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***** Edward C. Connor - 1805 N. Gale - Peoria, Ill. 61604 - USA *****



THE FOUR FUTURES OF STANISLAW LEM

BY

KIRILL K. ANDREEV

"On a giant shard of a meteorite, so black, as though on it had been baked the mirk of an abyss, in which it had circled unending ages, was lying a man, flat on his back. By day this fallen colossus is visible from the most remote points of the city. The debris of a rocket empennage runs through his breast. Just now, in the reflected glows of the distant town, the giant has lost his outline. The folds of his stony space-suit darkened, as fissures of rock. The head alone was human -- huge, heavy, tilted back, touching with its temple the bulging surface of the stone."

Thus Stanislaw Lem has portrayed the memorial to the Unknown Astronaut of future ages -- to the one overthrown, but not to the vanquished, because it is possible to kill a man, possible to blot him out, but one can not conquer him!

Yet at the very same time, this is a type of man of the present day; because, however far Lem might be peering into the future, into whatsoever worlds might his fantasy enter, he always writes about our times and about our very selves.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

By

JOHN W. ANDREWS

1

He lives in a small standard home on the far outskirts of Krakow. He highly values repose, allowing himself to concentrate, and so he doesn't even have a telephone. In a corner is scattered abandoned motion picture apparatus: one time the writer was carried away by photography and cinema, but afterward decided that this takes too much time. And all his time he devotes to work. When he just gets very tired or wants to see the world, he seats himself behind the wheel of his aged "Tatra" and drives out on the highway of Krakow toward Zakopane City, that passes by not very far from his house -- and makes,

depending on his mood, either for downtown or for the mountains.

He absolutely does not resemble his own heroes -- the cosmic Munchausen, John Tichy, nor Professor Tarantocha, nor astronauts discovering new worlds. He is not large in size, with quick motions and merry dark eyes. He often smiles ironically and speaks so impetuously, that you barely have time to follow the thread of his thoughts. But although he follows associations of thought momentarily occurring to him he is, at the very same time, quite thorough, and his phrases so exactly formulated and fine, that it seems

as if he simply is reading aloud some kind of book, and when he stops a bit for taking breath, or when turning toward the next thought, you'd think that he's simply turning the page.

"Do you see science-fiction entirely as a non-oracular literature, as some erroneously think? Forecasts of scientific and technical achievements unavoidably are doomed to defeat. Even Jules Verne seems just now to have become archaic. Just what then is there to say about the present day, when it's impossible to anticipate all likely and qualitatively-new leaps and bounds, which are performed in the life of humanity, thanks to the successes of science! Fantasy, rather, resembles a gigantic and mighty magnifying glass, in which we examine developing tendencies -- social, moral, philosophical -- which we are perceiving in our present day. In the main, speaking about the future, about life on far planets, I am really talking about contemporary problems and our contemporaries themselves, just invested in galactic garments. In our day, in order to occupy oneself in SF, fantasy's not enough, one needs to know ever so much besides!"

Lem beckons with his arms around the room, as if endeavoring to embrace all the books, which, it seems, soon will live out their service in their master's study -- hundreds, thousands of books, in many tongues and about the most out-of-the-way scientific branches; they are herded on shelves, lying on desks, still sealed and formed in bundles on the floor. Cybernetics, astronautics, biochemistry, biophysics, information theory, molecular biology, bionics, genetics, the study of spooks, radio-electronics, semiotics, parapsychology! In this instant it seems that beyond the windows of the little house, there catches fire not the dingy street lamps, but that meteoroids, comets, and exploding far galaxies flash out. Lem slyly and cheerfully smiles, as though a wise sage, exercising himself as a mage or prestidigitator, showing a complex trick, in which all depends on the sleight-of-hand and skill of the conjurer to distract onlookers from that which he does.

"None of these sciences existed when I was a boy. When I wrote the philosophical book Dialogues, concerning cybernetics, there were written only about sixty books. From these, without boasting, I might say I had read through half. Nowadays there are written whole libraries about this science...! For some writers, science fantasy represents a sort of bare corner of thought, an intellectual cross-word, but not one of the spheres of belles-lettres. Just the other interests me -- the people themselves and the problems, stirring men of our day."

"But then why, if you are interested chiefly in the contemporary scene and your contemporaries, do you write about the far future and of other, inhuman worlds?"

Lem smiles ironically: "Let us read through again, or perhaps we should even leaf through my books together!"

2

Stanislaw Lem is one of the most illustrious fantasy-writers of all the world. He has been translated into a great number of languages; films stand to the credit of his productions; and with furious passion and striking phantasy, he goes on writing, issuing book after book -- sometimes at a rate of several a year.

He was born in Lwow in the year 1921, educated here; here he lived through quite terrible years of German occupation. The Fascist terror deprived the Polish intelligentsia of the right to labor in their specialties, and Stanislaw Lem was forced to abandon the polytechnicum and go to work as welder. He says in jest that he likes this profession more than that of author, and he more than once was thinking of returning to industry. This work pushed him into real life, and he met for the first time with the actual people, to be future heroes of his first book -- with young underground workers of the Polish Resistance.

After the war, together with Poles residing in the territory of the Western Ukraine, Lem was repatriated and moved into Krakow, where he could finish his education. At this time he chose medicine and for several years practiced as a doctor.

Most of all did Doctor Hoinowski, having founded a workshop of scientific method in post-war Krakow, exert an influence on Lem. Under his guidance, Lem studied thoroughly the history and methodology of science. This permitted him to look at many scientific problems, so to speak, "from a bird's-eye view." Especially was he carried away by the history of men who accomplished revolutions in science. Through the hands of Hoinowski passed all the foreign books which were being ordered from abroad for the acquisition of Polish scientific libraries. And Lem began to draw material, not out of popular books, but from "first-hand," in works of scientific co-publishers, where you sense the breath of authentic science creation.

Lem began to write early. Already in 1946 his stories and verses started to show up. As first big output, there was the novel Time Saved (1955), devoted to the fates of Polish youth in the tragic years of the Nazi occupation.

In the year 1950 came out the first fantasy novel The Astronauts. This novel is devoted to the interplanetary expedition to Venus in the year 2006. In it Lem gave for the first time full strength to his daring and unchecked fantasy.

"In the year 2003," begins one of the chapters of this book, "was finished a partial tap-line from the Mediterranean into the heart of the Sahara Desert, and for the first time, Gibraltar electric stations were giving current for North African networks. Many years had already passed by since the fall of the capitalist government. There finished a heavy, tense, and great epoch of rightful world-transformation. Want, economic chaos and wars menaced the dwellers of Earth no more with their giant design."

With broad strokes Lem paints a picture of the first steps of the communist society. The irrigation of the Sahara, unmanned automated plants, photo-chemical transformations, in which carbon dioxide and water are changed into sugar, atomic reactors, control by cloud-movement of the weather, even of climate; and, at last, artificial "suns," suspended over the very fields, so as to melt down the ice and destroy permafrost: all this fantastic technology is portrayed with sharp, but fluent strokes; such is necessary to the writer only in order that he show on this background the people of the future and their adventures on the terrible planet of death -- Venus.

The fabulousness of the book lies in its true-to-lifeness, because Lem shows, translating it into reality, that which is planned and will arise right away or is contemplated for the near future in our country and the other countries of socialism.

But, while portraying the bloom of science and technology in the near future, Lem in his novel The Astronauts almost never tells of the development of his own society, of its forms and people's attitudes concerning communism. In this novel he follows in the footsteps of Jules Verne, who, trusting in socialism and dreaming about it, could not depict it in his publications, but only showed a fantastic development of scientific and technical ideas of his own age.

The collections of SF stories, Sesame (1953) and Invasion from Aldebaran (1959), pointed out quite another aspect of Lem. Here it is possible to compare him with H. G. Wells, rather than with Jules Verne. The term "science fantasy," to which we had gotten so accustomed, we do not quite apply to the creation of Wells.

It is indisputable that science in its fantastic elaborations appears as the material of his works, but the plot in all his novels, pieces, and stories is far from resting on a strict scientific base.

Most frequently of all this is sheer invention, a bold supposition, going far beyond the limits of our skills, a device in which the writer makes shift to transfer his heroes into an uncustomary setting -- into the far future, into other planets, or into a world, having altered its usual scale of size.

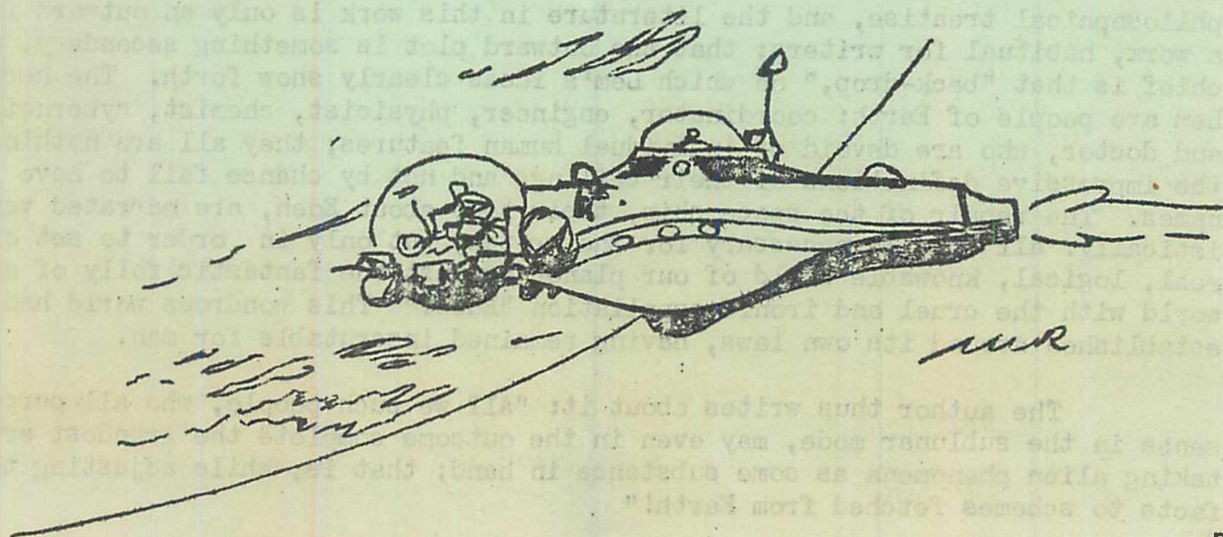
This device is a fully natural result. For any author, struggling to peer into the future, there always elapses an intermediate stage; he makes use for a time, not only of the fully scientific, but also quite unscientific assumptions, such as the Wellsian "time machine," in order to outstrip the thought of contemporaries and catch sight of days to come.

And even so Lem in many of his stories, having started in the collections Sesame and Invasion from Aldebaran. Speaking with the words of the great H. G. Wells, in such fantasies: They do not make it their aim to express the rightly feasible; their aim is to secure no more verisimilitude than that which prevails in a good captivating dream. They fascinate the reader by artifice and illusion, and not by proofs and arguments, and one has only to open a book, so as to awaken understanding of the impossibility of all this...."

In the years 1954 and 1958, two collections of short stories came out, being united by one hero and a single conception -- The Star Diaries of John Tichy. In these books the creative persona of Stanislaw Lem is revealed also to the reader from a singular, new aspect. It is playful-satirical stories in the style of Munchausen or Gulliver's Travels. John Tichy -- "Famous star-traveller, captain of a long-ranging galactic voyage, hunter for meteoroids and comets, untiring explorer, having discovered eighty thousand and three worlds, honorary Doctor of the University of Both the Bears (Constellations), member of the Society for trusteeship over minor planets..."

A bold satire, a harmless joke, a witty and venomous parody are mixed together in this book. When you read Diaries, it involuntarily recalls the wonderful Czech writer Karel Capek and his satire-fantasy, War With the Newts.

From the many books and especially with short stories of Stanislaw Lem, it is evident that he very intently has been reading SF (and fantasy pure-and-simple): the works of contemporary, preferentially American, writers. From them he has learned the dynamics of the development of plot and a bold -- at times even



excessively bold -- flight of fantasy. From them he also borrowed some touch of gloom, which tints his individual productions. There's no doubt that the fixed interest of Western writers in the cosmic theme can not fail to captivate Stanislaw Lem.

But the decisive thing for his creation, without any doubt, was the influence of Soviet science fiction. Its realism, its humanism, its aspiration toward large, generalizing themes couldn't fail to have been close to the hearts of the authors of socialist Poland.

Keen attention to the human being, to the search for a positive hero, for a genuine man of the future -- in all these has Stanislaw Lem been especially close to us.

In the crossing of the influences of Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and Karel Capek, of Western and Soviet fantasy, at the Junction of philosophy, cybernetics, and information theory, of science and art, Lem has found his own, very own unique style. But his creative work does not stand as a mixture of these variously derived elements: all component parts passed into the smelter, from whence has issued refined and sparkling, noble metal, a perfectly new quality.

And out of this fire-shining metal, then, was forged that pen, by which Stanislaw Lem has written four books on what will be.

4

"In the computations somewhere had been committed an error. They did not pass by over the atmosphere, but came into collision with it. The ship plunged itself into the gas with a roar, from which ear-drums almost burst...." So begins a new book of Stanislaw Lem, Eden (1961). The history continues further, as one already familiar to us from many fantasy works: one of the wreck of cosmic craft and its crew, forced to set down on the almost unexplored planet "Eden."

The victims of the cosmic shipwreck refit their rocket, in order to gain the possibility of returning themselves to Earth, and in their free time explore the enigmatic planet. All surface, expected processes of the story are stood on their heads, while still keeping them packed with full logic into the usual scheme of the novel of suspense and SF.

The witty fancy of Lem draws more and more fully amazing pictures, which ever replace one another. And suddenly in just that moment you start to understand: it's no accident that on the title page of Lem's book there lacks the traditional subhead "SF novel"; for this is surely no novel, but a philosophical or socio-philosophical treatise, and the literature in this work is only an outward form of a work, habitual for writers; that the outward plot is something secondary, and the chief is that "back-drop," on which Lem's ideas clearly show forth. The heroes of Lem are people of Earth: coordinator, engineer, physicist, chemist, cyberneticist and doctor, who are devoid of individual human features; they all are nothing but the impressive definitions of their callings and not by chance fail to have first names. The repair of the space ship, their tour about Eden, are narrated very realistically: all this is necessary for the writer, but only in order to set off the real, logical, knowable world of our planet against the fantastic folly of a planet-world with the cruel and ironic appellation "Eden." This wondrous world had been established around its own laws, having remained inscrutable for man.

The author thus writes about it: "All we such people, who all perceive and sense in the sublunar mode, may even in the outcome complete the grandest error, taking alien phenomena as some substance in hand; that is, while adjusting the fixed facts to schemes fetched from Earth!"

The "city" of dwellers on Eden, photographed on film, is absolutely alogical. The earth men call the inhabitants of Eden "doubletons" -- "two-fold ones." They are creatures fantastically queer, having given themselves up to the symbiosis of two organisms: a huge body-carrier, of two meters height, having given themselves, so to speak, a "robot part" of the symbiosis; and a small torso, resembling a child's, with the head and tiny arms -- a "thinking part." The small creature sits within the big body, in some respects like the pouch of a marsupial, and whenever it desires it may draw itself in or thrust itself out.

Incomprehensible and alogical -- from the earthly point of view -- the physiology of these double beings corresponds to the social structure, which to the stranger appears as cruel and ghastly. At every step they encounter piles of bodies that have been half-decomposed, carelessly abandoned in pits and ditches, the corpses of beings subjected to tormenting vivisection, immured in lumps of organic glass, somewhat like a concentration camp for "inferior-race" doubletons with mass round-ups and murders. And owing to all this, instead of contact with rational beings of another world, the people enter into a clash with them.

In the last part of the novel-treatise, Lem passes on into a strange and sombre allegory.

As it is possible to understand, in the society of the double ones, the class struggle has been replaced by symbiosis, similar to the monstrous symbiosis of Morlocks and Eloi in The Time Machine of Wells. According to the plan of biological reconstruction, almost all the population of the planet in the course of many years was subjected to the "series of procedures." This directed evolution had to consist not only in alterations of the current generation, but also of the succeeding ones, thanks to the management of mutations. Nevertheless, the results of execution of the plan had been sad: in the world came to be individuals without eyes or with a different number of eyes, unadapted for life, freaks, nonetheless, and also a large number psychologically under-developed.

It was decided to annihilate this ghastly "production" on a mass scale. Unadapted to progress, the society had undergone an involution: at first an oligarchy had replaced the democratic power, a minority power, after that a personal tyranny took its place, having passed into an anonymous dictatorship. Now the very existence of this highest power was disclaimed, and the affirmation that a power was existing was punished by death.

With this Fascist quasi-society, certainly, there is not possible the co-existence of Earth's humanity. But meddling in the affairs of Eden is also impossible: one must not by force impose a socialist system upon another world, one having gone along a blind alley of development....

The novel Eden is more than a novel. It is a philosophical utopia, being relevant to the category of "black" or "dystopian" work, as it is called, similar to Brave New World by Huxley, the lampoon 1984 of Orwell, or the novel Fahrenheit 451 of Bradbury.

"This is not even a warning-novel; a fantasy may evoke fond pictures of a 'black future'," says Lem himself, "and, properly speaking, many diverse artistic works, modifying this theme, wander about the world. In them is told of cosmic wars, of galactic empires, of predatory and bloodthirsty civilizations. But to caution against such a future would be banal to just such a degree, as to caution a man not to live on poison."

about the sort of future which I would wish for; no, about the sort which it is needful to beware of. I see far more danger in variations of a 'rosy future'."

On this theme, Stanislaw Lem wrote the alarm-novel Return from the Stars (1959) — perhaps also the best, and, in any event, philosophically the most deep of his productions.

Lem's book is a passionate forewarning about that which awaits humanity, if it will go along the way of attainment of satiety, calm, and vulgar well-being. This is just so passionate a call as on the poster in the Stanley Kramer film "On the Beach" (original novel by Nevil Shute), that showed swarms of all humankind in the results of unleashed thermonuclear war, a poster that had been warning: "Brothers, people, it is still not too late, there's still time!"

But the thought which torments Lem is the false replacement of socialist factors of progress by biological ones.

In the novel Return from the Stars, every person in their infant age undergoes so-called "betrizatsiya." This operation appears at first glance as the height of humanity: thanks to the injection of a certain substance, acting on the cerebral cortex of the brain, the person is deprived of the faculty of slaying people or animals — it is all the same.

It is a civilization devoid of risk. Everything that exists, serves people. Nothing possesses meaning except their conveniences and the gratification, not only of the vital, but also of the most dainty wants of each individual. It is a world closed from peril. For threat, strife, violence — there is no place in it. A world of meekness, of soft forms and usages. Work is easy and nice. Food, dress and lodging are given to all easily, although money still exists. And one can be spending all leisure time on entertainment and love....

But betrizatsiya is not only a blessing, but a mutilation. In the sempiternal battle for life, for the future, man did not conquer, did not become tempered in battle, did not grow stronger and better. He merely got vaccinated — that's the whole thing!

Hence, there are the unforeseen consequences: along with fear, the people lost also manhood. Having been deprived of the capability to slay, they forfeited also the capacity to stand for others, to risk their own lives for a grand aim, for their loved ones and companions. There vanished away the striving to go forward, interest in other people, anxiety for them. This is a world of satisfaction, petty bourgeois coziness and small deeds. To no one did it enter his head any more to devote a life to science or to fly toward other stars.

And there ensued a grim social retribution. Humanity degenerated. For so the iron social laws run: if a society does not develop, does not go forward, it inevitably must perish.

This "earthly paradise" is profoundly alien and dreadful to the heroes of the novel — strangers out of our time. In this novel, Lem has painted a clear, highly magnified



picture of a future, one, as it were, woven out of flames, bright-colored fires and mirage. But the brilliant technology in this crepuscular world has not been called upon to determine great objects. The returned heroes do not think of their prospering -- though having grown shallow, quibbling, and self-loving -- descendants as heirs of the hard but heroic past that had been theirs'.

El Bregg, hero of Return from the Stars, according to the personal declaration of Lem, had rebelled against his intentions. He and his comrades on the interstellar flight severely and with prejudice judged their own off-spring, who had gone along a dead-end street.

The heroes of the novel emerge out of our time -- of an epoch of labor, battles and great victories. So they can not aim to suit this domesticated, as though toyshop, world. This is a world decayed, a world of sunset, not only alien to them -- but dreadful. And in secret from all else, they build a new interstellar ship, in order to fly toward the Constellation Sagittarius, toward that nebula which lies in the center of the Galaxy.

6

As though through a giant magnifying glass of time, Lem examines our epoch in the novel Memoirs Found in a Bathtub (1961).

Communism has triumphed for a long time in the world. A country, formerly having been called the United States, now is called Ammer Ku. Much of the past had been forgotten, but in the Rocky Mountains, deep underground, the remote descendants uncover the so-called Fifth Pentagon, over-run, once upon a time, by lava -- a live relic of our days, and becoming for future humanity a distinctive museum of the Past. Wars are done away with long ago, and atomic energy, imprisoned in a "flying sun," transforms night into day, and ice into delicate fleecy clouds. Fat fields promise a quick, luxuriant harvest. Toward the surrounding blue of the sky rises a gorgeous city. And here, in the Pentagon, people continue by inertia to weave the network of habitual intrigue. From the aerodromes rise non-existing bombers; they drop death-carrying bombs, blowing up only on paper; they recruit spies. Only on their cards, in their circulars, and denunciations, exist the coming hellish flames of the bursts of hydrogen bombs, of villages burnt up by napalm, mountains of corpses, camps of the dead. And the world lives, entirely having forgotten about them.

And here into this phantasmal building, having gone way deep in the earth and populated by phantoms, chances a man from without. The monstrous reality of the Fifth Pentagon drives him to suicide. But he leaves behind a diary -- a mournful document, relating of this misshapen, spectral islet of capitalism, one having gone away for ever.

The surrounding world of the future attends only invisibly in this book. This world is shown in the novel Magellan Nebula (1955), in which Stanislaw Lem invests all the riches of his own mind and talent.

7

On our account, ((here in the U.S.S.R.)), there is some writing about tomorrow's world. They also write outside the countries of the socialist world, especially in the Western Hemisphere. In American literature, attempting to glance into the third millennium of our era, there are interesting, talented writers. But the shapes of things to come, which the contemporary writers of the United States have been drawing -- it is only a monstrous, perverted face of present-day America. And this is clear: in order to depict a different society, not similar to the world of capitalism, it is necessary to trust in it passionately and fight for it.

Lem set himself a higher aim by far. The novel Magellan Nebula is not one of adventure in the strict, old sense of this word. This is a modern utopia, a production psychological and philosophical. One can amass a series of such books, such as Men Like Gods and The Shape of Things to Come of H. G. Wells and The Andromeda Galaxy of I. A. Efremov.

Magellan Nebula is devoted to the communistic future of humanity. Portraying people of the 32nd Century, the author, naturally, can not show some human activities -- the development of science and technology, the full subjugation of nature. But in sketching their growth, the author does not lay bare before his readers the main points of the scientific problems that are presented to them; he does not discuss the structure of the wonderful machines of the future. For him all this is merely a majestic, romantic back-drop, on which he sketches with bold strokes the man of tomorrow.

The author does not draw this picture of future society in rosy colors. This is a severe time. Indeed, maintains the author, man never ceases to fight with the inert forces of nature, nor with his own weaknesses. The tasks which a liberated humanity will bring to its attention, will be decided in a great, cruel battle, giving rise to great heroes. Even through a thousand years, there will exist indivisible love, there will survive the bitterness of parting from home, from intimate fellows, from one's native planet, and there will spring up contradictions between the people of weak spirits and the genuine communists. More than that -- new problems of attitude will spring up between the generations of people of ages remote from one another and yet staying on one planet. But the drive of humanity forward has survived perpetually, a striving not only toward conquest of the Galaxy, but also of other universes, and, in the first place, that nearest them -- the Magellanic Nebula.

In the center of the events described in the novel is the flight of the first star expedition of mankind to the Constellation Centaurus in a super-gigantic cosmic ship, symbolically called "Gaea" -- "Earth." It is a small piece of the earth, a cell of future society.

This is a world full of light, movement and life, inspired with the modes of men of the future -- both so far and so near to us. Along its roads, meadows, and forests it is possible to pass barefoot, without having hurt the feet. In it there are already no governments -- the trace of them remains only in the title "Holiday of the Abolition of Borders": they are beginning to wipe out national distinctions between peoples.

The inhabitants of this world are infinitely precious to us because they are similar to us. They indeed work, argue, love, and rest almost as we also do. But a different life encircles them, where there is no want, nor enslavement of man by man, where everyone has his own proper place, his own beloved work, his own friend and loved one.

Just what kind of price is paid for this luxuriant future, full of passion and grandeur? Concerning this, it is discussed very graphically and very strongly in the chapter "Communists" -- in the best chapter of the book.

Just how fine do these people whom Lem sketches look -- in his opinion, fitting heirs of our great age?

In the introduction to his tale of the first interstellar expedition, the hero of the novel writes:

"In our expedition's pursuits of thought, we turned back toward a bygone era, and only there, with a humanity passed away on the path of travail, we found

ourselves; and our era, while separating the abyss of the Past from the wild spaces of the mysterious Future, was acquiring such strength; that we might advance toward meeting victory and desire.... Man has mastered the path to the stars, and no one can withstand him. And the more that obstacles are met in man's way, the more his grandeur becomes apparent. Even the stars age and go out, but we shall survive for the ages. The years, they shall pass; the era of swift progress of our civilization passes by; before humanity new difficulties will arise. And at that time, men shall glance back and discover us, as we have discovered the grand age of the Past....!"

An excerpt out of a book from our "age of the ancient book" (an imaginary tome quoted by the woman Soledad in Lem's novel), tells about some man, who had become "as one of us," even as they are.

"They asked him:

'How was living for you?'

'Good,' he replied, 'I worked a lot.'

'Did you have enemies?'

'They didn't hinder my working.'

'And friends?'

'They did not insist that I work.'

'Is it true, that you suffered much?'

'Yes,' he said, 'it is true.'

'What did you do then?'

'Worked still harder: this will help!'"

In this indissolubility of times and epochs lies the novel's basic philosophical idea.

8

Stanislaw Lem has peered four times into the future, so that there is conceived in living images, what awaits humanity. The road into the future is hard and dangerous; it forks many times, departs on each side, and leads, it would seem, into a blind alley. And only in the cruel struggle may humanity come forth onto the true path toward communism, which will not have been a recess after difficulties and battle, but the grand beginning of the real and unending history of the human race!



But Lem has not only reflected on the future and jotted down on paper the dim portrayal of the shape of Things to Come. He investigated not only the inner-solar free space, but also the whole Galaxy, in order to find different, inhuman forms of life. For life -- this is the highest flowering of matter, and in its resulting development it must, without fail, create humanoids -- man-shaped beings, with reason, like to us.

To the problems of alien forms of life, Lem has devoted two books -- Solaris (1961) and The Invincible (1964).

The peculiar, but unusually talented novel Solaris Lem himself considers the peak of his creative work.

"I should wish to write something like Solaris," says Lem, "but such luck takes place only once in a lifetime!"

"Well, and how, anyway, is it with forecasts of the future? May we right now catch sight of the shape of Things to Come, vague though it may be?" With such questions, the journalists often apply to Lem.

"Foresight, this is a very hard thing. For we have the ability only to extrapolate that which already we know, but we can't foresee some qualitative leaps, which science constantly is making. Not long ago, I was reading a report about a new radio receiving-device, in form a monolithic crystal. From the very structure of this crystal, it is clear that one might imitate a brain with success, similar to the human, yet in a way different than animal nature does this. Right now one such receiver costs a million dollars. But what will happen later? Personally, the present evolution of biology astonishes me most of all. We are right now enthused with technology, but it seems to me, that after the era of technology, the biotechnical era will ensue. What is a cow for, when a machine can produce milk? Probably, in the beginning this milk will not be very lucky, but little-by-little people will learn to manufacture it all the better in quality, than that, which we receive right now from cows.

"And the question of man himself? The problems of disease and longevity? The present medicine still brings to mind an electrician who repairs a receiving-device, starting to shake it. Only at times, and very rarely, are such shakings helpful....

"Personally, the future not only interests me, but will even trouble me...."

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"It is known that biologically man has not changed for the last thirty to thirty-five thousand years, and he has no basis for expecting a new leap in his biological development: the tempi of technical and social evolution considerably out-strip nature. Man has still for a long time remained childish, unsteady, and often inconsistent. To an analytical machine with perfect logic, which we somewhen will construct, probably, some human deeds will show themselves as ludicrous (if it will know how to laugh!).

"What are marathon contests for, when on the treadmill one can much more quickly attain one's goal? For what are deprivations and torments on the ascent of Mt. Chomolungma, when it is easier to ascend there on a helicopter? Why at all are there flights into the Cosmos, demanding enormous expenditures? But, for just exactly all this, we are loved, just because -- we're human!

"To confine the history of the future to the terms of information theory,

it is a strategic game in which the concept of 'adversary' itself undergoes a gradual alteration, that in its own turn arouses an alteration to the strategy employed by the human. Therefore, it is so hard to predict the future, even the not very remote one. The very prospect of a hundred thousand or a million years, probably, resembles most of all the visions of a primordial amoeba about its own generation's future in the Twentieth Century."

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Translator's Note:

This essay, "The Four Futures of Stanislaw Lem," has been translated by me from the Russian original. There were two versions of this essay; the main one was the introduction to the Moscow, 1966 edition of Lem's Magellanovo oblako (Magellan Nebula). The author, Kirill K. Andreev (since deceased), was the editor, though not the translator into Russian, of this early Lem work.

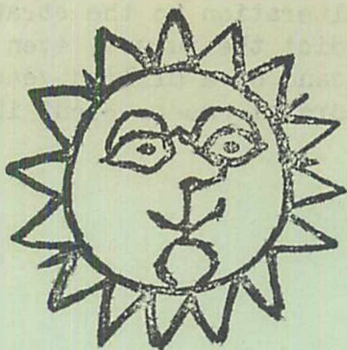
I have combined the two essays in such a way as to make a longer one: essentially the only things left out are a section praising Lem's anticipation of technical developments of the late Sixties, and another part, with a long quotation from Magellan Nebula, worked into a conventional "party-line" criticism, by K.K.Andreev.

I have gone through the list of Lem titles cited and forced them to agree with the ones in the Afterward to Lem's only English novel -- Solaris. Naturally, these English titles are not necessarily "equivalent" to the Polish or Russian ones. The other proper names, I have attempted to recover from their Russian version. With the exception of "Prof. Hoinowski," I'm probably successful. I tried to use the strict Polish spelling, where I was sure, to atone for the usual errors made in obscure Polish names in the West. Mt. Chomolungma (Gaurisanker) is really Mt.Everest.

Note that the United States has no copyright agreement with Russia, hence material published there is public. Of course, the actual fiction of Lem himself, in Polish and translations, is protected by the special U.S.-Poland concord.... The moral issue should be trivial, since this and many other things would not reach U. S. commercially.

-----John W. Andrews.

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RICHARD MATHESON

AN

UNFINISHED

INTERVIEW

BY

PAUL

WALKER

(Early in November, 1971, I requested an interview with Richard Matheson which he consented to but was unable to complete because of his heavy writing schedule. What follows is the contents of his two letters. I have reversed the order of the paragraphs in his first answer for what I hope are obvious reasons. Otherwise, the words themselves are as he wrote them.)

Matheson: If you want to send me a set of questions I'll do the best I can with them. I might add, however, that if there is one thing I'm not an expert on it's science-fiction since I have always regarded myself as a fantasy writer who managed to sneak in at the back door of science-fiction — as do most fantasy writers including the daddy of them all at present — Ray Bradbury.

Question 1: That's a curious thing to say. A pillar of your reputation in sf rests on your scientific justifications for vampirism and other supernatural phenomena. I think of "A Stir of Echoes," "I Am Legend" and your most recent "Hell House" as science fiction rather than fantasy. What do you regard as science fiction? What as fantasy? And what do you mean by "sneak(ed) in the back door?"

Matheson: I say "sneaked in" because when I wrote "Born of Man and Woman," I thought it was a fantasy story. To me it was a case of: What would happen if two normal parents had a monstrosity for a child and kept it? The word mutation was not even in my vocabulary then. When the story was printed as science-fiction and called science-fiction and, even now, resides in a book of the "Best Science-Fiction Stories Ever Written" I just shut my mouth and pretended I knew what science-fiction was. I had never read it in my life, had only read fantasy. I immediately began to read science-fiction omnivorously. And almost immediately began writing marvelous "new" science-fiction stories about subjects that had been written about for years. Such as the man and the woman who end up as Adam and Eve. Wow.

The only thing I've ever written which I regard as possibly science-fiction in the purest "science" sense is "I Am Legend." For that I did a good deal of research and feel that it stands up pretty well under scrutiny. If one extends the word "science" into the social sciences, then perhaps a story like "The Test" might qualify. And allowing for out and out speculation, a story like "The Last Day" maybe. But most of it is fantasy as far as I am concerned. There is an outside chance that some of "Hell House" is science-oriented, but I doubt if we will know for awhile since investigation of psychic phenomena seems to be decreasing

steadily. It was much more popular a subject for scientists back in the 1890's than it is now.

"The Shrinking Man" is strictly fantasy, I think. The rationale for his shrinking is mostly gobbledegook. I take that back. All gobbledegook. I would rather be thought of as a fantasy writer anyway because I like fantasy better. The difference between the two which has been stated before, I believe, is that science-fiction is an extrapolation on something already established, something already accepted. Fantasy need not adhere to such rules of probability. That's why I like it. It's more fun.

I think Arthur C. Clarke is the best science-fiction writer because he also writes beautifully and has a poetic soul inside that very science-filled mind. Or outside of that mind since I doubt that the soul resides inside the mind. Asimov is a science-fiction writer. He seems to be an everything-there-is writer for that matter. Incredible output.

Question 2: You were a friend and collaborator of Charles Beaumont. What was he like?

Matheson: Yes, I knew Charles Beaumont very well. He was my closest friend until his untimely death some years back at the age of 37. I first met Chuck in 1951 and, after my marriage, my wife and I and Chuck's wife and he became our closest friends. At the time I met him, he had not yet sold a story except for one when he was sixteen. Soon after, he started and his prodigious output soon put him ahead of me. Our careers ran parallel for a long time. We both had short story collections published about the same time. We both published "mainstream" novels at approximately the same time. We both joined the same agency and started writing for television at the same time. We wrote in collaboration at the beginning and it was much fun because we could come up with ideas so fast that it was all a lark to us. Then we began writing separately and were the first two writers to work for Rod Serling. Chuck wrote more Twilight Zones than me but, altogether, I would estimate we did about thirty-five of them.

As a person, Chuck was absolutely delightful. His sense of humor was incredible. We had marvelous times together. When we each became parents -- his son Christopher was born first -- we did things together with our families. It is impossible to list anecdotes because there are almost twenty years of them. He was a fantastically talented man and a marvelous companion. I still miss him very much.

Question 3: What is your opinion of Rod Serling as a science-fiction writer?

Matheson: I don't think Serling was one any more than I think Bradbury is one. Rod is a very nice man and working on Twilight Zone was always very pleasant for both Chuck Beaumont and I. Again, Twilight Zone was a fantasy series, I think. There was very little science-fiction on it. A space ship in view doesn't make a story science-fiction.

Question 4: You have probably had more luck with your work on the screen (TV and movies) than any other sf writer. How come?

Matheson: To say that I have had more luck on the screen with my work than any other science-fiction writer is only to say that science-fiction writers have generally had no luck at all. Crichton had good luck with "The Andromeda Strain." Clarke had good luck with "2001." D.F.Jones had good luck with "Colossus: The Forbin Project." And there is a handful of others. By and large, I have never been happy with the way my scripts have been done. I am admittedly very fussy but I think also objective. There were a few

Twilight Zones I was happy with. No movies really. Amusingly enough, I was happiest with almost all the programs made from my scripts in the old Warner Bros. western series, "Lawman," because the producer saw to it that they were done carefully and because he had good directors. My last was done by Richard Sarafian who is one of the most successful motion picture directors now. The Poe pictures had moments here and there but always lacked something. I was happiest when the Grand Old Timers were in them, as in "The Raven" and "The Comedy of Terrors."

My happiest moment to date is the filming of my Playboy story "Duel" which, of course, is not science-fiction or fantasy. A really outstanding job by everyone concerned.

I am hoping -- with the producer of Colossus, Stanley Chase -- to produce "Hell House" on my own. We are at this moment shopping for a director and -- while not more important certainly more difficult in light of the present market -- the money to film it. Wish us luck. When we finally do make it and I feel confident that we will, it should be the definitive haunted house picture.

End of Paul Walker's Interview of Richard Matheson.

Paul Walker now reviews: HELL HOUSE by RICHARD MATHESON (Viking, 279pp. - \$6.50).

One way to differentiate the works of the best science-fiction and fantasy writers from the "better" ones is to realize that the works of the best writers do not simply add to the field -- they re-invent it. To read Cordwainer Smith, Bradbury, or Lafferty is not to re-read re-statements of established themes, but to re-discover science-fiction and fantasy itself. The best of the "better" writers, while they do not challenge the limits of the form, do bring something of their own special imaginations to it, and on the strength of their integrity, enrich and enliven the genre. Simak, Ellison, and James White are examples. And so is Richard Matheson, who occupies the legitimate fringes of respectability, his novels flawed and sloppy, but charged with a fierce compassion and an electric realism that make them unforgettable.

It has been years since I read "I Am Legend," "The Shrinking Man," or those marvelous stories in "Third From the Sun" and "The Shores of Space." I am amazed to learn that there are many fans who have not read them at all, and I feel sorry for them. Good, bad, or awful, a Matheson yarn sticks in the mind.

"Hell House" is Matheson's latest novel, geared for Hollywood, I imagine, and coming in the wake of "Rosemary's Baby." It is a haunted house story, complete with ghosts and terrors, skeptical scientists and gullible mediums. So far I have seen one negative review and one rave for it, but I confess bluntly that my opinion was formed before I even opened it -- TERRIFIC.

Fortunately, it was even better than that.

In "Hell House," Richard Matheson has not written another short-story-cum-novel, but a solid, expertly developed, fully mature novel. It is the story of a group of four people who are offered \$100,000 apiece to spend one week in the most notorious haunted house in the western world, the former home of a man who made perversion, torture, and murder an everyday hobby, a man named Emeric Belasco. The group includes the skeptical scientist, Barrett, the scholar, impotent in bed but lusty in defense of his theory of what ghosts are; a theory he hopes to prove in Hell House. His wife, Edith, quiet and sex-starved. Florence Tanner, former movie star, now a spiritualist, with religious designs on Hell House. And Benjamin Fischer, a one-time prodigy among mediums who was almost killed by the house and

who has returned now to get revenge upon it.

In the course of the swiftly-moving plot Matheson covers most every aspect of supernatural fiction — there are talks with the dead, poltergeists, wandering spirits, and monsters; there are creaking doors in the night, whispering on the stairs; and a corpse chained to the wall in the cellar. There is "something" in the steambath; "something" in the bog; "something" in every nook-and-cranny of that infernal house and Matheson produces them all. But the true horrors are not supernatural ones — they are human.

"Hell House" is the story of the disintegration of four people when cruelly confronted by their own secret selves. No walking spirit or flying furniture can match the terror Matheson evokes at depicting Edith's surrender to her lust, or Florence's seduction by a desperately lonely horror. The sex is graphic and essential, but as explicit as some scenes are, I doubt if the most prudish will be offended. Matheson has created four very real and involving characters, and a fifth, not quite real, but also involving character. My favorite is Florence, who seems almost an impossible person to portray convincingly, for aside from being deeply religious, she believes in ghosts. Her purpose in Hell House is to save its soul, yet her convictions are not a bit artificial or cloying, and her compassion, her gutsiness, is winning. If I had to chose a hero for the book, it would be her.

My second choice is Fischer, the former boy wonder, who finds he has lost more than his talent for spiritualism. Fischer becomes the hero of the book too late in my opinion, and his victory seems anti-climactic after all that has preceded it, but Matheson has drawn Fischer in his inadequacy with such poignancy that he is a most effective character.

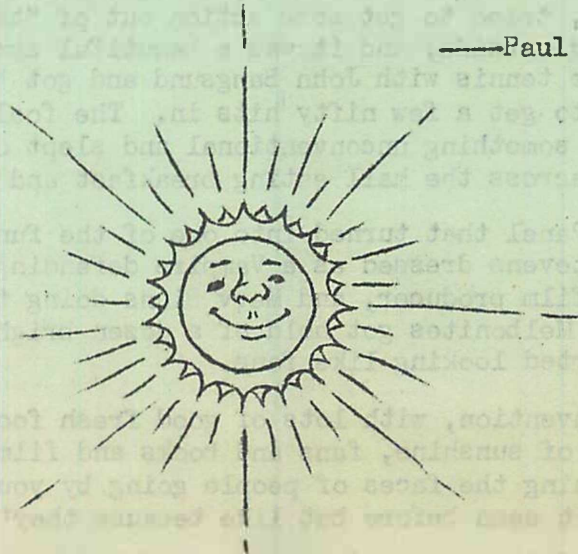
Barrett's wife, Edith, is a better-detailed character, and her troubles have the same poignancy as Fischer's, but her primary purpose in the book seems to be to suffer endlessly; not that her suffering is without a point, but I feel it would have been more justified if she had had a little more to do in unraveling the mystery of the house.

Barrett's fate, on the other hand, came as a shock, for he is the first on the scene, and the predominant character in the first third of the book, so I assumed Matheson would make him the hero. It was just as well he didn't.

The novel utilizes the four viewpoints most skillfully, and the book reads quickly. There is sufficient background on psychic phenomena for the uninformed, and the "explanation" of the house, as for the vampires in "I Am Legend," is science-fictional, although less interesting.

I had a ball with it! I enjoyed every word, and I envy those who have yet to read it. \$6.50 may be a bit steep for you, but if not, then buy it now. Matheson probably needs the money.

—Paul Walker.





ADVENTION 1

BY SHAYNE MCCORMACK



Australia had its first live-in Convention at New Year, 1972, and it was quite a ball. It was held in Adelaide, capital of South Australia for those who don't know the lay of the land, and was also Adelaide's first SF Con.

Since I joined Fandom in 1969 I haven't missed a Con I could get to, and each one is special in memory. I dunno what US Cons are like, I always imagine loads of famous people and lashings of filthy pros standing around being admired by adoring fans. Maybe my view is wrong, but never having attended any Con outside Australia, it is a restricted one. The only pros in Australia are personally known by most of Fandom, which makes for lots of interesting conversations.

The only external Con reports I read are those of World Cons, so I thought I'd write a report on a rather unusual convention so you would know what our Cons are like.

I hadn't intended to go to Adelaide, I live in Sydney, which is about 900 miles from Adelaide. But, as the time drew near, the thought of there being a convention and me not being there was too painful, so I saved my cash, made my bookings, and asked Ron Clarke (editor of "The Mentor" and co-editor with myself of "Wombat") if I could come with him in his car. He agreed, and we went.

Well, it is a long way, but it's the only way to see the country, and I am glad I went, because I hadn't been to Adelaide before and it's a really lovely place. The Con was being held in Melville House, an old sandstone building set in the middle of the Belair National Park. When we eventually found it, it was a bit of a shock. But first impressions are often wrong, and it was a great place.

About 50 people attended the Convention, and most of these stayed at the house. Besides Ron and myself, Gary Mason and his wife were in Adelaide visiting his wife's parents, and numerous other inter-state fans came along. Kevin Dillon, Robert Bowden, and about 4 other Sydney people arrived during the first day. John Bangsund drove up from Melbourne, as well as Robin Johnson, Bill Wright, Merv Binns, Paul Stevens, Lee Harding and many others. It was more a case of Sydney and Melbourne invading Adelaide than anything.

The Con had a lot of high points, and it would take too long to give a full report. There wasn't much of a programme, I remember listening in on a very relaxed panel on Heinlein (relaxed - half the audience was asleep on the grass - the discussion was being held in the shade outside the house), an auction run by Lee Harding who, rather unsuccessfully, tried to get some action out of "that bunch of peasants." Since it was also held outside, and it was a beautiful sunny day, he had no hope. I played a game of table tennis with John Bangsund and got beat (of course) but it was fun and I did manage to get a few nifty hits in. The fools went on midnight hikes into the Park - I did something unconventional and slept or tried to. Then they were up at 7:00 a.m. across the hall eating breakfast and talking.

There was the Horror Panel that turned into one of the funniest scenes I have ever witnessed with Paul Stevens dressed as a Vampire defending horror films, Lee Harding speaking as a horror film producer, and Merv Binns doing the mad professor like a natural. Somehow the Melbonites got hold of a dozen brightly coloured plastic beanies, and fans started looking like fans.

It was a marvelous convention, with lots of good fresh food and drink, fresh air and a good percentage of sunshine, fans and books and films and time to talk and sit and relax, while watching the faces of people going by you haven't seen for a year or so, or maybe haven't seen before but like because they're fans like you.

It was the first Con of its kind and I doubt there will be another like it. Pity.

THE S-F BOOKSHELF

BY BILL WOLFENBARGER



For a change of pace, let's lay aside story reviewing this round and rapp a little about cover illustrations. Something on my mind of late is the poor quality of the GALAXY/IF illustrator Jack Gaughan. His most current magazine effort is the cover for the February 1972 IF. In the foreground is a two-legged creature portrayed as a man, arms upthrust— behind him is what appears to be a sun with hot engulfing arms, and above this sun we see some sort of spaceship. But it doesn't really motivate excitement----for me. And if it ain't got excitement then it just ain't got it. Anyway, it "illustrates" a portion from the first installment of Colin Kapp's Patterns of Chaos; which is promising. But the artwork promises nothing, and leaves everything to be desired.

Occasionally, Gaughan comes up with something interesting: the illo for Douglas R. Mason's The Castoffs. This is when we can visually feel he is an artist with tender feeling. But he does so many illos for IF/GALAXY that it's a wonder the deadline rushes haven't driven him insane. I feel Gaughan has sold out to the commercial world around him.

Perhaps arresting is the word for Steve Harper's illo on page 63 of the March AMAZING, illustrating Only the Stars Are Real by Alan W. Stewart. This young artist is a man with Power in his fingers. Harper's illo for The Horror South of Red Hook by ~~Richard A. Lafferty~~..er, Ova Hamlet, in the February FANTASTIC may appear crude, and in certain ways it is . . . and yet, I sense a subtle power to it.

One of my favorite current artists is Jeff Jones. His illo for the short story After the Last Mass by Roger Ebert in the aforementioned February FANTASTIC is quite striking. But I feel Jones has done some of his very best work for the Ace Books edition of the Fafrard-Mouser sagas. I'm sure Fritz Leiber would be the first to agree. You know, we don't have really top ranking, high flying weird fantasy artists right now, but at least we have a Jeff Jones.

Davis Meltzer has done some outstanding artwork, notably the cover for the Terry Carr Ace anthology paperback series UNIVERSE (1). Another paperback artist I've gotten into lately is Dean Ellis; (see the cover for UNIVERSE 2.) The interior illos for the UNIVERSE series, Alicia Austin the sole contributor, make me feel proud she came from Fandom. She's fantastically gifted.

Note of Interest: Care to conduct a poll to discover which professional artist currently at work is deemed "most popular" by you Dear Star-Begotten readers? Let's also discover the most popular writer by MOEBIUS TRIP readers. For artist, my vote goes to Jeff Jones...and then again there's Lee Brown Coye...or is he producing anything currently? My vote for favorite current wordcrafter is Fritz Leiber...Ray Bradbury, R.A.Lafferty...Harlan Ellison, Richard Matheson...; uh, this category is hard (if not downright impossible) for me to answer! Have you been having the same problem?

ps: Special treat in store next round.

Stay loved.

---Bill Wolfenbarger
Bloomington, Illinois
February 1972

TRIPPING ON NATURAL GAS

OR

CONFESSIONS

OF A

SLINGSHOT VENDOR

AT THE

BY MIKE GLYER

ORACLE OF DELPHI



As I sit here calmly rocking in my chair on the porch of the Home for Unreconstructed Sercon Writers, watching the view, listening to groundcars flitter quietly by, noting the glimmering, meteoric trajectory of space shuttles as they catch sunlight from a star set below the horizon, I look back...and smile. Yes, my doddering memory mutters, I remember that Hank Davis article in MT 11. One of the few things clear in my memory it shines.

I remember the way he indignantly stated: "The job of sf is not to predict the future; but it should try, anyway. It often succeeds in the predicting which is not its job; when it too obviously does not succeed, we should not noise that news around outside the family..."

And it was about then that I thought "It's a good thing I carry life insurance. I think I may need it." I had not realized that when you were lynched by a mob you'd still be around afterwards to rebutt. In MT 11 a great many people said that it was obvious that SF's job was not predicting, and where'd I get a fool notion like that anyhow? Well, maybe I took the proposition ass-backwards, but since nobody has done it for me, I will ask the inevitable question: "What is the purpose, if any, of science fiction?"

Purpose in a discussion like this can become a troublesome word. It's like in Vonnegut's books where the Tralfamadorian humans find they have no higher purpose and end up superceded by their robots. Purpose connotates that something is being done towards some noble ends (or perhaps ignoble ends). A better phrasing of the question results from: "For what reason is SF written; what is characteristic of SF?"

Some writers will inform you frankly that SF is written to be sold for a profit. That we were always aware of, but you would be amazed at how many people will settle for that. Even if you weren't amazed, you would know that (postulating a continuous forward impetus for SF) the purposes and potentials for SF have been

infinitely espoused by people inside and outside fandom. Of the many, a few are:

- (1) SF, by postulating possible situations and environments prepares one for future events.
- (2) SF, by including science in its stories, acts as a sugar-coating for a mini-education in things from astronomy to zoology.
- (3) SF is simply for entertainment.
- (4) SF's purpose is the same as mainstream literature's -- whatever mainstream's purpose is.

However, it is a childishly simple game to find stories to support each thesis: This story is SF; this story (for example) is straight science with a fictional veneer; Therefore... Nothing is gained by attacking the problem this way. That path meanders into the desert of SF Definitions and many a better man than I am has failed in that arena. But since many have said SF is not a predictive genre, let us examine several works and comments drawn from the field.

Look what so many SF stories involve: a postulate imposed on the world. To wit: what would happen in a future version of this world if a specified new premise were introduced, if event X occurred, if invention Y was used. To write such a story, one need not necessarily extrapolate conditions and trends in modern society, but the majority of SF writers do because to create a believable not-too-distant-future-world one has to include the relatively unchanging modes of human behavior in characterization, and figure out what parameters of this time will survive to the next (and in what form). That is prediction. Or scientific prophecy. At any rate, Jerry Lapidus, it is not the exercise of a psychic power (my words weren't supposed to be saying that). It is the result of commingled imagination and logic.

Now, while the audience is out getting a fresh rope to make sure the job is done right this time, Ray Bradbury can have his say. He concurs that the future is being fabricated (dare we say predicted?), but not for the sole purpose of prediction: "...science fiction probes into our pretend future. Science fiction concerns things that might happen which already lie in seedbeds before us." (I suppose he might lean toward reason "1" above as SF's purpose.)

Some writers have been more forward in their speculation about the future: Heinlein wrote an entire book-full of stories included in a "Future History" series, later packaged as The Past Through Tomorrow. He constructed a time chart, and had certain interconnections to bind the stories (cross-references and such). I ask you, Hank Davis, I am supposed to look at this and in the name of "family harmony" say it is something other than an educated guess at the future -- a prediction?

Then about EE Smith and his Arisian/Eddorian conflict, or Vonnegut and his Tralfamadorians. The two writers suggested alternate origins of civilized humanity and thereby the direct cause of any possible future: inverse prediction? And what of the myriad alternate worlds stories, two examples of which are Laumer's Worlds of the Imperium and Garrett's stories involving Lord Darcy. In this essay the word "predict" will be stretched out of recognizable shape, but by changing key historical events and then developing alternate earths to suit, aren't these men predicting the results of those changes? Obviously.

Predict, though, connotes something which can be checked up on later (i.e., weather predictions). Whether or not prediction is the ultimate responsibility of SF, and I don't think that it's SF's exclusive *raison d'etre* (as I shall develop later), a large amount of SF operates inside future versions of the world predicted through the extrapolation of conditions of that time. John Brunner stated in SFR that he used newspaper clippings as ways of detecting new trends to include in Stand on Zanzibar, and he excerpted them in The Jagged Orbit. Spinrad's Bug Jack Barron virtually predicted to exclusion of all else that the Flower Children of the mid-60s would dominate future America (which is probably why it is now so obsolete

and unreadable). Andromeda Strain endeavors to predict the success today's techniques would have against an extraterrestrial micro-organism. I Will Fear No Evil is another extrapolatory piece, and in their time the following titles represent many more books or stories that were set in deliberately-designed future societies based on today's: "Marching Morons," Not This August, Age of the Pussyfoot, A Clockwork Orange, The Demolished Man, Time Out of Joint, The Door Into Summer, Way Station, The Year 2000, Three For Tomorrow, The Moon is a Harsh Mistress, Logan's Run, "Time as a Helix of Semiprecious Stones."

Prediction may not be the "purpose" of SF, but many of the genre's best works have been the result of it (as have some of its most remarkable flops). And when we read SF more than a few years old, any predictions there embodied are instantly checked by the reader. The checking is not something that can be censored out of the mind's operation, either. When reading stories involving Martians those of us who haven't been in seclusion for the last five years are aware that those proposed characters could not actually exist. On the other hand, when we read Methuselah's Children, some of the "newspaper headlines" of the 1960s that Heinlein included almost seem to fit! Successful too was RAH's prediction of an automatic-heating water bed in Beyond This Horizon. Readers look at those things and smile at the unexpected success this predictor has had. As a side note, though, I think what has a few readers keyed up are the technological predictions in some Analog stories that come to pass in a few years; the catch happens to be that the writers themselves knew the people who had that bit of technological ingenuity on the drawing boards -- take that for what similar free advice is worth.

In any event, what is the purpose of science fiction if it is not the prediction on which so much SF relies? The answer to that lies in the purpose to which the predicted event/society/etc. was put. You see, I think in this argument we have overlooked that prediction is the symptom of and not the substantial part of SF's purpose. The predicted societies are used as dodges to express various views of reality. And that as much as anything is the purpose of science fiction. Bradbury sums it up in the midst of a review of Ross MacDonald: "...for years now I have seen (the) two fields treated as if they were 'escapes' by people who misunderstand life and misjudge fiction. The detective-mystery-adventure is not escape literature. Just as science fiction is not a flight from reality. Both are metaphors for examining a very real present and a sometimes terrible or disastrous future."

The main claim for this advance guard, this SF cloaked in prediction, may be that along with the mystery-detective story, it can examine our contemporary humanity more effectively than anything else. "In November of 1966 I graduated from college with sure knowledge...that the novel was dead or dying, like all of fiction..." states Dean R. Koontz in a recent article. "What the literati meant -- and still means -- by the 'death of fiction,' is the death of mainstream fiction in which themes and techniques have long ago been worked and reworked to exhaustion. Genre fiction is still alive and well..."

Times and people change, and must be adapted to. The changes have been analyzed in fiction in a long tradition of histories, fantasies, midrash, and what lately we call mainstream fiction with its semblances of real worlds and people. If the latter form is played out, some new singers of songs must replace the old. It's not unthinkable that the much-abused genre products may be the replacement. Again, to Bradbury: "Science fiction, by pretending nonchalance, calls Reality near. Reality, drawn by this supposed neglect, edges close. Zip: off with its head."

"Science fiction, then, is the great metaphor of men and machines and what men do to each other with their machines: Super-reality. What, then, is the mystery-detective novel?

"Well, in these reprinted Ross MacDonald novels...we see the reality of death,

murder, greed, sex, time and growing old, years and growing sad, landscapes from which people vanish never to return. But it is a reality distilled: that's the point.

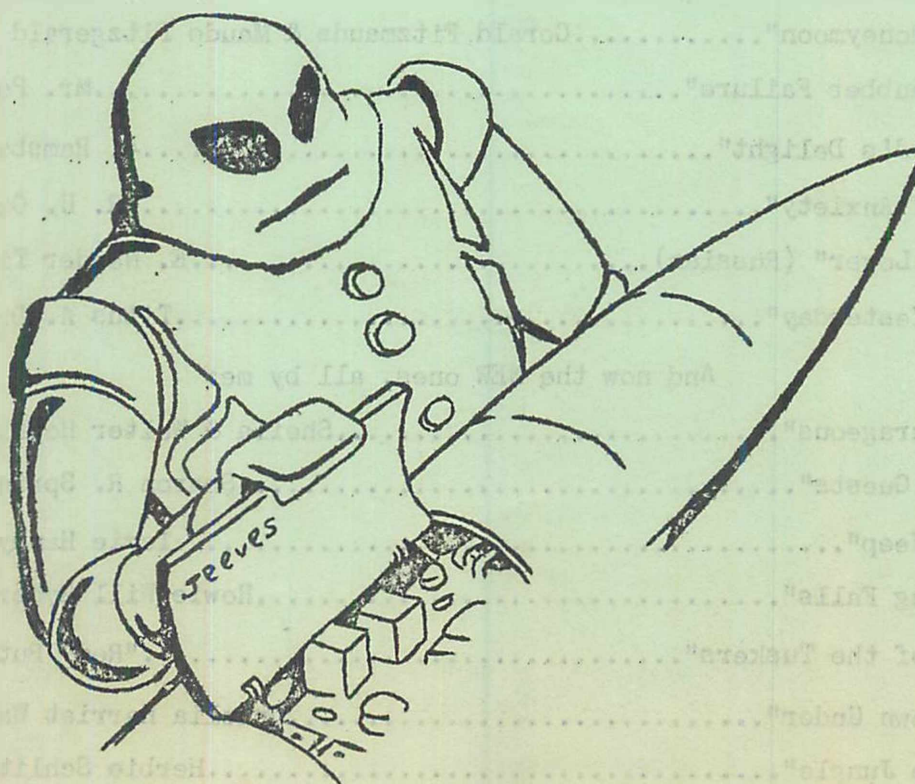
"The Tate murders are too horrible. My Lai massacre is of such a dread weight that it could easily smother us all. The raw data of that stuff is poison." And so SF, like the mysteries, treats the subjects in a way that distills the real world into an understandable form. Then when one has plowed through a postulated future society with people who aren't really so far removed from today's people (except that you understand them better in story form): "The reader, relaxed, off-guard, wakes some days later crying, 'Why, that writer means today, right now, this noon!'"

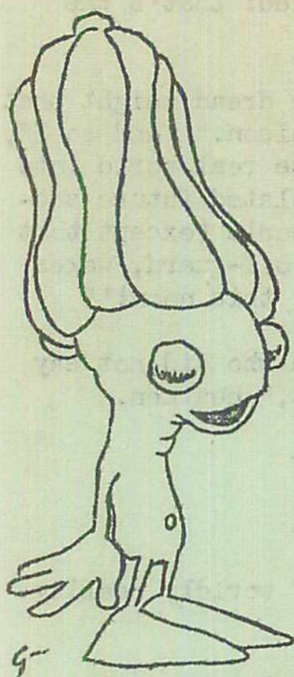
So, Hank Davis, Jerry Lapidus, Rick Sneary, and the rest of those who did not say so but think I "took the collective rattle of fans and spoiled it," hearken.

- (1) No, the major "purpose" of SF is not prediction, however
- (2) without prediction it cannot function and thus could not
- (3) fulfill its potential as an interpreter and distiller of worldly reality and serve as a signpost for the future.

Not all SF even wants to do so, but much SF conforms to this archetype, and I think it's a thing worth considering. I'm confident you will consider it (and equally confident that certain parties will find me with a fresh bit of hemp and a stronger knot here in my lair at the Home for Unreconstructed Sercon Writers.

---Michael D. Glyer.





"X" RATED BOOKS (NOT FOR PRUDES)

by

OMAR McBARSOOM

(McBarsoom returns to MT through the fortuitous circumstance of my stumbling onto his advert in "Hobbyman's Fortnightly" -- or was it Maidens' Wear Weekly? -- In any event, he was pursuing one of his hobbies -- whether the collecting of vintage wooden outhouses or ladies' undies, I cannot say; suffice that he is back, this time with a risqué period piece. --The Editor.)

(I never throw anything away. In one of my old wallets which I checked through before giving to my greatnephew for his birthday, I found a little blue card, printed with make-believe titles of books and the equally phoney authors of same. Nine of these are listed first, below...a few others I kissed off because they were obviously offensive in some way, like to ethnic groups who hate themselves enough already, etc. Next I found some other titles I had created myself years ago. Again I alert: If you are a prude, proceed no farther; if you are merely a prune, you may actually profit by reading on. --O.McB.)

Book	Author
"The Passionate Brute".....	Nina Knight
"The Contented Wife".....	John Thomas Everhard
"At the Stroke of Twelve".....	John Henry Bent
"The Happy Honeymoon".....	Gerald Fitzmaude & Maude Fitzgerald
"The Great Rubber Failure".....	Mr. Period
"The Shepherd's Delight".....	A. Ramsbottom
"The Hour of Anxiety".....	R. U. Cumming
"The Hungry Lover" (Russian).....	E. Nawder Titzov
"Return to Yesterday".....	Titus A. Drumm

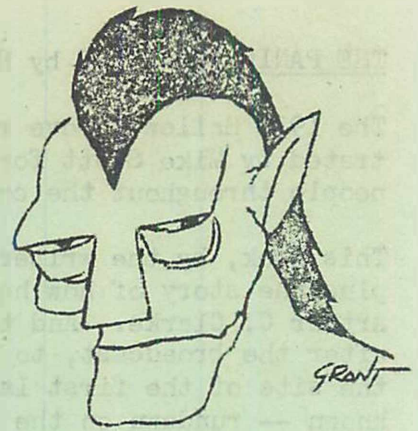
And now the NEW ones, all by me:

"Cousins Courageous".....	Sheila & Walter Hopkins
"Unexpected Guests".....	Sharon R. Springs
"Love In a Jeep".....	Izzie Handy
"When Evening Falls".....	Howie Will Ryder
"The Trail of the Tuskers".....	"Red" Buttons
"The Land Down Under".....	Ophelia Harriet Waite
"Lost in the Jungle".....	Herbie Schlitz
"A Time of Parting".....	Neela Oberfurst

Book

Author

"The Abandoned Shaft".....	A. Fallon Timberman
"Manhattan Towers".....	Minnie A. Stouthammer
"The Aftermath of War".....	Gladys Inness
"The Pyjama Game".....	Orvil I. Skinner
"Backseat Driver".....	Wendy Southwick Suits
"In a Dark Garden".....	I. Ben Lionel
"The Creeping Peril".....	Hans Updyke
"Daily Dozen".....	O. Milo Root
"A Thought In Passing".....	Ivan Taborer
"The Deep Six".....	Candice B. Paine
"Back Door to the Virgins".....	West India Phil
"The O'Grady Twins Coming-Out Party".....	Arbutus Ready
"The O'Grady Twins Tenting-Out".....	Peg S. Pound
"On the Brink of Disaster".....	Noah Lastic
"On the Avenue".....	Wanda Selzeras
"The Highwayman".....	Alice Bluett
"The O'Grady Twins at the Orphanage".....	Foster Toogood Prodz
"The Moving Finger Stops".....	Anna Maidenfalls
"The O'Grady Twins Visit the Woods".....	Rosie Rowells-Underwood
"Bottoms Up".....	Wayne Atlas
"Paris In the Spring".....	Baron de Man
"A Midsummer Night's Dream".....	Amanda Pauline Bedd
"A Tale of Canterbury".....	Mabelline Dover
"Love's Labor Lost".....	Dinah X. Stacey
"Of Human Bondage".....	Herman Drover Daily
"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow".....	Theodora Liza Oppen
"The O'Grady Twins on the Farm".....	Phyllis Enfield
"The O'Grady Twins at the Beach".....	Cora Sydney Sands
"The Guns of August".....	Packer Dewey Lodge
"Grand Canyon Suite".....	Wayne Widely
"The O'Grady Twins in Nurses' Training".....	Dr. Gideon N. Furst
"Hollywood Hotel".....	Manley Boysenberry
"Point of No Return".....	Lewis Runyon
"Agent Undercover".....	Ewell B. Saari
"Lurker at the Threshold".....	Pat Bottomly
"Revenge of the Cat".....	Claude Balls
"The Last Furlough".....	Benjamin Faste



BOOKS

THE PANIC BROADCAST by Howard Koch (Avon - N408 - 95¢) - (Nov. 1971).

The 1938 Halloween-eve radio broadcast of H. G. Wells' "War of the Worlds" (illustrated by Mike Scott for the cover of this issue of Moebius Trip) fooled enough people throughout the country to make newspaper headlines and become legendary.

This book, by the writer of the original play, Howard Koch, contains that script, plus the story of how he rushed to produce it, plus an introductory interview with Arthur C. Clarke. And the author's story of his and his wife's visit, thirty years after the broadcast, to the place in New Jersey which he had randomly selected as the site of the first landing of the Martians. There is also a factual -- so far as known -- rundown on the planet Mars. Plus many photos, repros of newspaper headlines and stories, cartoons, etc.

I heard the original broadcast and, reading about the book, I didn't think I'd particularly care for it. How wrong I was. The story is put together very neatly and I'm sure many readers will find it fascinating. They'll also find it easy and swift going.

As for the wide-spread "panic" caused by fears that the invasion from Mars was real, I felt then -- and still do -- that the news-stories were somewhat exaggerated. True, there were numerous isolated incidents of alarm, the particular area of the original "invasion" was especially sensitive in that respect, but the news media were up to their old -- and new -- game of over-emphasizing the unusual (producer Orson Welles, never one to play down gilt-edged publicity, on this occasion basked in its limelight).

Still, the basic facts were true...but bear in mind that the majority of the populace never heard the "War of the Worlds" airing and that most of those who did were well aware that they were enjoying fiction.

-----Ed Connor

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ORN by Piers Anthony (Avon - V2405 - 75¢) - (Nov. 1971).

Orn is an "individual", a member of a race of flightless birds whose survival is centered around racial memory. Thus after Orn hatches he begins to remember what has happened to his ancestors; this serves to inform the reader how the race developed, sketching bits of evolutionary lore commensurate with what has already been learned from scanning the book's cover-blurbs and admiring the cover painting.

While I grow twitchy over some of Piers Anthony's writing -- especially his occasional nit-picking style of delivery -- he has the ability to write well. He sometimes bites off more than he can chew, detailing some things to excess, other things being passed over much too lightly or with explanations often ignored entirely, but fortunately in this story he is largely limited to the surface of one planet.

He does a good job of probing the relationships between life-forms of outwardly alien appearance. This is heralded fairly early-on, as we note that one of the three humans involved does not eat "meat, fish, and fowl," and that he, strongman Veg, has been joined in this example by the female, Aquilon. (The third, Cal, is small and intellectual.) Because of the mantas with them, which had in the recent past brought about a man-made disaster on Earth, they are now exiled from the home planet. And "assigned" to visit a habitable "alternate" world, with the job of making a casual survey of its lifeforms and mineral resources.

But after being "shipped" to the "alternate" world, examination of the fauna of the ocean shallows pretty well establishes that the world they are on is the real Earth — of some 65,000,000 years past.

The story shifts back and forth from Orn's adventures to those of the humans. The great bird has various escapes, from the elements and fauna, and meets a female of his species with whom he mates. The humans, with their manta-companions, escape the elements, are ravaged by insects, and have to grub for food. By and large, Piers does a satisfactory job of making the whole bit lively and interesting.

And, inevitably, the two wandering units come together. And Cal, having studied Orn's tracks and observed the bird itself, concludes that it is intelligent; further, he decides that this "Earth" is not the real one after all, but merely a "parallel" one. (Wow.)

The question then arises as to what report should be submitted to the authorities "back" on Earth. The fact that Orn is an intelligent omnivore would pose a definite threat to his species if the authorities should decide to colonize, and our two human neo-vegetarians don't want that.

Eventually the stress of events brings friendship between Aquilon and Orn and his mate, and tragedy blends into triumph, with various meanies — both elemental and mammalian — having their innings.

While this novel, at its commencement, gives indications that it might develop into another of Piers' all-inclusive (like *Macroscope*) and heavy-handed thingees, it — surprisingly — does not. The thing is weirdly fascinating, oddly enjoyable, with an almost peculiarly-restrained Piers doing a remarkably excellent job of giving the reader more than his money's worth. I almost hate to say it, but in its own way Orn the opus, just as Orn the bird, is terrific.

—E. C.

*

TARZAN ALIVE: Apologia Pro Vita Tarzani Simiarum, or The True Epic of the Immortal Ape-Man. (by Philip Jose Farmer - Doubleday - \$5.95)

This is something unique. In this book of delightful literary fun and games, Farmer, a well-known science fiction writer, seeks to convince us that the celebrated ape-man of Edgar Rice Burroughs was not altogether make-believe. But Farmer goes one step further than mere literary fun. He takes engaging advantage of the reader's inherent susceptibility to myth. "I propose to show," he states, "that Tarzan is, in many ways, the last expression of the mythical Golden Age, that his life emulated, unconsciously, of course, the lives of many of the heroes and demigods of classical and primitive mythologies and legends." Indeed, Farmer practically drowns the reader in evidence that appears so convincing and strong that you have to keep reminding yourself it's all in fun. The book takes the form of a recapitulation of the Tarzan tales, rearranged to follow his life in chronological sequence, along with Farmer's detective work showing how Burroughs "went out of his way to make sure that the reader thought his Tarzan books were entirely fictional." Farmer traces not only Tarzan's genealogy (with the help of Burke's "Peerage"), but that of Jane as well. An astounding connection between Tarzan and a character in "The Hound of the Baskervilles" is also established. Farmer also discusses Burroughs as satirist. This could lead to the birth of a new Tarzan cult.

(Publication: 28 April 72).

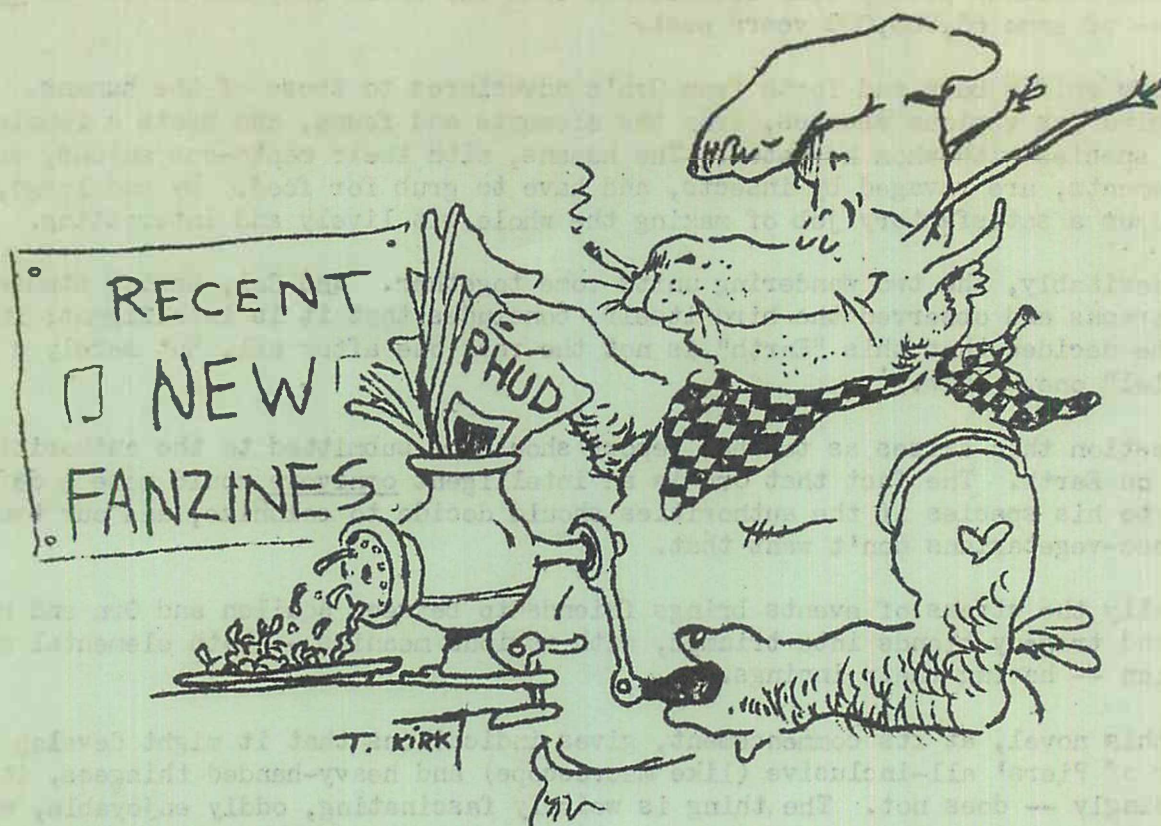
—Publishers' Weekly.

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GEGENSCHEIN #3 (Eric Lindsay - 6 Hillcrest Avenue - Faulconbridge - NSW 2776 - Australia.) (54pp.; for contribs., LoCs, etc., or 40¢, 3/\$1.20.) Many book reviews & letters. Solutions on how fans might handle their book-accumulating problems are offered by Buck Coulson & Cy Chauvin, and very contrasting viewpoints they are. Most of the right-hand margins have been "justified" and Eric has used various styles of paragraphing, etc., asking for comments on these technical variations. The even margins look nice, since pic type is used and the contrast with the regular unjustified margins is much more noticeable than with elite or smaller type. The issue was done on the editor's new Rex Rotary M4 duper. Very tidy. Gegenschein should continue to improve. Eric asks for contributions of reviews of recently issued (1971, 72) books, artwork - both serious & cartoon, articles on SF and allied areas, and on social & physical science. Also wants (dare I say it, in view of the last time I did so, when an editor was inundated?) --well, he asks for poetry. He has excellent reproduction of electrostencils, so artists should prepare their work in black ink, etc.....

STARWORLDS #1 (Verne F. O'Brian - 1320 Arthur Ave. - Las Vegas, Nev. 89101.) (36pp., 30¢, 4/\$1 - trades, etc.) Contains a piece on Ray Bradbury, an Earl Singleton poetic tribute to JWCJr written decades ago, long editorials, an FTLaney reprint, and more. An excellent first issue & I look forward eagerly to what O'Brian will concoct for his next issue.

COVER #2 (Jeff Schalles - Box 288 Grove City College - Grove City, Pa. 16127.) (52 pp., for LoCs, trades, 50¢, etc.) Jeff states in this issue that he is dropping out of school, but he has since changed his mind & re-enlisted for the current semester. Thisish includes a sizable letter section, many cartoons, a superlative --up to a point--art portfolio of full-page Schalles creations, the editor's tale of how he went along with a move to New York...and pages of Schalles editorials. Phew! -- now I know how those cartoon characters of Schalles' manage to float in midair, and how the clouds they float on are formed in the first place.... There are these fields of odd mushrooms, very unstable when ingested and forming vast

volumes of gas...especially when eaten with pepsi, Coors or IPA.

FIGMENT #3 (Jacob Bloom - 34 Andrew St. - Newton, Mass. 02161.) (25pp, LoCs, contribs, trades, 25¢.) Leon Taylor book reviews, poetry, LoCs, and a combination letter-editorial-trip to Bear Mountain (another one).

ZIMRI #2 (Lisa I. Conesa - 54 Manley Road - Whalley Range - Manchester M16 8HP - Lancs., U.K.) (50 pages.) Co-edited by Lisa Conesa & Philip Muldowney. Available for Letter of Comment, trade, contrib., money (10p). This is a neat, personable, likable, very well done zine. A juicy 21 pages devoted to LoCs (none from USA), the remainder reviews, editorial ramblings, a con report, and other odds & ends.

MOTA #4 (Terry Hughes - 407 College Ave. - Columbia, Mo. 65201.) (Bi-mo., 26pp., for trades, LoCs, contribs & 25¢.) Readable, well produced & contains a miscellany of entertaining stuff by the editor, Creath Thorne, Ray Nelson, Jim Turner, LoCs, & fanzine reviews by the Luttrells.

PLACEBO 2 (Moshe Feder, 142-34 Booth Memorial Ave. - Flushing, NY 11355; or Barry Smotroff, 147-53 71st Road - Flushing, NY 11367.) (Q., 35¢, 3/\$1, available for usual including trades--copy to each editor.) Lengthly editorials, long review of Wollheim's "Universe Makers" by Roy Nelson, a Schalles concoction (could have been written before he quit tripping), a review of the "A Clockwork Orange" movie, some Will Straw stuff, a brief critique of Anthony Trollope by Feder, a Smotroff glimpse at Kahlil Gibran, plus LoCs. Good show, which I largely enjoyed.

PREHENSILE 2 (Mike Glycer - 14974 Osceola St. - Sylmar, Ca. 91342.) (Bi-Mo., Locs, trades, contribs, 25¢; 38pp.) Lots of cartoons by Schalles and Rotsler, plus thought-provoking comments on this year's Hugo potentials by editor Glycer -- yes, the same chap in this & last issues of M.T. -- plus Chapdelaine, reviews, LoCs....

GODLESS #2 (B.D.Arthurs - 815 N. 52nd St., #21 - Phoenix, Ariz. 85008.) (35¢, trade, but no more for the time being. This is announced as the final issue; the editor joined the army.) (Still, a fairly good issuance.)

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Jan Geysen of Belgische Radio & Televisie was in Peoria last year to interview Philip Jose Farmer for a radio series he was scheduled to begin this January. He taped a talk given by Farmer at Bradley University in which the latter outlined his theory for the "economy of abundance" and noted that he is addressing his "peaceful revolution" to pollution and overpopulation in particular.

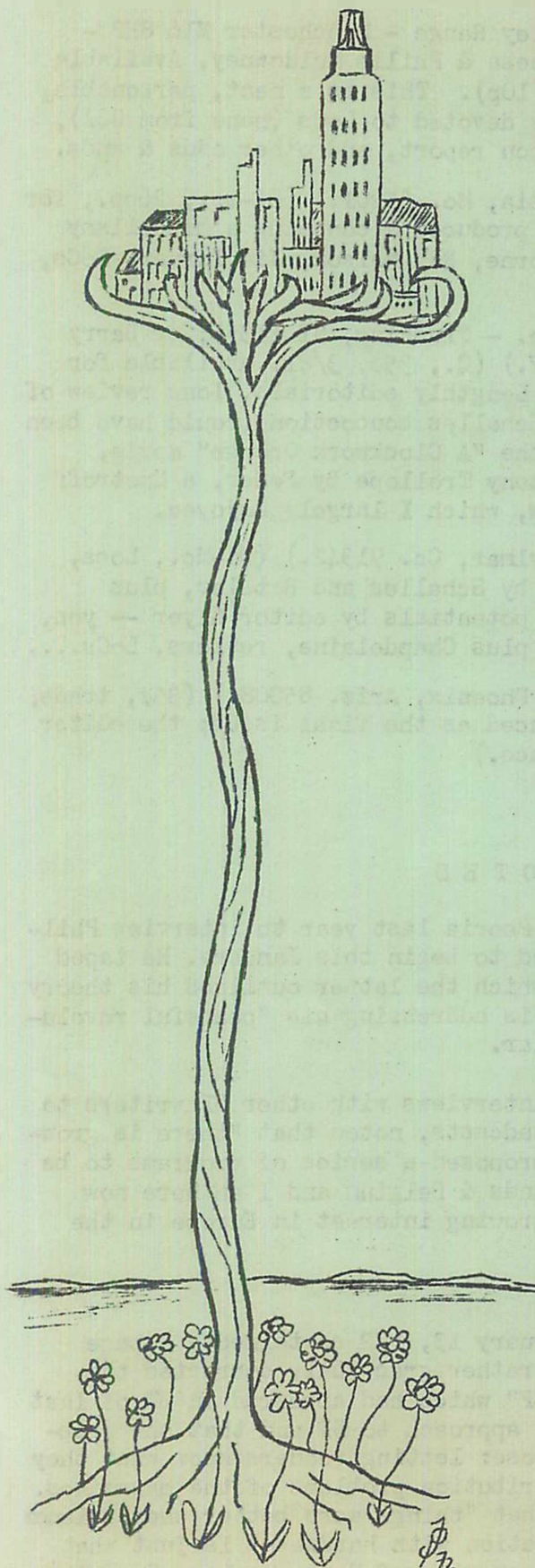
Geysen, who visited many cities in the U.S. for interviews with other SF writers to be featured on his Flemish and Dutch language broadcasts, noted that "there is growing interest in Europe...in science fiction. I proposed a series of programs to be combined with a national contest for the Netherlands & Belgium and I am here now for the interviews." Geysen also mentioned the growing interest in Europe in the occult and in underground comics.

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The Chicago Tribune's Sunday "Book World" of February 13, '72 contained a $\frac{1}{4}$ -page letter from James Tiptree Jr. of McLean, Va. He rather gracefully corrected the author (Diane Ackerman) of a "roundup review of SF" which had appeared in BW of last Dec. 19 (which I missed). He notes her "erratic" approach to SF and that she probably failed in what was apparently her chief purpose: letting readers know what they might or might not enjoy. He also notes the distribution problems of the magazines. She apparently concluded her remarks by stating that "things were better when science was scientia etc." (Tiptree answers that: "infatuation with hardware" is just what we're getting out of. Not into, as implied by her review of Mars, We Love You.) Hmmm.

* * *

LOCOL



JACK WODHAMS
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Australia.

andrew j offutt sure does seem to be hung up on the priority of an extraterrestrial genesis. Good old Earth is the Center of the Universe, any fool knows that, so why he can't start here, but has to chase off thinking us only the top of a tentacle of an even more gigantically-schemed octopus, is something that like confirms that he is a nut. U.F.O.'s, hobgoblins and hooahs -- rubbish! To say so, though, is, here, of course, heresy, hm? (Just don't attack the Loch Ness Monster.)

...I think Cy is being a bit of a pretentious twit when he would set himself up to pronounce upon abortion. A fetus is a physical thing - and it is not entirely possible to prove by scientific means whether or not it is an "individual person" at each stage of its development. Extremely few people remember being born. Some "personality" might seem to be reflected in motor reactions and response to stimulation, but true human individuality is indivisibly allied to memory. Our very morality stems upon a drawing upon memory, to persuade us to act accordingly. It is not physical sensation and motor reflexes that give to us individuality, but the memory-knowledge and the will that conducts these instruments.

For the most part, any child under two years of age cannot be considered an individual in the true sense of the word. Few people have memory back to their second birthday, and a babe of two or under might well be regarded as an "it", on a par somewhereabouts with a dog, or any other domestic pet. A child of this age has no wit for its rights, doesn't even know that it's here, and if it should get knocked off, it wouldn't even realize that it's been.

Now, this precious fetus that Cy would have a conscience about - how far back would he go? Right back to the beginning, it would seem, to the very conceiving night in question. Precious little egg, precious little sperm - millions like are flushed down the toilet or squirted against the wall every day. So, in a moment of passion, a condom is forgotten, a pill not taken, and a new life is started. Oh, praise the Lord! another sacred miracle of procreation! Huh? Balderdash. It is a miracle we got enough already, and some from the superfluity we can well afford to cancel out.

Young Cy, as a male, can indulge the righteous purity of an ultimate ethic - but, by God, if he could ever find himself with a puden he didn't want, he'd soon start whistling "Dixie",

and would panhandle himself to the nearest clinic pronto. The guy gives, the girl takes, she's only human. The guy doesn't get stuck, but the girl can be. So you can argue science, morals, and metaphysics, but the literal gut issue is not the right of the fetus to survive, but the right of a woman to decide whether or not she wishes to become a mother. We want wanted babes; of unwanted babes we have a surfeit. Cy may feel nobly enlightened to decree an end to abortion, but then, having established a 100% ensurance of fruition, he'll not give much of a monkey's pastime about the ensuing struggles of the family-mother, and the treatment received by the unwanted, unloved and miserable little beggars, the individuals so "saved" to endure deprivation and want of attention. What it never has it never misses, and without a baby being desired and wished for, to be the recipient of love and affection, it is well indeed if it is seen that a child is not born at all.

MERVYN BARRETT I thought I'd write about Leon Taylor's critique of John Baxter's 179 Walm Lane, SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CINEMA but on second thought decided to ask London N.W.2, old Baxter to do it -"Don't go to too much trouble; just the odd England, pithy paragraph." Here're John's comments: "As for a 'pithy paragraph' on Leon Taylor's review of Science Fiction in the Cinema (he could at least have abused me from the \$2.95 edition rather than the buck and a quarter reprint, by the way), there is a good deal too much shit in the air to be pithy about. His criticism of my style is probably justified and I'm with him on wanting a longer filmography and more material on SF on TV. There was originally more TV stuff, but the publisher, arguing that the book was 'Science Fiction in the Cinema', wanted nothing about TV at all. The result is a compromise. As for the full filmography, the book is already about 10,000 words longer than anything else in the series.

"Liking Jack Arnold seems to be about my main sin in Fandom's eyes. I'd respect Taylor's criticism of Arnold if he showed more than a passing acquaintance with his work. Bits of dialogue and facetious remarks aren't an argument, and since Taylor is clearly no fool I expected more coherence. He also has a lot to learn about cinema financing if he imagines Arnold is a filthy pro interested only in money and Kubrick, Hitchcock et al are pure artists. Even if Hitch and Fellini didn't want to charge a lot for their work, their agents would make sure they did anyway. (Likewise pop groups, about whom Taylor is equally naive. Am I wrong in recalling that it was The Band that sweated a massive fee out of Dennis Hopper for part of Easy Rider's music when most of the crew and cast were working for shares? And wasn't it lovable ol' Creedence Clearwater Revival that earned more last year than any other entertainer or group in the world?) Hitchcock's best films are superficially thrillers and personal statements underneath. Ditto Arnold, Curtiz, Leisen et al. Their situations are cliché and their casts amateur, but the way they are put together creates unique responses in the audience. They might do the same for Leon Taylor if he could be bothered to sit through a few of them with an open mind, though I know this is a great deal to ask of somebody who regards the New York Daily News as an infallible arbiter of opinion on the cinema.

"Science Fiction in the Cinema" wasn't really written for sf fans, of course, but primarily to introduce a coherent critical framework to the sf film, a field I've enjoyed all my life. Other film historians accepted it on this level; in terms of good reviews, which I suppose is a feeble yardstick, it was the most successful book I've published, but the reaction from SF fans has been almost totally negative, facetious and shallow. I would welcome some considered argument, a comparable book interpreting the films from a different critical standpoint, certainly a lot more research and discussion, but please spare me the febrile rhetoric." (Thus Baxter's remarks conclude; Merv now adds a concluding remark of his own:)

...The Philip Jose Farmer thing about Kilgore Trout was an absolute gas. The most scholarly biographical analysis I've seen in years....

RUTH BERMAN Farmer's life of Trout is delightful. Almost it makes me 5620 Edgewater Blvd., want to read Vonnegut. (I have some of his books, but Minneapolis, Minn. 55417 various pretentiously cutesy articles he's written for the

NY Times & such like have left me disinclined to sample his fiction.)

Chauvin's article on abortion is pathetic. "Whether or not it (a fetus) is an 'individual person'...is a matter of scientific fact." What science? For that matter, how can "individual person" be defined? "Individual" is a clear enough word, but personality (or personhood, to coin a more neutral term) is not. (Chauvin ... I am trying to restrain the urge to make an obvious pun...seems to argue, in his discussion of the age at which a fetus can survive outside the womb, that abortion of a fetus before the age of two months would be acceptable. That isn't what he means, but it does seem to be what he says. His own arguments turn against him.

Davis' article is another charmer — both amusing and informative.

JOE PATRIZIO
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England.

...Leigh Edmonds is probably 98% right when he says that all anybody is concerned about is his own life and those of his close family/friends. But it is idiocy or blind ignorance to go around thinking that a massive war or something else of the sort "somewhere else" will solve everything and not affect you. We are all still suffering from the ramifications of WWI (yes, one) and if

our grandfathers had been a bit more pleasant to the Chinese 100 years ago things might be happier now; and the USA (and the rest of the world) will feel the effects of Viet Nam for more than this generation. What I'm getting at is that you can't just say that the world would be a better place if it had to support (say) 500 million less people, eliminate those people ("other" people of course) by a war and then expect things to continue as they were, but with improvements brought about by the new conditions. By the way, I'm not saying that Leigh suggested all this or feels this way -- his letter just got me going.

I more or less agree with Harry Warner on violence and children (I've got 4 kids aged 3 - 8 so I feel that I'm qualified to give an opinion). I'm not convinced that it isn't a good idea for children up to about 12 or 13 to get all the atavistic violence out of their systems. Older than this they're big enough to do real damage, so somehow they should have learned self control by then. I'm disturbed (as is Harry) that "Peace" demonstrators find it necessary to be violent -- I know that their cause is right, but there's a double standard in there somewhere. (I'm not in the least opposed to the kiddies getting most of the violence out of their systems -- so long as they direct it at each other.)c

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...I regret to say that I find Cy Chauvin's reactions against abortion specious on several counts. "Regret," I said, because he wrote one of the best letters I've received yet on bm ((beard mutterings)); why, he even convinced me that I was wrong on a point or two, which hasn't happened since the last time I wrote

an LoC...

Cy argues that since a four month fetus is a "physical thing" it can scientifically be proven that it is a "separate person." Since the word "person" alone is open to a wide variety of subjective interpretations, I hardly think science is capable of proving his contention to everyone who comes forth with a definition different than his. In fact, all Cy has done is prove that it fits his own, personal, subjective definition -- the holes of which he patches together with the cement of circular reasoning involving iron lungs, etc. So: "A rock is a physical thing, so obviously it's scientifically provable that it is a "separate person." Some people might argue, but a rock doesn't breathe; that's ok, there are Tibetan monks who can go for long periods of time without breathing, either. And so it goes. Cy could, of course, trot out a bevy of scientists to agree with him that a four month fetus is a separate person, just as I could trot out a bevy to say that it isn't.

He also badly overstates the probability of that same fetuses' (feti?) chances of continuing to live, even under the best possible circumstances. A four month fetus, on this time-line, anyway, doesn't stand very much chance of living even with the best medical technology available -- and it's a more than even-money bet that, if it survives, it will suffer extensive body and brain damage.

These are just a couple of flaws in the stated argument — but it's the thrust of the argument which is really the most specious, which has the least substance. By making (or keeping) abortion illegal, Cy argues, we are preventing murder of a "separate person." But that is simply, provably, not the case at all. Abortion is practiced whether it is legal in your State or not -- and if it is not legal, then the rich who need abortions will go to New York, Switzerland, Japan, or some place it is legal, while the poor will go to butchers and very likely have themselves ruined to the point where they may never have children, possibly raped or even killed. Maybe that fits Cy's definition of an ideal world, or at least a better one, but not mine. If my wife wants an abortion -- and we already have a little girl that I'm quite fond of, as I write this -- I'd prefer that she have it safely in a nice, clean, local hospital, at a reasonable charge and with as little danger to her as possible.

There's a final point I'd like to make on the subject before I completely let it go. You may dismiss it as a Women's Lib viewpoint, if you like, but it's something I happen to agree with. It is this: Unless Cy is another Lee Hoffman (in which case the name would be Cynthia rather than Cyrus) he is a man, and unless he has unknown physical equipment and desires to change his sex, he will remain one. Thus, Cy Chauvin will never face a circumstance where he will have to carry an unwanted child in his body for nine months because of a mistake he and another person made but which only he must suffer for, because society says he must, and because society claims a right without basis in morality to his body when it becomes pregnant. So I clinch my argument with this: If Cy doesn't like abortions, he need never have one. I'm personally convinced that a woman's body is her own -- not mine, not Cy Chauvin's -- and therefore the matter is one for her -- not Cy Chauvin, not I -- to decide. The plain fact of the matter (and a telling point it is, too, for Women's Lib) is that anti-abortion laws are passed by legislative bodies comprised mostly of men, when it's only women that stand to suffer for them. *1*

Dave Lewton's right that Ted Johnstone's real name is Dave McDaniel (which he's used on his Man From Uncle books from Ace), but partly wrong when he says he "fanned under a pseudonym because he felt no one would believe his real name." When Ted first came into fandom, he was told by George W. Fields (that wasn't his real name, either, although I can't remember what his real name was) and Milo Mason (Miles Cross) that if you participated in fandom under an assumed name you couldn't get sued. (In 1956-57, there were at least three fannish suits in progress, two as a result of the WSFS, Inc., hassle, and one in the Kyle-Charter Flight dispute.) Ted may or may not have believed them, and in any event the reasoning had no basis in law, but it seemed to have some bearing on his decision to use Ted Johnstone as his fannish name. The other factor was that a New York fan named Dave MacDonald was one of the participants in the Kyle-Charter Flight fiasco, and even though 3,000 miles separated them, Ted did not want to be confused with him. (Having known them both, at separate points in their lives, I think they would have liked each other if they'd ever met.) Strangely enough, years later, when Dave MacDonald had gaffed, Ted/Dave tried using his real name, but by then it was too late -- newer fans who knew him as Dave McDaniel would meet older fans who knew him as Ted Johnstone, and he got so tired of trying to keep everybody from being confused and of repeating his explanations that he finally gave up and became his "old" self. He was the first fan I ever met personally, he and I collaborated on several fanzines, not to mention the Leslie Norris hoax, I wrote his "official" biography for Shaggy, and I even wrote his TAFF platform the year he was a candidate. And I always think of him as Ted Johnstone.

1 Cy's letter re abortion seemed almost deliberately constructed to favor -- by its own loosely-posed arguments -- the opposite viewpoint. He's too sharp for that. So he either had an off day or was pulling our legs. Or...?

PECON 3

This summer's centrally-located CON:

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Write to DON BLYLY - 825 W. Russell - Peoria, Ill. 61606.

CY CHAUVIN
17829 Peters
Roseville, Mich. 48066

...Loved Farmer's little article -- now I'm waiting for some pro to write a book under the penname of "Kilgadore Trout" -- preferably one with the title, "God Bless You, Mr. Vonnegut."

Hhhmmmm -- regarding Hank Davis' article, remember the old saying, "He who is without sin cast the first stone." Or aim the first rock. But personally, I think all SF is really fantasy anyway, just disguised to look like science fiction. Or maybe I should say science fantasy, so as not to confuse it with epic and weird fantasy. Only now rocketships and spacemen have replaced swordsmen and elves as symbols in the "new mythology."

ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Dr.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90046

...it's a prize issue, what with P.J. Farmer and A.J. Offutt both represented - and Rick Sneary spelling "fallacious" correctly!

But P.46 is really what makes the issue a historic one: the Rotsler cartoon captioned "DID YOU KNOW THIS IS THE ONE THOUSANDTH FANZINE I'VE APPEARED IN? DO YOU CARE?"

I've no reason to disbelieve this caption, after seeing WR cartoons in so many zines for so many years -- and if it is true, the answer is "Yes, Willie, we do care. And we are truly grateful for the continuing contribution you've made to the joy of fandom. Few fen have given as freely of themselves and their talent: damned right, we care. And may you flourish for yet another thousand appearances!"



JOHN BROSNAN
Flat I, 62 Elsham Rd.
Kensington,
London W.14. England

...Offutt's article on books about weird happenings etc -- I'm afraid I regard books like these with a great deal of cynicism. One rarely reads one of these types of books where the author displays even a minimal amount of objectivity. Invariably these are people who want to believe that flying saucers are piloted by benevolent beings, that there are secret civilizations beneath our oceans, and that Stonehenge was once a helicopter landing pad. They start off with these beliefs firmly entrenched in their minds then frantically try and dig up as much evidence as possible to support them. Usually the evidence is of such an ambiguous nature as to be meaningless. For example, that photograph that Offutt cites of 1,000 year old trinket that resembles a delta-winged jet. Instead of assuming that the artisan who made it based its shape on something he saw flying by, isn't it more reasonable to think that he made it that way because he was in the mood for hammering out a trinket in a delta shape that particular day? After all, if you wander through any museum you'll see a lot of trinkets in all shapes and sizes. If we are to assume that they are based on flying objects the skies must have been

pretty crowded back then....

Liked Farmer's Kilgore Trout piece but it went on a little too long.... Chauvin raised some interesting questions in his article on abortion. I'm afraid I'm taking the coward's way out as regards that subject. I'm sitting on the fence until all the facts are in. Tentatively, though, I'd say I supported Chauvin.

Interesting letter column, as usual. So Ann Chamberlain and friends are communicating with beings in the fifth dimension? Well....I suppose it beats watching television.

MIKE KRING First off, about that remark to my loc in MT 11...yes, my mundane P.O.Box 441 friends know I'm a fan. They can't understand why, but they do know. Castroville, So there!

Tx. 78009 Is Ann Chamberlain for real?

...Let me ask a question, please, of all your readers: has there ever been a long review of the novel OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE DRAGON by Mark Getson? If so, where? The only review I ever read was in Bob Vardeman's SANDWORM, and it was a short review. The reason I ask is because I happen to think the book deserves some attention, and tho I may be a little late (it was published in '69) I am curious what other people thought of the book....

ROSE M. HOGUE ...muchly enjoyed Mae's article, "Fandom Is Not For Egoboo" -- 1067 W. 26th St. it really was hilarious! I too in my insane youth tried to San Pedro, Ca.90731 help people and know just exactly how most people when helped will react...helping people begets problems! I can recall taking in a neighbor's five kids (the youngest 2 mounts old and the eldest 6 years) before the police came to take them to juvenile hall for abandonment -- the lady had rode the bus downtown to pick up some medicine and left the kids home -- anyway I'm the one who got told off by the police (they consider this not helping but kidnapping...) and by the mother as well -- even though I'd left a note on her door telling her I had the kids at my house.... I'd even fed the kids dinner and cleaned them up afterwards.... Oh the gratitude of some people....

The illo that accompanied Mae's article was all too much -- how do you ever manage to get things so well co-ordinated? Also Bill Rotsler's sense of humor is a constant creative wonder!! I do so enjoy it!

For a con report "Birmingham Breakthrough" was really great -- the con and all the activities therein were so thoroughly covered! And it was most enjoyably written.... Mervyn you're my kind of fan.... If you get to LA Con I'll split a bottle of my favorite wine -- Black Velvet -- with you...although I do suppose you'd prefer the Golden Rose...oh well.... In fact I dare say Mervyn's con report is the best I've seen -- second only to Bob Vardeman's hilarious "I Drank the Water and Lived" -- as you can see I enjoy loooooong con reports!!

All too often the covers of the book contain plots not contained in the book -- and the pictures lie even more than the words! Also I detest any intro that gives away the whole plot to the book -- is very poor writing on the part of the intro-er and I've noticed Carter of late delights in doing this...so I read his intro after the book. Anyway I did so enjoy Roger's review of The Man Who Was Thursday....

ROY TACKETT ...Kilgore Trout? Ah, yes. Know his work well. Much of 915 Green Valley Road NW it has appeared in such collections as ORBIT. Writes Albuquerque, NM. 87107 under a number of pseudonyms, you know. Don't recall them all, of course, but James Sallis and Thomas Disch come to mind.

...Cy Chauvin seems to be arguing against abortion on the grounds that the fetus is an individual person and I really can't see what difference that makes. In many societies, more primitive than ours, to be sure (although I might debate on that), population was controlled by exposing unwanted infants after birth. I see nothing wrong with population control either by contraception or abortion -- except, of course, the wrong part of the population is practicing it.

In re: Andrew Offutt's
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item...I remain open-minded about flying saucers, pardon, UFOs, and all it would really take to convince me is for one of them to land in my back yard.

Sorry about that, Ed. I thought the "editorial notes" were yours so I addressed comments to you, not to Schalles. Oh, certainly there are sand-covered cities scattered about the middle east. Schalles, however, specified Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Probably the best work, unfortunately, on the origin of the races is Carlton Cpon's book of the same name. In common with the people Offutt mentions, Coon belabors his point overly much but he does some competent theorizing amidst all the garbage.

And, back again to Offutt, of course Atlantis is not poppycock. Atlantis is Santorin. Or, more properly, Santorin is Atlantis.

MARK MUMPER I really enjoyed "The Obscure Life and Hard Times of Kilgore Trout." 1227 Laurel St. Trout is indeed an archetype of an sf writer, and is a perfect Santa Cruz, model for what is probably Vonnegut's attitude toward sf writers in Ca. 95060. general -- that they are paranoid, basically humanistic, prolific, sub-literary hacks. He's afraid to identify himself with this, although as Farmer notes he too bears much resemblance to Kilgore Trout.

Vonnegut has an irrational sneering attitude toward the sf genre -- he considers it a ghetto, without realizing that nearly every "category" of literature is a ghetto. It's just that some ghettos are gilt-plated. It's true, of course, that Vonnegut might never have "made it" had he not renounced his origins and thus become acceptable to influential people outside sf, so he's perfectly justified from a viewpoint of success and recognition. But I wonder what his conscience is like; I don't think he actually has one. Too bad -- I suppose you could read into his subconscious the way Farmer has, exploring areas in his books that maybe Vonnegut himself isn't aware of, like his gut level identification with sf that he's ashamed to admit....

Mike Glycer's original "Delphi" article and Hank Davis' reply initiated a thought -- namely, what motivates an editor, such as yourself, to publish an article you don't agree with. Obviously, in part, to establish a free forum and to stimulate response and debate, but I think something else is involved. I'm sure you realized that Glycer's article would provoke some heated comment, which is desirable from a purely selfish standpoint: it feeds your fanzine. But of course you could print verbal crap (That's been done.) and achieve the same end, and probably more easily too. Therefore you have some altruistic motive, right? *1*

1 I was aware that Glycer was not entirely correct in certain specific references, but I had an idea that it was a Good Thing to examine both sides of the main question more thoroughly. Glycer's article in this issue, for instance, gives a hint of how things are not, necessarily, what they seem. SF not predictive? Well, in spite of all the arguments saying that it isn't -- or at least isn't intended to be really -- by its creators and others, it still is widely, widely indeed, considered so-intended, both outside of the genre and within the genre. So which viewpoint really IS the reality...?

PAUL ANDERSON ...Re my last comments I'm happy to be able to say that the situation has improved somewhat with Films and Filming with many 21 Mulga Road Hawthorndene, stands actually having copies to display, rather hoping from month South Aust. 5051 to month that they would get enough for their regular customers.... Australia. The art was excellent in the main but, surprisingly enough,

I found that the master Rotsler was outshone by Schalles in both quantity and humour!...

I enjoyed reading the review col but it was not long enough for my interests. I prefer the longer review over 500 words rather than the cryptic "well I liked it so you might" type of comment so a lot of the column I just skimmed over. For its content you might as well have just printed the contents page from the book.... After all you gave us a run down of the merits of The Shores Beneath so why not do it with New Worlds For Old? (No room.)

PERRY A. CHAPDELAIN
Rt. 4 - Box 137
Franklin, Tenn. 37064

23 Jan '72

MAE STRELKOV

1 Feb '72

Casilla de Correo 55
Jesus Maria, Cordoba, Argentina.

Dear Mae:

A woman priest yet! What will woman's lib get into next?

...I said my eldest son had left seminary school to take a common laboring job to support us, along with an older brother. You asked "What is seminary school?" It's a place supported by the Catholic church where young people train for priesthood, the whole college curriculum taking about eight years. Tony, the eldest, finished his first four in 3½ primarily to hurry home on one year sabbatical to help.

...Now Tony has seen how truly rigid is the Catholic thinking, and how incompetency begets incompetency, and how the word is used repeatedly to obfuscate the real issue, which is to love thy neighbor, not necessarily as thyself, God forbid, for some of us hate ourselves, but simply to love thy neighbor.

No matter the state of mind regarding "responsibility," "civic rightness," and all the other veneered "things to do to be society acceptable," the issue really is that, isn't it? To love thy neighbor?

It's a beautiful philosophy, and from a high hill atop the Andes, protected by geography, wind and rain, snow and cold, and with stomach full, instincts satiated, I'd subscribe to it one hundred percent. Meanwhile, until I reach such a drugged, lofty position, I'd rather hate some of the sons-a-bitches that prey on others, and who do not love even as many as do I.

...You are a womanly woman, no doubt, and you're a little too old to change philosophy, and methinks you shouldn't; but you do have a lack of facts, methinks. This is not a negative statement. Don't we all have a lack of facts? Except the schizo who insists his imagination is bigger than reality?

Consider Audrey's thesis: THE AFRICAN GENESIS. Woman and man have all the genetic instincts of their forbears, down to the smallest amoeba, at least those instincts which have brought about success to survive at each step. If this were not so (excepting obvious modifications) there would be no conflict between instincts beast by beast, human by human.

Continued next page, top left.

Dear Perry:

Did I ad lib a sermon you found too much? So I take it back. Not that I do not believe that "life-is-worthwhile," etc., but I've no wish to rub your nose in it. As for quoting back and forth endlessly, that would be boring.

So you have a Tony and he wanted (still wants?) to be a priest! Our sons long ago went through that stage but grew out of it, totally disillusioned when they began to see how sad life here can be.

Do you really think I live on a high hill atop the Andes, protected by wind and rain, snow and cold, stomach full, instincts satiated, etc. Oh, boy! Just because I don't whine about my troubles! There is only one old friend in the States I've known long enough to blow my top to in correspondence. I've told him what it is like to be a very small cog in a feudal regime, but I don't discuss it off the bat. As for all the nice things you think would make you happy if you were in our boat, my dear Perry, I wouldn't wish them on my worst enemy. We survive and find happiness despite it, not because of the "bliss" around us. Where? Well, yes, Nature. That's our delight. Better live as do the pigs and peones with the sky above us than wear fine clothes on the 9 to 6 circuit in a city, as we used to do for years and years and years. (Not particularly fine clothes, either, but dressed for the ole white-collar role.)

Mind you, I'm not angry nor scolding, Perry, my son. I'm just astonished at the conclusions you jumped to.

Yes, of course, Grandma Mae is a bit old to change her mind, and after what I've been through (anguish-filled details to remain unlisted, because I am the type who endures and gets over things), I doubt the saddest stories will make me wear a placard GOD IS UNJUST. He's simply "inexorable Cause-and-Effect," that's all. Man is unjust and the more powerful and rich and godlike man is (in his ability to rule the meek), the worse he does seem both nowadays and throughout the course of history. I never loved -- only pitied -- that type.

I'm crazy about the underdog...sure, the pitiful unlettered peones can be dreadful in their ignorance, but folks

****continued next page, top right.***

Continuation of Perry's LoC to Mae S.:
 Woman, he says, has primarily the instinct to get screwed, so the race survives. Man, however, has the instinct to seek status. Both have the instinct to protect territory. If territory did not exist, woman and man would instinctively invent it. Thus, no language barrier creates discrimination from nation to nation, but rather man's instinct to divide his kith and kin into "my camp" and "your camp." The pecking order, no doubt copied from the barnyard fowl during our long evolution, is man's instinct for order, without which there could be no society, no family, no civilization. Strangely, he says, our civilization demands of woman instincts which are not hers. She should be out trying to get laid, as befits woman. Instead society has her assuming the territorial imperatives of the male, thus her frustration and foolishness, and sometimes her need to quote the bible out of context.

Truth hurts, even when its a falsehood, nicht wahr!

But that's Ardrey, not me. I'm even worse.

...Humans are people who are called Homo Socialis in Fontenay's book titled Epistle to the Babylonians. Though society was created by Homo Individualis, Homo Socialis tries to destroy Homo Individualis, and his efforts. (Univ. of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tenn.)

Unfortunately I'm Homo Individualis, or as much so as I can be, and still survive to 47....

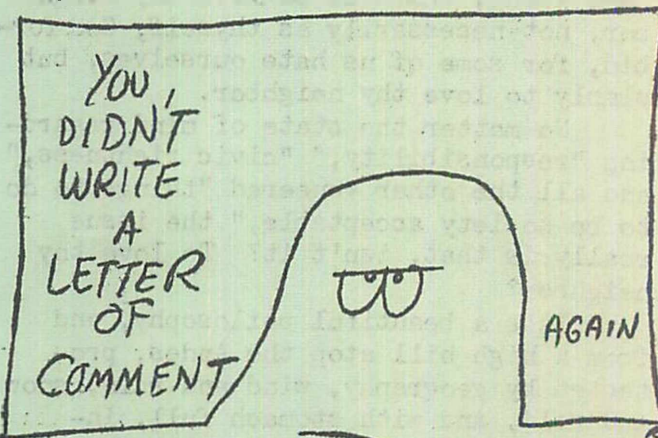
John Campbell's arguments were delightfully provocative. Simply this: if there's an alternative way of thinking, follow it, no matter the pain. If you must use conflicting logic to get there, use it. No matter, humans, who want to be known as very logical, are essentially illogical anyway. Now do you better understand my boyhood hero?

Speaking of communication. There should obviously be a common link between humans, insofar as their biological similarities permit, which may not always be too close. As mood was the first language, and is still used among all the mammals, man too communicates by mood. He has built an intense super-structure of foolishness atop mood combined with cerebral needs to predict the future. His reasoning, too often after the fact, is the basic sin, the basic hypocrisy of

****Onward & Upward: Column 1, next page!***
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Continuation of Mae's LoC to Perry C.: -- given half-a-chance and not spoiled by pampering, are darlings, usually. Fans, for instance. So far I've had only pleasure out of fandom, and don't expect to be disillusioned. Those who don't like me leave me alone and vice versa, naturally. I should worry?

...No, changing philosophy would be silly for me when I've found my lifelong philosophy perfectly workable, and of survival value. Sorry, Perry. You scold in vain. And every day I'm getting older and more stubborn, as I concur. As for lack-of-facts, I know so many tragic, unmentionable things (here, anyway -- I don't know your U.S. situation save from slick newszines like TIME), that the only reason I don't rage about it is I believe it would do no good, might do harm, and I do have the Eastern background that believes in Karma. Adjustments take lifetimes -- many.



I've the book AFRICAN GENESIS and enjoyed a lot of it. Son Ed (our 4th) was mad over it from start to finish, with piles of underlining done by him. I've seen the book furiously criticized in learned reviews. Not being an anthropologist (accredited, nor widely read), I reserve forming judgments for some future date. I enjoyed him and thought his arguments impressive. And sure, sex is nice. Am I supposed to say UGH?

...Sure, territory's so important. Why does the Church forbid the pill? We're overcrowded most everywhere, and the individual is going under because of the mob. Territory. Try to buy a little scrap of land here all one's own to plant one's own vine and fig-tree in. We're trying. The house we bought for the kids is still heavily mortgaged, and we've years to keep paying it off, with inflation against us, worse and worse, and the

******On & Up! - Column 2, next page!***

Continuation of Perry's LoC to Mae S.: --
life, and reflects itself everywhere. A physical referent can mean only one thing, insofar as chemical, physical and biological differences permit.

People too often mistake the word argument or quarrels for "what happens when John gets angry, waves his arms, and shouts loudly, sometimes threatening to kick the dog and slap the children."

Without differences of opinion, there can be no basic agreements. But a wise psychiatrist once told me that the truly sane neither accept nor reject an idea, they simply understand it. That's a basic yardstick, but too often fails to hold down my instincts in conflict.

Institutions, organizations, isms are natural, instinctive outgrowths of being human. How can the one -- the effect -- stink without the cause also stinking?

((Dec.16:))...You can't write science fiction as WHO wants it? The nuts that control the magazines? The paperback factory? Hardcover? Everyone tells me to do it my own way, and then hunt for the market, not otherwise....

...No author should loathe criticism. One of the primary points of disgust I've felt for some time was to learn that many pro writers are sensitive over the type-writer marks they've made. Seems like the first point of a pro is to learn to disassociate one's personality from the marks the personality made. The marks are not the personality, nor even the person. But that again goes along with knowing one's self. You can do it if it's pointed out to you. Is your goal in writing to receive praise? Then you will attach your personality to the tracks. Is your goal to communicate a mood, a fact of life, a philosophy...? If so, you'll concentrate on your success or failure in so doing, not on whether or not you feel good because someone said it was good. Measure of such success comes from others' feedback. Elementary principle of writing, that, the very first principle.

...I have a long, long memory. As a matter of fact, my recall is getting better in some aspects. Also I'm well trained in techniques of castration having done the job with eight years of little pigs around our farm. My memory is indeed long....

Let's see: This year my mother died, my grandfather, dearly beloved, 99 years old, died, my step-father changed person-
Continued Left Column, next page:

Continuation of Mae's LoC to Perry C.: --
whole republic in panic, except for our very virtuous prophets and profiteers. So shall I grumble more? No. Instead I say, "So if I don't reach that little goal, a place to plant another tree when we're old, what matters? I believe in Eternity and a reasonable, non-orthodox God-Creator, who isn't like Christianity says. Morbid, senilely vengeful, eternally."

And yet I speak within the Christian /Jewish background of my childhood home.

As for rejection, I've had plenty. I did have the naive idea long ago that knowledge is to be freely shared, but lots of folks like to hog their own researches and preside over their own little styes alone, so I let 'em. My job is not to insist...just to compile. I am perfectly content to leave it behind me for someone else, maybe, to finish doing properly. Do you understand that? I happen to care more for the Universe and its contents than for myself...for a Creator and his Reasons or Reason than for my own evanescent personality. If I had to choose between my own endless survival and His, you know what I (and no doubt anyone) would choose. His. So would any animal, grateful for the little things of life. Or any savage. We love the Universe, and would die happy knowing it continues though we do not. I do not believe in a personal immortality as my present self in the hereafter, even as my body becomes Earth-dust when I die. I hope we forget the past, as the future holds us in its grip anew. Okay, I'll say it. I do not see the justice of Eternal Hell which the priests who used to be my confessors (before my mind cracked from the horror of it) insisted I must. I prefer as a fair possibility reincarnation, but if Hell is as the Church says, that's my destination. Irrevocably picked. If the Inquisition, or Hitler, were in power anew, to save my family's hides I might keep my views a secret. But from this hypothetical god, there's no concealing one's convictions, so there you are. Either God is just, there's no eternal Hell, only punishments to make folks improve, maybe (or changes -- Karma) , or I will have to face the worst eternally. And I hate it.

Epistle to the Babylonians sounds good. I wish we humans could be both individuals and social beings together. That's what I've tried to be, myself, for better or worse...being too individual is
Continued Top Right, next page:

Conclusion of Perry's LoC to Mae S.: ---
 ality, after 38 years of closeness, and left me after mother's death. I was fired from my job under illegal circumstances; filed federal court suit which was thrown out because the lawyer I hired stole my \$500; I filed against the lawyer with Tennessee Bar Association, like filing complaint with a bunch of crooks; blasted out an eardrum, nearly went deaf, got operation; insurance company refuses to pay, though legally should; my doctor joining with me, against them; other health insurance refuses to clarify their legal standing and what they must cover for my \$450 per year (the good old Blue Cross-Blue Shield); filed complaint at State level and found they were all in the same pasture eating from the same droppings; had my business destroyed by a crooked partner, who tried to steal it all; two boys dropped out of school to help feed and house family; can't get a lawyer who is unafraid of state lawyers, and have no money to fight battle which I'll certainly win according to three independent attorneys; haven't had a salary since last June; have been boycotted out of good potential jobs for two years by college presidents who are frightened of me, and ---

But why go on? Enough of a picture? And HOT BUTTERED SOUL, a quarter of a million word manuscript covering four years of this experience CANNOT EVEN GET AN EDITOR TO READ IT. EVEN MY AGENT IS SCARED OF IT, FIRST BECAUSE HE COULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT HAPPENS TO BLACKS, SECOND BECAUSE IT WON'T SELL (bullshit! on that one) yet it is damn good literature, far above anything of mine you'll ever read in fanzines or magazines.

The Chapdelaine motto, remember, is "Fuck 'em."

Conclusion of Mae's LoC to Perry C.: ---
 lonely.

Ahah! Trying to think along alternate ways is what you recommend. But there are issues at stake that one can't deny. If one is in favor of totalitarian ways, can one take the side of the oppressed? Or vice versa. I shall remain on the side of the "little ones," till death. I never took any other side, though in the last analysis the big ones are littler than they know, hence also to be pitied.

That's true, what your friend the psychiatrist said, and one shouldn't take sides so much as try to see both sides (to paraphrase your quote).

...I don't want to be rich, or have a magnificent mansion, but I would hope to have a corner under a tree with an adobe-and-straw cottage for a year or two before the end comes for me. And if I don't get it, I'll say, "next time round" and be satisfied. In fact, all I do want is a way to be so simple that any peon in the campo will be at home in my company. That's bad? Already, we are at ease with both peones and oligarchs and the scant middle-class also here, struggling to stay alive. We forgive both, for we're all caught in our ruts here, and no escaping the old Colonial mores still rampant. I don't believe in violent revolution. I believe in --- excuse me quoting again? --- the grain of mustard-seed in the heart that must grow into a big tree, and still hasn't become big enough to shelter all the birds-and-beasts-of-the-field, to use the old parable. Because if it had, would we be ruining our Earth ecologically still, in our 2,000 years of Faustian greeds now reaching a climax?

...But if Jesus' message had been obeyed, and nobody had grabbed all to render the rest of humanity poverty-stricken and mind-washed, life would be nicer by now, wouldn't it?

((In order to hold the comments above within reasonable bounds I have had to butcher unmercifully (an outlet for violence? Hmmm.). However, passages on specific points have been kept largely intact, and I tried to retain remarks in each LoC which complimented remarks in the other. It was a tough job since I could have filled over 4 pages with Perry's and some 8 pages with Mae's. If I've goofed anywhere no doubt I'll hear about it, but I'm confident neither of our orators will blame me too much....--ecc.))

BRUCE D. ARTHURS ...Nice cover this time around. I also see that Jeff Schalles 815 N. 52nd St., #21 is having people imitating him, now. Gee, there's bogus Rot-Phoenix, Ariz. 85008 slers in BEADOHEMA and bogus Schalles in Moebius Trip. "Imitation is the sincerest form..." Jeff Schalles might be the next Bill Rotsler. He certainly is appearing in enough fanzines. If he stays in

fandom as long as Rotsler has, who knows what sort of good stuff he'll be turning out?

I suspect Robert Bloch and I are somewhat similar in the way we think (tho' I'm definitely not saying I'm as talented as him, god no). I often find myself thinking up gruesome happenings and such, including my greatest creation in this line, the corn-flakes-and-prune-juice torture. With a little thought, you should be able to figure it out. *1*

1 You should go far in fanzine publishing.

GENE WOLFE 27 Betty Drive Hamilton, Oh.45013 ...Cy Chauvin's piece brought back unpleasant memories of a psychology course (Psy. 321, the Psychology of Personality) I recently completed at Miami U. The definition of personality drilled into us -- sixteen points on the midterm -- included a phrase about a prior history of Individual Differences decisions. Translation: infants are not "persons". The push for postnatal abortions -- for example in cases where the baby is born blind -- ought to be along in about ten years.

KILGORE TROUT was one of those fanzine articles which could as easily have appeared in Esquire or The Saturday Review....*1*

1 If plans now made materialize, Farmer's piece will be included in a paperback of selections from fanzines. News eventually in the fan press, I imagine.

ARTHUR CRUTTENDEN Idiocy Couchant, 11, Heath Lodge Site Welwyn, Herts., U.K. ...Worcester was a very good con but I was in an overflow hotel where the night porter locked up & went to bed @ 2 a.m. so missed the best part of the night's entertainment. I was then working night-shift so started the weekend by working 8 hours, 10-6 a.m., travelling 2 the con & not going 2 bed till 2 a.m. Saturday which bugged up my wake-sleep cycle for the whole con. Kept nodding-off at the oddest times. It's a pity th@ the boat-trip was on Monday, as at the Heicon 'twas a really good chance to meet people (they couldn't get away) & would have been better held on Saturday morning. Good writing, brought back happy memories.

...Mae's letter -- Since I loathe children & can't stand mundanes in the mass, I long ago decided to support only military, mainly because in this country the government didn't do much after the wars & hasn't done all it could even now, & animal charities....

...P. J. Farmer's biography of Trout was much appreciated here. A well-researched and erudite article....

...Tom Digby's letter -- Canal development started about 1720 by "cutting corners" in the Mersey & Irwell. Early canals built by Duke of Bridgewater to carry coal from his mines to Manchester, then to Liverpool. Later joined to the Trent Navigation by the Trent & Mersey Canal which went via the Cheshire salt-mining areas & the Potteries to Hull thus linking the North Sea to the West Coast. Excerpt from the Canal Age: "(The work) was done by hand using wheelbarrows on planks, temporary horse tram-roads (to remove spoil), with horses used to haul barrows up ramps where the canal was deep." At this time there were no mechanical aids for digging, 'twas all spade work done by the navigators, from which comes navvy. No convict labour but men were contracted & subject to penalty if they ran off in the early days. Even when the first railways were being built the work was mostly done by hand.....

NICK SHEARS 52 Garden Way, Northcliff 4 Johannesburg, South Africa Dave Hulvey: ...Again I find myself agreeing with you against my will. Protests & Demonstrations & Fings should be Trips With Purpose - to awaken people and persuade them to do something practical instead of being so complacent. Trubble: they develop into egotrips for the guy who arranged the whole thing. It goes to his head, he slowly loses interest, and on the Day of the March he doesn't turn up - instead he's with one of the chicks who fell for his Big Rebel Man act. Trubble: most of the cats involved aren't there for the Cause, but simply for the sake of Being In. Trubble: here, tho not overseas, marches are virtually completely banned by the fuzz. Last time that the Jo'burg varsity - Wits

arranged a march they were allowed halfway down the main street in town (they had been warned not to march, mind you) when they were all picked up by the fuzz, fingerprinted and photographed and then most of them were released with warnings, the ringleaders spending the night in the cells....

HARTLEY PATTERSON ...One zine (of mine) is a tri-weekly Postal Dippyzyne, Finches - 7 Cambridge Rd. a second is a Tolkien Society thing and the third is all Beaconsfield, Bucks., U.K. to do with a monster postal fantasy game. I'd love to do an SFzine but that takes lots of time squeezing material out of people, there being an acute shortage of fan writers here, and I just don't have that time. ...Well, sure, Peter Weston's SPECULATION gets more material than he can print, but I would guess he's the only one...the rest have to grub for it.

...to dispute with Mae Strelkov. Yes, we're all in fandom to meet people, but for that subdiv of fans called faneds egoboo is vital or their precious creations curl up and die. One British promising faned has just dropped both his zines due to lack of response...and has in fact semi-gafiated.

And as for fandom doing anything practical...by simply talking to each other rather than to our next-door neighbors plus watching television we must achieve something. But no further can we go, since fans don't agree over anything except liking being fans. The silly (no, I strengthen that, stupid) nuts who have attempted, to take a blatant example, to force anti-Vietnam war votes on Conventions really must be opposed.

WorcesterCon was amazing. A Con without hitches, and with double the number of normal attendances (300-plus). Can Britain keep it up?

JOHN PIGGOTT First off this time ((early Jan.)) we have a short chatter 17 Monmouth Road about British fandom. And fanzine fandom in Britain is just OXFORD, OX1 4TD, U.K. about dead, despite the best efforts of Bob Smith to prove otherwise. In the past six months, aside from OMPazines and Checkpoint, I've received about three new British fanzines. Three. As I write this, several zines are, and have been for the best part of last year, "in preparation." Fouler 7 on stencil but no duplicator. Maya 3 on stencil, but stymied by the apathy and disinterest of Ian Maule. Cynic 4 may come out "as soon as Gray's duplicator is repaired." Quicksilver 3 with twelve or so pages on stencil, and the rest of it bunkered by Malcolm's mundane activities. Forthcoming marriage, indeed! Maybe they'll appear around the year 1985 or so....

((Late Jan.)) Phil Farmer on Kilgore Trout was fun. But, you'd expect a professional writer of Farmer's experience to write decently. (Sure, I know there are a hell of a lot of so-called pro writers who can't write, but then I've given up reading Belmont Books.) And this might even be the start of an alarming new trend in fandom...the taking over of the fanzines by pro's! This issue you've got Farmer and that Offutt guy (how many books was it last year, Andy? Only twenty? Tut-tut, you're slipping...) What next? A column by Asimov, maybe? Perhaps even Harlan will come back to fandom... Of course I'm not really serious, but we're got to watch these Dirty Old Pros and curb their power before it is too late....

BRIAN WILLIAMS ...Jose Farmer's is a joke to which I do not have the St.David's University College, key, but W.E.A. over here is the Worker's Education LAMPETER, Cards., U.K. Association. Does he know?

Andrew Offutt's article is an articulate effort at rationalizing the wish to believe the things no-one seems to have the courage or the good faith to believe. I shall have to use his argument, "I merely respect the inarguability of a fact and the privileged position of a probability." Offutt's style is exhilarating, and his thesis (which I would restate as, "Crank's get their hobbyhorses a bad name"), is very sensible. But Fraser wasn't impartial in "The Golden Bough": "The abundance, the solidity, the splendour of the results already achieved by science" are by implication contrasted in the last chapter of this book with magic and religion, which he sees as "merely an extension, by false analogy, of the order in which ideas present themselves to our mind." This fairly narrow-minded Victorian attitude means that Fraser's evidence cannot be said to lead to his

conclusions!

BILL WRIGHT
53 Celia Street
Burwood, Vict.3125
Australia.

...I must say that I am surprised at the extent of Australian contributions to Moebius Trip. Not only were seven of the letters from Australians, but Mervyn Barrett, author of the "Birmingham Breakthrough" report on the British 1971 Eastercon, is a foundation member of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club from

which all current activity in Australian fandom descends. John Baxter used to be a regular convention goer in Australia before he got caught up in writing That Book.

...Thank you Alex Vitek. I am sick and tired of hearing from all the BNF's in Australia that the day of the magazines has gone, and that the future of SF lies in paperback short-story collections. I think that SF enthusiasts in general, and fans in particular, have allowed themselves to be brainwashed by the book-publishers who simply want to market their products in the cheapest way. Instead of the fans saying "We'll have none of it; give us the magazines we went, with the artwork, reviews, letter-columns, science articles, serials and stories that we're used to," they allow themselves to be led by the nose into accepting great blocks of closely typed stories in fine print bound close to the center margin in a flimsy binder, the whole unreadable mess being dignified with the name of "book" and colloquially known as "paperback". Appeal to fans everywhere: SUPPORT THE MAGAZINES - THEY ARE SCIENCE FICTION!

ERIC B. LINDSAY
6 Hillcrest Ave.
Faulconbridge,
N.S.W.2776, Australia

...Cy has an interesting article, and if I didn't know better I would say that he did it just to start an argument. The whole thing boils down to "Is killing wrong," so you ask "Killing what" - answer "human beings," then is a fetus a "human being" or something else. Observe a child, even to a reasonable age, and ask if it is a human being. The answer is that it is no more so than a monkey or other animal is a human being. Therefore anything that humans want to do to such a creature is right morally, despite anguished cries. Indeed in the present state of the world, with people starving to death, any attempt to force an increase in birth rates, or to provide artificial and resource-wasting support for individuals with terminal diseases, or hereditary diseases is criminally negligent, and should be banned by law (as it no doubt will be in a few years time).

DAVID WM. HULVEY
Route 1 - Box 198
Harrisonburg, Va.22801

Didja know Kilgore
Trout married Naomi
Tester and surfaced
on a Philly Child-

ren's TV series, The Sewer Company? They starred in the everloved and Midwheatfield-land dramas of Pain of Glass and Theater in the Dark, not to mention Neal Peale's Ice Cream Emporium where you can get beets, sweets, greens, etc. Better yet than the Puritan Maid (Archie Bunker would tell you so, but don't believe him).

Pain of Glass was one of my favorites. It was the continuing trials and tribulations of a boy from a small pane in a large picture window who tried to find happiness as a television in a home for the blind. Naomi was the sunshine superwoman who brought him rays of acid so they could trip lightly across the reflections of the day-and-night.

Theater in the Dark starred the unseen presence of Ignatius Ofari. However, this whole schtick was defunct by the time the talking dogs, Fred and Dave, discovered they lived on the back of an immense talking dog named John. Y'see?.....

This letter
has to be
the weirdest
one yet
from
Hulvey!



NORMAN HOCHBERG

Benedict College, Room E013, S.U.N.Y., Stony Brook, NY 11790 I just wish Farmer wasn't so flip about Trout. I, for one, take Vonnegut very seriously and have often wondered who Trout is. I sort of suspect that Trout is Vonnegut himself but Farmer raised a few doubts. I hope that this is just the first of many articles analyzing Vonnegut's works and correlating many of his characters. I just wish the article was longer and made more of an attempt to treat Trout seriously.

As for Hank Davis' article the worst crime that he accuses Mike of is belaboring the obvious and not researching his article well enough, still I think that he went overboard on rebutting his article (I like the Rotsler you used as the header). I tend to agree with Hank on his view of Mike's article but four and three-quarter pages of rebuttal. Wow! At the article's end I felt like standing up and yelling "Right on!" Luckily I didn't (my roommate would have been suspicious) but I agree that the world owes us sf people something, if only from a selfish viewpoint for I can't think of too many rational reasons why they do.

...Ned Brooks is interesting in his portrayal of a future "overpopulation crisis". Unfortunately he may be wrong just about as much as he may be right. It is possible that, rather than grabbing up the farmland and inaccessible and unproductive lands, people will crowd about the already inhabitable places. No one can say, including the "think tank" people. You futurologists care to comment?...

HANK DAVIS

Box 154, Lovall, Ky. 40854 Enjoyed Philip Jose Farmer's article. I have long suspected that Kilgore Trout is supposed to be a parody of Theodore Sturgeon, and this has been one of my reasons for irritation at Vonnegut. I have others, but that one particularly rankles. One of the more recent causes for irritation occurred when Vonnegut, again playing the critics' tame sf writer (as Andrew J. Offutt once tagged him), hosted "experimental" short sf films on the NET network, and made such brilliant comments as "Science fiction writers are still stuck back in the 1938 POPULAR MECHANICS, not keeping up with modern science..." Gaah. Maybe Vonnegut knows more of science, even 1938 science than he shows, but one would not guess it from his novels. For that matter, why does all the machinery in Player Piano depend on the vacuum tube? The transistor had been developed before that book was published, and Vonnegut was familiar with the name, at least, since they are mentioned at one spot....

ALEX VITEK

4672 Lakeview Detroit, Mich. 48215 Let us give thanks for the homework done by Hank Davis for his article in MT #11. What makes Hank's article great though is his method of refuting the original essay by Michael Glyer. He did it in such a tone as any reader could see that Glyer only made a mistake and nothing else. In all, the article was well written, and a bit more informative than most. It is good to see an author who is able to draw upon information normally not included in the average fan's background. Good!...

MIKE GLYER

14974 Osceola St. Sylmar, Ca. 91342 Finished reading Farmer's To Your Scattered Bodies Go about a week back. I was so impressed by it that I intend to vote it in nomination for the Hugo.

...Though I suppose I ought to be flattered, on the one hand, that my first article printed outside my own zine was a big enough threat to the security or integrity of Hank Davis that he spent nearly double its length in reply (and that Rick Sneary virtually exploded over it), I really have no such feeling.... But as you will see upon reading the enclosed article ((see page 22)) that neither side (neither Hank Davis, Lapidus, Sneary, or myself) has gone so far as to state what the purpose of SF is. Everyone was so busy insisting that prediction was not SF's purpose, shoring up those arguments, and finding a rope and branch stout enough to hold my weight that they never did dare to say what purpose SF has, if any. They were all completely negative. Of course if that's the way they want to leave it, that's their concern. I, however, wanted to synthesize the whole set of arguments in this area and at the same time continue the feud. (After all, Ed, what's a fanzine worth that doesn't have a riot being staged in its pages?) (Let's all keep our heads, as usual.)

GEORGE SENDA "Good morning, Mr. Senda. The fan you are looking at is Ed Connor. 340 Jones St. He has just published the second annish of his fanzine. Your mis-San Francisco, sion, if you should decide to accept it, is to send him congratula-Ca. 94102 tions and best wishes. As always, if you or any of your alter-egos should be caught or gafiате, the secret master will deny any know-ledge of your actions. Good luck, George. This loc will self-destruct in 5 seconds...."

Goshwow. Two years and gettin' better all the time. Hope you have ten more....

...Farmer's Life & Times of Kilgore Trout is an excellent piece of satire....

Dave Lewton neglected to mention the fact that the Isfa/Eisfa zine eventually metamorphosed into Yandro. And I believe that at the time it was being published at Ball State Univ...You might ask Juanita Coulson for clarification on this. A recent Yandro had a reproduction of one of the zine's covers. (I think it was #200.) (dI consulted my memory; you are more or less correct, Mr. Senda. Carry on.)

...I cracked up when I read Bloch's note. The people on the bus looked funny at me.

I also feel that it is undoubtedly unfair and immoral for a T.A.F.F. winner to have been here before and be nominated/win T.A.F.F. This was a primary reason I voted against Mario. Also, there's the fact that I disapproved the idea behind the Heicon and felt that it would be rather a shoddy affair. As it seems to have been. Therefore, I feel that some kind of rule should be set up to eliminate this kind of thing from recurring. I intend to write the T.A.F.F. administrator about it and if nothing is done, I will send in \$1 and vote Hold Over Funds in protest....*1*

1 I did not print any of your previous letter, George, in which you tell of your troubles in escaping parental tyranny, and your "adventures" leading up to that, simply because the worst seems to be over and you are rolling along, even more productive than before & looking for material for a genzine. And you still have all your toes. You're a veritable phoenix, George. The information has been filed in your top-secret dossier.

JEFF SCHALLES ...WOW! A Tim Kirk spoof of me! I didn't even think he Box. 288, G.C.College, knew I existed! What's worse is that he made my character Grove City, Pa.16127. look twice as good as I've ever drawn it...the other two attempts were less accurate but still enjoyable...and it's really a shipload of egoboo to handle all at one time...what can I say? I'd love to hear what Rotsler has to say (if anything) about my work. I mean, him and me are sort of the most published fanartists around, with volume way above anyone else's (except maybe Jeeves, but probably not) and all....

As for the frontcover of MT-11, that's one of the best Rotsler full-pagers I've ever seen. It somehow has more depth and feeling than most of his rocky/hilly/sandy creations. Gee...I wish he'd send ME some of that stuff....

ALJO SVOBODA ...I expect Cy Cauvin's article to draw a full firing squad of op-1203 Buoy Ave. ponents opening fire from every angle. However, I doubt that a Orange, Ca.92665 full-scale Battle, complete with feuds, will develop, even with your seductive invitation for "Reasonable" comment. It will come to an end swiftly, I predict, with each side saying defiantly, "I'm right and you're wrong, and I don't feel like discussing it anymore!"

Maybe it has become a fannish tradition to have every loc disparage of the ego-tistical andrew j. offutt article in the previous issue, but I rather enjoyed this one (that "rather", of course, is superfluous...rather). I suppose everyone wonders...wonders whether it might...but at a certain point one goes through a phase where he'll devour every book of that sort vociferously. At least that's what happened to me. But during that period it's impossible to have an open mind on the matter...(Aljo is alluding to UFO's and other unidentifiable phenomena)...instead, you go around trying to convince everyone else to "have an open mind" (or in other words, to be convinced in your direction). After that time, of course, you become a profound skeptic of anything strange, for a little while, until finally a balance is achieved, and you really get an open mind....

ROGER BRYANT You know, you've run some strange articles in your time, Ed, but 647 Thoreau Ave. Cy Chauvin's little piece is the winner so far. May I speak to Cy Akron, Oh. 44306 directly?

I have a question for you, Cy. You say, "It is entirely possible to prove by scientific means whether or not (a fetus) is an 'individual person' at each stage in its development. It is a matter of scientific fact...so I hope I've shot that argument down."

Well, hell, no, Cy, you haven't shot it down. You have not told us how this remarkable feat (akin to the curing of cancer, I should think, or the invention of a ftl drive) is accomplished. And apparently not too many other people know about it, either; if they did there'd be nothing from which to brew such a controversy.

So please tell me, Cy, how this "matter of scientific fact" is determined. And I'd also be interested to know why you didn't explain it in your article. I'm sure all of MT's readers would have loved to know.

While I'm waiting to hear from you, Cy, let me muse on a few minutes longer. I'm intrigued, really I am, by this idea of proving a fetus is a person. Now that I think of it, I'd be interested in proving that you and I are separate persons. I've heard of thinkers who postulate that all people are really part of a single consciousness, connected by an "undermind." I think that's rather unlikely, but if there's a "scientific" way of proving that I'm an "individual person," I haven't heard anything about it.

On the other hand, there's that curious little twist of philosophy that begins, "I am the only being in the universe, and the entire external world, perhaps even my physical body, is a figment of my imagination, and all you schmucks don't exist at all." I don't believe that either, but I wouldn't know how to go about absolutely disproving it, scientifically or otherwise.

Well, listen, let me tell you how I feel about abortion personally, so you won't just automatically classify me with the baby-killers. I think abortion by itself is a lousy idea. As long as we can't be sure about the nature of consciousness, individuality, "soul" if you like, we should be wary of killing anything or anyone that might be a living person. I wasn't saying you were wrong, mind you; I was questioning your proof of rightness. But look. I'm convinced that we are on the verge of destroying ourselves. Plenty of people are starving already, and widespread famine is predicted for many parts of the world in the frighteningly near future. If the environment is not already damaged beyond repair, it will be before long. We must have fewer people, by whatever means may be necessary, if anyone is to have any chance of survival.

Obviously, the ideal solution would be to educate everyone on earth as to the need, provide them with less drastic methods than abortion, particularly contraceptives, and then get them to do it. However, the chances of every star in the galaxy going nova at the same moment are considerably better. So if that can't be, what choice do we have (except to destroy ourselves) than to use whatever methods may be there? Give contraceptives to everyone who has the good sense to use them, regardless of age or marital status. Permit those who want to be homosexual to be so. Permit those who want to have abortions to have them. Permit those who want to end their lives to do so.

I honestly think it's better to allow people to do things, even if they may be morally repugnant to you and me, that will help. If they do something, the day may come very soon when I may have to do some of those things to stay alive at all.

Is that a better argument? *1*

1 Obviously, as Aljo Svoboda noted, everyone has his opinion on abortion and hardly anyone is about to change his mind. The only solution, of course, is compromise. Over half of the population wants abortion, but church opposition is powerful. Abortion, however, must be permitted to those who want it. Those who do not want it must give in (abortion, after all, will not be forced upon them). Church power in the aggregate is slipping. Meantime, their agitators (who blocked, through the courts, abortion in Illinois a couple of days after it was "legal") dare not let the question be submitted to popular referenda.

If Cy has a comment or two to make, however.....

BEN P. INDICK ...I'm still deep into my Jew/stf piece, which, like Topsy, keeps
428 Sagamore Ave. growing. I keep recalling titles and stuff, and then have the
Teaneck, NJ. 07666 chore of digging them up. It's surely 6000 words by now, and may
climb upwards. I found out about Philip Jose Farmer's THE LOVERS,
and had to include a few lines. (Basically, the major theses I propound are unaf-
fected by his story, a marginal item.) It was good to see his humorous essay in MT,
better I would say than Vonnegut's inane GOD BLESS YOU, MR. ROSEWATER. I love KVJr
in PLAYER PIANO, MONKEY HOUSE, CAT'S CRADLE, yawn at him in SIRENS OF TITAN, and
will decide about his flick when I see it. I haven't read much Farmer, but LOVERS
was a good yarn, and must have been a trailblazer on publication, for its frankness.
However, in terms of passion, it is distinctly second to SHAMBLEAU, which takes in-
terspecies love and does something with it.

LEON TAYLOR ...I think that the answer lies in a basic precept from psycho-
P.O.Box 89 logy: The more that a man truly loves himself, the more he can
Seymour, Ind. 47274 love others. The immortal forces seem to be self-generating, and
wonderfully accumulating. Remember the parable of the buried
talent? There is your key. If you live, and live to the point where you lust for
every squiggling moment, then you are like a seashell under a waterfall: brimming
and bursting with the primordial source. An overflowing cup: and you have enough
life, and joy of life, that you can share with the universe. So a man who truly
lives — and the way to accomplish that is to establish a rap of love with every
substance in the universe...not a romantic love necessarily, but a consuming com-
passion to understand and G*R*O*K — will want others to live, to at least the same
artistry that he does; not only because this is an extension of his awareness, and
hence an improvement on his charged life, but because joy passion finds its greatest
attraction in brotherhood.

This is why I object to the ostrich syndrome in fandom: because if you entomb
yourself in a splinter of existence, cut off from all people and places and ideas
that you feel are not "safe" enough to venture your ego into, then you do not love
life but rather dimly yearn for the security of a life: whittling away the minutes.
(Is today Tuesday or Thursday? Well, still another drag of a night. You know,
this rioting and pollution and wars and everything is just terrible. Somebody
really ought to do something.) Life reaches, it does not fearfully select; it wants
to be omni-everything. It tries to relate everything to everything else, because
there is a special bond in its creative force: all is brothered but you must seek,
you must live. So if you cannot see the relevance of using the same talent you use
in fandom for joyful nonsense also for feeding the people, if you cannot fathom why
you shouldn't spend your entire life hunched over a beaten typewriter, then I ques-
tion your desire for life. Does that sound presumptuous? Perhaps I ask it to ra-
tionalize my own fear of whether or not I live to the fullest, or have the desire to.
All of this haranguing comes from a fella who doubts hourly his capacity to love or
live or know.....*1*

1 I think you may have judged the many by the few. How can you equate "ostrich
syndrome in fandom" with "spend entire life hunched over a beaten typewriter?" The
two are only infrequently the same.

W. G. BLISS Offutt...Dunno about that, about Sanderson's book. Us UFO
422 Wilmet nuts faunch and crave for endless minutiae on the subject.
Chillicothe, Ill. 61523 Almost everything under the sun including the sun has been
tied into flying saucers in one way or another. Am sending
Offutt one of those Shaver photos. Besides, I have a photo at least a million years
(well at least 100,000 then) old of a merman who is anatomically correct. I also
have a photo of a dinosaur. Not only that but I have the original source sitting
right here on the desk if anybody else cares to try with their Brownie camera for
veracity. I have been peeking into the biggest grogging time capsule of all, which
does include technological information. (d Bill has some of Richard S. Shaver's photos
of rocks. The rocks show pictures...messages?...from the ancients?...I couldn't be-
gin to guess. Still, many rocks do show pictures.)c)

...Should I start a service of supplying small-type typers to fan-eds? -- fan-zines naturally grow and more words per page keep them practical longer -- NIEKAS seemed to reach the limits of that -- a booklength lettercol in micro-elite....

...I shall have to send some spirit world photos to Ann Chamberlain -- just found out how to make them recently. (Crackpot science marches on!) And too, I know two accomplished telepaths, and am occasionally in contact with other similar (parallel?) worlds mentally. Come to think of it, OAHSP is also a complete manual on human contact with ethral worlds, all the pitfalls are well charted. The lower ethral planes are usually loaded with low grade spirits and false gods....

WAHF: Philippe Hupp, Bob Stahl, Reed Waller, Gerd Hallenberger, Angus Taylor, Randall D. Larson, Jack Cordes, Jacob Bloom, Dorothy Jones, Leigh Couch, Mike Scott, Frank Denton & Ray Bradbury...etc.

*

EDITORIAL NOTES

Please excuse the purplish stains edging the cover illo. I sought to straighten the slightly uneven edges -- themselves unavoidable with the repro machinery & ink used -- by using black felt-tipped markers and a ruler. The idea worked perfectly -- for a while. Overnight a chemical separation of the ink from the markers occurred, with some ingredient sneaking out into the area already covered by the almost-invisible "halo" from the mimeograph ink. Since I wasn't about to scrap the covers, I just pretend the purple halo isn't there. Next time, it damned well won't be!

*

In an early issue of M.T. I wondered if Karel Capek's "R.U.R." had ever been made into a movie. Well, I've discovered an answer (one answer, in the event there are others) myself. Some time in early 1948 (or possibly shortly before) the play was televised in England by the B.B.C. The only actor mentioned as being in the performance is John Stuart; the time of the action of the drama was advanced from the original date, being moved 30 years into the future to 1980.

*

Paul Walker is to have a series of interviews of SF writers beginning soon in LUNA Monthly. (From Editor Ann F. Dietz - 655 Orchard St. - Oradell, NJ. 07649. - 35¢, \$4.00 per year 3rd class (in No. America).

*

Whilst on the subject of newszines, may I recommend SANDERS? It is far more than what some have called it (the "West Coast" newszine). The last few issues are, in my opinion, superior in many ways to the large-circulation "East Coast" newszine. SANDERS is offset, 4/\$1, 9/\$2 or 15/\$3, from DAVE NEE - 977 Kains - Albany, California 94706. No matter where you live, send your news to Dave! (By the way, the above address is his school; his home digs are at 254 College Ave., Apt. C - Palo Alto, Calif. 94306. Send him a subscription and help insure the continued existence of a really deserving newszine. Remember, with L.A.Con coming up the West is where the action is!

*

Are you interested enough in the Loch Ness Monster to help pay for the search? Apply to: The Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau Ltd. - 23 Ashley Place - London, S.W.1, England. After May 1 and through October application may be sent to the organization at Achnahannet - Drumnadrochit - Inverness-shire - Scotland. Annual associate membership in the Bureau is \$4.80 (if aged under 21, \$2.40).

*

NEXT ISSUE is planned to follow rather soon. All I need are letters, to add to 50 some just rec'd (Rick Sneary, Buzz Dixon, etc.). Can you take a hint? ecc

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