

Moebius Trip

7



A R T I C L E S, etc

	Page
OSTRICHES (by Leon Taylor).....	4
ZEPPELINS AND PALLBEARERS (by Bill Wolfenbarger).....	6
THE S-F BOOKSHELF (by Bill Wolfenbarger).....	8
BOOK REVIEWS (Ted Pauls).....	9
TIPTOEING THROUGH THE TRILOGIES (by Roger Bryant).....	11
THAT IMPOSSIBLE FEELING (Part I) (by Joseph Pumilia).....	15
S.F.W.A. COMMENTS (by Perry A. Chapdelaine).....	17
EDITORIAL.....	36

A R T

Bill Rotsler: 1, 1, 7, 9, 11, 17, 23

Jeff Schalles: 5, 10, 14, 31

Mike Gilbert: 15

Alexis Gilliland: 20

Terry Jeeves: 22

L E T T E R S o f C O M M E N T

JACK WODHAMS.....23	KEITH KRIEGER.....27	MAE STRELKOV.....30
PAUL WALKER.....24	ED R. SMITH.....27	TERRY JEEVES.....31
LEIGH EDMONDS.....25	BOB SMITH.....28	RICK STOOKER.....31
ROBERT COULSON.....26	RON L. CLARKE.....28	DAVID HULVEY.....32
ROBERT BLOCH.....26	BRIAN WILLIAMS.....29	ROGER BRYANT.....32
LEE HOFFMAN.....26	ARTHUR CRUTTENDEN.....29	ED CAGLE.....33
ARTHUR HAYES.....26	BILL WOLFENBARGER.....30	HARRY WARNER, JR.....34
MICHAEL GLICKSOHN.....35	The IGLOO.....36	

O S T R I C H E S

by

Leon Taylor

In the beginning God sent Eve, and people have been chastising their gonads ever since.

Now he sends Fandom. And believe me, the parallel reaction of burning fanzines is mightily tempting.

Oh, it's a blessing enough. In a society geared to boob tube gooking and Keeping Up With The Joneses, there is little room (hell, hardly even a closet) for creativity. In a structure based on monetary class superiority and polite patter about the weather, there is scant breath for honest rapping. With a single brush of corflu, fandom eliminates all (well, almost) superstructures; it reduces to the common denominator of creativity, and frees the entanglements of social fears. For literary-oriented people, it is a utopia; you can do anything in anyway you wish, and the result will be judged solely on its merit. Such a dispassionate mechanism is the propellor to Nirvana, for the logical lifegoal of a person whose main interest is writing is to realize his potential as a writer; and how better to reach your peak than by plunging into a pure writing establishment, measuring your progress by the honest gauges of others, crescendoing in a steady line to the final fortissimo of perfection? Right?

Wrong, damnit. Even if you accept admittedly glorified description of our local snakepit.

(Pause to ingest a few solemn blank stares: Now someone clears his throat and...)

So Fandom Is My Way of Life, you say indignantly. And what the hell is wrong with that? It's a free country, ain't it?

Well, pardon me if I seem perched on a mountaintop. Those obscuring clouds you see about my feet are actually ribbons of smog, and the peak is hardly more than an anthill. In other words, the only lofty element around here is my manner of speaking---God forbid. I don't want to toss down pronounciamentos; I'd rather not be called for bluffing the lightning-and-thunder bit. Hey, it's just *me* being hardheaded as usual...indecently idealistic and all that. But now that I've offered the ritual apology, I'm going to cut quick and clean --perhaps too much so--to what I think is the rubber bone behind the FIAWOL farce, and why it's all a... well, let's save that for later.

So Fandom is a life-style all unto itself. OK. Beautiful. I seem to recall saying something to the same effect a few paragraphs back there, when I remarked that a person whose main hobby was writing would be naturally most interested in writing (if you're an artist or whatever, fill in your own blanks. This here is universal.) And to spend a whole lifetime doing exactly what you most want to do... well, the Garden of Eden wasn't actually lost, just undiscovered for a long time. And the strawberries are as juicy as ever.

But I can't accept the underlying philosophy that implies: that an individual's sole purpose in life is to thoroughly sate himself. In a utopia, maybe; in a planet of plenty where there are necessities abundant for all, then Joe Schmoe may chase his own ass with my blessings. However, this is no utopia. This is 1971. Children starve, cities choke and politicians fatten. The generals gaze at tiny red buttons with hungry eyes. And a 5-page article on the latest antics of your parakeet, no matter how happily written or joyfully received, will not contribute a single drop of milk--not even of human

kindness.

Whoa, let's back up there. I am spiritually committed to the banner of self-denial, but nevertheless I realize that it's somewhat outrageous to demand full-time crossbearing from each and every fella. Besides, service is impossible without a certain depth to the servicer; so inward grooming, selfish as it may be, is wantable. What I'm questioning here is the degree: how much time, strength and talent does a person have a right to devote to himself? How far can he go in creating a privy pocketbook universe, specially erected to suck in enormous amounts of energy without any discernible feedback save egoboo?

That's what disturbs me. Fandom is not only a gigantically successful hobby but a remarkable social tool; the skills it teaches in its earthy trade--communication--are applicable and valuable anywhere in the outside world. Fandom can actually do what the Boy Scouts et al blow about and build human being; it is a recording medium, capturing until paper crumbles the given emotional/intellectual/moral reactions of an individual in a given situation at a given time, and there are consequently not a few adept armchair psychologists among us (uh, as long as you don't take it too seriously. Pen is a pretty good duplicator of a person's inner state, but is not perfect...like a lie detector, it is definitely not infallible.) Fandom stimulates and breeds thinking; David Wm. Hulvey once commented that fandom taught him more in 6 months than formal schooling did in 12 years. This isn't pretentious babbling--fandom can actually do these things, and a helluva lot more. IF.

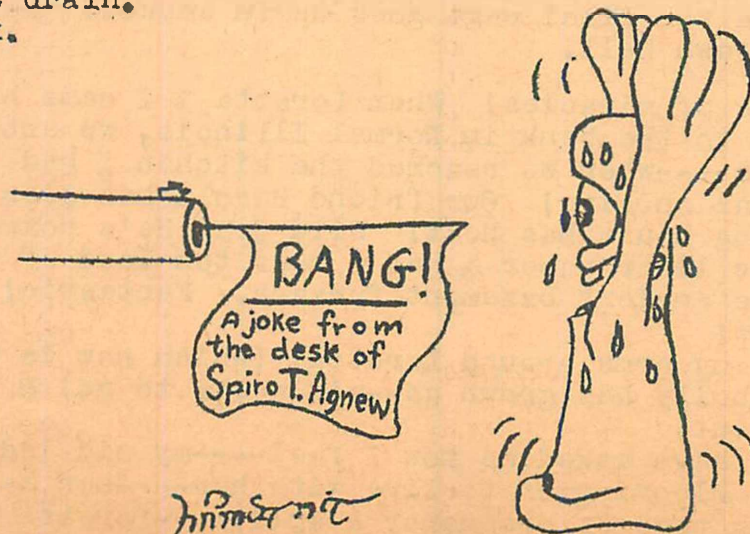
Ah, but if. If you know what you're looking for. If you dive in with the conviction that you're not going to just sink, sink, sink into the womblike waters away from the glaring sun, but that by Ghod you are going to learn how to swim. If you forget your childish dreams of winning a Hugo or rating high in a poll or extracting a thotless compliment from a pro. If you realize that the long fight ahead has nothing to do with conquering fuggheads, but with conquering fantasies. Evil fantasies. I've talked about those before.

Egoboo is a pleasant plaything to touch. But don't live in it.

FIAWOL--all right, I can buy that. But which life, the one in the bubble or the one on the land? And when it's all over, what will they say about you? That your most significant contribution to mankind was a 50-issue run of a hectographed Tarzanzine?

Join me at FIATFL--Fandom Is A Tool For Life. Unpronounceable, perhaps, but it makes a little more use of fandom than just a bloody toilet drain.

Pax.



ZEPPELINS AND PALLBEARERS

by

BILL WOLFENBARGER

The night comes with its Fall chill & it seems that even the crickets are frozen tonight; yet thank God there is no wind for the lonely to bare the burden of this insufferable cold. Inside this old broken two-storey house I sit, crosslegged in a wooden straight-backed chair in front of the kitchen's gas stove, door open to 300°, sniffeling with my cold, unable to sleep, unable even to lie awake in bed. Hot cup of coffee is before me & I flick the ashes from my cigarette while I shoot a gaze to my left at the broken windowpane with only a flimsy piece of red curtain to protect the kitchen from intrusion. I'm figuring Loretta's tomato plants could very well freeze in the living room which also lacks windowpanes. . . . Oh Christ & this is only the beginning of Fall But then I begin to think of how cold & lonely it must surely be thruout the vast reaches of outer space.

At least my sweet Loretta is working inside a nice toasty hospital as a nurse's aid.

This morning feels nearly as cold & insane as the late night before. I've set the stove to 350° & I'm back into the chair with fresh coffee brewing. Out the window the sky is a clear blue with small patches of sick-looking clouds, plague of the city. The sun is so feeble this day. Jack Frost has vanished only for the moment around a corner.

When my eyes slid open today Loretta was home with a smile for me & she slipped under the blankets & we made love. Now she's sleeping her peaceful sleep while Sol tries to shine between the earth & the chilled sky.

Reading material before the stove now is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but I feel more identification with Jack London. Yet even Doyle's pages seem to gather a certain frigidity as I feel them between my fingers. (Dr. Watson relates to Sherlock Holmes the happenings on the English Baskerville moorland.) Would it be that I should have to build a fire from Doyle's pages to read Jack London? How uniquely tragic if I were forced to burn my own works! Indeed, what words to assail my mind as the final page goes up in smoke?? Well yes I fear I would be in my own Hell.

Miracle of miracles! When Loretta & I came home from a short morning bus trip to the bank in Normal Illinois, we entered wondering-ly thru the rooms----when we reached the kitchen I had the wild notion that the stove was on fire! Our friend Harold has seen to it that this old crumbling house has heat! Wild joy! He's boarded up the windows with plastic liner paper & had a half ton load of coal delivered & he's stoked the ancient basement furnace. Fantastic! It actually gets hot here now!

I wrap my arms around Loretta, (which now is difficult to accomplish--her belly has grown so--six weeks to go) & we kiss one long eternal moment.

People have asked me how I feel----my old lady pregnant before I came to Bloomington to live with her----her x-old man freaked when he heard the news of pregnancy & split----Loretta wandering, lonely, scared----we now live together with all our knowledge----we

can live with it because we love each other. Loretta's now my wife (as of October 24) & we can dig spending the rest of our lives together----growing old together (if that's possible in this paranoid age); however I have this sneaking suspicion we're going to make it. At least my wife & I know we'll make it in the world as long as we're here to make it last. We have enuf love for each other to last lifetimes!

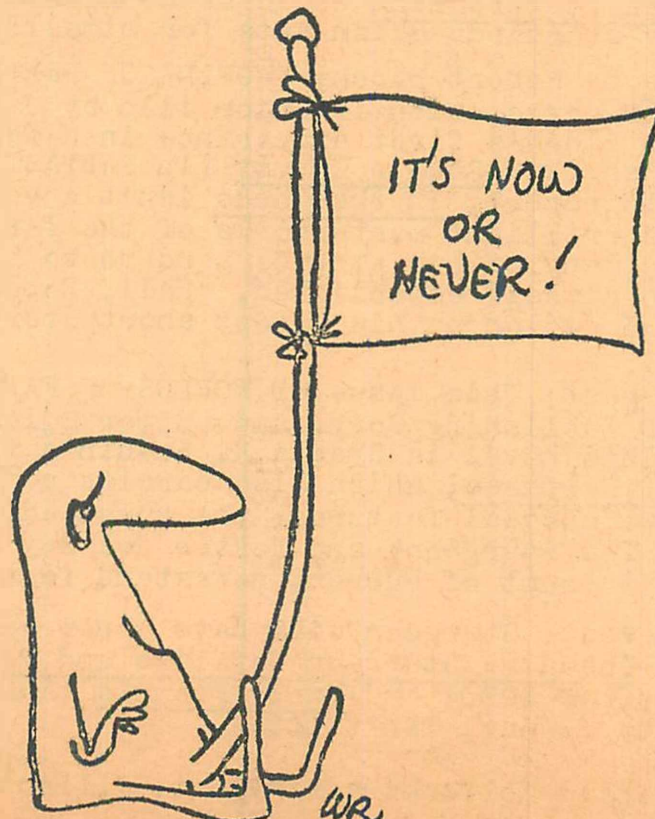
Anxiety grips me further each day now as due date grows near----; due date is the 10th of December. Dr. Patell, a little brown man from India, takes good care of Loretta & she has complete trust in him. Therefore he has my trust & confidence. Good Lord knows it's so difficult to get a good doctor in Bloomington; Loretta was turned away by doctors because she was unwed. How ridiculous!

If it's not doctors, then it's salesmen of some sort, any sort, who seem dedicated to ripping you off one way or another, any way they can. Oh Holy Jesus they are so paranoid! Paranoid over everything. Not everyone on this weary globe is overtly or psychologically going to rip off any body else! Fear of war, fear of hate, fear of love, horror of openness (& openmindedness), paranoid over games of power, games of lust, paranoid over a willing, tender skin; fear of the unknown & conforming to mistrust their own inner reality.

It is, indeed, mindblowing to watch these people play their games of paranoia & oppression.

Yet the gentle skies of October reach out & make you feel your face toward the sun. Today the sky is so heavy with blue! Thin puffs of cloud decorate the skyscape in the magick land where breezes blow warm, fragrant & friendly.

This is the last day of the month, All Hallows Eve. Tonight the goblins & ghosts, witches & werewolves will snarl, carrying their baskets across a patch of darkened street & hit a square of frontporch light, ring the doorbell, & the front door of the American dwelling will open & voices will announce "trick or treat!" The stars of heaven will look down at this night on the planet, & I fancy they wink with no small secret knowledge.



Note of Interest: In the latest issue of MOEBIUS TRIP (#6 annish) I wondered how the ANALOG Analytical Laboratory would rate the collaborative yarn by Ben Bova and Harlan Ellison called Brillo (Aug. 1970); just how would John Campbell's readers rate something by a prince and literary pied-piper of the American New Wave? To my own personal surprise the results in the December issue shows Brillo in second place, topped by part 3 of Hal Clement's Star Light.

Apron Chains by Christopher Anvil; (ANALOG, Dec. 1970), comprising 8 pages, with interior illo by Frank Freas.

It's one of the strangest stories I've ever read. Seems to me it's fantasy on a broad level, but then again what is considered fantasy today will be the S-F of tomorrow, / vice versa. I just don't know how to describe or even attempt explanation ... it's a "what-if, world of when" type of happening. I'd be very interested in knowing what you dear tender readers out there feel about Apron Chains. Is it fantasy, really? Is it really S-F? Well, how bouts science-fantasy? #help*

Darkside Crossing by James Blish; (GALAXY SF, Dec. 1970), comprising 22 pages, with cover and interior art by Jack Gaughan.

What's rather surprising about this latest James Blish story is that the opening scene is what you might call "sexual", yet the author maintains his clinical outlook throughout the story. However the clinical outlook is one of Blish's literary traditions.

John Hillary Dane, one of the world's richest men, wants out; out of the whole impossible mess and frustration the world has to offer. So what happens is he secretly treks through outer space to a newly discovered planet which has a dwarf star. During this far, far journey he plays tapes of classical music to help relieve boredom. Finally he arrives upon the seething surface of his own private world ... and there the story ends.

The classical music sequences flashes to mind Space Odyssey, and, overall, Darkside Crossing could be considered rather unique in sf, even for the standards Blish sets for himself.

In the Cards by Robert Bloch; (WORLDS OF FANTASY, Winter, 1970-71), comprising 12 pages, with interior illo by Jack Gaughan.

This is Bloch's first appearance in a fantasy or sf magazine since last year's shocker Double Whammy (in FANTASTIC, Feb. 1970); however, as I'm sad to report, In the Cards isn't a very successful effort, considering his brilliant masterworks of the far and recent past. I fear that all too many of his stories tend to be hacked out of the traditions he has himself established. Hell, Robert Bloch is a damn fine writer, and I did enjoy his latest short story, but it's far from a shocker.

Note of Interest: This issue of WORLDS OF FANTASY is the best to date that the UPD Publishing Corp. and editor Ejler Jakobsson have come up with. The lead novel is Ursula K. LeGuin's The Tombs of Atuan, sequel to Wizard of Earthsea, which also carries a most striking cover by Gaughan. Two special features: the guest editorial What Do You Mean--Fantasy? by Ted Sturgeon; and Lester del Rey's Among the Grimoires, an informative account of current newsstand fantasy classic paperbacks.

Note of Interest: Sturgeon will have a new collection of stories out soon called Theodore Sturgeon Is Alive and Well!, including Crate (KNIGHT, October 1970) and Uncle Frennis (ADAM, December 1970). And that's pretty farout, isn't it?

.....Bill Wolfenbarger/Wyanet, Illinois/November 1970.



BOOK REVIEWS

THE SHIPS OF DUROSTORUM, by Kenneth Bulmer, Ace Double 76096, 75¢ (with "Alton's Unguessable," by Jeff Sutton).

Readers who suffer from eidetic memories may recall a 1969 pot-boiler by Bulmer entitled "The Wizards of Senchuria." Well, the Wizards are back, at least as an off-stage presence, and so are some of the other characters, dimensions and strange alien races that made that novel what it was. Crud. This one achieves approximately the same heights.

Sometimes I wonder why I continue reading and reviewing Bulmer. Certainly I gain nothing of value from the reading: I have yet to read anything by this author that is worth the price of the paper it is printed on. And my reviews accomplish nothing but the garnering of mild hostility from readers who find it unseemly for me to constantly be attacking Bulmer. I assure you, there is nothing at all personal in this. I am perfectly willing to believe that Ken Bulmer is a marvelous fellow whom I would like on sight, and believe me, no one would be happier than me if he wrote a novel about which I could honestly find something favorable to say. But he hasn't, and I hold no great expectation that he will. Bulmer is a hack, who churns out science fantasy just meeting the minimum standards of a not very impressive line, the Ace Doubles.

"The Ships of Durostorum" is 95 pages of loosely put together verbal garbage totally without redeeming feature. It is part of a series of novels, loosely arrayed around the same central idea and having some characters in common, and this novel is typical of all of them: cardboard characters running through various dimensions, encountering a miscellaneous shovelful of alien races, and foiling the machinations of the Bad Guys. Really, there's no more to it than that, unless you count the actual writing technique, which I would call on a level with comic book writing except that some comic books are better.

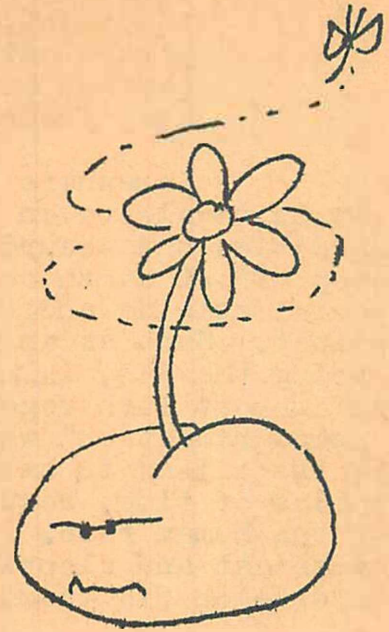
Even the Gaughan cover isn't one of his best, which figures, I suppose...

-----Ted Pauls

*

THE TWILIGHT MAN, by Michael Moorcock, Berkeley Medallion S1820, 75¢.

"Primarily," the author writes in his introduction to this book, "the story is about fear and its results." He goes on to observe:



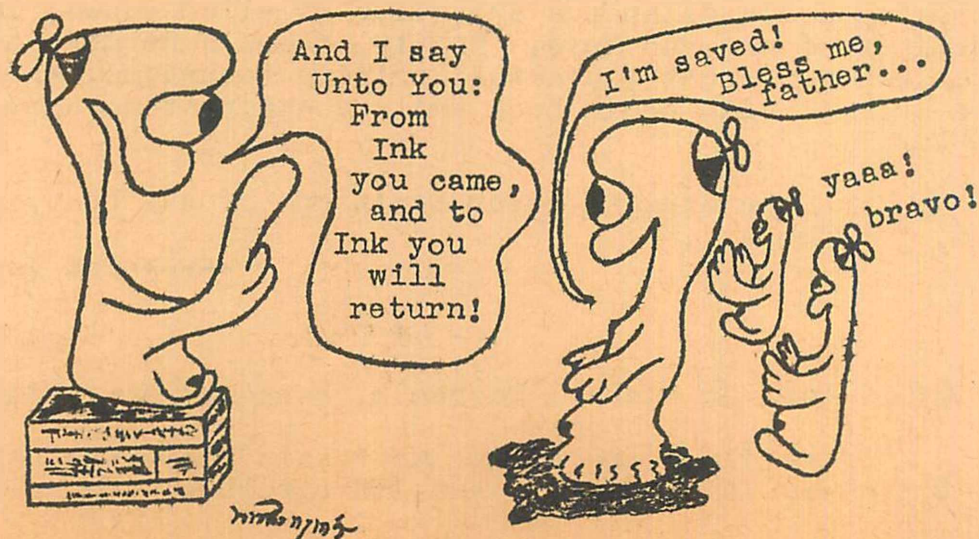
"The symbolism in it is not obscure and may even be a bit too obvious for some. The fear, in this case, is the fear of death and the despair that comes with it. Essentially the novel is still romantic and extravagant, but I now think the view it takes is psychologically realistic in the description of the perfect society and how it can decline rapidly once its 'freedom from fear' is removed."

Somewhere in "The Twilight Man" there is a reasonably competent novelette on this theme, but it is overwhelmed by banal absurdities and absurd banalities. Such as deus ex machina aliens who stop off at Earth on their way to the edge of the universe to commit racial suicide and, for no apparent reason, halt the rotation of the planet. Such as an Earth which, frozen with one side constantly facing the Sun, is merely a trifle hot on its bright side, continuing to support lush vegetation and human life. Such as the unexplained "omega radiation" which exists as a byproduct of the forces employed by the aliens to halt the rotation of the globe and which, over a period of time, results in the sterilization of the surviving members of the human race. It is as if Moorcock deliberately chose the clumsiest and sloppiest possible contrived background against which to develop his theme.

"The Twilight Man" is disappointing because it is not without merit. There are some worthwhile elements, but they are counter-balanced at every point by essentially second-rate work: a few good ideas, and a handful of tired, uninspired, hack ideas ... one or two well-drawn characters, but a half-dozen cardboard cut-outs ... a few vivid scenes amid a terrain of depressing greyness. One could easily believe this novel to have been a collaboration between Moorcock and, say, Kenneth Bulmer; but in fact it is simply a collaboration between Moorcock's very genuine talent and the lack of discrimination which has thus far prevented him from achieving the position in the SF field to which that talent may one day carry him.

This novel is a radically rewritten version of a serial that appeared in New Worlds in 1964. If the author keeps radically rewriting it every few years, by 1980 or so it will have been distilled into a 45-page story that I can recommend. Let's wait.

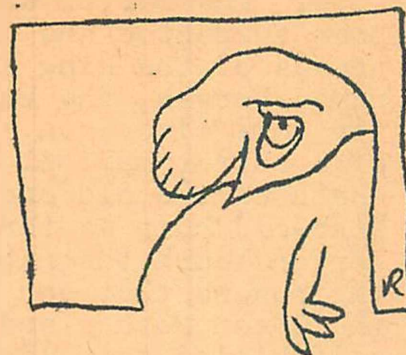
-----Ted Pauls.



T I P T O E I N G
T H R O U G H T H E
T R I L O G I E S

by

ROGER BRYANT



EVERYBODY is writing trilogies these days. After the impact of THE LORD OF THE RINGS, and Jane Gaskell's "Atlan" books, and Eddison's "Zimraviva" series, and Mervyn Peake's "Gormenghast" trilogy (Oh, just in passing: there's a new clothbound edition of Peake's work out. It restores a lot of material cut from the paperbound editions, and adds a lot more of the author's illustrations. It's expensive, but worth it to some), every fantasy writer, of real or imagined talent, has started writing his stuff in triplicate. Here are a few of the sets of triplets that have been born lately.

I've been reading Avram Davidson's sf for years now and thinking of it as average. Nothing to be condemned, but precious little of it is worth raving about, either. So it came as a very pleasant surprise to find him a master craftsman in the realm of imaginative fantasy. His THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR is likely to be a Hugo contender; he has also just published THE ISLAND UNDER THE EARTH, which might also be one if it were a complete work. But ISLAND is the first segment of a trilogy, and whereas most trilogy pieces are written to stand at least fairly well alone, this one comes to a screeching halt and leaves everything hanging at its end. This leads me to expect that the remaining parts (to be titled THE SIX-LIMBED FOLK and THE CAP OF GRACE) will be coming along very soon.

The "Island" of the title is an alternate world, apparently related physically to our own earth. A part of the plot, not fully explained here but presumably to be resolved in the remainder, involves the interactions of the two worlds and the earthquakes and other calamities caused thereby; this volume ends in a cataclysmic cliffhanger. At any rate, this world has a substantial centaur population (the "six-limbed folk," of course) and a goodly number of human characters competing in their search for a sort of parallel to the Holy Grail (the "cap of grace"). Their trials and tribulations make for interesting reading, and promise well for the remaining volumes.

(Avram Davidson, THE ISLAND UNDER THE EARTH, Ace Science Fiction Special #37425, 75¢. Does no one at Ace know about the word "fantasy"? At least half of their "science fiction" specials aren't.)

*

Another first volume is DERYNI RISING by Katherine Kurtz. This is one of those Adult Fantasies Lin Carter has been putting out

for Ballantine, and this is the first original one.

And a very good beginning. The setting is a world which the author describes as being roughly parallel to Wales in the 9th century A. D. The Deryni are a race of wizards who, though not evil, have been suspected and persecuted by humans for several generations. The armies of the king of Gwynedd, however, are led by a Deryni half-breed named Morgan, the king's closest friend. The kings of Gwynedd have for some time been able to take on themselves the Deryni magic by means of a secret magical ceremony; it is passed to a new king after the death of the old one. So when Morgan's king dies, and the fourteen-year-old heir is threatened by his murderess, it becomes urgent that Morgan learn the nature of the ceremony and invest the young king with the powers that can save him. And do it in spite of the opposition of the Queen Mother and most of the nobles, who suspect that Morgan himself killed the elder king.

It all makes an excellent suspense story. It's set in a well-defined and richly depicted world and (unlike a lot of sorcery-encrusted novels) the magic seems plausible. And unlike THE ISLAND UNDER THE EARTH, this first of three novels can be read alone. Highly recommended.

(Katherine Kurtz, DERYNI RISING, Ballantine Adult Fantasy #01981, 95¢.)

*

And as long as we're on the subject of Lin Carter's Adult Fantasy Novels, it might be well to talk about three volumes by William Morris that have appeared in that series. Not a trilogy, really, they are two novels in three volumes.

William Morris was, as Carter goes to great pains to tell you, a medievalist who found himself stranded in the 19th century. Since he found the trends of the world of his birth so deplorable, he set about re-creating the past by writing imitations of the great medieval romances. His first several works are historical novels set in the real world, but (having gotten smart at last) beginning with THE WOOD BEYOND THE WORLD he began setting his stories in created worlds, thus (as Carter has pointed out in darn near every introduction in the series) "inventing" fantasy as a genre.

After THE WOOD, Morris wrote a far longer work titled THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END. Ballantine had to put this one into two volumes.

Both of these books are, as I said, imitations of medieval romances. As they should, they deal with fair and virtuous young men who leave homes with which they are not happy, and travel the world to seek adventure and love. Both leave him happily ever after with the woman of his dreams whom he has won in a great number of adventures and perils.

Between the beginning and the end, they are, of course, fairy tales. If you like grown-up fairy tales, you'll like these books. If you don't, or if you tend to get nauseated by the medieval view of love in bloom, or irritated by people who blush for any reason at all, you probably won't care for them.

dictionary handy. Preferably the O.E.D. Because if you're going to get full measure of these stories, you'll want to know the meaning of such terms as sele of the day (like "top of the morning"), thrall (bond-servant), rede (advice), carle and carline (peasant man and woman), or gossip (god-parent or god-child). And many more. But fairy-tale fanciers, don't hesitate. These are good ones.

(William Morris, THE WOOD BEYOND THE WORLD, Ballantine #01652, 95¢; THE WELL AT THE WORLD'S END, #s 01982 & 02015, 95¢ each.)

*

And then there's James Blish. He's written a trilogy with four novels. So far. They have the general title "After Such Knowledge." And they don't fit most of the assumptions we usually make about trilogies.

The first novel in the series is DOCTOR MIRABILIS, an historical fantasy about Roger Bacon. Bacon was a very learned Franciscan monk of the thirteenth century who involved himself with magic, alchemy and "the occult." A magickal legend has grown up about him, but Blish notes in his Foreword that although his works are enormous in quantity, what we know about the events of his life is absurdly little. This novel, at all events, is an interesting historical biography.

The book itself is possessed of a complicated history. It was first published in England, and when the author failed to find an American publisher within the legal period of time, he was forced to publish it himself in order to protect the copyright. So my copy was mimeo'd on legal-sized sheets and obtained through the James Branch Cabell Society. This edition is sold out. Now I understand that an American house has purchased the book for clothbound publication, and it may someday appear in paper covers. I recommend it if it does.

The second book in this "trilogy" is A CASE OF CONSCIENCE. You're more likely to have heard of this one. It was a Ballantine paperback, and more recently a Walker hardcover reprint. This story is set in the rather distant, star-traveling future of mankind. It, too, deals with the Church of Rome, for here we have a Jesuit priest who is also a biologist on a very curious planet. To the priest, the planet seems to be a denial of his faith and the doctrines of the Catholic Church. He becomes convinced that the entire planet, and its evolutionary processes, are a creation of Satan to deceive mankind. Yet even in this belief he runs afoul of his Church, which asserts that Satan has the power of delusion, but not of creation. The good Friar must at last test his faith by attempting to exorcise the entire planet. It's another very well-written story.

What was supposed to be the third and last novel in this "trilogy," BLACK EASTER, is a problem. One thinks of trilogies as being at least vaguely connected, and internally consistent; but this last novel, set in the very near future, ends in such a way as to make the further future of A CASE OF CONSCIENCE impossible. Oh, well, writers have their little foibles, don't they? BLACK EASTER is, to my mind, the most powerful book in the series. It's a novel of black magic, complete with all those authenticating details from the grimoires to show that Blish knows what he is talking about. To the student of magic the best thing about this book is the way Blish has adapted the Secret Tradition to the modern age; to the rest of us the

best thing is the story and the gripping technique with which it is told. I usually hate to hear it said of a book that "you can't put it down," but for me it was true of this story. BLACK EASTER tells how Theron Ware, the greatest-ever practitioner of the Black Art, released forty-eight demons from the Pit and thus precipitated Armageddon. The problem is, who will win Armageddon?

The Roman Church appears again, in the form of a group of monks under a special papal dispensation to practice White Magic, and here attempting to oppose Ware. The central theme of the trilogy seems to be an investigation of certain long-accepted Christian doctrines; here it is the matter of God's eventual triumph over Satan. At any rate, it is a marvelous story, highly recommended.

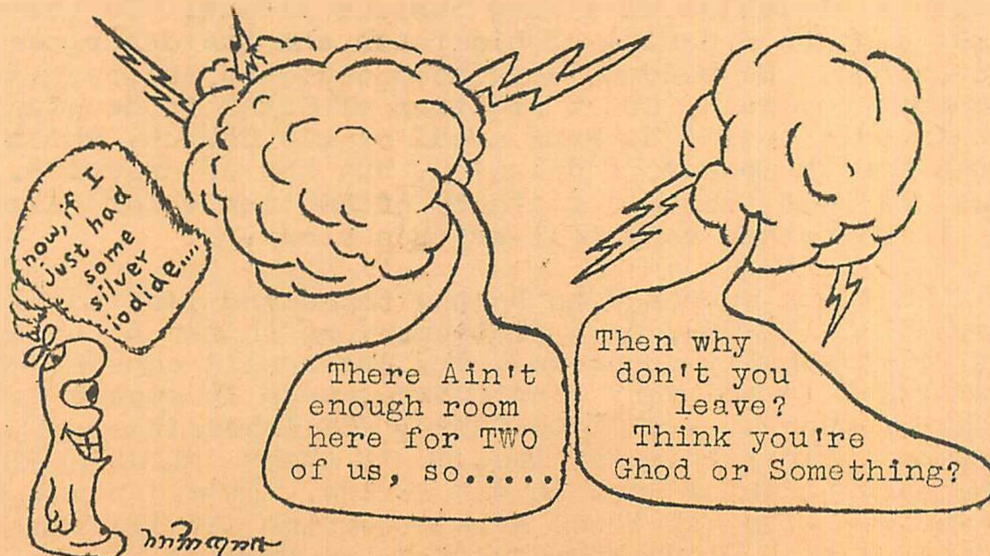
Along with internal consistency, one also expects of trilogies that they be in three parts. But the August-September issue of Galaxy carried, complete in that issue, a novella sequel to BLACK EASTER titled THE DAY AFTER JUDGMENT. It will surely soon be out in paperback, and if you missed it in the magazine, watch for the book. In its original form it seemed to lack some of the power of its predecessor, and I think some obvious opportunities were missed, but the author has every chance to repair that as he fleshes out the novella to book size. Here's a Strangelove-ish general at war with the forces of Hell, a sly reference to "President Agnew," a scattering of names-we-all-know, and an answer to the question, "Can Evil exist if there is no power of Good?" And at least it ends the problem of a future in which A CASE OF CONSCIENCE can take place, though it makes you wonder about the continued basis for the Catholic Church.

(James Blish, A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, Walker, \$4.95; Ballantine edition out-of-print at this writing, but may be reissued. BLACK EASTER, Dell, #0653, 75¢.)

*

After writing all that, I look back over and consider how much money I've spent on all those books (and will spend on the ones that haven't come out yet), and how much time I've spent reading them.

But it was a delightful way to spend both.



I enjoyed andy offutt's article last time about all those impossible things, those archeological anomalies and Fortean fragments that aren't supposed to exist. Naturally I desperately want to believe they're all the result of alien intervention in human affairs or pre-historic terrestrial supercivilizations.

But in some cases I have grave reservations about assigning such far-out explanations to strange artifacts or phenomena, and in other cases I don't have enough specialized knowledge to even hazard a guess as to the true explanation.

Now andy didn't cite his sources, which is quite all right for a fanzine article (and besides that, I already know where to look); but this illustrates a point.

Take Charles Fort for example: he's a secondhand or thirdhand or nth-hand source, and that's why a lot of his signs and wonders aren't all that earthshaking. Most of his data he found in books or periodicals; I can only remember two or three strange events which he said he actually witnessed (one of them was his own doing--he supposed; he stared at a picture and after a while it dropped off the wall).

The true stories behind a lot of those wonderful impossibles are lost forever in the misty past--all Fort preserved were newspaper clippings. We don't know whether his observers were truthful, or accurate, or mistaken in their conclusions. True, some of the events he mentions were witnessed by many, such as the rains of blood, rains of frogs, and various UFOs. True, he cites cases of scientific studies being made. But still, the data is far away from us in space or time, and is controversial even today.

I once tried to convince a group of SF pros that UFOs might be spaceships, that is, that the idea wasn't utterly impossible. This was at the SFWA Southern Nebula banquet in New Orleans last year. (andy gave a speech, but I don't think he was at my UFO defense.)

Well, what it boiled down to was that everybody agreed that people could be mistaken about those weird lights in the sky. Here Dan Galouye told us about the time he'd seen ball lightning roll back and forth on an airplane wing.

Sure, I said, anybody could make that kind of error. But what about closeup eyewitness observations of what looked like solid, symmetrical objects hovering near ground level?

No dice. They wouldn't buy it. A delusion or a lie.

Now I hasten to add that this is a reasonable answer. It's reasonable because it jibes with common everyday experience.

But can't you just imagine what would happen if somebody really did see something weird, something at ground level, and tried to tell others about it? They wouldn't believe him, would they? He would soon discover that if he didn't want to be branded a chrome-plated nut he'd better button his lip.

Funny thing, you know. In lots of UFO cases this is what happens. In fact, some people see things and don't report them to anyone but close friends or neighbors. Of course, this can be explained as an attention-getting device employed by an insecure personality. But what if they've never reported such a thing before or since their UFO experience? And other people won't make a report unless they're granted anonymity.

Imagine this fellow: he sees this big flying saucer, with or without aliens, just hovering there a few feet over his lawn, making his dogs bark, maybe scorching his grass. And he knew it was real. And later he tried to tell people. But



they wouldn't believe him. The grass just lost its will to live, they say.

But he knew he saw something real.

But the people he loved and trusted try to get him into a psychiatrist's office.

He might even go crackers.

Funny thing, you know. That reaction has been observed too. It makes you wonder.

The point is, even if the thing is real, even if the Martians have landed, you won't be believed under any circumstances, unless you can produce proof of some kind. And even then, some people won't believe you. But there are cases involving people you know where you don't need proof to know they saw something unusual. And if you're familiar with UFO sightings, you know what they're trying to describe even if they can't describe it so well. But sometimes they're intelligent and articulate, not dummies. Had it been anything else, you'd know they saw what they say they saw.

I had a personal experience with a reaction of the first type I described. As for the second, as Charles Fort might say, "I have clippings..."

We'll hang a man on eyewitness testimony, but when a group of people see a UFO that's a bit more substantial than a wisp of foxfire, that's not enough evidence for the presence of--shall we say, a superior technology? Quick, Henry, the Flit! Make the big bad datum go away!

Of course the best evidence would be a fully intact UFO with pilot. Most people say they won't believe in alien spaceships until one lands on the White House lawn and demands an audience with Spiro Agnew's wristwatch.

But there're some cases that are bolstered by evidence that's impressive, though not absolutely compelling. You just sort of get a feeling that, by God, there's something there--something alien. A few Kodak photos of a dark shape that seems to move just beyond the garage, maybe. And the experts study them and say:

"This is one of the few UFO reports in which all factors investigated--geometric, psychological and physical--appear to be consistent with the assertion that an extraordinary flying object, silvery, metallic, disk-shaped, tens of meters in diameter, and evidently artificial, flew within sight of two witnesses. It cannot be said that the evidence positively rules out fabrication, although there are certain physical factors such as the accuracy of certain photometric measures of the original negatives which argue against a fabrication." Case 46, "Scientific Study of UFOS" (Condon Project; Bantam Books.)

Condon was the fellow who said nothing useful would be gained by studying UFOs. Me, I'm more curious.

In some of these cases you get a feeling. It's this feeling more than anything evidential and substantial that puts me somewhere between the true believers and the "open-minded" skeptics.

(Once I had intended to make a list of the cases in the Condon Report that seemed to verify the artificial object theory; I think there are a few of them, but, well, don't have time for it now.) (That's a copout if you ever heard one, right?) (But the cases are there. I have a handwritten note on them somewhere around the place. Charles Fort had pigeonholes in his walls to store data. I'm not that systematic.)

Maybe I'm the only one who won't go into cultural shock when the prophet Ezekiel is returned to earth by the fiery chariot that snatched him in 600 BC after two or three subjective years of time dilation travelling.

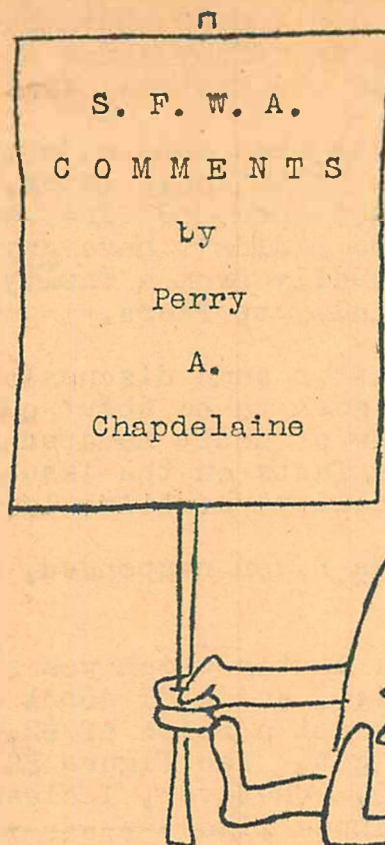
Chills and thrills in Part II. Stay tuned, folks.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Pages 41 and 42 of your Moebius Trip #6 by David Gerrold and Michael Ward represent the first material I've seen which refers to me by a set of dashed lines. If you've quoted the gentlemen correctly, Michael Ward calls me by 12 dashed lines, two sets evenly divided, and David Gerrold only 6 dashes, ending with the word mess.

Now honestly, those two gentlemen are more imaginative than that! Well, aren't they?

((Editor's note: Thou hath said it. In an effort to obviate fantasies which the insertion of Mr. Chapdelaine's name in the material herein referred to might have engendered in the minds of MT's readers, I myself substituted the "dashed lines." Now, with the decks cleared for action, we invite you to proceed with the story. Have fun.))



But then this whole flap is quite extraordinary to me: everyone wants to know what in hell went on inside the SFWA Nebula Awards Business meeting, and the bullshit, apparently, has been flying from coast to coast ever since.

A tape recording was made of the business meeting especially so no one could be mis-quoted, or, as events turned out, probably to have a permanent record for some sort of impeachment or court action, I think.

Well, as long as old Williams' surrogate, Perry A. Chapdelaine, is now only referred to as 12 dashes, evenly divided into two sets of six, and six dashes, ending with the word mess, respectively, I think it's time some facts be given the fans so the stench will clear.

James Blish, Anne McCaffrey, Michael Ward and Barry Malzberg are the only members of SFWA that had the guts to come to me direct and to ask if I had done what they had been told. Well -- not exactly direct -- some went around, some accusatory, but finally all direct. The others? Well, they either just don't give a damn or play ring-about-the-secret when they aren't getting up keep-out-the-reporter business meetings.

We start with the Madeira Beach, Florida, Milford Writers' conference of last June 1969. I didn't play by the rules there, and made an ass of myself. Had I known the rules, I might have been less of an ass, but then I suppose I would still have been an ass for other reasons. I was helped in my writing. Today I can write better for it.

During that conference Anne McCaffrey casually stated some-17

thing about a new contract she would be getting from Ballantine. Now everybody knows that Betty Ballantine is a good friend of Anne McCaffrey and vice versa, and before you read further, I just want to say that I don't care whether or not they are good friends, or whether or not Anne McCaffrey earns a cent a word or a dollar a word. That's her business and Betty's, friends or not.

But when Anne made the statement about the new contract, I paid little attention. Later, in writing to Piers Anthony Jacob, I told him that Anne McCaffrey now got about \$8,000 advance on her books. At that time I didn't have any idea how much writers got, and I was quoting casually from a faulty memory, not realizing how touchy this was, especially to Piers.

After some discussion with Piers, via phone and letter, the figure was seen to be about quintuple what Piers was getting, and a large shadow of doubt hovered over it. Piers relayed the info, and request for facts on the issue, to Gordon Dickson, then president of SFWA -- I believe sometime late in 1969, probably about October.

He never responded, but we'll return to Piers' quest in a moment.

A letter which was sent to Piers Anthony at that time, by me, I quote; I said, "I don't remember, now, whether Anne McCaffrey told me she got a raise of \$2,000, or \$3,000, or what over what she originally got. The figure \$8,000 sticks with me but it may have been only \$6,000. Whatever, I clearly remember my shock at its size compared to people like -----, who definitely got more than -----"

"Maybe she lied to me.

"Maybe she mis-understood Betty at the time. (Betty Ballantine)

"Maybe my memory is completely false. I do good remembering principle, but not detail."

Remember this was all discussed within the context of making a case for financial disclosure among SFWA officers so that no one could accuse anyone of making private deals for themselves, something both Piers and I had heard much from others.

And remember, too, that I don't now and never have believed that Anne McCaffrey or Betty Ballantine were wrong-doing, although anyone who can read the English language correctly should be able to read that much without this additional qualifying paragraph.

Now that I'm more familiar with what writers get -- often only 2% of the pie -- I'm sure it was a damn faulty memory. How does one apologize for that? Especially when no harm was intended, or even conceived, in the first place?

I knew nothing of the brew that was in the making from Oct. 22, 1969 until March 2, 1970, when I suddenly received a standard type "I'm warning you" letter from attorney Joe Hensley informing me that my rough draft of a letter -- clearly marked rough draft, by the way -- mailed to Terry Carr (then SFWA Forum editor) and a copy to Anne McCaffrey, Gordon Dickson and Damon Knight, was libelous and "actionable." (Anything is actionable and my attorney, on checking, said it was not libelous, but as Joe later pointed out, that's how fun cases begin -- disagreement between lawyers.)

Back again: Robert Moore Williams, in his fight against Ultimate, had dug up letters which seemed to prove that stories were being printed illegally. These were forwarded to Gordon Dickson by Williams, whence Gordon sent them on to Joe Hensley and a letter to Robert Moore Williams which Bob interpreted as a slough-off of his admirable leg work.

Bob triggered, as all of us do now and then, and sent a letter to me which he also sent to SFWA officials, and resigning from SFWA.

Depressed myself, because all of my friends had resigned, the letter of Bob's and his construction of Gordon's action, triggered me, whence the rough draft copy to the SFWA Forum editor, Terry Carr, which named no names, fingered no people, but in rather sloppy language, poked fingers to many of SFWA's chief weaknesses.

I can only assume on the basis of Anne McCaffrey's triggering action, through Hensley to me, that she connected something in that rough draft with Piers' search for facts, and it must have also crossed in her mind with frequently heard rumors that "Anne McCaffrey is on the take with Ballantine, Chapdelaine says," rumor, incidentally, which I never heard at all during all the months of this narrative.

I called Joe Hensley on the phone next day to find out why Anne was threatening suit, and was frankly puzzled about the trigger response of my honest criticism of SFWA policies. (It was poorly written; Terry Carr rightly asked me to withdraw it; I did. But it never, ever had anything to do with Anne McCaffrey or other personalities.)

My talk with Hensley was a calm one, and reasonable, but only by accident, in a way, did I learn for the first time that Anne was plagued with the "On the take from Ballantine," rumors, and had apparently pinned down the source as me.

I say, by accident, because I had said in my covering-letter to Anne, a copy of which had gone to Terry Carr, that I thought she sometimes confused personality and principle, but that I didn't think Damon Knight did, thus found him possibly one of the very few SFWA officers, or former officers, that I'd genuinely trust to represent me with publishers, had I the need or inclination to take that route.

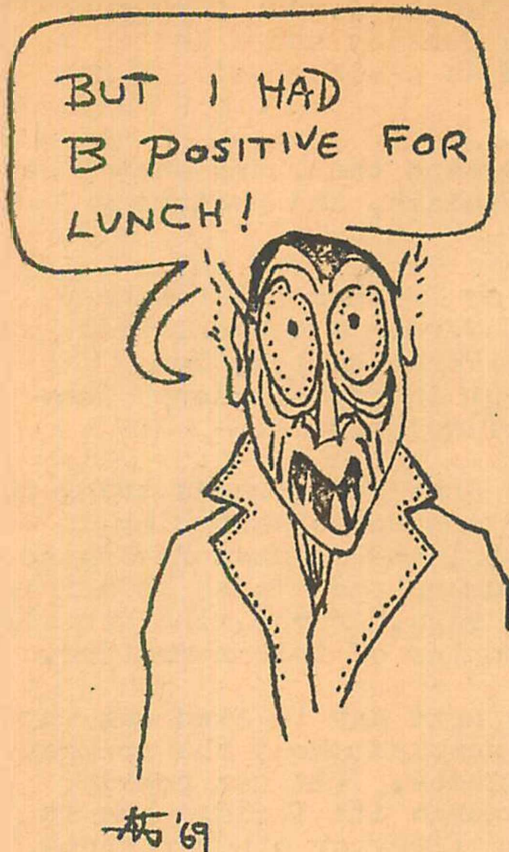
When Hensley's legal letter came, I assumed Anne was upset only because of that comment, whereas Joe Hensley apparently assumed that I understood the "On the take," thing was what bothered Anne.

But fortunately I did find out before hanging up. And I was aghast, was I!

I think all SFWA officers are in a position to get prestige or special attention from editors and publishers, and that also their personal contacts, by virtue of their special positions, can be used to the benefit of their special friends and to themselves. This is a hell of a far cry from claiming that any officer is "on the take" -- certainly a far stronger statement than anything I had intended.

Remember -- I'm isolated from Machievellian groups, their rumors and their tactics. I don't ever see another SFWA member or writer, unless I go to a meeting, which has so far in maybe an already over-long writing career included exactly five. Match that against 19

others who trigger rapidly, yet run from meeting to meeting, from coast to coast, periodically.



Anne, apparently thinking me an ingrate and bastard of the clearest water, wrote a long, long letter which asked all kinds of questions. I answered in kind, like her, spending several days digging out my files. I was appalled at the things that had gotten into her mind.

On March 10, 1970, I received a letter from Anne apologizing for pushing the panic buttons for believing that I was the originator of the \$6,000--\$8,000 advance.

I read her letter while waiting in the lobby of the Nashville airport, ready to leave for the SFWA Nebula Awards Banquet within perhaps a half hour. The figure \$6,000--\$8,000 she quoted seemed terribly high to me, and frankly I couldn't remember having quoted that much. (My God! I hold down two jobs, write every spare inch, take care of ten kids, a farm and drive to work and back at least an hour and a half each day. And I should remember all that crap?)

So nearly a half a year had passed. I sat down, in that airport, and thought again. Yes! I'd given Piers some figures, but it seemed to me they were more like \$3,000 to \$5,000. I wrote to Anne that it seemed to me that I had quoted two other writers some figures and maybe I was the source of her rumor, unintentionally, but it had been rather innocent, and sure as hell didn't have anything to do with her being on the take with anyone. (The \$3,000 and \$5,000 figures I just quoted may be wrong, too. That was a hand-scribed note, mailed in the airport, and I don't have a copy.)

I arrived in California OK -- at least the pilot didn't trigger -- and that evening called one of the SFWA Banquet preparation big-shots. That person indicated happiness to hear from me, and gave me clear, distinct, precise orders to stay in my room, and they'd call on me as soon as they'd picked up somebody at the airport. We'd go out together, the person said.

They were supposed to call me at 8:00 P. M.

I stayed dressed tight, tie, white shirt, suit coat, all that folderol, and lonely, until 10:00 P. M. before I finally realized I'd been left out. Still I thought little of it.

It was not until after the business meeting, which I'll go to in a moment, that I learned that Harlan Ellison was the person who was picked up at the airport, and that all who had joined the party, including our new SFWA secretary (a good friend of Anne McCaffrey's) and I think David Gerrold -- but can't remember for sure -- all sat in the same hotel as mine, bar-guzzling or talking or both.

Well, at least I had a good night's sleep, and when the business meeting came, I hid my paranoia the best I could (everyone in SF must have a certified paranoia, I believe) and joined in by sitting as close to the tape recorders as I could.

Oh yes. It did seem peculiar to me beforehand that David Gerrold would make a point of asking me if there was something that I wanted to put on the business agenda, almost as though I was being set up for something. But then, I tucked my paranoia back, even when I saw our new SFWA secretary monitor the petition at the door which requested that our old SFWA secretary be given a life membership in SFWA.

Let the kids play, I thought.

The real kids, like Mike Ward, were kicked out of the meeting. Harlan got up after the announcement that everything would be taped so that this time, there'd be no question about what was said and what was not. Allusion to my comments about the St. Louis SFWA Caucus, where things reported were not exactly the bias I had experienced and heard? At the time it didn't penetrate, but afterward -- well -- maybe!

He -- Harlan -- rather bluntly asked if anyone in the room thought that Anne McCaffrey was on the take with Ballantine. If so, they wanted to thrash it out right now! (I don't remember whether it was BY GOD! we want to thrash it out right now! or something more revolting, but only a play-back of the original tapes, certified by trustworthy people to be the originals, can settle that faint memory, can it?)

Harlan continued on the question, looking everywhere, it seemed, except at me. Finally he almost begged somebody to do or say something, at last turning to Norman Spinrad to ask if he, Norman, didn't have something to say. Norman, in essence, told him no, but whenever he got off of personalities, he did -- and that pretty well echoed my feelings, too.

The whole idea was so utterly fantastic that I seriously wondered about the emotional stability of those who would believe such a thing of Anne -- or of me, for that matter.

Piers Anthony I understand. He has a livelihood to make, and is usually a rather accurate historian. And he was warring with a publisher at the time.

But after that! Where did the rumor grow? Who could possibly believe either end of it? Why would they do so? Fabulous. Absolutely fabulous! Why hadn't I heard even a trickle-trackle of the monster until it had become SFWA-wide?

I think very highly of Anne McCaffrey. She was good to me, and she deserved better from me.

On March 4, 1970 Piers, not having heard from Gordon Dickson as yet, took his question to Anne McCaffrey where it probably should have gone in the first place. Anne answered Piers on March 9, 1970. On April 11, 1970, Piers wrote to Anne McCaffrey again. Keep in mind that Piers Anthony was unfamiliar with the "Anne McCaffrey is on the take," bit rumoring about, that he was still unfamiliar with the experience I had had at the West Coast SFWA Banquet. According to Piers, "She expressed amazement that there should be any suspicions concern

ing herself, and implied that she'd be happy to have as much as \$3,000." So though the rumor was false, started quite innocently, apparently from a months-earlier inquiry through Gordon Dickson -- but I can't be sure of this either so don't take it as gospel and don't really care -- it was a monstrous thing that grew and grew and grew.

Of course the rumor was false, and from Anne's letter, Piers is convinced it was false.

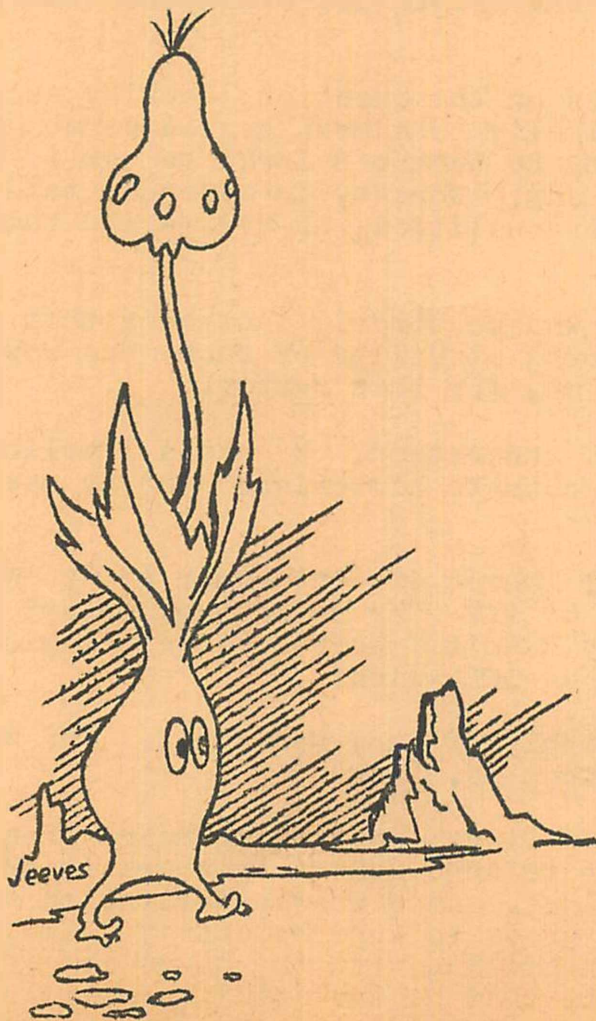
But my God! What a scurrying of dinosaurs, elephants, and sabre-tooth tigers before little mice! And the complex paths they follow as they hurry this way and that, apparently never knowing whether to charge or flee in wrath . . . !

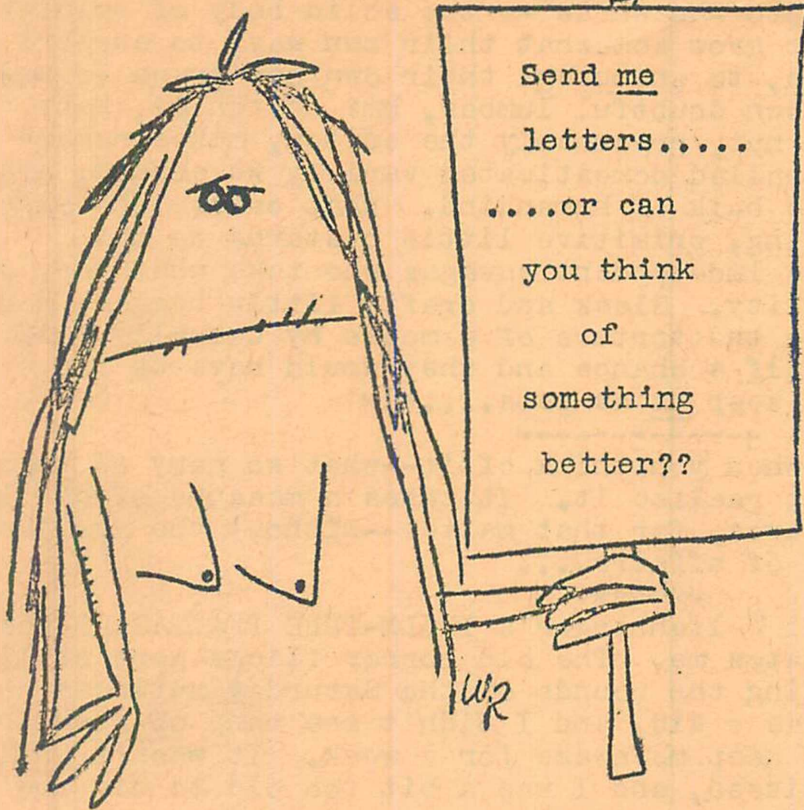
I haven't written about what I think of SFWA. That would probably make an excellent fanzine article, and maybe one day, soon, I'll do it. I'm not promising to do so, neither am I promising not to, preferring, as I've heard Hensley say, to be my own man.

Who was it said, "Crap on me once, shame on you; crap on me twice, shame on me!"

Well, I've been shaming myself for nearly a year now.

Any other doors you'd care to open up friend David and Mike?





JACK WODHAMS
8 Stone Street
BERALA, Sydney NSW 2141
Australia

...andrew j. offutt is a meathead, well-meaning, kindly and quite harmless, but he does seem to worry unnecessarily. It is not impossible that humans, and concomitant etcet-

eras, derive from prehistoric visitors from space. This solves the problem of where humans come from, but does not solve the problem of where the space-people come from. The art and artifacts he notes have delightful value for curiosity, and let us probe, probe and enjoy -- but always let us keep in mind the old saying about the number of methods that might be employed to ensure the decease of a pussy. My opinion of the wisdom of the ancients is no higher than my opinion of the wisdom of the moderns. Men do not, and have not, changed all that much; And another thing, it is amazing how the uncorroborated, unauthenticated word-of-mouth hearsay and assumption, provided by a bygone seers and throwbacks catalog, can become accepted unquestioned as fact, while much recent intensive investigation and studied postulation gets decried as being unworthy of man's effort, and balderdash besides.

To this interest in SFWA business, and to David Gerrold's ominous references to "trimming the dead wood." In these cases, typically, much of the "dead wood" cannot be pronounced to be quite completely dead, and some of the "live wood" might be said to be over-greedy for the sap.

If you follow me. It is very well to breezily speak of wielding the pruning-shears, but the elected tree-doctor's personal definition of just which twig is entirely lifeless will need to be very precise and prescriptively justified, otherwise, hoo-hay, soon you has got nothing but a stump, boy. To carry the analogy further, a tree has many parts, and each part is essential to the whole -- the solid body of opinion, and the stout branches that grow somewhat their own way, to support their own smaller offshoots, to encourage their own new green -- and to be burdened with their own doubtful lumber, hm? Watch it, baby.

On page 52, some nut, presumably the editor, makes remark to suggest that cats, the so-called domesticated variety we assume, are more civilised than are the bulk of humankind. What crap. The night-fighting, screaming, spitting, primitive little bastards do not civilise themselves and are independent savages who take what they can milk from human susceptibility. Sleek and crafty little beggar, have you ever seen one terminate the torture of a mouse by casually biting off its head? Give cats half a chance and they would have us for breakfast. They would not keep us as pets....*l*

l But that's precisely--when you think of it--what so many of them do, even the most men don't realize it. It takes a measure of civilization to keep pets--or slaves, for that matter--without the victims(?) recognizing the true state of affairs....

PAUL WALKER
128 Montgomery St.
Bloomfield, N.J. 07003

Bill Wolfenbarger's PFILM-TUBE PFANTASIES fascinates me. The old horror flicks were still making the rounds of the Saturday matinees when I was a kid, and I didn't see many of them then.

One EC comic was enough to keep me awake for a week. It wasn't until TV that I learned what I missed, and I was a bit too old to dig the later Frankenstein atrocities.

I did see FRANKENSTEIN and DRACULA play together in a local theater. They did not contain the scene Wolfenbarger claims they cut for TV, in which the monster tosses the little girl into the water. And I'm glad. It would have distorted the effect for me.

The essential ingredient of a successful Frankenstein is compassion for a misunderstood and tormented-to-madness monster. He is born asking for love and brutalized by a world that is more monstrous than he is, and he defends himself with less brutality than that world uses to persecute him.

According to John Baxter's SF IN THE CINEMA, the film was conceived by German-born Carl Laemmle, a veteran from The Golem-German school, who dressed the Shelley fantasy in psuedo-scientific trappings, and it was its original director, Robert Florey, who included the bit about a homicidal maniac's brain implanted into the monster. Both efforts distort the emotional impact of the novel, in which the monster is the hero, and the world the blind, unfeeling enemy.

The madman's brain idea is ridiculous and the pictures themselves seem efforts to overcome the handicap. (Hammer Film's Frankenstein was a very, very poor imitation, which cannot be taken seriously.) The phony science, however, added a great deal. The opening lab sequence in which the body is assembled and brought to life has never been duplicated.

In fact, the whole opening sequence, until the monster escapes, is what makes the film. In the clear light of day, even Karloff looks a bit ridiculous in that get-up. But I think the showing of the monster's murder of the little girl would have been a major mistake, and destroyed the viewer's sympathy for the monster entirely. In fact, the idea of it was wrong. There was sufficient motivation in both monster and mob to make for the same climax without that scene.

In any case, Dracula and Frankenstein were both films of

atmosphere and imagination rather than horror, which is a much cheaper emotion; They are the kind of films that improve on the tenth re-viewing, for you can ignore the more sensationalistic effects and concentrate on the artistry.

I disagree with Wolfenbarger about Lugosi's performance pleasing Bram Stoker; at least, in theory. Lugosi had as much in common with the true Count as I have. Stoker repeatedly made the point of the Count's fiery, demon-eyes, and his barbarian presence; while Lugosi is nothing of the kind. The Count had been a barbarian warrior, who dealt in the evil arts. Lugosi is very much the Anglicized Central European, who always keeps a stiffer upper lip; and his eyes are more demanding than overpowering.

The Hammer version came closer to the original, although it was a lesser work of art. The truth is that DRACULA, as literature, is a pulp-horror classic of pure sensationalism, devoid of serious intent. Lugosi lent the Count an air of respectability that Stoker did not.

As far as the censor philistinism goes, I do not hold it against them, for most horror films are so stupid and tasteless, a little snipping could only do them a service. The best elements of a horror story are the atmosphere and characterization of both victim and monster. It is a story of technique, which requires a master touch, which is why so few of them succeed. A horror story should capture a feeling of timelessness, of place, and combine this with the sturdiest characterizations to produce an ultimate effect. It is a kind of fantasy very akin to poetry and the "horror of it all" is its least significance. Gore galore is the cheapest, and least interesting, variety of horror: compare Blackwood and Stoker and see for yourself.

LEIGH EDMONDS ...I have no intention of getting into a fight
P.O.Box 74, Balaclava with Leon; I'll admit that his original arti-
Victoria 3183, Australia cle got me a little steamed up but he seems
a nice enough bloke and I see no reason to
continue. BUT: My attitude to fandom is that it is important because
fandom is made up of people. Whether or not these people are more im-
portant than other people is up to each individual to decide for him-
self. My decision is that fans are important because they are people
that I have come into contact with and it is important to be able to
understand and get along-with them, just as important as it is to be
aware of what is going along in the world. If you can't understand
and appreciate single people or people in small groups you have no
right to expect to be able to consider the wants and needs of people
"en masse." If you say that fandom is trivial then I don't see where
you can stop.

Here is a question: "Which is more important, fandom or the
New York Thoroughway?"

I do oppose so called "law and order," not because I don't
believe that there should be laws to govern the behaviour of certain
persons but because the way in which the term is being used these days
means, not "law and order" but "repression."

Most things I cannot disagree with since neither Leon nor
myself seem to know the answers. How do you get people to groove to
each other? I don't know. If TV is all they have how do we go about
improving that so that people can learn to live with each other? I
don't know.

At the moment I subscribe to the idea that life should be
dedicated to "wine, women and art" (Luther as quoted in a Busoni
opera). Supposing that this is the right way to see things -- and it
isn't, but then nothing really is -- how do we teach people the way to
live? HMMMMMM....

ROBERT S. COULSON
R.R.3,
Hartford City, Ind.47348

Since Leon Taylor is hair-splitting a bit himself I'd like to point out that law and order has nothing to do with "making people be nice to one another"; it has to do with preventing them from harming one another. It doesn't even succeed in that; there are thousands of ways of harming another person legally. But that's the intent. However, ignoring the plight of a sufferer isn't being nice to him, and does have a thing to do with law and order. I can walk away from a drowning child with perfect legality, as long as I didn't push him in to begin with.

I might also add, more to the point, that the reason violence exists is not due to any lack of conviction on the part of peace-lovers, but because violence works. Man is an animal who looks into the future -- but not very far. Man is very practical, and in the short run, violence is practical. It may not be practical in the long run, but how many men are willing to look that far ahead? And saying that there isn't any war that couldn't have been prevented or a criminal who couldn't have been set straight is getting dangerously close to Tom Sawyer's brag "I could push over that schoolhouse if I wanted to; only I don't want to." Because preventing wars and setting would-be criminals straight often takes ideal conditions -- which don't exist in real life. The American People -- by themselves, as Leon intimates. -- could no more have stopped World War II than they could create Utopia.

...Taylor again. No, it isn't coincidence that out of 24 suggestions made by LOCUS, 22 became nominees. Leon seems to feel that there is this vast supply of great science fiction to pick from for the Hugos, and there isn't. Any year that produces 20 stories worth being on a Hugo ballot is a good year, and it isn't all that hard to pick out the good ones (especially since you can discount original hardcovers, British magazines, etc. which aren't read by enough voters to get them on the ballot)....

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

MT#6 is a worthy annish, highlighted as it is by such unusual items as andy offutt's Fortean-style article and the equally Fortean Loch Ness pieces. Needless to say, this sort of material fascinates me, and the emphasis on the prehistoric past forms a perfect setting for Bob Tucker's article. Looking back on your first year, I'd say you have a lot to be proud of -- and I congratulate you for all the time and effort you've put into the 'zine and the results you've achieved....

LEE HOFFMAN
Basement
54 East 7 Street
New York, NY 10003

...Apparently Ted Pauls isn't the only one who was bothered by ATBK being serialized as a fantasy when it appeared to be S-F. Well, yes, I wrote it as S-F. The complicating factor seems to be that it is S-F about fantasy. The idea originated, in fact, in a discussion of the sword & force field school of S-F/fantasy (or whatever that stuff is) that took place at a Fanoclast meeting when Dave Van Arnham was working on STAR GLADIATOR (or as it was known affectionately at the time, STAR GOOGIE).

...The work-in-progress here, tentatively titled CHANGE SONG is definitely fantasy (I think).

ARTHUR HAYES
Box 1030, South Porcupine
Ontario, Canada.

IMPOSSIBLE by offutt: The very simple explanation for the impossible things discovered from time to time shouldn't have eluded everyone all these years...it's just that science fiction goes further back than most modern day historians have found evidence for. The cave-drawings were S-F Art. As for the Pre-Inca calendar, well, just an sf writer theorizing. As for that

masonry block, masonry water pipe, the 100-ton blocks that are upside-down, well, I ain't seen them, and offutt does write some s.f. so? And so on.

Pumilia: I do believe that the moon-shots were primarily propaganda motivated, but any serious propaganda is not going to be labeled as such and so, other official reasons had to be advanced. Secondarily, and of a similar nature, was and is the desire of the U.S. to be ahead of everybody else and THAT was sufficiently good to get the kind of support the project got. The transportation reason might have some merit, but primarily for its military significance, direct or indirect. The statement I find the hardest to accept is that "but most space military uses are defensive." *l*

l Ah, but at least, unlike the automobile, they're not offensive. (Being above the atmosphere and all....)

KEITH KRIEGER In a way, I'm glad I didn't see Marooned. I read the 2412 Masters book by Martin Caidin. The book was excellent and I Cape Girardeau, can still remember parts of it very vividly. All of Missouri 63701 the griping going around gives me the impression that the movie was terribly flawed. Of course, my not having seen it is a factor.

I think it would be interesting to see a one-shot put out on Ellison. If someone had the time and initiative to gather all of the articles on Ellison and the rebuttals to them and the counter-rebuttals, etc., it would be very interesting. "The Ellison Phenomenon" perhaps. His campaign statement made sense. To me, at least.

...For some reason, the cartoon figures of Jeff Schalles remind me of a human fetus. I wonder...could he be trying to tell us something?

ED R. SMITH Was that lovely Tim Kirk cover done on request for Route 2, Box 151-C your special Loch Ness Monster issue of Moebius Matthews, NC 28105 Trip? Or were you so inspired by the cover that you decided to write a couple of articles on Nessie?

l Either way I can't blame you, little as I enjoyed the Monster material in this issue; I find my eyes constantly returning to dwell upon Kirk's delightful art as I type this loc.

Many of us could only wish that life were as simple as portrayed in Leon Taylor's "Peace: A Crusade." For example, he refers to our "own continued refusal to solve the Japanese/German problem" as the reason for the US involvement in WW II. Solve in what way? I wish to hell Leon would explain his position; I know of many people who would like to believe war is as easy to avoid as he says in his article. I'm listed with Uncle Sam as a Conscientious Objector to this war, and consider myself opposed to other kinds of wars too. Yet I can't help but think that Leon's generalities serve as better ammunition for the "other" side than for the pacifist stand.

Your reviewer is right in his evaluation of "The Wizard of Id." It is the only daily comic around that occasionally tops that old fannish favorite, Peanuts. Think of the backlog of Id strips Fawcett is sitting on now--only two skinny paperbacks have come out so far, a year apart. And the strip has been going on for 5 or 6 years now.

Despite the large amounts of forgettable articles in MT this time, it is still one of the easiest fanzines to loc. And it is also one of the very few that still prints most of the mail it receives. It's good that you print all these, including the ones from beginning fans. I often wonder how some of the neofans react when they see these gigantic pro-dominated genzines of today. Can you imagine the reaction of a young reader of Amazing, who tries SFR after seeing a John Berry review? Used to be that a young fan immediately became a letterhack

and wrote reams of locs to the fanzines he received, so he could continue to receive them. As his writing improved, more and more editors would send him their publications--zap, instant fame. But even if he emerges from the shock of seeing his favorite pros slinging mud at each other and writes a letter, chances are it won't get printed, since Piers Anthony just sent in this groovy four page letter saying he does not have time to write letters to fanzines. So you're providing a useful service by printing a large letters section....

Ed, your comment on Steve Carrigan's letter was hard to believe. How could anyone who suddenly emerged from obscurity ((referring to J. J. Pierce)) to warn us all of the feelthy New Wave Plot be considered full of "tolerance and broadmindedness?" The mind boggles. *2*

1 Tim saw mention of Nessie in MT, that we'd probably have something coming up on the beasties, so prepared his cover as a magnificent surprise.

2 I mentioned in MT that I had not read Pierce's original "manifesto." It must have been a dilly, to have roused such widespread hostility. My guess is that, as usual, many fans over-reacted (and I read their opinions) which is why most of what I've read by Pierce since doesn't sound rabid at all.

BOB SMITH ...Perhaps present-day Fandom in the United States
1/64 Elouera Road is full of the misfits, mental emotional and social
CRONULLA, NSW 2230 misfits, as Harlan apparently says, but I would
Australia venture a reasonably qualified opinion that it hasn't always been that way (my contacts with fandom cover around eighteen years). A tidy portion of the young people of today (in fandom or elsewhere) could be described the same way, and fandom is a great place to work on it. Harlan's campaign statement seems reasonable to me, but then I am no writer. If Gerrold is an example of an SFWA member then I can readily see why it requires some "pruning" in the right places...

The "review" of The Glass Teat typifies much that I find quite incomprehensible and distant about your country; it was almost vulgar, and certainly hysterical. "...and so many other wonderful things"...my gawd.

I can sympathise with Bill Wolfenbarger; censors and what we do not get to see is a problem these days. As a member of the motion picture industry I am not happy about our attitude, either...

A good answer to Gerrold's hysteria, Ed.

Ed Cox is always readable. I'm with him about junkmail, although nobody ever sends me any porno stuff...well, not recently....

I have to agree with Leigh Edmonds (which, as some Aussie fans will tell you, is downright disloyalty 'cause we is always having a crack at the poor lad): compromise plus large dollops of that rare bird, tolerance, is what all these people who expect the whole damn world to come out into the streets and be beautiful with 'em should take time to cultivate and use.

Mervyn Barrett, you should know, is thoroughly part of Australian fannish history, so watch his natural Kiwi modesty. A good buddy.

WG Bliss: I am willing to read sexy sf if its readable, but it's been my experience that most "sexy" writing is just plain boring (pardon me). Farmer & Matheson wrote good sf, and you insult them by suggesting it was "sexy"...

RON L. CLARKE Thanks for all those issues of MOEBIUS TRIP....
78 Redgrave Rd., I have only recently returned from a trip myself
Normanhurst, NSW 2076 (overland to the UK then back to Aussie via the
Australia Panama Canal by ship)....

Haven't as yet seen Marooned: I suppose it's been on, but I've been away from "Civilization" (so called) for some time. I'm not so sure I'm back, yet, either. Even though the "Cold War" is taken for granted now, it's surprising how opinions have changed on the Western side. In the '50s you had the, almost, hatred in sf stories (Astounding etc) for the "Commies" and the other gooks; now the Russians can come up in stories as equals. Does this show that propaganda can hold up to a high pitch only for a (relatively) short period of years in a democracy? I am not so sure about the situation in Socialist States: they have all communications media tied up there. And look how long Comrade Mao has been going. On the way through Yugoslavia we found out something: it is not the People who make the policies; or even follow them all the way; even those working for the State--Customs for instance. If my trip showed me anything, it was that people are, underneath all their superficial masks, all the same in their basic ideas: those in the same line of work are receptive to others from entirely different political groups, or religions. One big, unhappy family.

BRIAN WILLIAMS
"Kenya", Ballinger,
Gt. Missenden,
Bucks., England

...MT6 was excellent. The new size can only be an improvement, and I hope you continue to produce such bumper-issues as this. The articles on Nessy were intriguing, and in the same way Andrew Offutt's piece was rewarding reading. EEEYADIDAHOODIT escaped my comprehension, I'm afraid, but Jeff Schalles' story of the sinister radiator is nearer home for me. In the antiquated sixth-form house of my school are some radiators with funny habits, and we too have a Roboserve drinks machine with a sense of humour, damn the thing! Terry Jeeves was as inimitably fannish as usual. He's running for TAFF, and I hope he makes it, in that I'd love to hear what you lot

~~Jeeves for TAFF--Jeeves for Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund--Terry Jeeves for TAFF~~

over there would make of him. He's very British! (and, while I think of it, his cartoon on p. 20 is to my taste: I don't know if they do it on your side of the river, but British judges are always asking embarrassing questions which make it painfully clear how out of touch with the world the law is. For instance, a man recently claimed that an industrial accident had impaired his enjoyment of sex, and asked for compensation. On finding that the claimant was not married, the judge asked, "You're not married, why do you want the compensation you claimed?" (or words to that effect). Whether or not one approves of the permissive society, this kind of ignorance is surely a bad thing for all concerned!) *1*

1 You are lucky to have judges who are merely naive. In the US the average grassroots judge is a moronic bigot, whose jurisprudence appears founded in the latest TV comic-spewings. It is no mere accident of fate that so many innocent men have, down through the years, been hung. (Fortunately, not many judges are average....)

Ar (Arthur) CRUTTENDEN
Idiocy Couchant,
11, Heath Lodge Site,
WELWYN, Herts., England

As U've most probably heard by now, I got 2 Heicon. Had a glorious time there, met 100's of people I want 2 see again & am determined 2 attend a Worldcon in the States 1 day--'tho not by tandem, so help me Ghod!! The "Tale of a Tandem" continues however. I had taken out insurance before setting out, specifying th@ it cover me 4 accident, illness, hospital treatment & return fare if the tandem broke. On getting home I filled in a claim 4m, added a letter explaining the claim & listing expenses & shot this off 2 the insurance co. Back, eventually came a letter telling me th@ the claim had been disallowed as the policy did not cover it. Since I am out of work @ present, my next move was round 2 my solicitor

4 advice (free under the circumstances, why I went). Trouble is, my instructions 2 the ins. brokers were verbal but the solicitor is sending a letter anyway. More in the saga next time....

Ed ((Cox)) is right about fanzines. I can imagine the different types of repro he lists but--2 actually hold in a sweaty paw the result of many hours labour over typer & duper is a sensation I would not willingly 4go. Friends say my caravan has its own distinctive odour because of all the mags & 'zines therein.

We @ this moment have no s.f. magazine. Vision of Tomorrow last appeared before the Heicon & while there are rumours th@ it may re-appear as a compact p.b. nothing definite is known by anyone asked.

BILL WOLFENBARGER
705 East Front St.
Bloomington, Ill. 61701

MOEBIUS TRIP 6 is a really beautiful job; congratulations on yr fine first annish! Tim Kirk's art is always a little mindblowing; I also appreciate the fine art of Terry Jeeves and, of course, that grand old wizard of fandom, Bill Rotsler. Leon Taylor has a couple of fine articles, and I find myself getting into his rapp about "peace" and "fuggheads." Right on, Leon! Got a big laugh out of Glen Whemple's effort and Jeff Schalles'. (I can sympathize with Jeff's dormitory hassles; see "Zeppelins & Pallbearers.") Donn P. Brazier's "A Tadpole Has No Legs" tore me up--I had at first given no thot to the amount of research involved. Likewise "Vengeance" by Terry Jeeves. Shore is good to know Jeeves is involved with MOEBIUS TRIP! The Bob Tucker reprint, "Den's End," is entirely fascinating. And I feel it's a good idea to every so often bring us reprints like this, from the Grand Old Masters. The rest thish is splendid....

MAE STRELKOV
Casilla de Correo 55
Jesus Maria, Cordoba
ARGENTINA.

I am having lots of fun watching your fated zine grow. Fated, but nicely, to be "different" because of its name. Watching a zine start right from scratch is a new adventure to me. CRY was "ageold" when I dropped into the middle of its "Criers" with an unexpected splash (as friends wrote and told me later), in a way that made certain groups suspect I was a hoax being perpetrated in some fannish way. The friend who'd first introduced me to CRY assured them he knew me "for real!"

...Though what's "real?" I know the answer no more than does anybody, when all's said and done, but if torbellinos, (lovely Spanish word for "whirlwinds"), are real while they last, so am I and so are you, dear Mr. Moebius, Incarnate!

Oh, but you've stirred up a hornet's nest, haven't you? I had such a laugh, about it. You see, I usually refrain from joining in, in spates, not knowing Adam from a Zebra, in your crowd. Harlan, I'd read his GLASS TEAT, and taken a liking to the spirited person who could write that way. Next, I thought him jolly-handsome in the color photo at the back of the ACE book. So---I was a little surprised to learn he has a black side from your last issue of MOEBIUS (S)TRIP.*1*

And now the pack is snapping at your heels, which makes me like you for being "naughty" as I see you have been, and you say so yourself. Whatever the antecedents, people are such fun to watch when they spate, though I don't approve, of course, and like them to get over it ... soon! Hope you both do, too ... kiss-n-make-up, tho' not, of course, like you, now, were the virgin, and he a Hun! (Mind you, when Huns havock with virgins, quite remarkable crossbreeds must result! Incidentally, those who blush over F-ck, can say "havock" and get away with it. See Cohane's THE KEY, for he shows both ideas stem from the same original concept ... a male/female deity of prehistory.)

...Such a somber, thoughtful cover by Rotsler ((on #5))! But good!

1 Ah, but no one caught on to the article's castigation of all those meanies who had written so naughtily about HE. In fact, from a "clue" story (sad--I just couldn't bring myself to come right out and tell people how obtuse--or unthinking--they seemed to be) I wrote in a Raps-apa 'zine I sent out, one broad "understood" it the opposite of its intention and wrote in her Raps-zine that she wanted nothing more to do with me. Lucky me!

But, concerning Ellison: his photo is also on an autobiog and list of his books, plus advert for "Partners in Wonder," put out by Walker & Co., 720 Fifth Ave., New York, NY. 10019. Maybe, if you write them, they'll send a copy....

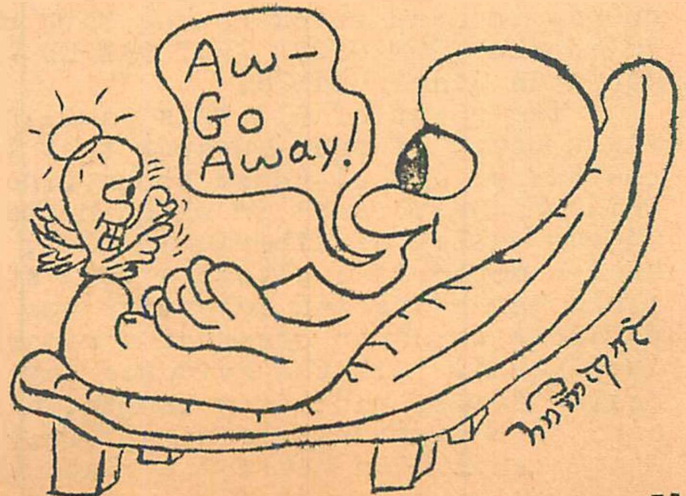
TERRY JEEVES ...David Gerrold's piece was out of my orbit, since 230 Bannerdale Rd. to me, Harlan Ellison is little more than a name... Sheffield S11 9FE a name which produces stories with (to me) unpleasantly cumbersome titles. His stories don't turn me on (or off for that matter), so whether or not (and

so on) he is guilty or not guilty of whatever people say is of little bottle to me...HOWEVER, it is nice (and I mean that) to see someone leaping to his defence. Not only is this far more effective than if Harlan were to defend himself, but it also is a refreshing change in these days of "Kick the big guy while he is down." As for Harlan the man...I hope to get the chance to meet him and find out for myself in 1971...as I'm running for TAFF....*1*

1 May I remind readers that they don't have to "belong" to anything--except to be a fan--to vote in TAFF. See the newszines Focal Point and/or Locus, etc., for a ballot & full details, & have your buck or more ready.

RICK STOOKER The relationship between the SFWA and fandom is 1205 Logan St. tricky. Science fiction may be able to survive with- Alton, Ill. 62002 out fandom; but in what form? Besides supplying many pros, fandom supplies just about the only feedback an author gets in the way of reviews, besides the meager prozine offerings. Without fandom pros would be cut off from almost all criticism of their work. Most fanzine reviews are hardly brilliant but on the whole fans are more knowledgeable about sf than the average reader. There are exceptions of course but... On the other hand fandom has no business spreading SFWA gossip. The motive for knowing SFWA business is just plain curiosity. I for one would love to know what went on at that meeting, what writer was called down etc; but until I sell a story I realize it's none of my business.

It's funny how Chapdelaine has taken to defending Williams. I really don't mind bad writers spending their time defending each other against fandom's malicious hordes but I kind of think he could put more effort into improving his own work. By the way, Perry, just what the hell kind of book is LOVE IS FOREVER--WE ARE FOR TONIGHT? In your love letter you were so busy complimenting it I never did get any idea what it was about. "A science fiction novel?" "A poetic biography?" One other thing--sales don't make a writer great. How many past best-sellers are



read today? There are writers who sold stories to all the pulps, confessions etc., and sold many more stories than Williams has. For their sales to TRUE ROMANCES, THRILLING DETECTIVE and others they should have their names in gold?

The story Sandra Miesel wanted to know about is "The Last Letter" by Fritz Leiber....

DAVID WM. HULVEY
Rt. 1, Box 198
Harrisonburg, Va. 22801

Leon Taylor, like Joan Baez, seems to be a peace freak. This isn't a putdown because I applaud and admire anyone able to speak with such obvious sanity and clarity in an age fraught of violence and hatreds. Unfortunately, for us all, I've always been a militant on one side or another. Intellectually and morally I can dig Leon's reasoned and understanding plea for peace, however, emotionally I can never really be with it. He'll have to find a more visceral way to reach me, for it only takes one hothead to ruin the whole crusade, but millions to make it work.

andrew j. offutt is always so entertaining and enjoyable that he could sell Jerry Rubin's DO IT! to our favorite ANALOG--John W. Campbell. He, as the Kentucky gentleman, can convince me of just about anything with his unique and intimate communication with the reader. Even so, whether I'm prejudiced or not, I find his words true and unrefutable. I hope he'll be back again to present more of that special talent....

ROGER BRYANT
647 Thoreau Ave.
Akron, Ohio 44306

...!On the Implausibility etc" is an odd title for a good article. andy seems to be following after Charles Fort, who made a career of collecting things which didn't seem to fit into the accepted pattern of things. The trouble with Fort was that he put his facts, with some considerable straining, into a half-witted general theory which didn't fit the very data he collected. And, because of those non sequiter conclusions, the man's data (which are perfectly good) fall into disrepute.

The same is true of Immanuel Velikovsky, who does a fine job of collecting information which belies the idea of evolutionary geology in favor of catastrophism, but tries to fit that information into such foolishness as "Venus was a comet," or "The Israelites' manna and Greek fire are the same thing." So in rejecting his half-assed conclusions, his perfectly valid facts get disregarded too.

And then there's Frank Edwards, whose STRANGER THAN SCIENCE and its sequels repeat, add to and enlarge upon Fort. Edwards' books usually don't stretch for conclusions, but they are based on episodes of a radio program, and are written in such a way as to seem "eerie" or "enigmatic." And so people seem to shy away from him, too. And of course the paperback houses have come out with so many sensationalistic imitators (THE GHOST THAT DANCED WITH KIM NOVAK, even!) that the entire genre is disreputable.

The point of all this rambling is to mention something that I first heard of from Edwards that seems to complement andy's tale. At the end of one of those books...he has a chapter entitled "A Guest From the Universe?" in which he tells the story of an explosion in the Tungus valley of Siberia in 1908. For years it was assumed to have been a meteorite, albeit a very strange one. But after the second world war a Russian scientist who studied the effects of atomic explosions in Japan observed a remarkable similarity to effects observed in Siberia. All the evidence (eyewitness accounts, lack of a crater, fallen trees, radiation counts, exhumation of people who had evidently died of radiation poisoning, etc.) pointed to the conclusion that an atomic explosion had taken place above the ground there in Russia. In 1908.

Now I've seen mention of that event elsewhere, including in USSR, the English-language magazine produced by the Soviet government. In that particular journal the Russians explained (rather unconvincingly, I thought) that the Tungus valley was struck by a comet. They made no mention of all those strange data compiled by Edwards. But in CHARIOT OF THE GODS? by Erich von Daniken (another example of good material unfortunately mixed with poor judgment and pure wishful thinking, and from which I imagine Andy got his material), a considerable amount of detail is given about the 1963 expedition sponsored by the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The conclusion reached then was the same as that above, and it was calculated that the explosion must have been on the order of ten megatons.

Now then, what can we draw from all this? Andy suggests that perhaps the Biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah had its roots in a similar nuclear disaster. Modern archeologists think that these cities (and two others mentioned in the Bible) were located in what is now the southern lobe of the Dead Sea. After (or perhaps as a result of the catastrophe, the lay of the land north of Zoar was altered and/or the level of the water rose and inundated the site. Well, whatever the case, Abraham lived in the 20th or 21st century B.C., and since it is by no means certain that the historical Abraham had anything to do with the events at the Plain of Gomorrah, we can place the hypothetical atomic blast at that date, or maybe much earlier.

Might the two events (if, indeed, they are what we are assuming them to be, namely, evidences of visitation by an extraterrestrial race) have involved members of the same culture? Supposing that they did, what conclusions can we draw?

First, in 4000 years their luck with their engines hasn't improved much.

Second, they came a very long way. If they were from relatively nearby, we would have been revisited much sooner after the first effort (in 2000 B.C.) ended in disaster.

Third, they apparently travel by means of something like suspended animation. Had they brought with them one of those enormous flying-colonies we talk about, they could hardly have landed it all on earth; therefore when the landing-craft exploded in 1908, there would still have been a "mother-ship" nearby. Whatever was destroyed in Siberia was evidently the whole shebang.

Fourth, this in turn argues for a military or scientific exploratory mission rather than a colonizing effort. The 1908 vessel might have been a follow-up to the first visit or, if as Andy suggests, that first visit ended in tragedy, it may have been the first effort to find out what had happened to them.

Lastly, if all this is anywhere near the mark, it suggests that since the 1908 visit ended as it did, we might not expect to hear from them again for quite a while.

We might have to go to them.

Ever since my vision of St. Fanthony, in which he told me, "GO THOU FORTH AND NIT-PICK," I have striven ardently to follow his dictum. So it is necessary to point out to Glen Whemple that while Paul was never one to turn away a potential convert just because he was a goy, it was Peter who had the vision of the blanket filled with all the non-kosher food, and thus got himself in trouble with the church of Jerusalem and Jesus' brother (or half-brother, if you insist) by letting in whole herds of gentiles to lower the property values in Zion....

ED CAGLE
Route #1
Leon, Kans. 67074

...it seems to me that Omar McBarsoom would be the man to review D.G. Compton's latest book, CHRONOCULES, to allow him to take a deep breath of fresh air. Comparing CHRONOCULES with Macroscope is a very reveal

ing experience.

...Andrew J. Offutt spoke of Oryana and her seventy get. That's capacity, any way you look at it. I enjoyed his article, but someone else will have to answer his questions. But, I wonder...what did Oryana do before she got here, and how about the trip back? Also, what if those cave artists were just bad at repro on stone, or were high on the leaves of dried bopoodoopoo weed and painting what they thought they saw? Maybe they had a sense of humor? As a resident of Kentucky, Mr. Offutt should be aware of, if not familiar with, the strange effects sourmash squeezin's have on a typer, when taken through the typist. Maybe the ancients had their own pleasures, and it affected their illos....

HARRY WARNER, JR. ...I should mention that there is now a camera on
423 Summit Avenue sale for taking laser photographs. It is safe
Hagerstown, Md. 21740 for anyone to use with moderate caution, according to a photographic magazine which tells about it, and the cost is no more than a top-rate 35mm camera, around \$600 as I remember. There is one catch, however. It can take pictures only of very small objects, because this camera unlike conventional cameras can take pictures only of things inside itself, and anything too big to be inserted inside the camera can't be photographed.

I glanced over the series of articles in The National Enquirer which seems to have served as inspiration of Andy Offutt. (I don't read this publication in time which I could be devoting to catching up on fanzine reading; it arrives at the office free, and I'm justified in looking at it there because they told me to go ahead and borrow from its pages if I liked, when they offered to put me on the mailing list.) All these apparent survivals of an unsuspected past are impressive but there's one problem. Why are they so few and so isolated when many of them are large, tough and able to survive down through the ages? If earth did have bems as semi-permanent visitors, there should be many more evidences of their spoor lying around. Unless, of course, they tried to tidy up before departure and destroyed most of the evidence that they'd been here, overlooking just an occasional item here and there.

...My naivete in the query about shortarm inspection is one reason I don't have the heart, many years later, to speak harshly to youthful fans who do equally stupid blunders in their fanzine writing. But it's an odd thing. I haven't lived a very sheltered life since 1943, working ever since among journalists, residing in a lower middle class neighborhood most of that time, keeping in contact with these awful "fans" of "science fiction" that silent majority parents keep talking about, and so on. And during the 27 years since I asked that question, I still have never heard anyone use that term or seen it in print, except in connection with my incautious query.

...W.G.Bliss must be referring to old silent movies when he mentions repeated frames for television showings. Ever since sound came in 40 years ago, all commercial movies have been processed at 24 frames per second, the speed at which they're shown on TV, and it wouldn't be possible to do this frame-repeating with sound movies anyway, without fouling up the sound reproduction. For technical reasons it's been very difficult to show silent movies without frame-repeating techniques on TV, but I think that this is now possible with the use of video tape which can be played back at different speeds. Silent movies weren't all shot for projection at 16 frames per second, as some people assume; the speed at which they were projected increased very slowly through the years for reasons explained in a wonderful book called The Parade's Gone By....

MICHAEL GLICKSOHN
267 Saint George St.
Apt. 807
Toronto 180, Ont., Canada

...The cover is superb, as is just about everything that Tim draws. His ability to portray monsters, dragons and aliens is truly phenomenal. I'd like to see more interior art and at least some attempt at lay-

out but I suppose this is a holdover from the fact that you are a member of the "Old Guard." It seems that the majority of the older fans are more word-oriented and less interested in the visual aspects of fanzine production. Doubtless this is due to the fact that in the "old days," really good repro was impossible ((sic)) and the number of top class artists in fandom was considerably less than it is today. (This is not intended as a blanket put-down of hand stencilling of art in favor of modern electronic processing. I'm well aware of the limitations of the new processes and of the heights that it is possible to achieve with the old methods, but even the most ardent proponents of hand stencilling must be aware of its inherent limitations.) Thus a lot of new fans tend to stress appearances much more than ever before in fandom. If you're happy with things the way they are, that's fine. I'm just saying that in my opinion, MT would look better if you spent a little more time on layout, got a heavier weight of paper to reduce see-through and put in a few more judiciously chosen and carefully placed drawings to augment the text. To me, that's important--whether or not it is to you, I don't know. ((Pfu! You nag too much.))

As far as contents go, I found this issue to be a real melange--some excellent pieces, some terrible but in general, an interesting issue. Perhaps it a bit bitty ((This isn't too clear, Michael; is it baby talk?)), too much that looks like mere filler, but again, that's a personal preference...and no matter what you might think, if you'll check my previous letters carefully, you'll find that I do not insist that everyone else share my opinions.

Down to specifics: Offutt's article is perhaps the best thing by him I've seen. I admit that in the past I've not been impressed by his fanzine writings but this compels me to reassess the man. It is well-written, totally fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable. I was not aware of several of the facts that he brings forth (they are facts, aren't they? I'd hate to find out I'd fallen for a hoax.) ((You're safe.)) and they really set the mind to thinking. If the article is a put-on, perhaps its success is an even greater tribute to the skill of the writing. To me this was one of the highlights of the issue.

Read Tucker's column with great interest and admiration for the way he captured the essential spirit of being a fan and a collector. Thought as I went along, "Now this is the sort of thing I'd been led to believe that the Tucker of old was capable of producing." Then came the revelation that it was written in 1944! I hate to sound heretical but it seems to me as if the Tucker of old had something that the modern Tucker lacks--Sense of Wonder, perhaps? youthful idealism? Whatever, this is a very fine piece of work.

I could have done without that silly article about someone's dog ((pussycat)) but I'm sure they loved it. I hope they read it to the animal--even a dog ((sic)) needs his egoboo, I guess. Then there's a bunch more space wasters before we get to Terry Jeeves' excellent ACC parody. This was the other highlight of the issue, materialwise, for me. Having enjoyed many of the White Hart stories, which were, of course, themselves parodies as I'm sure you're aware, I thoroughly enjoyed this little gem. If only more fan-written fiction had this degree of humour and good writing, the term "fanfic"--with all its derogatory connotations--would not be so prevalent among modern fanzines that insist on perpetrating the Famous Writer's School Admission Test rejects of their best friends on a poor unsuspecting fandom.

Ah, at last! A one-hundred percent gold-plated fuggheaded article!! Chapdelaine (whom I did not call a fugghead please note) jumps

in to ensure that the issue will not be totally filled with sensible, well-intentioned articles. He's still airing his dirty linen in public, I see, in a depressingly-familiar petulant manner. An entire article written solely for the purpose of letting off a few unsubtle digs at some of his well known "enemies" and singing a glorious paean of praise to his good buddy Robert Moore Williams. I can't help but wonder about Williams when I see Chapdelaine proselytizing so strongly for him. To my knowledge I've never read any of Williams' works so I cannot speak from personal knowledge as to his ability as a writer and have to rely on the opinions of others if I wish any knowledge of him. Now it's not as if Chapdelaine is trying to get us to recognize some unfortunately overlooked author. I could understand it if he was. Occasionally some unsung genius is brought to light by the diligent efforts of a particularly devoted energumen of his works, but Williams is not the victim of such negligence. Rather, from what I've been reading lately, he has been widely judged and found wanting by critics whose opinions I have come to respect. Why does Perry keep insisting that Williams is the victim of a plot? Or that fandom is just about to give him the recognition he deserves? It would seem to me that fandom has already done just that. Just what is Perry trying to overcome? A Communist plot against an admired mentor? or perhaps just a general indifference to a style and ability that, for personal reasons, he reacts to differently than the rest of fandom?

Leon Taylor over-reacts to the increasingly widespread use of the term "fugghead." It is not always applied to people whose opinions differ from your own, but rather refers to a manner of acting or of presenting opinions instead of merely to the opinions themselves. There have been many times when people whom I basically like and generally agree with have done things that I have considered Fuggheaded.... ((Sorry to cut you off but time flies & this must be the last page.))

* * * * *

The IGL00 (I Got Letters Out Of): Rose M. Hogue, who thot Tim Kirk's "Nessie" cover delightful & cute. Ted Pauls, who at one time was absorbed with philately; he also came up with "The Last Letter" by Leiber (Galaxy, '58) as the answer to Sandra Miesel's poser. Lynn Hickman, who saw through the disguise of the potted plant on p.50 of MT#6 & hoped it wouldn't get him into difficulties. David Lewton, who refused to be quoted (is this going to be the usual thing, or are you--heheh--going to issue another Infinitum?). Susan Glicksohn, who deserves a personal answer and may get one real soon now; and Bill Bliss, who sent some ideas for "Id" strips. Also Dorothy Jones, Don Dailey, G.P. Cossato, Leon Taylor, Jeff Schalles, etc., and certain others (including Ned Brooks) whose letters will be in next month's (really!) MT #8; since most of the latter are English fen those letters will do for what might have been written during their recent long postal strike.

*

EDITORIAL: Short, thish, more from being behind time than anything else. But with #8 to come soon, I'll write more then. My apologies for cutting so many letters so drastically. All letters always get something cut anyway (can you hear that way up on the 8th floor?) and my comments are the first to go in many cases. No malice intended--if you think I hate you, it's not true--you are merely sick. The cure?--Write letters to S. F. Review & be ignored entirely....

Reviews of NEW FANZINES (a number have been received in the last few months) will be in #8, I swear. So if you have a new one or know of someone who has, I want it fast. I'll trade for any fanzine in the genre & prefer all for all, especially where overseas pubs are concerned. But I also need subscriptions, definitely if I'm going to continue using this more expensive paper....

PECON II in Peoria APRIL 9-10-11; don't be the exception: COME!.....

W H Y Y O U H A V E T H I S I S S U E

 We trade fanzines. Trade?

 Your material is included. You are mentioned.

 You subscribe. X This is a sample copy (a hint).

 Your SUBSCRIPTION HAS EXPIRED -- Please renew.

 A letter of comment would be appreciated.

The only back issues of Moebius Trip still available
are numbers 2, 3, 4 and 6. Price: any 3 for \$1.

Subscriptions are 3 issues for \$1, 6 issues for \$2.
Issued every 2 or 3 months.

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