower of London rises above another giant's skull, supposedly.

Then there's the Temple of the High Head honoring the great god Marduk of the ancient Near East. The old name for china's bunting Tao-mei will have been d'og-miar, "head/eyebrows". Say it the other way around: Miar-d'uk? Marduk? He killed his ancestress Tiamat, treating her as Ymir of the Nordics got treated. He turned her body into Heaven and Earth. And what of Tiamat? Was it an older Tiag-mart? D'og-mier?

Another type of "rolling head"
 Her hair is done up as
 a horn.

=  ← the horn

= China's
 Forerunner
 + Baptist
 in oracle-
 bone forms
 is here
 compared



From a photo of
 a Soapstone
 Carving in
 the Book on
 Eskimo Tales

KATYUTAYUUG of the
 Eskimos
 (Note she's three-toed
 very "correctly" !)

THE PAIRING BUNTING-HEADS.

These ancestral d'og-mier heads that refused to die, but were powered by their own spirits in the form of buntings, (though there were thrushes also as birds of the eyebrows; also apparently blackbirds, and even doves, etc). They were not saintly. The eskimo example has breasts for her cheeks and a vulva for her chin. She gets about under her own propulsion, accompanied by her mate, and they enter temporarily abandoned showhouses, search for scraps of food which they devour, they then bump about against the walls, "butting and bunting", and finally bundle up in the bedding and make a cozy tent for themselves. It is obvious they would especially have appreciated bunting-cloth for such purposes, a cloth we use to make flags. And such bunting-heads will have been carried about in "Baby Bunting" type garments, during processions and migrations, forming thus the sacred bundles of their clans. Could it be possible indeed that while Adam's Skull ended up at Golgotha, a Mar-duk or D'og-mier skull had such a great temple erected in its case.

The Babylonian historian Berossus, who lived about 250 BC wrote of a race of monsters who'd emerged from the Persian Gulf under the leadership of Fish-man Oannes. Berossus was a priest of Bel, and was also a historian and astrologer as well as an astronomer.

It was Berossus who recorded an old Assyrian-Chaldean myth concerning a woman named Amorka, who was so large that when she was beheaded the world could be fashioned out of her body. According to Berossus, the Fish-god Oannes had tried to explain to the primitives who he was educating that he had come forth from the primary world egg, long ago, hence his combined fish/human appearance. He belonged to an era before there were humans, and when all sorts of misshapen animals, often hermaphrodites, (with two faces, one male, the other female) existed. At times there were crosses between animals, humanoids, and so on, also. (We seem to be creating such freaks anew, as our biologists experiment in transforming genetic material.

Rabbinic legends recall that Adam originally was also hermaphroditic till Eve was separated from his side.

Adam, whose name is said to mean "red earth", has indeed a name whose sound would match those Tao-mei type old ideas.

The monsters accompanying the legendary Oannes were represented in sculptures in the temples of Bel. And Amorka herself, the incarnation either of the seas, (MR as in mar for "sea") or the moon, was cut in two by Bel just as Marduk was cut in half Tiamat, creating thus the Earth and the Heavens, from such a huge body. Ymir, Amorka, Marduk versus Tiamat! With a cancelling factor such as the tao-mei rolling head (one of a pair) of China, the picture begins to take shape.

A host of words in various languages seems to refer to parts of this same ancient MR body and the head, and I'll mention examples later. The Ymir Eyebrow walls might be mountain heights, like Mount Omel's fastness; they might be the retreat of the gods, Mount Maru or Sumeru of India, or the mysterious Mount Moriah(s) of the Bible.

Fascinating material for science-fiction writers! I can't write fiction myself, (I used to attempt it, but my craving for facts has led me into the studies I've pursued. Myths aren't fact, certainly, but they reveal old beliefs and memories of peoples long vanished and forgotten, as likely as not, by us all.)

Ymir, incidentally, has been compared by mythologists, with Yama of India, who with his mate and twin, was another "First Pair", now ruling in the Underworld. Supposedly he lived originally in a heaven above the world; brahmanism transferred his abode to hell, where he now functions with his mate and twin. He is being tortured down there, (thrice every twenty-four hours, boiling copper is poured into his mouth). But he'll be reborn again a Buddha, as the "Universal King", the Buddhists tell.

A tale about Yama from Central Asia runs: "In a mountain cave in the 'Snowy Land' lived a saint practicing austerities for fifty years. On the night before he would reach his goal of Siddi (magical powers) two robbers entered the cave, killed a bull and ate it. They then cut the saint's head off his body, and when the blood touched the ground he came to life again and he place the head of the bull on his

shoulders and devoured his murderers. He was now the man-eating demon Yama. The good Bodhisatva Manjusri then changed himself into the terrible Yamantaka and preached to Yama who repented, and now he is "Judge of the Head in Hell".




Yama is represented as green with red garments, sitting on a buffalo (like old Lao-Tze himself when he rode off and vanished into the west. The Green/Red Knight of Jawdia (of the knights of Arthur) who was also beheaded and is similar.)

Priestly memories are long as such bygone theologians cling scrupulously to every single detail of symbolical value, out of some remote past. The Hell of Yama in Chinese memories has a Mrs. Meng present, who gives thirsty passersby free tea. The good benefit; the evil ones forget all their memories, and are "up for reincarnation" on the Wheel of the Law, Karma, again.

This Mang mother has for her glyph (now) a picture of a first born above a vase of sacrificial blood. That classes her as a female Minos or Menes, of the Mediterranean and Indian myths also (Manu). They are also "first men". Her second title, Bo, shows, shows itself to be the mother of the grandmother of the "wrinkled skin of the ocean", ie the waves.

AMIDA OF OMEI

A giant apparition of the Amid Buddha sometimes appears outlined in dazzling light, a shadow cast by the beholder upon the spinning mists of a chasm beneath Omei's heights. It is - or was - supposed that if a pilgrim leaped into that Buddha's arms he or she would reach Amitabha's paradise instantaneously, bypassing future weary incarnations.

Amida in the older form will have been Ka-miar-t'a, the miar in this case looking very like a lady wearing an embroidered crinoline, with her arms stretched out and her breasts on view, as though she were a Cretan lady. (However, it is explained as merely "something demonstrating balance"). When accompanied by a "bow" in the usage  in Amida's name in modern Chinese, "boundlessness, excessiveness" is suggested. The final ta or da of Amida is represented by a rearing cobra  of which much more needs to be told. The Ka of the name is a sort of  "sigh expelled", like our "Oh", but in the uses in Amida's name (plus a radical for heights), the meanings change to "Hill (of) Boundless Steep paths", but it could also signify "Oh, Boundless Bobra (of Eternity)" obviously. In India creation and our very Creator rests upon such a serpent, swallowing its own tail, (when not wit seven heads providing shade to a Vishnu who floats upon it on the sea, with his mate caressing his sacred feet, in some depictions.)

As pilgrims climbed the endless flights of steps to the peaks of Omei, passing shrine upon shrine as they went, (and the old women with bound feet crawled the whole way upward chanting their rosary, crying O-mi-to-fu, many planned never to return down that same way, for they were bound for Amitabha's paradise, to be reached by one swift leap.

Now: consider the older form recalled in China of Amida: Ka-miar-ta. Firstly, you could derive a name like that of Amorka out of it: Miar versus Ka, reversed. And the gigantic shadow of Buddha within the dazzling rainbow, stands as if right at the entrance to this Heaven of Boundless Light, (for he appears haloed in rainbow glory when the sun's angle is right and the viewer stands at the precise spot on the "Eyebrows of Omei". On "My Eyebrows", to be precise, for the deity of the mountain would be aware of the presence of the human about to commit "suicide", or rather self-sacrifice.

So the Ka-Mair-ta apparition at Omei, (that famous sacred mount so special pilgrims came from as far away as Tibet, whose snowy peaks are visible from the peaks of Omei), Amida or Amitabha in modern usages, can be compared even with an Amorka of Babylonia in pre-Christian times, and with Ymir of the Nordics, and so on. Since it goes back to the days of mythical monsters and hermaphrodites, we must include yet another echo, our word "chimaera". Is it related to our "nightmare", for example? The

mare in "nightmare" in Old English maere "goblin", can well be compared with any concept that's merely chimaerical. The Greek form was khimaera, "she-goat", but we view it as a fire-breathing she-monster who's a concept of a lion, goat and serpent. (There's a similar creature of Paraguay, the Teyu Yagua or Yaguaron), which was a composite of jaguar, iguana and dog (yagua for dog). The local feared version here is Comereho, a Quechuan term.

THE TAO-MEI AND ST. THOMAS.

Now we've brought Amida into the picture, he'll remain a topic for a good while yet. In Japan to honour Amida, worshipers used to leap into some river, or they wall themselves into some niche in a wall, while still alive. Why? Well, it is obvious they wish to "become one" with the Eyebrows of this old Deity we're considering. Melr, Ymlr, Amorka, and so on, found the world over in mythologies still, and in some religions are still honoured. Mary? Miriam? Hmmm... Our Indo-European root marl for a young woman, gives us a word such as "marital" - mari-to - "provided with a bride"; and so in Spanish marido means a husband, but they do not have marida for "wife". A man becomes somebody when provided with a marl - young woman, apparently. On his own what was he worth? He lacked half of his own self, and "to become one with his mate" was necessary for his very spiritual sense of being whole.

Mara might be the tempter in Buddhist beliefs, but a lovely young daughter of the Mother of the Eyebrows Mier, (mari), was the focal point of men's dreams always.

A tao-mei bunting, (if crowning a Rolling Head) was "one of a pair". Thomas of the Gospels was "the Twin". (Aramaic t'oma, "a twin"). The T gets dropped in the Aztec echo: the oma- in the prefix of the names of their first pair dwelling in a very ethereal heaven. It also means "one of a pair". The ome- ancestral pairs of heads travelled far. Humahuaca was one such shrine, wherever such a head or pair of heads came finally to rest in the Andes, and uma for a "head" remains an important term in popular vocabulary usages till now. For example, in Santiado del Estero in our south some ways, the natives who still speak Quachuan know about an umita or "little head" with hair, that rolls along to accompany travellers after nightfall, to protect them from evil spirits.

Amida himself in Tibetan belief has a replica of his own head crowning a pyramid of ten heads adorning the otherwise headless body of a certain spiritual son.

The Tao-mei twin heads already considered, (bunting crowned), reappear thus in South American memories in many ways. The "bunting" itself becomes the Quechuan pintuna (ppinttuna as some would spell the staccato consonants) for a bundle, in their ayapintuna for a shrouded dead one. Pintuna for a bundle has many aspects including the concept of long and narrow pants legs, (bundled legs, as it were!) san pantoleon (whole head is honoured at Venice and the world over too, including where we are) give us "pantaloons", which has the usual Chinese and Aztec echoes.

The story gets all too involved, however, when I try to weave too many threads into the tapestry suddenly, and I have to keep rewriting and cutting out details.

Let me introduce now Saint Thomas in the Andes, where he temporarily was honoured by the church. Later, the worship turned out so Tammusian it had to be wiped out, together with the shrines where the natives formerly had honoured his pre-Columbian forms, and his cross (which he'd carried and sometimes buried) and his footprints. He had a twin, not always cooperating.

Originally this "San Tome" (or chume, or Zume, etc.) of the Andes, was a foot of a Creator, his twin having been the other foot. To create, a Creator walked through creation, but to do so he turned his feet into these special forerunners and civilizers, men or supermen that they seem to have been.

The cross turned out to be a phallic symbol, also when buried apparently suggested the seed that must be buried and die to "bear much fruit". Jesus referred to

himself in that way, and it is no wonder the earlier friars from Rome and Spain got so confused.

The beautifully decorated shrines with the treasured footprints sunk in white stones had all to be blown up.

Indulgences had been given Spaniards who prayed before the footprints of St. Thomas, but once the shrines were gone this embarrassing detail was forgotten in a generation or two. Apparently the ceremonies at the Andean muchadero shrines were similar to old Christian agape ceremonies that had to be discontinued due to unbridled passions unleashed by such feasts of love. Mucha- in Quechuan, means "to love, kiss, adore", and that seems to have been part of the Andean ceremonies, also.

We speak of mooching or smooching, a vulgar term for kissing. In the Caribbean there's a slang expression still in use for "love or like", muches. The concept travelled far!

Would you believe me if I said right now: the Twin Feet of the Creator, in the Andes, (one of whom got mistaken briefly for Saint Thomas), has old Chinese equivalents that would link this figure with a proto-John the Baptist also, whose head originally was the foot of a Creator in oracle-bone Chinese forms? We'll go into that next, but first to think of Saint Thomas a bit more. In Paraguay, this native saint "gave the Jesuits" the plant called Paraguayan tea. His name was invoked in colonial ditties in Spain chanted to create more demand for this wonderful tea sold by the Jesuits there. In China, another St. Thomas figure created the tea we all prefer (so loved in Britain), out of his own eyelids which he cut off to stay awake forever. The eyelids fell to the ground and became the tea-plant, supposedly. That proves he was one of the staring Tao-Mei ancestral heads originally.

TIEG VERSUS D'OG

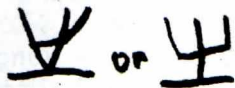
Tieg was the old Chinese name for the foot that becomes a plant also called tieg, and this is the mysterious plant that becomes a forerunner's head, though this forerunner's name then changed to sien for concepts of "going before" (in time or space).

The oracle-bone forms present us with the following sequence:

Foot or Footprint

Plant of Being

Forerunner



and the latter figure is but the foot/plant that goes ahead and grows and advances, now equipped with a body (viewed from the side).



An old bronze presents us with this forerunner glyph in a really vivid way:



Put water alongside him, and he "reforms, cleanses, baptizes". Accompany him with another like himself, and in a different phonetic series, they go forth two by two, from house to house, to exhort, advise and receive monies, (ie the cowrie on which they stand, once representing the Mother's genitals, later cash.)

A head shows the way, (d'og in old Chinese as we saw). But far earlier a footprint or hole dug by a foot had a seed dropped into it which grew into a plant, the divine plant of being and becoming, where the very God of Being might dwell. ("The Dweller in the Bush" as Moses called him.)



Similarly, our word plant goes back to Indo-European times when it was envisioned that a foot left a hole in the earth into which a seed was dropped, and it became a plant. (Our "bush" is a cognate of the verb "to be", supposedly.)

The footprints or foot (in Small Seal form: ) , sprouted and became the "renewed foliage on the world tree, of our prehistory  . The story of those three







branches or crosses symbolizing our world Era have endless world wide echoes as I found.

What precisely was the mysterious plant that grew in the footprint, so long ago? (So our word "plant" is a cognate of a concept still found in Spanish: planta del pie for "sole of the foot")?

What was the mysterious plant that is the head of a Baptist who, when he loses his head, is buried headless by his disciples, and the head is presented to Herodias, Herod and Salome on a platter, (like the Yuletide boar's-head celebrating the year's end in Britain formerly)?

His body could be replaced beneath that "head on a platter" (as it appears), or the plant of Being, by the body of an insect or reptile, to represent a scarab,  or else by a sun for the unworldly sun² that promotes plant growth,  both being old symbols of resurrection. The scarab in its various old Chinese appearances Ak/Tieg/Tan had its Andean matching Trinity, the Akatanga or Tangatanga.

Herod, incidentally, as per John Allegro (THE SACRED MUSHROOM AND THE CROSS) compares with "heron", another old mushroom symbol. In archaic Chinese forms the horned heron reappears, "along the way", with its "loud cries" and its "seeing eyes", and seems a confirmation of much that Allegro could suggest. (Indeed, I checked so many of his clues from the Near East and found them in old Chinese forms also.)

Take the "Stumbling-block that becomes the Head of the Corner". Christians say it refers to Jesus, who is the stumbling-block of the Jews but the head of the corner to Christians. Well, the old Chinese form for this stumbling-block represents the tomb, (the tumulus of the stumbling man or his "slipped foot", once an upside-down idea: , and a phonetic usage does cover a "corner". These details will have to wait their turns for fuller analysis much further along: I'm just blocking in the over-all picture right now. But the point is,  to represent this stumbling block, you take that foot-plant-head:  or ; and instead of turning it into a primitive forerunner/baptizer, you give it mere stubby short legs, and hey presto, it's "the mushroom that stands like a man", read formerly Liuk, or when in  the market-place Mliuk with its kingly look: .

The penetrating and kindly looks of Jesus is emphasized in the Gospels. I'll make a confession here: two years ago I'd reached the point in this study (that's gone on for so many years) where I could avoid the fact no longer that the Bush of Being viewed by Moses was the same Fungus of Immortality of a Lao-tze. I thought I couldn't bear it, and fretted as I grew dangerously ill. (A pancreatic infection). Rushed to a distant hospital in a dying condition, with the heart giving out too, I prayed silently.

"Father, are you taking me away? I don't have to study this mushroom clue, then?" And I was very relieved. Three days and nights I lay apparently dying in the intensive care ward, then it seemed to me my heavenly Father suggested this thought in my head:

"So, you don't trust me after all. What if I did use the mushroom to awake the stodgy minds of peoples long ago, to the Unseen? They were mere lumps of flesh, all too often. How make them think? Face hidden facts?"

That sort of argument ran through my head, and I felt sheepish, till finally I thought: "Yes, I trust you, and I'll go back and continue the study. But I still think it horrible that it had to be mushroom freaks who gave us our religions, very probably."

And it seemed to me this One indicated: "Judge the religions by all means too. Find truth!"

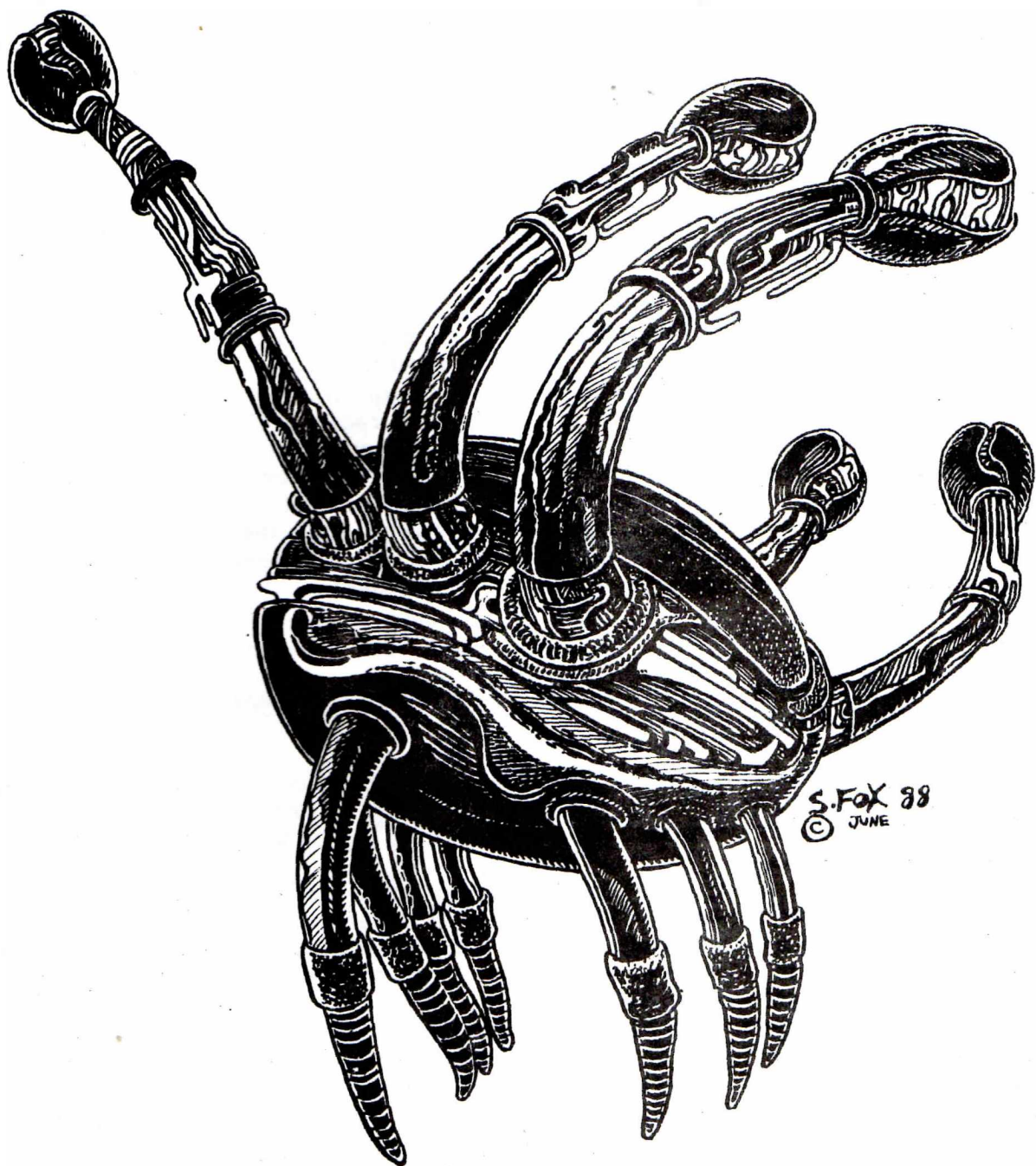
Truth? Only facts do I trust. What other truths can there be, if they contradict facts that are obvious?

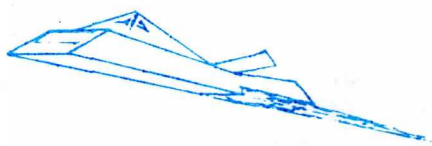
I was immediately well. Antibiotic and other treatments had had their effect, but the doctors were astonished. I'd been so very ill, with so much amylasa (I think it's called) in my blood, it had seemed impossible that I could be cured.

Well, that was two years ago, and I've been almost grimly facing those knotty problems ever since, and coming to conclusions that really bother me still.

In pre-flood times delty is quoted as saying that he'd be shortening human lifespans because his spirit could not wrestle forever with man "in that he is but flesh". Lumps of flesh, refusing to put into use 90 percent of our brains, till now. We hide behind the skirts of our preachers and priests, our shamans and wizards and witches, where ever we are... still! We fear God too much to "explore" him as a basic, indwelling entity in our own hidden centres awaiting our response to his (her?) love.

- Mae Strelkov





REVIEWS

BROTHER BERSERKER by Fred Saberhagen. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1969. 233pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Saberhagen Berserker series was a big hit back in the sixties and the reprints are welcomed by the new fans as a means to get into some good sf. I read most of these in the magazines when they were first printed - of course they were slightly edited there.

BROTHER BERSERKER is a novel made up of three distinct novelletes. They tie together well, as they are all set on the planet Sirgol and the main character is Darron Ogegard, a member of the military operation aimed at saving the remnants of the planets inhabitants from the attacks of the alien machines. The space around Sirgol is unique in that it is possible to go back into Time in the vicinity of the planet. The berserkers send back an assault group to break the present inhabitants life line by killing several important ancestors. It is the militaries job to prevent them. The berserkers have a maximum of three tries before the humans can pinpoint them and destroy the 'keyhole' the berserkers used to go back into the past.

Good adventure sf.

CRYPTOZOIC! by Brian Aldiss. VGSF Classic pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1967. 187pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Another novel from what was the 'Golden Age' for some of the (now middle-aged) fans. Back then I still liked Aldiss's hard sf stories better than his New Wave (and still do, mainly) - novels like **NON STOP**. **CRYPTOZOIC!** was billed back then as being of his New Wave writings, so I never did get around to reading it...

Victor Gollancz is including it in their 'Classic' series, and finding my chance, I read it here. With an extra twenty years sf reading under my belt (an expanded belt..) I found the novel quite enjoyable and thought provoking. Aldiss, unlike several US authors, sticks to one basic premise or idea, and follows it through. I won't reveal it incase there are readers of **THE MENTOR** who haven't read **CRYPTOZOIC!** (also called **AN AGE**).

It is a time travel story - the inhabitants of a future Age escape the degenerating society by using the newly discovered time travelling drugs which enable anyone with a minimum of training to mentally travel back into time. One's body stays in stasis, and a person can spend a year or so journeying back and looking over the territory. Good reading.

WIZARD AT LARGE by Terry Brooks. Orbit pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1988. 291pp. A\$12.95. On sale now.

This is the sequel to **MAGIC KINGDOM FOR SALE/SOLD!** and continues in the vein that novel is written in.

The magic kingdom had been quiet for a change and they all hoped that it would last. Naturally it did not. The court wizard, Questor Thews was to blame. His brand of magic nearly always had a twist to it and when he tried to bring Abernathy back into human form from that of a dog he thought it would be easy. Abernathy suffered a change, of course, but instead of being only back in his own body, he found himself in Twentieth Century earth, not back in the kingdom. What was back in the kingdom was a small bottle, which would prove to be very worrisome for the inhabitants of said kingdom.

Terry Brooks has written five fantasy novels - the Shannara Trilogy and **THE BLACK UNICORN** as well as this novel. As well as being an easy to follow fantasy, the publishers have set it out physically good looking, with sharp type and uncrowded margins. Very smart looking.

THE SKY LORDS by John Brosnan. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 318pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This is the first of John Brosnan's novels I have read. He has come a long way since I published his short fiction in **THE MENTOR**. Bert Chandler gave his earlier novel featuring airships a roasting in his column here, but reading this novel, I can't see first off any major problems John has in that direction.

The world of **THE SKY LORDS** is of a world ravaged by war, mainly biological. The plagues and spores have decimated the world's population and the travel over most of the surface is impossible. The giant airships created by the UN for famine relief are still flying, but in a different aspect - they are ruled by tyrants who hold the lands in their flight paths in their dominion, ruling with an iron fist when any rebellion is sighted. The feminist colony of Minerva is one such. With the fungus destroying their crops they turn in despair to try to bring down the sky giant Lord Pangloth with home made rockets. All seems to go well as hundreds of the explosive laden rockets fly toward their target.

Good sf adventure for those liking a good read.

IN CONQUEST BORN by C. S. Friedman. Legend pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1986. 511pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

A different novel. I found this novel quite engrossing - it is of the type a reader doesn't want to put down. It is space opera in the grand tradition, with 1980s sophistication.

The human galaxy was centred around two power centres - the planet of Braxi and Azea. There were two distinct races that were outstanding - the pale skinned, black haired Braxana (the ruling race of several on Braxi) and the darker skinned, white haired Azea. The Azeans had created a government of many races, including aliens, under a titular Emperor. He was the head, under him were the House of Humans and House of aliens. The Braxana were bred on conquest and had been fighting the Azeans for 10 thousand years. The Braxana were slowly dying out of genetic defects, but before they died out they intended to extend their conquests.

This novel is very good. The use of genetics by the Braxi to create the supreme human is well thought out, as is the use of Psi powers by the genetic scientists of the Azea to enhance humans everywhere.

Recommended.

THE COMMITTED MEN by M. John Harrison. VGSF Classic pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1971. 220pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

VGSF are running a "classic" series with one of their paperback lines, and this is one volume in it. It is set in England in a future year when radiation rises (which aren't explained, but hints

are given that the scientists may have done it for some reason) turn most of the population into hideous wrecks. Government has broken down and virtual anarchy now reigns.

The story follows the career of a doctor, from the early days when the cankers begin to cover the faces of the populace, to when he is late middle-aged, with teeth fallen out and he is only holding on to reality with difficulty. He meets up with a dwarfish man who has been in the militia, and they come across a woman fleeing the events on the coast. They have several adventures as they make their way across the countryside - which is very Ballardish - across the deserted motorways in their giant mesh cages and rusting hulks.

They eventually meet a band of mutants, who have seemingly evolved to meet the increased levels of radiation. They reach the end of the journey in more ways than one. Quite a interesting novel for the period. (I like the cover artwork, with the scorched-look English countryside - especially since throughout most of the novel it is raining).

AS FAR AS HUMAN EYE COULD SEE by Isaac Asimov. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1984/6. 267pp. A\$10.95. On sale now.

Asimov's science articles have been running in F&SF for some 28 years and they are all quite interesting to read. They show what someone with a photographic memory can do; someone with also a scientific bent.

The articles range over many subjects, chemistry and astronomy are but two of them - but two of Asimov's favourites. The full list is as follows: AS FAR AS HUMAN EYE COULD SEE; MADE, NOT FOUND; FAR, FAR BELOW; SALT AND BATTERY; CURRENT AFFAIRS; FORCING THE LINES; ARISE, FAIR SUN!; THE RULE OF NUMEROUS SMALL; POISON IN THE NEGATIVE; TRACING THE TRACES; THE GOBLIN ELEMENT; A LITTLE LEAVEN; THE BIOCHEMICAL KNIFE-BLADE; THE DISCOVERY OF THE VOID; CHEMISTRY OF THE VOID; TIME IS OUT OF JOINT and SUPERSTAR.

Being for a popular sf magazine the articles had to be both easy to understand and interesting; that Asimov has succeeded in both these is shown by the fact that the series is still going, and that they have been collected into a book. Just the think for that nephew or niece who shows a faint interest in science.

THE LEGEND OF HUMA by Richard a. Knaak. Penguin pb dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1988. 379pp. A\$9.99. On sale now.

The DragonLance saga, started by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman, continues in this new series titled H.E.R.O.E.S. The author is Richard Knaak, who has had included some short stories in the collection of DRAGONLANCE TALES. This is his first novel.

THE LEGEND OF HUMA fills out the chronicle of Huma, who was called the Hero of the Lance, and his steed the Silver Dragon. Knaak has delved through old records to put together this tale of the origins of Huma, and he tells of the treachery that grew among the Solamnian Knights and of other things. He tells of Huga's mental battle with the Sword of Tears and how he almost lost his soul to its rage. He met with the figure in the grey gown who helped rid him of the evil sword and at last knew him as Paladine.

There are many fantasy adventures on sale; The sage of the Dragonlance are a series that seems to go on and on, with various people taking up the writing of it, something like the Conan series.

L. RON HUBBARD * THE WRITER: The Legend Begins.** Ron Magazine, published by Bridge Publications Inc, dist in Aust by New Era Pubs. (C) 1989. 72pp. US 4to. US\$10 per issue. On sale now.

This is Issue One of Ron Magazine, and details the life and times of L. Ron Hubbard.

The magazine is on glossy paper and costs about US\$10 per issue, though you can subscribe now and save \$2.50 per issue. There is colour used throughout, and some of the black-and-white photos are colourised. The contents are articles about Hubbard, and stories and articles by him.

The 'magazine' is interesting in the light it shows on the times Hubbard wrote in. The photos of Hubbard scattered through are of various periods of his life, from a child of about 3 through his teens to his thirties.

It is, I suppose, a collector's piece and there are some articles in it which are of interest to sf fans, though I don't know if many fans will subscribe.

COBRA BARGAIN by Timothy Zahn. Arrow pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 404pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

The Moreau family are well known, both for their politics and for their past record in being a part of the military Cobras. Said Cobras are human beings who have been enhanced with ceramic overlays over their bones and augmented servos for their muscles and various physical functions. Jasmine Moreau has for most of her 19 or so years wanted to be a Cobra like her father, but military tradition says Cobras must be men. She has her opportunity, however when a special team is needed to again visit the planet Qasama to ascertain whether the spy satellites mysterious blank spots in their scanning has hidden some attempt by the Qasamans to again get off their planet.

The shuttle carrying the team of Cobras is holed as it attempts to land and crashes, leaving Jasmine in as bad a spot, if not worse, than any that members of her family have ever faced. This is first class sf adventure - if you like SFA, you will find this a good buy. An unashamed sf adventure novel. This appears to be the third in the Cobra series - the others being COBRA and COBRA STRIKE.

THE ANNOTATED HOBBIT by J.R.R. Tolkien. Annotated by Douglas A. Anderson. Unwin Hyman h/c, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1978 (4th Edition). 336pp incl appendix. 22x28.5cm. A\$39.95. On sale now.

There are many paperback versions about of THE HOBBIT, and some of them are quite well bound, for paperbacks. However to have a book one can always keep and have it always available, one needs a hardcover. Allen & Unwin first published the book in 1937 - this edition was published celebrating the 50th year of its publication in the USA. The text is beautifully set out using glare free paper and uses plenty of white space. Anderson has collected illustrations from many of the countries that THE HOBBIT has been published in and the text is illustrated with these, as well as Tolkien's own illustrations.

I won't bother to go into the story of THE HOBBIT itself - I am sure that any reader of this review will have read it, but if you haven't, then this is a good opportunity to go for it. Of course if you haven't read this book written for children, I suggest strongly you to out and buy it. But as I said above, if you have only a paperback edition, which may be getting a bit grubby and dog eared, then you might think of investing a couple of twenties to get this for your permanent library. It is well worth it.

WYVERN by A. A. Attanasio. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 422pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

A. A. Attanasio has written some memorable sf - RADIX and IN OTHER WORLDS and he is building up quite a following of readers. This novel is not sf, but a very good historical novel. If you liked the above novels, you will have found that Attanasio shows his ability with the English language. I'll let the dust-jacket blurb speak for the novel:

It is 1609 when Jaki Gefjon is born in the jungle of Borneo, son of a beautiful native girl and a Dutch trader. An outcast because of his fair skin, Jaki is adopted by a battle-scarred mystic named Jabalwan, who teaches him the arts of survival, from healing to head-shrinking. Kidnapped by pirates, Jaki comes of age on the open sea, among men who live by wits and cruelty. But the pull of gold is not as strong as the quest for knowledge, begun under Jabalwan's magic tutelage. Jaki's restless adventures carry him to the far distant corners of the globe; to the farthest reaches of

human consciousness; to a deeply passionate love; and finally to the shores of the Americas, where the promise of a new life and a new world beckons.

EYE by Frank Herbert. New English Library pb, dist in Aust by Hodder & Stoughton. (C) 1985. 328pp. On sale now.

This collection of 328 pages of Herbert's short fiction shows that he can create short stories as well as novels. I reviewed this back in 1986 when Gollancz brought it out in hardcover. If you didn't get it then, now you have the opportunity, in a (cheaper) paperback edition.

The stories range across a range of subjects, from undersea warfare in **DRAGON IN THE SEA** to communication in **TRY TO REMEMBER**. Herbert's writing style is subtly different in each - the contents are: **FROGS & SCIENTISTS**; **THE ROAD TO DUNE**; **RAT RACE**; **DRAGON IN THE SEA**; **CEASE FIRE**; **A MATTER OF TRACES**; **TRY TO REMEMBER**; **THE TACTFUL SABOTEUR**; **BY THE BOOK**; **SEED STOCK**; **MURDER WILL IN**; **PASSAGE FOR PIANO** and **DEATH OF A CITY**. Many sf readers have read **DUNE** and its followers, but until this volume was collected, most readers had not had the opportunity to read his short fiction other than that which turned up in the prozines. Here they are collected, and they present an excellent opportunity to peruse at your leisure.

DARKSPELL and **DAWNSPELL: THE BRISTLING WOOD** by Katharine Kerr. Grafton pb and Trade pb respectively, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987 & 1989. 476 & 366pp. A\$10.95 & A\$29.95. On sale now.

The third in the 'Spell' series by Katharine Kerr. A fantasy series that is rooted in Celtic mythology. The world is that of Deverry, wherein dwell magicians and elves, kings and prophets and the usual feuds that make life interesting (and dangerous) for the inhabitants.

In the first novel - **DAGGERSPELL** - Katharine sets up the world and the background to the story and introduces the characters and sets them off. The following two volumes build up the plot and deepen the character's appeal. The two here are worthy successors to **DAGGERSPELL** and all three continue in the tradition of Celtic based fantasy that has created a sub-branch of the fantasy genre. Kerr's style of writing is interesting to the reader and sits well with s/he's reading, be it in the train or lying in bed reading for relaxation. If you like adventure fantasy these will probably suit you.

STORM WARDEN by Janny Wurts. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1984. 378pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

Fantasy books run in cycles - **STORM WARDEN** is Book One of the Cycle of Fire, though the novel is complete in itself. The other two to come are **KEEPER OF THE KEYS** and **SHADOWFANE**.

The novel commences with a quotation from an old legend which said that to keep some demons out of the land, two wizards had joined forces. However one of them had bowed out of the agreement and left the remaining wizard to face the consequences. The remaining wizard, Anskiere, had managed to defeat the demons, and then he had laid a geis on the other wizard and his descendants. The story is of the remaining wizard and two children he has helped before being arrested for killing four thousand people with a storm. The two, a boy and his sister, follow him and have many troubles trying to stay alive. They meet up with another travelling youth, Jaric, who joins them. Unfortunately for the trio a demon takes control of the brother and is determined to obtain the necklace that holds power. Well written fantasy.

INFANTA by Louise Cooper. Book three of the Indigo series. Unwin pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. 318pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Book one of the series started with Indigo (or Princess Anghara Kalings-daughter as she was known then) letting seven demons out of a tower that had imprisoned the task of destroying them before she could find rest - she cannot die or age until they are all destroyed.

INFANTA describes how she attempts to destroy the second demon, and her problems along the way. How she and her wolf companion battle the serpent demon though several of her friends: in one scene she is unable to keep someone from being crushed and dismembered by the serpent.

This is an projected series of 8 books - and this is the third, copyrighted 1989 - so there are many unwritten. I have seen several people who find the style of writing suits their reading habits, and I agree that Louise Cooper has an easy style to get along with.

A fantasy series that promises to be a real monument when completed.

FOOTFALL by Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle. Sphere pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. (C) 1985. 300 pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

Niven & Pournelle have had some successful collaborations, including **THE MUTE IN GOD'S EYE** and several other novels that have Hugo nominations. The two writers complement each other so it is nearly impossible to see the different styles.

FOOTFALL is a novel of an alien invasion of earth. When an alien spacecraft is found decelerating from the direction of Saturn, the whole world waits as a delegation is set up in the Soviet space station. The US ambassador is a politician who has been pushing the industrial use of space, however so far his efforts have gotten nowhere - the US was leaving that to the Soviets. When the aliens smashed the space station, killing the inhabitants except for a small group, the nations of the earth reacted.

A copy of this novel was taken out a parcel I was sending to Boris Zavgorodny, after much chasing around and sending in postal forms for missing articles I was later told by Australia Post that the book was banned in the USSR. Since the copy I sent was a galley proof, I find that interesting in that either the parcel was lifted, or there is a fast reader in the Soviet mail system. ***Highly Recommended***.

TERRAPLANE by Jack Womack. Unwin Hyman h/c, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1989. 227pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

The year is around that of **AMBIENT** (reviewed last issue) and the world is as violent as ever. An employer of Dryco, O'Malley and his sidekick, Jake, are given the job of kidnapping Octobriana Osipova and an experimental device and to escape Russia ahead of the Dream Team, one of the Soviet's secret police. The two, with the aid of a Russian turncoat, pick up the woman and the device and are flying out of Russia when they are attacked by two Soviet fighters. To escape they employ the device, which the two assume is a time travel device of sorts - it is not, of course, but one which opens a gate between worlds. The four end up in an alternate earth in the year 1939 at the time of the World Fair. They escape the turncoat, who turns his coat again, and enlisting the aid of Octobriana, they make for the Fair, hoping to get back to their own world.

The world of 1939 is on a different time track - slavery had been abolished in the USA in the early 20th Century, and the trio meet up with two black who had been slaves and who now live dangerously, along with other coloured people, in a USA where they don't even have the vote.

If you like cyberpunk and **AMBIENT**, you'll like **TERRAPLANE**.

MOTHER OF STORMS by Adrian Cole. Unwin trade pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. (C) 1989. 374pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.

Innasmorn was a planet that was seemingly barbaric. The majority of the inhabitants were fishermen and hunters. There were several guild like organisations - one being the Windmasters, a group who seemed able to control the wind and like elements. Indeed the ordinary people said that the elements of the air were gods, and that the Windmasters both acted for and controlled them.

The coming of men and women from the mountains brought a perceived threat to the Windmasters who determined to stir the local people up to make war on those trespassers. The trespassers themselves were human fleeing the warring alien Csendook, who had destroyed the empire men had carved amongst the stars and forced them even from the universe they had evolved

in, out into the universe of Innasmorn, where it appeared sorcery had some little appeal and machines could not live long in.

Fantasy with an sf backdrop.

THE TOYNBEE CONVECTOR by Ray Bradbury. Grafton h/c, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1988. 277pp. A\$29.95. On sale now.

Despite the 1988 copyright date, these stories are from different years and different sources, though this is the first time they have been collected. In fact, this is first time I've read any of them.

The stories are typically Bradbury. They have that 'old fashioned' flavour and are written in a straightforward literary style. They make good reading. The titles are: THE TOYNBEE CONVECTOR; TRAPDOOR; ON THE ORIENT, NORTH; ONE NIGHT IN YOUR LIFE; WEST OF OCTOBER; THE LAST CIRCUS; THE LAURAL AND HARDY LOVE AFFAIR; I SUPPOSE YOU ARE WONDERING WHY WE ARE HERE?; LAFAYETTE, FARWELL; BANSHEE; PROMISES, PROMISES; THE LOVE AFFAIR; ONE FOR HIS LORDSHIP, AND ONE FOR THE ROAD!; AT MIDNIGHT, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE; BLESS ME, FOR I HAVE SINNED; BY THE NUMBERS!; A TOUCH OF PETULANCE; LONG DIVISION; COME, AND BRING CONSTANCE!; JUNIOR; THE TOMBSTONE; THE THING AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS and COLONEL STONESTEEL'S GENUINE HOME-MADE TRULY EGYPTIAN MUMMY.

Some of them are American saccharin, though some are sharp vignettes that stick in the mind. Buy it yourself, or get your library to order it in - though it will be the book that is always out.

LAND OF DREAMS by James P. Blaylock. Grafton pb, dist in Aust by William Collins. (C) 1987. 264pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

James Blaylock is the author of THE ELFIN SHIP and THE DISAPPEARING DWARF, which were reviewed last review supplement. In THE LAND OF DREAMS he tries his hand at the type of fantasy that Ray Bradbury, for one, is well known for. One of the locals is a strange carnival, which is run by what could be dead men.

The title is taken from a book which was found by three children in an attic - an attic haunted by the ghost of the woman whose house it used to be. The Land of Dreams is illustrated by the front cover of the book and the text waffles on about it. The time of the twelve year Solstice is coming around again and strange things are happening - a giant pair of spectacles is found and an enormous shoe is washed up on the beach. At the time of the Solstice time itself is partly in flux and it is possible to journey into the past and future from the Land of Dreams. One side effect is that if you journey into the past you get physically smaller; into the future and you grow.

A well conceived and executed fantasy.

THE WARLORD'S DOMAIN by Peter Morwood. Legend trade pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1989. 279pp. A\$14.95. On sale now.

The fourth volume of the alban fantasy. The previous volumes were THE HORSE LORD, THE DEMON LORD and THE DRAGON LORD, which were reviewed in past issues.

The Lord involved is Aldric Talvalin, who's father had been killed in an earlier volume and who is dogged everywhere he goes by treachery. Not only do his fellow nobles try to do him in, but his king does also. However his most able enemy is Voord, a former Commander of the Imperial Secret Police and whose hand is behind many of Aldric's problems. He has, however, managed to find someone to help in his cause - Kyrin, a woman who is as good with a sword and bow as she is intelligent.

With the two of them trying to get into the city of Drakkesborg to steal the jewel that will help Gemmel, Aldric's adopted father, to make his way back into the lands that used to be his. The two have many adventures along the way; make friend and lose them - mainly to the sword.

Fantasy adventure.

ROSE OF THE PROPHET by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickmen. Bantam pb, dist in Aust by Transworld Publishers. (C) 1989. 375pp. A\$9.95. On sale now.

This is volume II of The Paladin of the Night series and is written with the usual verve and style that Weis and Hickman employed in their Darksword trilogy.

Volume I was reviewed in an earlier issue (THE WILL OF THE WANDERER). This volume is also set in the land introduced in the previous volume - where the war between the Gods disrupted the world of men as well as that of the twenty gods. Although the two warring tribes are were united, before they could taste the result of this they were attacked and captured. With the two leaders - Khardan and Zohra missing - the tribes found that their imprisonment became almost impossible to break.

Meanwhile the two were having adventures of their own, together with the wizard Mathew, who came across a wand that could conjure up imps, among other things. For those past fans of Dragonlance.

OTHER RELEASES THAT HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED:

MISSION EARTH by L. Ron Hubbard. New Era pb, dist in Aust by New Era Publications. (C) 1986. 429pp. On sale now.

ADULTHOOD RITES XENOGENIS: II by Octavia Butler. VGSF pb, dist in Aust by Century Hutchinson. (C) 1988. 277pp. A\$8.95. On sale now.

OTHER CURRENT RELEASES:

TRANSWORLD: THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET by M. Weis & T. Hickman

VGSF: THE COMING OF THE QUANTUM CATS by Fred Pohl
 MAN IN HIS TIME by Brian Aldiss
 PYRAMIDS by Terry Pratchett (h/c)

SEPTEMBER RELEASES:

UNWIN: THE REINDEER PEOPLE by Medan Lindholm

OCTOBER RELEASES:

UNWIN: OTHER VOICES by Colin Greenland
 GOOD READING GUIDE TO S.F. & FANTASY by M.H. Zool

CENTURY HUTCHINSON: THE FINAL PLANET by Andrew Greeley
 THE VANG - THE MILITARY FORM by Christopher Rowley




NEW SCIENCE FICTION GROUP FORMED IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.

A Group of science fiction readers has been meeting at member's homes since the first meeting held on the 14th of April at the Springwood Coffee House. Between ten and fifteen people have been turning up, consisting of even numbers of both sexes, to discuss science fiction.

Meetings are held monthly, on the first Friday of the month, alternating between Springwood and Katoomba, the two groupings of fans in the area. The meetings commence at around 7.30 pm and supper is served before the meeting finishes at around 10.30 pm. Previous topics have been "my favourite sf book" and discussion of Heinlein's works. The July meeting will discuss George Turner's just released in Australia THE SEA AND SUMMER.

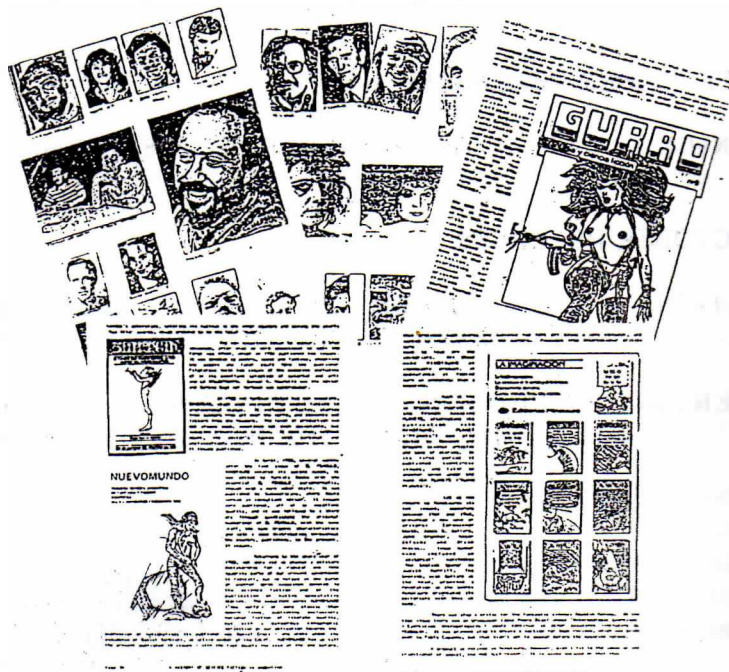
A magazine printing discussion papers given at the meetings is being edited by Alex Ozanne.

Any enquiries should be directed to: Julie Hawkins,
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