

MYTHOLOGIES

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MYTH

During the past few years, rebels and rebellions of one sort or another have filled our newspapers almost daily. There have been student "rebellions" in colleges and high schools, a Black revolt, a feminist revolt, uprisings in one country or another, and so on. We tend to think of rebels as politically motivated, because this is the most obvious form their actions take, but at the same time we recognize that rebellion itself is often a psychological need expressed in one form or another. As such, it often serves useful purposes.

As most people advance into their middle and late teens, conflict between themselves and their parents begins to increase. The teenager sees himself or herself as a fledgeling adult, capable of dealing with mature problems and making important decisions without the intervention of the parent. The parent, on the other hand, is used to seeing the teenager as dependent, lacks confidence in the teenager's ability to make the right decision, is frequently determined to shape the teenager's future, and may even be unconsciously trying to prevent the child from growing up. A little rebellion here is not only no surprise, it is actually desirable.

A 23 year old woman of my acquaintance is a good example. She recently moved to her own apartment, primarily to escape tensions at home between herself and her parents. She has not resolved for herself what she wants out of life. She does plan to get married eventually, but is in no immediate hurry. In the meantime, she has a boyfriend living with her. Her parents object to this arrangement. Their argument runs approximately as follows. "We've raised you to make your own decisions about life. Living with a man you are not married to is a mistake. You do not have the right to make bad decisions. You should stop living with the man." I'm sure this is a familiar attitude to everyone reading this.

Rebellion then is not simply an evil. In some cases it overcomes outright tyranny (although Bierce defines a rebel as "a proponent of a new misrule who has failed to establish it."). In other cases it is necessary for a young person to break the ties of childhood and discover his or her own ability to survive. Even unsuccessful and misguided rebellion is often useful, providing a challenge to established ways of doing things. Thomas Jefferson said "I hold it, that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical." Rebellion then should be looked upon as a process, a never ending challenge to the existing order.

But there is a point of diminishing returns. A rebellious institution, whether it be a political movement, a counter-culture, a new religion, or any other more or less organized resistance to the status quo, begins to lose its productiveness as it becomes dominated by fanatics. In THE TRUE BELIEVER Eric Hoffer points out that most fanatics are obsessed with the idea of rebellion, rather than with the actual tenets of the group to which they belong. This explains why extremists can and do make 180 degree turns and be converted to the opposite extreme. Fanatics can often argue very fluently the surface of issues, but lack any understanding of the basic principles that underly the movement to which they belong.

Hoffer attributes this to the fanatic's contempt for himself, his lack of conviction of his own worth, and a sense of futility about the value of his own existence. "A man is likely to mind his own business when it is worth minding. When it is not, he takes his mind off his own meaningless affairs by minding other people's business." And hence we have the professional rebel, who latches onto one legitimate movement or another, and transforms its purposes to satisfy alien needs. This is the rebel who doesn't want to win, but only to battle.

While a student at Michigan State University, I met quite a range of rebels. There was one fellow who was simultaneously a member of Young Americans for Freedom and Students for a Democratic Society, the former a right wing group and the latter a left wing. Steve firmly believed in the goals of both groups, even where they were mutually exclusive. Only he didn't know exactly what the goals of either group were. If asked a question for which no prescribed answer had been provided him, he would defer the question until he could consult with his superiors in one or the other organization.

Dave considered himself a left winger. He was the kind of person who could tell you with a straight face that no measures taken against the Johnson administration were unreasonable, because LBJ actually enjoyed knowing that he was burning women and children to death.

George Fish was one of my favorites. George was a member of the Communist Party of America until they started charging dues through their college chapter. He then discovered miraculously that he wasn't a Leninist at all, but actually a Trotskyite. The campus Trotsky Union did not charge dues. I used to invite George up to my room when I knew Dalton Maner was around. Dalton was a right wing nut, who felt that Blacks were "animals", that the Jews were in secret control of the US Government, that the KKK saved the nation in the late 19th century, and that fluoridation was a Communist plot (he brushed his teeth with fruit juice, so help me). The two of them were not very constructive when they engaged in an argument, but they were certainly entertaining. It was also interesting to note their similarities.

Both favored censorship, though they didn't call it that. It was wrong, they said, to expose people to the often fluent (but always evil) statements of the other side. People weren't capable of handling their own freedom and needed to have proper limits set by those who were politically and philosophically aware of what was going on in the world.

Similarly both thought that the economy should be managed. George thought that a government of the people should do it, Dalton felt that the government should let the manufacturers do it.

Both favored outlawing other political groups. Dalton felt that there was ample choice between the two existing political parties, and that other parties were subversive malcontents out to undermine the basic system. George felt that if the country were controlled by the people, there ought not to be any parties, because the will of the majority (as expressed by the governing elite) would be enforced.

And lest anyone think that Dalton and George really were small fish (pardon the pun) not representative of the true rebel, let me recount for you an evening I spent in the company of Bernadine Dohrn. Dohrn was then a high ranking official in the SDS, I believe, before she split off with several others to form the Weathermen (and subsequently found herself on the FBI's ten most wanted fugitives list). Dohrn was at that time well known in college circles but not particularly well known to the world at large.

She visited MSU on a recruiting trip (I'd guess this was 1964-5) and somehow I found myself being introduced to her in the Fee Hall grill. I'd heard of her, of course, and shared enough of her views to hold her interest, but not enough of them to satisfy her. She was determined to convert me. Initially I was somewhat in awe of her fluency, the ease with which she could analyze diverse situations in terms of her basic premises -- which were essentially that there was a conscious conspiracy by top government, military, and industrial powers to maintain control of the US economy, and to play the different classes of society against one another.

Obviously she failed to convince me. After a couple of hours, it was rather clear that she was essentially a more fluent version of George Fish.

On the other hand, I was also exposed to some more constructive, if equally unproductive, rebellion. Three popular instructors found themselves without contracts one year. The university didn't deign to explain themselves to the student body which assumed (probably correctly) that the decision was the result of their rather well known opinions, and their participation in a counter-culture literary magazine called ZEITGEIST. There were a number of protests, culminating in the Bessey Hall sit-in.

Bessey Hall's occupation was instructive for a number of reasons. For a change, it clearly demonstrated that a sit-in does not have to be destructive, and that an administration can respond in a constructive manner. A large number of students refused to abandon Bessey Hall at its closing time one evening, vowing that they would prevent it from closing its doors until the three instructors were reinstated. The administration countered by declaring that Bessey Hall would be open 24 hours per day until further notice. The demonstration thereby became legal.

The demonstrators, for their part, showed equal constraint. They requested and received access to janitorial equipment and very carefully kept the building clean and uncluttered. During the day it functioned as a classroom building; after its normal closing hours, it was filled with Risk and Diplomacy games in the stairwells, passionate (and usually dull) debates in the classrooms. Meanwhile, various academic groups met and argued among themselves, and the administration was eventually backed up by enough other groups that the protest lost steam and disappeared.

The skeptical reader might say that either the university was right and the students were wrong, or that the university was wrong, but triumphed despite the protest. In that sense, the skeptic would be right, although I doubt that it would ever be possible to determine whether or not the university did in fact have justification for terminating the three instructors. But had the protest not taken place, the firings might have gone unchallenged, and I think that would have been a mistake. This, then, is what I think Jefferson referred to. If authority remains unquestioned, it becomes arrogant.

Strangely enough, the true radicals on campus did not participate in the Bessey Hall sit-in. The whole issue seemed to throw them into some confusion, a demonstration of Santayana's charge that "fanaticism consists in redoubling your efforts when you have forgotten your aim." While attacking the school administration on one hand, they criticized the sit-in as juvenile nonsense perpetrated by the politically naive.

Unfortunately, it was the real radicals on campus that made the best news copy, and therefore got the most publicity. And since these were the ones that people heard about, they were taken to be representative of the mass. As Hoffer points out, "There is a tendency to judge a race, a nation or any distinct group by its least worthy members." And so the legitimate criticisms were frequently lost amidst charges of class pressures, capitalistic dictatorship, and exploitation of the worker.

If we accept then that a certain amount of rebellion is desirable, we have to accept as well that some portion of that rebellion is going to be personally distasteful to each of us. Protests made by any group - students, Bank executives, Blacks, Whites, men, women, or Birchers - are going to be valid in some cases and invalid in others. We're going to have to live with it, so we might as well get used to it.

PARABLE

FROM HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD

One of the most significant services THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION performed under the editorship of Anthony Boucher was in bringing to the attention of science fiction readers many stories written by non-genre writers. At times, this led to the publication of original fiction by these same authors, works that often showed a very untraditional approach to traditional science fiction themes. One such writer was P.M. Hubbard.

Hubbard is an Englishman, born in 1910, raised in the channel islands. He was a fairly successful minor poet when he entered government service following his attainment of a degree from Oxford. He spent thirteen years in India, serving in a variety of positions, including judge of a criminal court. Returning to England in 1947, he held a variety of executive positions in business firms, including one as chief executive of a national manufacturing association. He took up writing again in 1950, and became a regular contributor to PUNCH. His published work in the following years included poetry, ghost stories, science fiction, mysteries, non-fiction, humor, and juvenile literature. Seven of his short stories and three of his poems appeared in F&SF. As far as I know, these were his only appearances in this country at all, except for mystery novels, and one short story that appeared in THE TANDEM BOOK OF GHOST STORIES edited by Charles Birkin, published in this country by Paperback Library as THE HAUNTED DANCERS.

That last story was Hubbard's only ghost story of the lot, "Last Time Lucky." A traveller in the small British village of Fontwell Canonicorum overhears men in a pub telling of lights seen in a nearby valley. It appears that there is an abandoned 19th century prison nearby, from which the ghost of a Frenchman named Raul is supposed to be attempting to cross the valley to the inn where lived his lover. The lights seen periodically by the villagers are those held by the ghosts of the prison garrison, still attempting to capture the Frenchman before he crosses.

Predictably enough, the traveller finds himself driving through the valley one night and spots the lights himself. What's more, he begins to feel an alien presence in the car with him, as though someone were riding in the backseat. Suspicion becomes certainty; the Frenchman's ghost is making one last effort to pass through the restraining line.

Almost every ghost story written follows this essential pattern. The ghost story as a form is possibly the most rigidly formula-ridden. That fact makes it even more perplexing to discover just why ghost stories continue to be written, and why readers continue to devour volumes of them. I'm no exception. A well written ghost story is frequently better than a well written science fiction story.

I'm at a lost to explain it. Possibly it's because the development of mood and suspense is more important than the actual plot. Certainly it is the little detail rather than the major plot elements that hold our interest. For example, David Seltzer's novel, THE OMEN, has a fairly predictable plot. What makes it succeed as a suspense story is essentially the insignificant trimmings. The slightly malevolent nanny is not frightening because of her dominance of the household or her influence with the young boy of the novel, it is the fact that she apparently never uses toilet paper. It may sound trivial, but in practice it's a very effective maneuver to keep the reader off balance. By this token then, it is the anachronistic effect of having the ghost of a 19th century Frenchman riding in the back of a 20th century automobile that gives the story a bit of extra appeal.

Although that was the only traditional ghost story of Hubbard's to appear, there have been as well a number of horror stories. "The Golden Brick" (F&SF, January 1963) tells of an encounter with a mysterious vessel occupied by a repulsive man who offers a gold brick to a passerby. Eventually we discover that the boat is a prison, secretly maintained by a single very rich family, that has survived for four hundred years. Imprisoned in the boat is an alchemist, apparently immortal, who has discovered the secret of turning anything he desires into gold. Ultimately he escapes his captor by turning both the man and the boat into gold, and then escaping from the sinking vessel.

As well written as "Last Time Lucky", this story nevertheless is both a logical and dramatic failure. If the alchemist were so easily able to escape, one wonders why it took four hundred years for the idea to occur to him. Neither is the menace ever as repulsive to the reader as it is to the narrator. We are told rather than shown.

A far more effective and chilling story is "The Shepherd of Eddon Pen" (F&SF, February 1964). Three sheep farmers fight their way through a snowstorm looking for a stray herd of sheep. Their dog indicates a snowdrift, and the men begin digging, believing the sheep to be buried there. Eventually they discover that they are digging through the chalky earth rather than the snow, but they have already reached a vague, purposeful shape, as though a shepherd's crook were lying in the earth. Then, as they watch, the crook is drawn back within the ground. The men panic and return to their homes.

This incident is tied in with legends of ancient deities that were shepherds to all animals in the distant past. The missing herd is found safely secured in another farmyard, and the reader is left to conclude that the ancient god left the hill to watch over the animals. The themes of menace and protectiveness are nicely balanced, and the deliberate understatement of the actual incidents involved is very effective. Hubbard is well aware that what we don't see but imagine is far more frightening than what we do see, no matter how horribly described. This idea is possibly best demonstrated in Shirley Jackson's THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE, particularly the film version.

Even Hubbard's science fiction had overtones of the supernatural. "The House" (F&SF, April 1969) is apparently Hubbard's most recent appearance in this country. I suspect that he may have died about that time, for he would have been in his sixties during these past several years. "The House" is set in London following a nuclear war. The government is providing land grants and minimal aid to people trying to resettle areas left devastated by the war. A young couple begins to prepare a mound of earth as the foundation for their new home. Unfortunately, their efforts by day are frequently reversed during the night.

It is clear to both the husband and the reader that a group of small malevolent beings of some sort are responsible. He is determined not to let them triumph, and to hide their existence from his wife. He is eventually dissuaded when he investigates the cavern under the mound and discovers a race of repulsive but obviously intelligence beings.

Although successful for the most part as a story of suspense, the conclusion is unsatisfactory. Hubbard apparently attempted to please everyone. His description is vague enough that it can be interpreted as a fantasy about ancient unknown beings, or a straight science fiction story about deformed mutants following a nuclear war. The ambiguity (which is often an asset in a story of this type) is a liability in this case. The reader is left with the impression that more just happened than was perceived.

"Special Consent" (F&SF, October 1963) is also set following a nuclear war. The traditional religions of the past few millenia are overthrown and worship of the Mother has returned. Population is rigidly controlled; in order to receive permission for a baby, a woman must first find someone willing to commit suicide, to make room for the child. Hubbard's approach is, again, almost supernatural, with a young priestess literally hounding a young man to agree to his own death. The development of mood is exceptionally good for such a brief story, but there's not really enough character development to involve the reader.

"Lion" (F&SF, March 1956) is also set after a catastrophic war. Many generations in the future, a pair of humans argue about whether or not the ancients (us) had some special occult power now unknown to mankind. Their society is incapable of duplicating many of the facets of our own civilization, and the great question is whether or not they will ever be our equals. In the final paragraph, we discover that the race has become universally blind, and vision is the occult power whose existence they suspect.

Gimmick stories are rarely successful, and this is not one of the few exceptions. In order to be a valid surprise, there has to be some probability of the situation actually occurring. Universal blindness in a developed civilization such as this is not credible without a great deal of substantive detail, and the surprise ending necessarily makes this impossible.

A gimmick story that does succeed (at least at vignette length) is "Manuscript Found in a Vacuum" (F&SF, August 1953), reprinted from PUNCH. This is a small section from the journal of a castaway space captain, written in the style of a seventeenth century sea captain. The story is amusing, despite the incredibly bad understanding of the universe, about which I will say more presently.

Hubbard's best known story is "Botany Bay" (F&SF, February 1955). A motorist has a brief encounter with a gas station attendant, who is revealed to be a criminal on some other world, exiled on Earth, homesick for his lost world. A very effective mood piece, the story is generally unsuccessful. Hubbard does little with the situation. Unfamiliar with the genre, he presumably believed his comparison of Earth to a prison colony was startling enough to stand on its own. The story also displays his misunderstanding of the way our universe works, for the criminal is able to pick out his home planet in our sky (the narrator assumed it to be a star).

At risk of opening old wounds, I'd like to say again that accurate science is not always a prerequisite to a good science fiction story. Piers Anthony's RINGS OF ICE is a novel about how people act in a catastrophe, and the fact that his meteorology is bad is a minor criticism. If the novel had been about how the world corrected the situation, it would be a major criticism.

Similarly, "Botany Bay" is designed to develop a mood and make an interesting metaphor. The science could be corrected by altering a few words, without making any noticeable change in the story. In "Manuscript Found in a Vacuum", Hubbard takes enormous liberties with celestial mechanics. But the story is designed to be humorous, and its very absurdity adds to its entertainment value.

Obviously, most of the stories mentioned above are unavailable. For those who are interested, "Manuscript Found in a Vacuum" was reprinted in THE BEST FROM F&SF 3, "Botany Bay" is in THE BEST FROM F&SF 5, and "The Golden Brick" was reprinted in THE BEST FROM F&SF 13. All are in paperback from Ace Books, although I'm not certain of their in/out of print status. Hubbard's first mystery novel, FLUSH AS MAY, a really excellent book, was published several years ago (1963) by Ballantine. I would appreciate any information readers might have about his other mystery novels.

SECOND IMPOUNDATION

((A year or two ago, Mike Bracken asked to reprint some of my older fan material. Although the project died, it did force me to look at some of the things that I wrote years in the past. Much of it was...err...embarrassing. The following piece, originally published in STARLING in 1972 or 1973, was one of the few that I found I still liked. Since I'd gone to the trouble of getting the Luttrell's permission to reprint it, I decided to reprint it here. It's slightly unfair to the people being satirized, for which I apologize, but only slightly. I've refrained from changing things (like updating the dates).)))

Recently events transpired here in Vietnam which will have enduring effects on the world at large. A visitor from the year 2069 appeared in the hamlet of Kiem Chac near An Son. As editor of the battalion newspaper, I was given the opportunity to fly north and interview this strange visitor. During the course of several hours' conversation, I indulged a personal fancy and asked the individual for news of the development of science fiction during the next century. The following is a condensed version of the information which I received.

In 1973, a well-known fan by the name of John J. Fierce entered the battle between the two schools of sf writing, New Wave and Old Wave. But Fierce did more than simply enter into the meaningless exchange of invective. Championing the traditional style of writing, Fierce organized a loyal group of supporters into the Second Impoundation. To lend an aura of respectability, he acquired permission from the popular writer, Lester del Rage, to use his name as Primary Speaker.

Using the motto "If thy nose offend thee, strike it off", Fierce launched a vigorous movement to expel the New Wave writers from the ranks of SF. At the second convention of the Second Impoundation in Texarcana, he thrilled his now hundreds of followers when he said, "If science is based on formulas, then science fiction should also be based on formulas!"

In 1976 he established the Fan Review Board which received advance copies of all new releases and ruled whether they were New or Old Wave. Recommended lists were issued to all members and a special publication, The Index, listed all of those books which were guilty of straying from the fold. Originally only those items were boycotted by the Index, but by 1978 interdiction of any book by an author would cause all of his works to be placed on the Index.

In 1977 the Second Impoundation had raised enough money to buy controlling interest in the Universal Publishing Company. Authors whose works were construed to be New Wave found themselves cut out of GALAXY, IF, and WORLDS OF TOMORROW, the profits from which eventually gave them control of Ultimate Publishing Company. By 1979, Ultimate's four reprint magazines had increased to 6, 6 of them monthly. THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION was the last bastion of New Wave writers, who had pooled their resources and bought control to prevent takeover by the Second Impoundation.

Their days were numbered, however, for the rival magazines provided a launching board by which the Science Fiction Writers of America was padded with one-story Old Wave writers. The New Wave, and many independents, withdrew from that organization in disgust. There was talk of setting up a rival organization, the International SF Writers Association, but a concentrated boycott finally forced F&SF to fold and the movement disintegrated. Many younger New Wave writers migrated to England. The bulk drifted into mainstream, mystery, or non-fiction.

In England the upper hand went to the New Wave people. Angered by the book burnings in Los Angeles, and the sacking of Milford, Pennsylvania, New Wave writers agitated successfully for closure of British distribution agencies to American SF paperbacks. NEW WORLDS was joined by NEW GALAXY, THE NEW MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION, and THE NEW ORIGINAL SF STORIES. The market flourished briefly and SF received much notice from the critics for the first time, but the younger readership dwindled and all but NEW WORLDS had folded by 1981.

In late 1981, Fierce convened the fifth convention of the Second Impoundation. In his famous "We Must Expunge" speech, he proclaimed a boycott of all publishers who issued any of the works of the New Wave writers. Bowing to his now monumental support, publishers quickly allowed the complete works of Cordwainer Smith, Ray Bradbury, Michael Moorcock, Harlan Ellison, Thomas Disch, David Bunch, and many others to lapse into obscurity.

The convention also established a Fan Examination Committee, which studiously plunged through the minor works of accepted authors. Any taint of experimentalism condemned an author's work to limbo. CRYPTOZOIC destroyed Brian Aldiss, the lack of articles in THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS was rightly defined as experimental and the works of Robert Heinlein were reluctantly consigned to oblivion. The visual use of print in THE DEMOLISHED MAN and THE STARS MY DESTINATION caused the banning of Alfred Bester.

The fifth convention also created the retroactive Hugo. It was remarked that many classic sf novels had been written before the institution of the Hugo award. In order to correct this, pairing was initiated. For instance, in 1982 the possible contenders for the Hugo were all novels originally published in 1981 or in 1937. During the course of the decade Hugos were awarded to such SF greats as Alexander Blade, Don Wilcox, and Neil R. Jones.

In 1982, IF, GALAXY, and WORLDS OF TOMORROW announced that they were going to stop publishing original stories. AMAZING and FANTASTIC began printing exclusively reprints from STARTLING, THRILLING WONDER, DYNAMIC, and others. DOC SAVAGE magazine was revived early in 1983. Only ANALOG continued to print new material.

In the last months of 1983, NEW WORLDS in England was forced to resort to mimeograph reproduction and distribution by subscription to members of the British SF Writers Association. This preceded by only a few days the dissolution of the SFWA because of a lack of interest.

The break up of the SFWA was followed by the sixth convention of the Second Impoundation. In four dazzling days, control of the organization was wrested from Fierce by the Jamaican, Blake Ericson. Ericson established the SF Morality Board which strove to clean up contemporary SF. Edgar Pangborn's works were among the first to go; Philip Jose Farmer followed almost immediately. Sturgeon's ramblings about incest and homosexuality caused him to be anathematized, although pirated editions of his works still appear. Norman Spinrad, somehow overlooked by Fierce, was scuttled by Ericson.

By the beginnings of 1984, Ericson was establishing the Fanzine Review Board, which set rigid restrictions on what could and could not appear in fanzines. The revolt against Ericson at that year's World SF Convention was squelched. Ericson called the seventh convention of the Second Impoundation and declared the World SF Convention Committee dissolved. Hugos would thenceforward be selected by a Committee, as were the Nobel Prize, Pulitzer Prize, and National Book Awards.

By this time most of Ericson's contemporaries had died. Fierco passed on that April. The bulk of the readership was composed of boys in their early teens. Unfortunately, there was a growing tendency to stop reading sf upon completion of high school. The first warning was the bankruptcy of the Universal Publishing Company in June. August saw the Ultimate Publishing Company follow suit. Only ANALOG continued to flourish.

The British SF Writer's Association began to fill with Australians and eventually took the name of the International Fantasy Writers Union. Members came from Italy, Germany, France, and Russia. NEW WORLDS was given a grant by the Australian government and moved its offices to Sydney. Most of the expatriate Americans followed, along with a considerable coterie of British writers, hoping to make use of the burgeoning Australian market.

By the early months of 1985, there were six sf magazines thriving down under. Many of the Old Wave writers from the United States began sending their works overseas to the lucrative new markets. By 1986, despite attempts by the Second Impoundation to ban them, Australian SF magazines were being imported into the US. Even ANALOG was finally driven from the stands, though it was revived by an Australian corporation as ASTOUNDING.

In 1986 a world SF Convention was held in Melbourne, at which the Hugo was reinstituted. The tenth Second Impoundation Convention was called by Ericson. Maps of Australia were burned in effigy; various writers who had contributed to the Australian publications were expelled from the organization. Despite this counter-attack, the Second Impoundation was doomed. Its membership waned steadily until its dissolution with Ericson's death in 1990.

Eighty years went by before American SF began to rival the Australian imprints. By then France, Italy, Russia, and other countries were steadily adding to the market. World conventions rotated among the continents and each country gave its own award. England presented the Moorcock, France the Jules Award, Russia the Alexei Tolstoy Literary Workers Award, etc.

As of 2069, that was the situation, although our time travelling visitor tells me that a Third Impoundation has recently been formed in Australia. Their policy is apparently to ban all stories dealing with space travel or time travel from the SF magazines on the grounds that these are both demonstrably possible, therefore do not fall within SF's realm. Perhaps someday we will encounter a visitor from 2169 and he will be able to tell us how it all comes out.

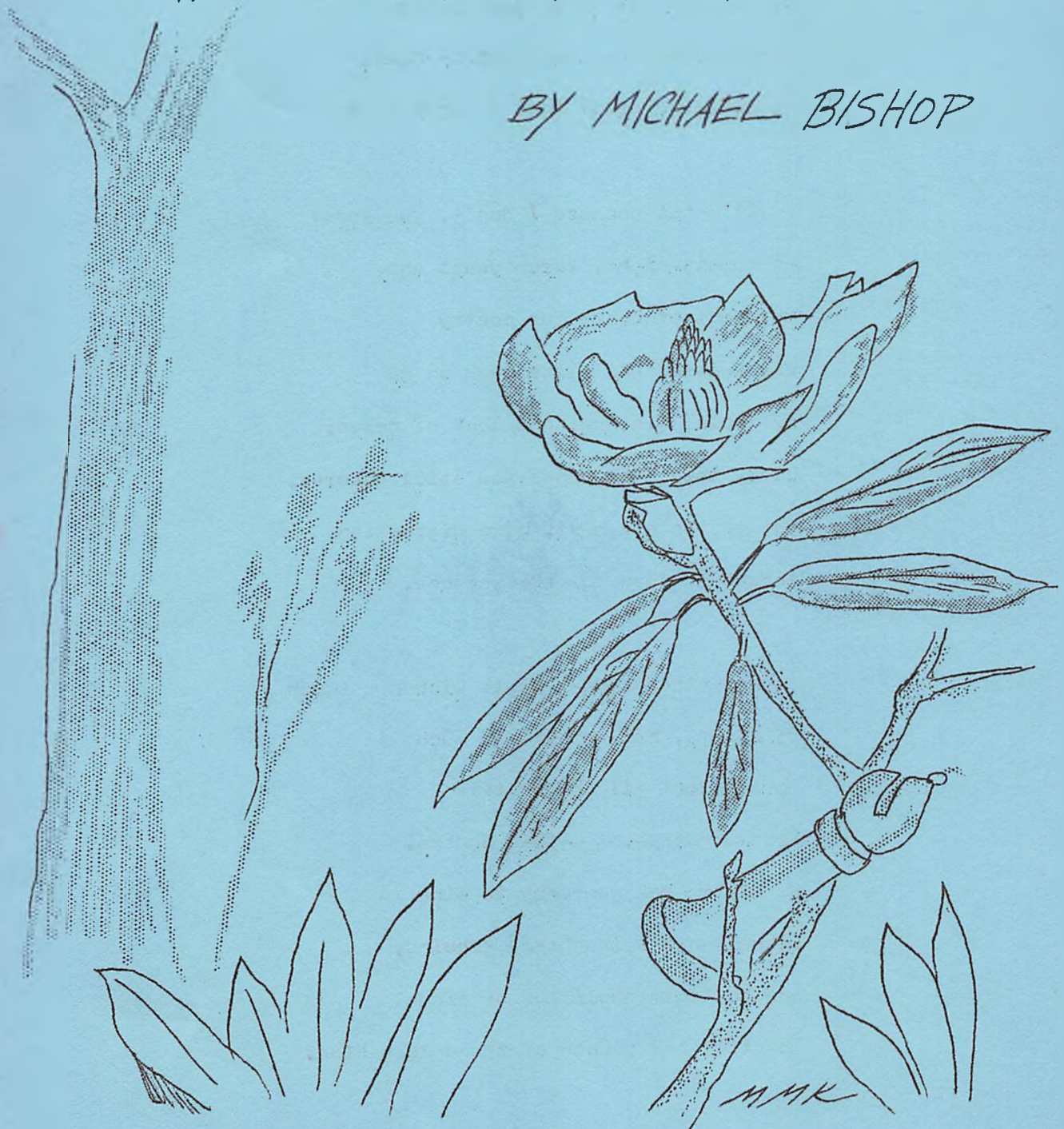
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"Yet malice never was his aim;
He lash'd the vice but spar'd the name.
No individual could resent,
Where thousands equally were meant.
His satire points at no defect
But what all mortals may correct;
For he abhorr'd that senseless tribe
Who call it humor when they gibe."

"Verses on the Death of Dean Swift" -- Jonathan Swift

A POEM FOR
MY DAUGHTER

BY MICHAEL BISHOP



1

Stephanie, you are three years old.
Although I've found the time to scold,
Tease, coax, cajole, and play my part,
You've never had from Daddy's heart
A poem whose significance
Is guerdon for your foxy glance,
Awed tribute to your savoir-faire,
Or cadenced proof that I might care.

2

It's not because I don't, you know:
At twenty-eight, three years ago,
My twist of heart for poetry
Was twisted knifelike back on me
By fools, finance, and lack of nerve;
Lost, then, the songs you still deserve.
But that's all past, mere digression,
And now I mean to make you one.

3

For his daughter Yeats wished a touch
Of beauty, but not yet so much
To ensorcel all her suitors
With memories of mythic whores.
He wished her courtesy to sing
Like linnet's laughter, echoing,
And her calm qualities of mind
To still the taunts of those less kind.

4

He wished for her a bridegroom who,
Dependable as twilight dew,
Would make their house a hermitage
In which their love of law was liege.
Custom and ceremony were
The rich brocades he wished for her --
For in these staid habiliments
The silver thread of order glints.

5

Watching you, daughter, play at chess
With fire, flair, and flagrant guess,
I see the virtues Yeats once touted
Thrown to the gales and thereby routed.
Across from you, upon the floor,
Your brother waits and views the war
That you with gaudy verve have waged:
He's only five, but he has aged.

6

That ceremony haunts the board,
Hierarchy of Queen and Lord,
You understand quite well enough
To romp its squares with shove and bluff.
But when crass custom lays a claim
Against the progress of your game,
Or too-tight order gives you fits,
You fold your arms and call it quits.

7

Although your brother may despair,
I find I like the way you wear
Your young contempt for ritual.
Each column and diagonal
Imposes patterns on your play
That masters feel obliged to say
Are challenges to choicer art.
Why, even my metrics take their part.

8

But in our cold miserichord,
The propane burner by your board
Seethes and hisses as you strike down
This platitude of high renown.
The hardwood's strewn, because you please,
With tiny, carven casualties.
Custom? Ceremony? Place? Each
Is an eidolon out of reach.

9

It doesn't matter, Stephanie.
A modest taste for anarchy
Becomes the bird still taking wing;
And that you'd rather lose your King
Than any other piece for which
You've come to feel a friendly itch
Shows only that we Bishops move
Tangentially to prove our love.

SANITY AND MORALITY ON THE MOTE

A DEFENSE OF THE MOTIES

TONY DALMYN

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was originally designed as a loc on Mark Keller's article on FIRE TIME, but considering its length and subject matter, I have prevailed upon Tony to allow me to run it as a separate article.)

I was interested in some remarks Mark Keller made while mentioning THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE. He refers to the Moties as extreme conservatives and Malthusians and then goes on to say that the Ishterians in FIRE TIME are too rational to have a Motie ideology. By implication the Moties are irrational in their social philosophy. I find this to be too tempting to pass without extensive comments.

First, Keller is assuming a universal standard of rationality. What he considers rational in the context of our society must be rational for Moties. I would question what the content of the term rational as used by Keller really is. Is he referring to one standard of conduct for all intelligent life as being the sole healthy standard? I would have thought that human history and anthropology show that different standards of reasonable behavior obtain in different cultures at different times. What is rational depends on the state of knowledge and technology, the history, the social environment and the various physical and chemical factors operating upon an individual.

It is conceivable that it would be possible to weigh all the various factors and determine objectively what is rational. I didn't know that Keller had all the answers. I didn't know that such answers were possible. I am unable to accept the broad and sweeping statement that the Moties are a less rational race than the Ishterians or the humans.

Keller may have used the term irrational in some different sense, but I cannot detect any indication of that. He appears to have referred to some universal and objective standard.

He also runs into problems in comparing the Ishterian, Motie and modern human situations. Keller introduces the comparison in terms of response to catastrophe. The problem is that the impending dooms are not really comparable. The Ishterians face a shortage of essential commodities, bad weather, and a war against the barbarians. The Moties face a devastating war in a situation of high technology. The Ishterians are in a position to mitigate the situation by proper social and political organization. The Moties are supposed to be locked into the situation. The only course of conduct open to them is expansion and conquest, or wholesale bio-engineering of their own species. The situations of the two races are only superficially comparable. The races face different risks and have different choices open to them.

My comments about the analogies between the Ishterian and Motie positions will illustrate the earlier point about the difficulties of setting a clear standard of rationality. But additionally, on the assumption that the universal yardstick of rationality is available to measure the two cultures, we may find that both cultures behave rationally in light of all the circumstances.

That brings me to my second main point. How irrational are the Moties? If we take Keller's remarks as indicating that the Moties merely serve as symbols for certain bodies of thought among humans and as expressing the view that "conservatism", "Malthusianism", and the other various "isms" which he refrains from mentioning are

irrational, is he right? I do not propose to conclusively prove the correctness of what I will call the Motie philosophy, but I would like to show that it is not so indefensible as to warrant Keller's referring to it as irrational.

The Motie philosophy is one that attributes moral force to natural fact. It can be paraphrased as: "What is is good". The Motie finds himself existing in a certain natural situation. His body is capable of certain kinds of activity. He has certain physical and psychological needs. His mind is capable of certain achievements. He exists within a certain relationship between Motie and universe. The sum of these elements is the Motie reality. To change that is to become certain else. A certain amount of change is natural and harmless. But a deliberate attempt to change alters the mutuality of the Motie-nature relationship. The Motie is no longer a participating part of nature then. He has removed himself from the relationship which he had with nature and has destroyed his own existence.

When I referred to the Motie philosophy as attributing moral force to natural fact and as treating existence as good, I was referring to a rational and scientific understanding of natural facts and existence. In order to determine what is good, the Motie examines his situation and attempts to determine what action will maintain a purposeful continuation of his existence. Certain possible acts may not serve such a purpose. They will change the fundamental character of existence.

Such acts are not necessarily that common. Man or Motie must exist within an environment and in order to do so interacts with and alters the environment. If the interaction is on a large scale, the interaction can be called exploitation -- outright alteration to suit the demands of healthy and productive life for the human community at the expense of parts of the biosphere. But even on this scale the interaction remains one of adaptation. There is an evolution of the relationship between man and environment.

At a certain point the process of investigating and exploiting nature converts itself into a process of destruction and alienation. That point is reached when man or Motie ceases to accept his identity as part of a natural process and attempts to act in a manner which ignores the requirements of natural existence. Such a point was perhaps reached in our society in the later parts of the Industrial Revolution, when the pressures of survival forced a fragmentation of each individual into a worker, a spouse, a parent, a citizen, a believer, and a "person". Additionally, that period of history led to the pressures of urbanization with its incident effects of crowding and rushing. The full consequences of that change are still not appreciated clearly but quite possibly that change was harmful to a species of ape evolved as an omnivorous and nomadic tribal animal.

Consider in that light what the Moties were faced with. The change which they faced included wiping out whole ranges of evolved behavior in the areas of procreation, competition, and aggression. Such a change will not assure the social consequences sought, and even if it will, it will have various unpredictable side-effects. The certainty of war does not necessarily represent a less desirable alternative than radical and uncontrollable change. The Moties themselves are the product of someone's idea of good artificial adaptation sometime in the distant past. They have learned the lesson of caution at an awful price.

Please observe the qualifications I am imposing on the concept of natural change. The arguments I am making do not necessarily amount to a justification of any particular social or economic program. Any program or institution must be rigorously examined and evaluated. Its existence may indicate a degree of natural reality and viability, or it may be only an undesirable experiment which should be discontinued. It is important to remember that nature is subtle and complicated. It

changes in appearance from day to day. It is not possible to justify something as natural and good by reference to natural phenomena alone. There must be an examination of the process and principles involved in any given activity.

I should mention some of the problems of this philosophy. One problem is in the argument that change is the only natural process of moral significance. Change occurs and must be good. Whatever man can do is all right. This argument essentially says that nothing which man decides to do is wrong because it derives its moral force from the choice and will of free intelligent beings. I think this argument is essentially an exposition of a completely different philosophy which will not accept the moral force of natural facts. It appears to illustrate a contradiction in the Motie philosophy by pointing out that an essential part of nature is the free will of intelligent beings who are not fettered by nature. I do not think that there is a real contradiction here. While the fact of choice exists and while choices must be made, it is still possible to say that any given choice is morally wrong because it is against the requirements of nature. The choice carries no self-justification in the Motie philosophy.

However there is choice. The Motie philosophy is not fatalistic or deterministic. It is one that accepts that choices can be made but insists that there is a moral element to choice. The moral element is located in a nature-based system of ethics that emphasizes values of whole-system function. In the context of the universe, what is one species? What price must it pay for its survival and what price must the rest of the universe pay? These are important questions within the Motie philosophy, and within the Motie philosophy it is possible to choose wrongly.

From his remarks, it appears that Keller is not impressed by the argument that an action can be wrong because it is against nature. I agree with him to the extent of saying that the argument can be and frequently is misused. It is used by people who do not appreciate the tentative character of our understanding of natural fact and the evolving character of human ethical systems. Too often the argument is used to disguise the personal predilections of narrow-minded and dull individuals. But the argument has validity and it has its proper application.

It is important for humans to realize that the dawn of intelligence was not the end of evolution for humans or for other forms of life. It is important to maintain the possibilities of further evolution, and further development. We must be wary of locking ourselves into any given situation. Excessive deliberate change is as sure an inhibition of evolution as complete failure to change. The system of nature based ethics which I have outlined prohibits the kinds of change that may overspecialize man and turn him into some kind of Motie. But it does not prohibit relatively rapid change or otherwise amount to a deliberate choice to inhibit evolution.

The Moties appear to have a philosophy that regards the kind of changes necessary to liberate them from their biological trap as morally wrong. Such a philosophy is not irrational. It is easy to dismiss the Motie philosophy as one that might argue that man should not fly because he has no wings. Such a dismissal would be unfair and dishonest. The Motie philosophy would regard flight as a natural product of intelligent life. The Motie philosophy measures human aspirations against human capabilities and cosmic risks and determines that some developments are not beneficial because they cut off too much alternative development.

Perhaps the ultimate evil envisioned by the Motie philosophy is presumption by any form of life to know conclusively what its role in nature is. The Motie philosophy condemns equally deliberate failure to change and deliberate change where

the attitude to change is inspired by some clear vision of ultimate human perfection.

That is not to say that an argument based on something being against nature may not be used (i.e. a contradiction exists in my argument). The Motie philosophy does depend on arguments from nature. But it observes that nature is a process and not a perfect ideal. It attributes moral significance to natural conditions and processes but it does not assume that nature at a given point in time represents a moral ideal. Neither however does it accept the notion that there is nature in the abstract which must be hammered out of present reality. It quite simply tries to understand nature and consider how a species fits in at any given time.

I have not answered all the questions that present themselves. My objective was simply to show that within the modern standards of human mental health a person espousing the Motie philosophy would not be insane. He may be a person with whom one might prefer to disagree, but he ought not to be dismissed as lacking the higher human faculties. There is a logical system of thought which supports his opinions and that system of thought demonstrates a sensitivity to one's existence as part of the human community which other systems of thought often lack.

To summarize and conclude this little exercise, I will briefly review the main points which I made. First, taking Keller's statement that the Moties were an irrational species at face value as indicating that they were a demented species, I question Keller's assumptions about alien psychology. I suggested that there could be no valid inter-species comparisons on the state of the science at present, and I further suggested that even if comparison were possible, the variables in the situations compared were too complex to permit any valid observations.

The second series of comments placed a different meaning on Keller's remark. Assuming Keller to have meant only that the Motie philosophy among humans was something with which he disagreed, I attempted to show that the philosophy was not beneath the notice of intelligent life-forms by examining its basic values. Finally I indicated my distaste for the term "irrational" when used to describe a position with which one disagrees. The word connotes insanity and to so dismiss a position with which one disagrees seems to me to be unfair and improper. The words "wrong", "incorrect", "illogical", and "unreasonable" might have served the purpose.

After all of that I feel that I must apologize to Mr. Keller for seizing upon what was probably an offhand remark. He was concerned with Anderson's science in FIRE TIME and only dealt with the theme of impending catastrophe by way of prologue to the main discussion. He never directed his attention to the philosophical dialectic between the Motie and human or Crazy Eddie philosophies in THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE, a dialectic in which the Motie philosophy is much more than a mere paper tiger serving merely to show the flaws and errors of that way of thinking. It was that very tension -- the sustained contrast between a conservative and a liberal species -- that made the book so worth reading.

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(From a subsequent letter: "It is clear to me that my comments were not directed at Keller's article at all. The article served as a convenient starting point for a different discussion altogether. I would like to endorse the comments printed in #10 and again congratulate Keller on a fine article.")

PARABLE

CROUCHED ON THE BORDERLINE

(NOTE: This article was originally written for the now defunct - apparently - NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT. I have been unable to obtain any information from Denis, so I am taking the liberty of using this article myself.)

Those most unfortunate of all SF fans - the completists - have become increasingly aware of the overlap between SF and the modern spy novel. Spies no longer wrest secrets from enemy strongholds; now they save the world from mutated viruses, nuclear blackmail, insidious computerized propaganda, laser beams from space, plots to cause earthquakes or other "natural" catastrophes, and a host of other menaces formerly the exclusive hunting ground of the SF writer. Many of us are able to ignore these novels because the authors do not write as SF writers per se, and we don't think of them as such. But the borderline has grown increasingly hazy and it now appears that some writers dabble on both sides of the fence. A case in point is Joe Poyer.

Poyer first appeared with "Mission 'Red Clash'" (ANALOG, December 1965). Telemann, a CIA operative, is sent in a highly secret spy plane to investigate the latest Sino-Soviet border clash. During the mission he discovers that the Soviets have developed countermeasures against his aircraft, and he is forced into an intricate escape technique resulting in his crash in and subsequent rescue from an isolated part of Scandinavia. Sounds like a conventional spy story, doesn't it? There are trappings of SF; the story is definitely set in the future, with NATO and the Warsaw Pact dissolved, Southeast Asia united in a common market. But the fact remains that Campbell published what is essentially a U-2 story with a happy ending.

Poyer's next story was "Operation Malacca" (ANALOG, March 1966), one of the first dolphin-as-spy stories to appear. Keilty is a crusty, highly individualistic researcher who agrees to convince Charlie, the dolphin with whom he works, to spy on a secret project in the Strait of Malacca. Intelligence sources believe that the pro-Chinese Indonesian government has been provided with a nuclear device with which to destroy Singapore. Charlie confirms their suspicions in due course and a pre-emptive raid saves the day. Poyer's familiarity with international politics is evident in this novelette, and his greater attention to characterization made this a far better story than his first. It is still, however, a spy story. Substitute a frogman for the dolphin and change the dates and you'd have a hard time calling it SF.

"Under the Wide and Starry Sky" (ANALOG, May 1966) is yet another story about rescuing an astronaut who has become separated from his ship. While this is more definitely SF than the previous stories, Poyer's lack of familiarity with the field is evident, for this plot was a cliché even in 1966. Compounding the story's flaws is a distressing inattention to characterization in favor of the rather unconvincing technical solution. Particularly puzzling is the fact that although the two astronauts are described as extremely close friends, they refer to each other by their last names only, even when delirious or under stress.

Poyer ventured further into space with "Spirits of '76" (ANALOG, August 1966), a dismal story about the founding of the Republic of Luna by an ingenious moonshiner. Poyer spends most of the story discussing the intricacies of distillation rather

than the formation of the Republic. The reader never actually sees any of its progress toward independence. The plot really is just grafted on to fit Campbell's editorial requirements.

"Pioneer Trip" (ANALOG, February 1967) was Poyer's first, and only, cover story, and was the furthest he ever projected into the future. When one member of an expedition to Mars becomes fatally ill, he commits suicide rather than allow the others to abort the trip. Poyer could have turned a good basic idea into a valuable if somewhat tragic story, had he only bothered to spend some time making the reader care about either the astronauts or the space program.

"Mission 'Red Plague'" (ANALOG, November 1967) is a very inferior sequel to the first "Mission" story, hinging on the discovery that influenza makes a very effective bacteriological weapon. "Null Zone" (ANALOG, July 1968) postulates that we could have interdicted the Ho Chi Minh Trail by dusting it with radioactive material. "Specialty" (ANALOG, August 1968) is a sequel to "Spirits", and is equally dismal. With even less plot, it lectures about lunar mining techniques. All three of these last stories completely ignore basic plotting and characterization, shortcomings that Campbell should have been perceptive enough to notice.

"Pipeline" (ANALOG, December 1968), Poyer's last prozine appearance, is a long novelette about sabotage and intrigue on a future water project. Poyer spends more time developing his plot and less on the technical aspects of his story, but the characters remain lifeless, and the story is essentially only marginally SF.

Then Poyer decided to try his hand at novels. After revising "Operation Malacca" to include recent political developments, Poyer wrote a second adventure, and published the two as OPERATION MALACCA from Doubleday, later a Curtis paperback. In the second half, a Chinese submarine is hiding somewhere near Indonesia with a cargo of nuclear weapons. These are to be used in conjunction with a concerted Chinese invasion of Pakistan, India, Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Taiwan, while the Indonesians invade Singapore, Malaysia, and the Phillipines. Granting Poyer's contention that the Chinese would be willing to frontally assault so many enemies at once, there follows a competent but not very new version of the original novelette, as Charlie finds and helps destroy the sub, then rescues his human allies.

As unsatisfactory an expansion as OPERATION MALACCA was, NORTH CAPE (Doubleday 1969, Pyramid paperback) is worse. Poyer selected his first story, "Mission 'Red Clash'", beefed it up with long technical discussions and some distracting subplots, included a portion of "Mission 'Red Plague'", and padded it up to almost 300 pages. Alistair MacLean's blurb that NORTH CAPE was the best spy-adventure story he'd read in years fails to convince me. NORTH CAPE is deadly dull.

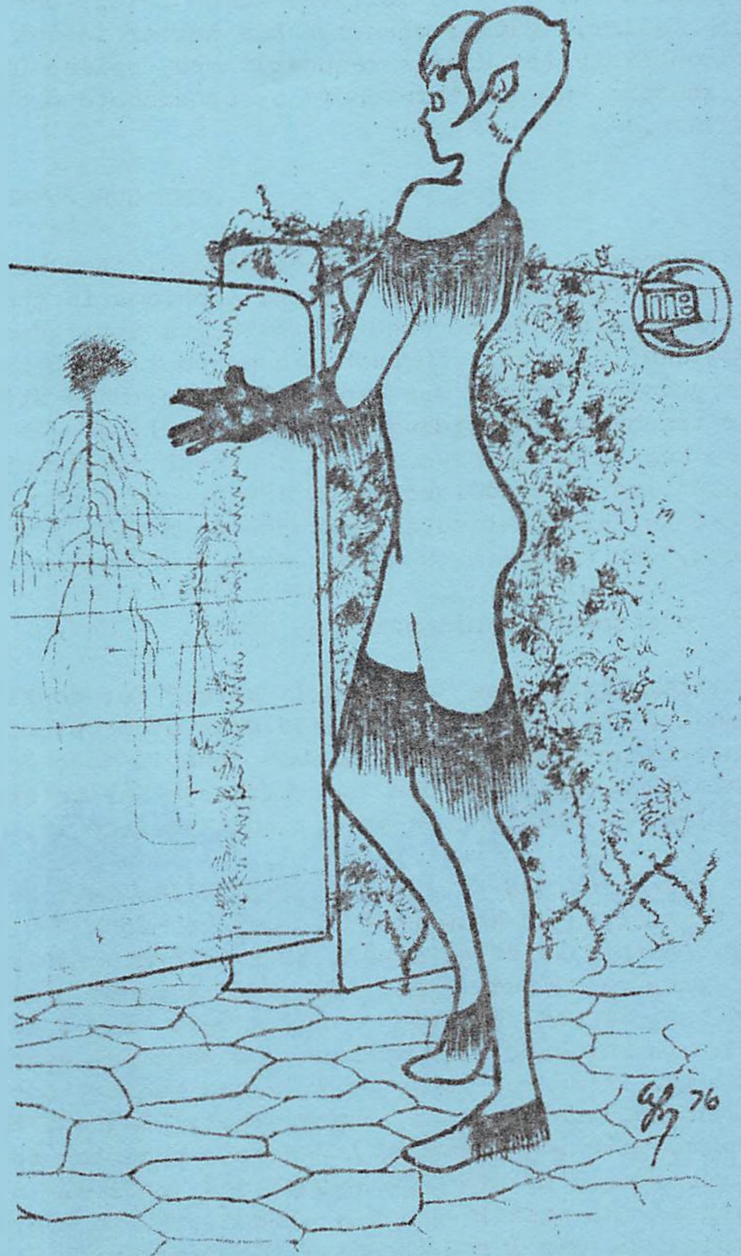
Luckily, Poyer chose not to expand another of his stories for his next novel. In fact, BALKAN ASSIGNMENT (Doubleday 1971, Pyramid paperback) is not even marginally SF. Chris Boyd is approached by an ex-Nazi and a Yugoslavian outlaw to pilot them to a deserted Yugoslavian island to recover a secret cache of gold stolen by the Nazis. Maher, the ex-Nazi, turns out to be more Nazi than ex, and Boyd eventually exposes his organization to Interpol. The characters are better drawn, though hardly admirable. The plotting is terrible, starting with the pointless removal of Boyd from a train by Interpol, only to be placed back on it later, a host of pointless killings, the highly improbable carelessness of the neo-Nazis, and the banality of the whole idea in the first place.

Poyer's next book, THE CHINESE AGENDA (Doubleday 1972, Pyramid paperback) edged back toward SF. A team of Taiwanese agents learns that the mainland Chinese have

prepared a full scale CBW attack against the Russians. Bob Gillon, a carbon copy of Chris Bogd, is part of a joint Soviet-American team sent into China to retrieve proof. Naturally one of their number is actually a Chinese agent, determined to betray them. His identity is so transparent, it's embarrassing, detracting greatly from a story that is otherwise fairly readable. Poyer's characters continue, however, to be pragmatic, brutal, and egotistical to the extreme, traits which Poyer seems to find admirable, or at least necessary for survival.

Poyer's most recent novel, SHOOTING OF THE GREEN (Pyramid 1974) is more firmly in the twilight zone between SF and spy novels. Manned space satellites circle the Earth, keeping close watch for any indication of poppy cultivation. As a result, opium derived drugs have virtually disappeared. Then, suddenly, they reappear in startling volume. The hero, a narcotics agent, ignores associates and superiors alike to follow his hunch and figure out where the clandestine crop is being grown. In case the imperceptive reader didn't pick it out from the title, the solution is Ireland. The novel is so full of cliches and clutzy melodrama, with a dash of half-baked investigatory technique, one is tempted to suspect that Poyer is another penname of Howard Hunt.

Ignoring its quality as a book, though, we are left with the question of whether or not SHOOTING OF THE GREEN is SF. If it is not, then neither are many of the short stories published in ANALOG. If we are to assume therefore that Campbell could not tell the difference between spies and SF, then can we? Or does it make any difference in either case?



HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

CURLOVICH/KELLER

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In the past few issues of MYTHOLOGIES, starting with the discussion of the SCA by John Curlovich, various interpretations of history have begun to crop up in the letter column. For this issue, I received a lengthy letter from John refuting what he believes to be unfair and inaccurate statements made by Mark Keller. Rather than run his letter in the letter column, I am running it in its entirety (at John's request) here, paired with a rebuttal by Mark. Those of my readers who are turned off by passionate arguments should skip to the next section.)

JOHN CURLOVICH

The meaning I intended in my original letter was not that the Church itself is directly responsible for all the problems in the world, but that it has consistently fostered and even revered the barbaric attitudes that led to the downfall of classical civilization. Through its pervasive influence the church has spread them to every corner of the Western world, and these attitudes are responsible for most of our troubles. Rereading that letter, I can see that I wasn't as clear as I might have been and may have missed the boat completely in the last few sentences. Communication is a collaborative thing, and I am willing to admit to my share of the blame in this particular breakdown. Still, I think the intended meaning is fairly clear, and Keller must have gone out of his way to misread me.

Let me respond to him point by point:

1) Yes, Gibbon was "grossly in error" for considering the Byzantines weak and unmanly. Keller has discovered what other students of history have known for years. You will note that I said Gibbon "should have known better" than to think what he did. You will also note that although Keller expounds freely on the defects of the DECLINE AND FALL, he seems not to have read it.

2) The Greek and Roman cultures, Keller says, were based on physical courage. I am fascinated to know what history he might have read. If you want insight into, say, Athens, it is advisable to read her writers. Read the great tragedians. Better yet, read Thucydides. He wrote a great deal about armies and battles, since his subject was the Peloponnesian War. But I am amazed that anyone might come away from him thinking that courage and physical strength were at the heart of Athenian society. Time and again he stresses reason, careful deliberation, splendid oratory as the things that made Athens great. Indeed, he clearly considered the Mytilenian Debate, with its dramatic and heroic decision to forgive a rebel polis, as the glorious peak of Athenian wisdom and justice. A debate, mind you: logic, rhetoric, skill in the political arts. These are, to use the term Keller objects to, contemplative, and I can think of no Greek writer from Herodotus to Polybius who did not revere them above the military arts.

The view of Roman culture as an essentially martial one is also very popular --- among people who don't read history. It is certainly true, for instance, as Keller suggests, that the myth of Romulus was an important one. But the average Roman, unlike Keller, knew the legends rather well and knew that Romulus was not only an able soldier but an able administrator as well (and a loving husband! Some very

toaching poetry was written about Romulus and his wife Hersilie, childless in their old age). More to the point, no Roman could think of Romulus without thinking of his successor Numa, who gave form and substance to Roman law and religion. These were supported by arms of course, but they were clearly the basis of the Romans' concept of their own greatness. Livy, a historian enchanted with warfare, wrote nearly twice as much about Numa as about Romulus, and he referred frequently to Numa as the early paragon of Roman virtue through the later books of his history. No writer is more typically Roman than the younger Pliny, yet where does he write of combat and arms? Even an overtly military historian like Ammianus Marcellinus recognized that the Roman army served merely to preserve the essence of the empire, the physical and cultural pleasures of the great cities. And I hardly need to point out that the soldier was stereotyped as a blundering, blustering buffoon in Roman drama, even in the tragedies -- a very odd way for them to write about what Keller says their culture was based upon.

Keller does not seem to have acquainted himself with the many books the Greeks and Romans left behind them. His ignorance seems thorough, even down to fairly commonplace details. As an example: he points to the cult of Heracles as proof that physical strength was the classical ideal. While it is true that the ancients worshipped Heracles, it was as a symbol of human suffering not physical strength that they revered him. See the tragedy HERACLES of Euripides, or Ovid's METAMORPHOSES, or even the ARGONAUTICA of Appollonius Rhodius. No one who'd read anything from the classical world about Heracles could have written what Keller did; I daresay his knowledge of Heracles derives more from Steve Reeves than from Euripides. And so it is with his concept of the ancient world as a whole. The Greeks and Romans told us very vividly and quite definitely what their world was like. We can accept what they told us, or we can listen to people like Keller. Which do you prefer?

3) Keller says that I confused "the Huns (who never became Christians) with the Germans (who did become Christians)." This is puzzling, not least because I never mentioned either of them. Then he himself goes on to confuse the Germans with the Goths, writing as if the nouns were synonymous. The two were quite distinct, a point most classical writers were very careful about (Tacitus in his GERMANICA, for example); the Goths originated in Scandinavia. Keller also pretends that the Goths and the Huns remained wholly separate when in fact they often concerted their efforts. Huns are known to have served as mercenaries in Gothic armies, most prominently under Alaric during his rape of the Peloponnese and in his eventual siege and sack of Rome.

Further confusion arises from Keller's insistence that the Huns never turned Christian. A Fifth Century theologian named Crosius, a disciple of Augustine, wrote a long panegyric on the barbarians who had reformed and embraced the Church. He says that the majority of them were Goths, but he also includes a great many Vandals and Huns in their numbers. One presumes he was in a better position to know than Keller. A number of historians have also observed that the various rival sects and heresies seemed to grow between members of rival tribes and their descendants. Goths tended to be Arians and Vandals Athanasians, etc. Since my original point was that the Church fostered and institutionalized barbarian attitudes, this fact seems worth noting. I might also point out that when the Goths sacked Rome they had already been converted. Several Church fathers commented on the pillage, among them Augustine and Orosius, and they give it their clear approval since it was only pagans who were raped, robbed, slaughtered. If, as Keller asserts, the Church tried to discourage such things, why did its leaders write of them so approvingly?

Finally, and quite astonishingly, Keller implies that the barbarian tribesmen did nothing but watch over the fall of the Western Empire and try to pick up the pieces.

Put simply, this is wrong. Among them, the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Alemanni, Burgundians, Picts and Sarmatians wounded virtually every important city on the map. The Vandals alone laid waste the entire African province, even to levelling once more the again prosperous city of Carthage. Under Alaric the Goths (whom Keller seems to admire) ruined dozens of Greek poleis, destroying a cultural treasure of unguessable proportions. The eyewitness accounts of their sack of Rome, of which several survive, are surely among the most harrowing things ever written. And it is hardly a coincidence that Romulus Augustulus, the last Western Emperor, was deposed by Odoacer, king of the Ostrogoths. If the Goths were unable to preserve Roman institutions it was largely because they themselves had done such an effective job of pulling them to pieces.

4) The Church did in fact disapprove of and actively discourage sensual pleasure. The cue for this came from Paul of Tarsus, whose grim asceticism has been widely noted. Most if not all of the early Church fathers followed Paul in this. Irenaeus for example, a bishop of Lyons who was later sainted, conducted a mission to save the souls of the Gauls; a good Christian, he tried to persuade them to lead lives of chastity and self-abnegation and abandon their happily lustful ways. He was lucky to escape from them with his life and spent the rest of his years loudly damning "the fleshly savages". (Another reason for his failure with the Gauls seems to have been his trouble mastering their difficult language -- this despite the fact that he claimed to have the gift of tongues.) The most influential theologian in the first four centuries of the Church was Origen, who wrote extensively and vehemently on the virtues of chastity and sexual abstinence. He even went so far as to recommend that male Christians castrate themselves to head off (so to speak) temptations to lust, advice which at least several hundred men are known to have followed. The rigorous self-denial advocated by Augustine hardly needs to be recounted here. And the one Roman book the Church has always been hot against is THE GOLDEN ASS of Apuleius. This is because its chief villainess is a Christian woman who is, to be blunt, a slut. The Church objected fiercely to the image thus presented. Augustine attacked the book frequently and ferociously, even going so far as to call Apuleius the Anti-Christ. Decrees attacking the book during the Spanish Inquisition for its pernicious picture of Christianity are still in existence.

I suspect at least some of this is overkill. There can't be many people besides Keller who are dense enough not to know that the Church dislikes carnality. As T.S. Eliot once observed, "The first sign of intelligence is the ability to recognize a fact."

5) And yes, the Church disliked comfort. For roughly its first seven to eight centuries, the Church's concept of heaven was of a purely physical paradise. It was central to this view that a Christian would receive more than enough enjoyment in heaven to balance the pain he or she experienced here on earth. It followed that if one purposely endured discomfort, one's afterlife would be that much more pleasurable (always provided that the pain was "offered up" to Christ, whom one would have thought had more than enough of his own). Again, it was Origen who promulgated this doctrine most actively, though Augustine also wrote extensively on the subject. Ammianus Marcellinus, who in the Fourth Century was the last of the Roman historians, wrote a great many descriptions of these odd sectarians, blackening the roads of the empire as they rushed about fighting heresy, wearing hair shirts, inserting pebbles in their sandals, never eating full meals and never smiling, all to the surprise and amusement of the startled pagans. Who could have guessed that these zealous loons would one day have the last laugh?

Keller says I misused the word "Puritan". One of the definitions of "puritan" in Webster's dictionary is "one who practices or preaches a more rigorous or professedly purer moral code than that which prevails." This is clearly the sense in which

I used the word, it is clearly valid, and I can't imagine anyone but a rapacious fool wanting to quarrel about it.

7) The Church has always fostered and encouraged the military virtues, as they are called. In the latter part of the Fourth Century it became a mortal sin for a Christian man to refuse to serve in the Roman army. (This was part of the price Theodosius extracted from the bishops in return for banning all other religions.) Plenary indulgences were granted to Crusaders. During the Vietnam War a number of American churches, among them the Catholics, publicly deplored draft refusers and deserters. Etc., etc., in potentially tedious detail. Keller really should learn to face facts.

8) Keller denies the Church preaches chastity! See #4 above; I'll forgo further exposition. There is a question I'd like to ask Keller, though, as one student of theology to another: what is a "relatively venial" sin?

9) See #7 above. It appears that in addition to his various other failings, Keller suffers from acute literal-mindedness.

10) The Roman poet Horace once proclaimed, "The city is the glory of our race!" In this he echoed the consensus of classical writers: even Homer, writing in a barbarous age, recognized the civilizing nature of the city. It was only in a city that one could find in much quantity or quality the pleasures of the flesh, of conversation, of art -- the three things which Petronius described as the essence of civilized life. Everywhere in classical writing this view of the city appears. There is a famous example in the HECABE of Euripides; the tragedian has his protagonist plead for the life of her only surviving daughter with these words:

I implore you, do not tear my child from me, do not
Kill her. There is enough death. In her lies my joy,
In her I forget troubles, and find comfort for
All I have lost. She is my city now...

To a modern ear this metaphor sounds jarring, until one recalls the exalted view the ancients held of their cities. Indeed, the word "civilization", taken back to its Latin root, means "the world of cities".

It was precisely this web of glorious cities that was destroyed by the barbarians, who I repeat supplanted it with no achievement of their own, and who were at a very early date absorbed into the Church which encouraged, institutionalized and even propagated their destructive, uncivilized attitudes. This alarming fact was noted by numerous observers in the Fourth Century, most prominently by Ammianus Marcellinus and by the Greek critic and philosopher Libanius. And it was primarily a realization of its pernicious influence on art and science that led the emperor Julian to try to crush the Christian Church and strip its bishops of their temporal power, which had become considerable. This view of the development of the Church and the decline of the great pre-Christian cities has been endorsed by reputable historians from Edward Gibbon to J.B. Bury and Steven Runciman, and I see no reason to reject it simply because a half-educated "intellectual" like Keller finds it not to his taste.

And it is precisely the values the ancients revered in their cities that the Church has always deplored. It has persecuted and often destroyed learning and art which don't harmonize with its dogma (wouldn't you love to know what Apollonius of Tyana wrote to make them call him an Anti-Christ?). It has constantly insisted that sensual pleasure, except when it produces more Christians, is a bad thing, despite common sense and the inclinations of human nature. It is even possible to detect

a vague fundamental Christianity in the hostility many people feel toward cities in this country today, an attitude hardly conducive to happy settlement of our urban problems. (Why should we save New York? It's full of pornographers and queers? Cities are wicked.) Really, the Christian Church has in many ways, some overt but most subtle, worked against our halting efforts to become once again civilized (in the classical sense of the word). Its barbarous influence has pervaded the West; foolish and repressive laws in scores of countries owe their existence directly to the Church's doctrines. This seems to me both clear and inescapable. Perhaps if Mark Keller had troubled to read a few books from the cultures he writes of so casually, he might have agreed with me.

"I DREAMED I SAW SAINT AUGUSTINE..."

MARK M. KELLER

John Curlovich fondly believes he has a wide reputation among fans as a historical scholar. He responds favorably to praise in print (admittedly scarce) and bristles when faced with criticism (regrettably common). His latest letter to MYTHOLOGIES is a case in point. A paragraph of negative comment on his unique interpretation of the classical age calls forth four pages of impassioned reiteration of his previous errors, mixed with personal abuse directed at those who dare criticize him.

Ordinarily I would join the rest of fandom in politely ignoring these outbursts. But since he has attacked me by name as ignorant and foolish, I suppose I must take time off from more important tasks and reply to him, at least briefly.

His argument has two parts: that I am ignorant of the facts of history, and that the events of the past did take the unlikely path he describes. First, the question of relative ignorance -- The Curlovich philosophy of history appears very simple. The facts of the Classical Age come from one source, the tragedies, histories, and poems of the elite urban writers in Greek and Latin. There can be no other source of information about the Classical past. There is one way to interpret these facts: the Curlovich Hypothesis. Anyone who does not agree with the Curlovich Hypothesis either knows the facts but maliciously lies (the Catholic Church) or does not know the facts at all (poor ignorant Keller).

We can look at the Curlovich Hypothesis in a little while. How does Curlovich intend to prove I am ignorant of the facts?

He does so by repetition upon repetition, seemingly in the faith that to repeat a thing twenty times makes it true: "knows less about ancient history than about most things"; "expounds freely about a book he seems not to have read"; "unacquainted with the many books the Greeks and Romans left behind"; "knowledge of Heracles more from Steve Reeves than Euripides"; "can't be many people besides Keller who are dense enough not to know..."; "half educated intellectual"; "perhaps if Keller had troubled to read a few books from the cultures he writes of so casually, he might have agreed with me".

That last sentence is the key: Curlovich cannot imagine anyone knowing the facts and coming to a different conclusion than him. This marks him as a crank and a dilettante, I'm afraid. The professional historian, the serious scholar, knows full well that there are many ways to read the same data. Critical judgment -- the key skill of the historian -- is the ability to choose among varied interpretations. Curlovich still cannot grasp that honest students of history have to judge among choices.

For him there are no choices. There is only one view - his view. All else is fabrication contrived to delude his potential followers and lead them astray. He may know lots of facts (I don't deny his wide reading) but his synthesis of the facts is quirky and skewed. He refuses to admit there are areas of study about the ancient world in which he is deficient. Indeed, for Curlovich, "what he doesn't know is not worth knowing".

I do not worry about damage that Curlovich might do to my reputation. Any of my colleagues in academic history who skimmed a Curlovich tract would likely set it away the first time he hit one of the fallacies Curlovich so often uses instead of argument. I don't know any fans who take Curlovich seriously, so I need not fear being ostracized in fandom.

For the record, I have read rather widely in European and world history, but with no more specialization than the average graduate student of medieval and renaissance history. This is not the place for a catalog of my library, an annotated bibliography of books read, notes of conversations with historical scholars, or personal observations of ancient artifacts. About ten hours of library research have gone into checking details for this reply -- more than it really warrants, perhaps.

"Ignorant about most things"? I wonder, how does Curlovich know? His research is as sloppy here as elsewhere. Has he met me in person, seen me at a con, read any of my published articles, heard me on the radio? He must base his opinion on my fanwriting for MYTHOLOGIES, or on personal spite.

What I wrote for MYTHOLOGIES has been mostly biology, history, or book reviewing. Does he claim I am incompetent in those fields? For biology, I place his decision below that of the Biology Department of Dartmouth College (they awarded me an M.A. in Ecology in 1969). For history, is not the History Faculty of Brown University more competent to judge my ability than Curlovich from a distance? (Full approval for PhD candidacy in History of Science, 1976). --- Book reviewing is a matter of personal opinion. Still, I think I did better with Poul Anderson than Curlovich did with Michael Bishop. He claimed a Bishop story was a defense of fascism and militarism, an interpretation so unlikely and so misleading that Bishop himself wrote to the zine to refute the error. Take this as evidence that Curlovich's critical judgment is sadly deficient. But you knew that already.

You have all been waiting for me to unveil the Curlovich Hypothesis, a new and exciting reconstruction of history. Wait no more. Here it is:

- the Classic world consisted of gleaming cities populated by brilliant poets and tragedians who pondered the human dilemma and respected the human mind.
- outside this world were the Barbarians, a faceless mass characterized mainly by a love of warfare, violence, and marching in armies.
- within the walls of the Classical cities were traitors, the Christians. They hated the noble pleasure-loving pagans and encouraged the Barbarians to enter the flourishing cities by force, burning, looting, destroying. Christians were glad to see cities burn and countrysides depopulated.

The second part of the Curlovich Hypothesis concerns the Middle Ages, but Part One should be enough for now. I am sorry if it sounds like a synopsis of THONGOR AT THE FALL OF ROME, but that is the level of sophistication at which Curlovich operates. He has read historians of far greater understanding and subtlety, I am sure, but the message didn't get through. No economic background, no concept of social classes, no grasp of public policy - just attitudes of literati are what Curlovich grasps. And those he selects to show only his point.

Herewith, another view, with supporting quotes as needed. First, the ancient world was an agrarian one, based on primitive farming methods. It took 19 workers on the farm to support one city dweller; productivity was low and the fear of famine ever-present. Curlovich reads poets and tragedians: "they have told us quite clearly what their world was like". I read them, but also historians and essayists, and I get a perspective larger than the urban literati. Power was based on the great estates and on the armies, Who ran the estates and the armies? In Greece, at first, there was widespread control by the public gatherings of citizens; but this fell under oligarchic rule. Similarly in Rome, primitive democracy and the consulship were submerged by the principate and the imposition of oriental despotism. The Byzantine state - central control, loss of citizen rights in practice - dates from Diocletian (284 A.D.).

Sources: essays of Pliny and Cicero on farming; M.I. Finley, THE ANCIENT ECONOMY.

Second, not only was the ancient world mostly rural, it was based on slavery, upon war as a source of slaves. This Curlovich vehemently denies. He knows most students of history believe Roman society had a core pattern of institutions based on warfare; that's what the ancient historians tell us. Curlovich dislikes military men and military thought. He doesn't like to think of his beloved Romans being involved with warlike acts. So he denies they were.

I shall have to bring up more evidence here. Fortunately it is easy to find. Follow the Greek historians. Follow Athens. This city of philosophers was at war two years of three between the Persian Wars (490 BC) and Chaeronea (338 BC); the longest peace lasted less than ten years. Study the civic militia as a key social institution of Athens. Peninsular Greece was full of wars: ritual wars; revenge wars, family feuds, piracy and brigandage. Look at the laws of warfare. Capture meant slavery - there was no such category as POW. Victory meant all the land and property and persons of the enemy became yours. Certainly the historians did not like it, but they could imagine no alternative. Writings on theory of "peace" were as rare as writings on theory of "slavery"; one was unimaginable except as temporary lull in marching armies, the other so deeply ingrained in Classic culture that life without it was just not imagined. /// Check Garland, WAR IN THE ANCIENT WORLD: A SOCIAL HISTORY (Norton 1975)...Adcock, GREEK AND MACEDONIAN ART OF WAR (California, 1957)...Anderson, MILITARY THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE AGE OF XENOPHON (California, 1970).

Conflict took non-physical forms within the Greek city: lawsuits, struggles for political office - in short, the grab for wealth and power. The weapons here were words, debate, rhetoric, propaganda (to use a modern term). To call political speeches "contemplative" (!) as Curlovich does is misleading; they were meant not to be read in a tranquil study but to rouse a crowd to concerted action.

Toynbee estimates that the Roman historians spend four-fifths of their time talking about wars. This is not surprising, since Rome was at war so often. To quote Livy, the gates of the Temple of Janus were closed only when there was peace throughout all the Roman domains, and

"From the time of Numa Pompilius ((700 BC)) to the time of Augustus ((14 BC)), the doors were closed twice: once after the Punic War in the consulship of Titus Manlius; the second time, which heaven has allowed our generation to witness, after the Battle of Actium, when peace on land and sea was secured by the emperor Caesar Augustus."

-- (Livy, I, 19, 2-3)

Presumably Tacitus knew the sensibilities of his Roman readers. When he writes of

a period of peace, with no wars or battles, he apologizes because he fears they may find it dull:

"I am aware that much of what I have described, and will describe, may seem unimportant and trivial. But my chronicle is quite a different matter from the histories of early Rome. Their subjects were great wars, cities stormed, kings routed and captured. Or if home affairs were their choice, they could turn to conflicts of consuls and tribunes, to land-and-grain laws, feuds of aristocrats versus plebians. Mine, on the other hand, is a limited inglorious field. Peace was scarcely broken, if at all. Rome was plunged in gloom, the ruler uninterested in expanding the empire."

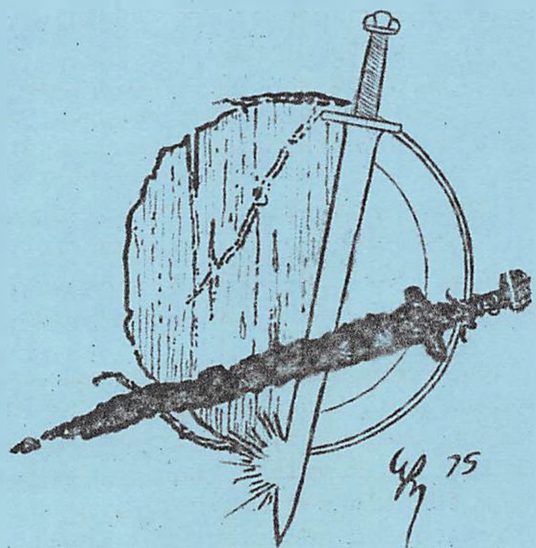
-- (Tacitus, ANNALS, IV, 32)

I agree with Curlovich that the glorification of military prowess is not a good thing. He sees the lust for armed conquest only in the barbarians; I see it in both barbarians and Romans. "They make a desolation and call it peace." The historians recognized the evil face of war - how could they avoid it? But no other way of life appeared possible. Peace was preferable? So said ideology. But pious Romans went to war when honor demanded it, reluctantly, but they went. That was the other face of the ideology. And honor seemed to demand it about every five years for as long as Rome lasted.

The Romans went to considerable lengths to cloak their wars in legal rhetoric. In every conflict, they had to be the ones wronged, so that Roman soldiers might march out wholly justified in wrath against a treacherous enemy. In the Republic there was even a special class of priests, the fetiales, who walked ahead of the armies to the borders of Roman soil, proclaimed the rightness of Roman cause, and hurled a bloody spear into enemy soil. (Livy, I, 32, 5-14)

How does the quote go? "Let other nations cultivate the arts and sciences. Your task, O Rome, is to rule the world with justice, sheltering the weak, conquering the strong, subduing the proud."

Curlovich refutes the warlike reputation of Rome by telling me that Numa Pompilius gets more space in the histories than Romulus, that Rome was proud of its administrative abilities (see above), and that professional mercenary soldiers were stock buffoons on the Roman stage. Correction: he doesn't indicate that the miles gloriosus, the comic captain, was a professional paid soldier rather than the old heroic militia volunteer (who is not mocked). I can't say his refutation is particularly convincing. Need we look at archaeological evidence of all the fortified towns and walls built by Rome? Need we look at all those monuments of soldiers? Need we look at the whole idea of gladiators as public spectacle, a curious diversion for a pacifist nation such as Curlovich's Rome?



Further data: histories of Livy and Tacitus...Adcock, ROMAN ART OF WAR UNDER

THE REPUBLIC (Barnes & Noble, 1960)...Parker, THE ROMAN LEGIONS, (Barnes & Noble, 1967).

Sticking with Rome for now, we can say that there were gleaming cities, but they were islands in a sea of rural poverty and misery. There were brilliant thinkers and writers in Rome, but the mass of the populace of the city did not share in the high flights of intellect.

This should be no surprise; it is the pattern of the underdeveloped world to the present day. Only the extreme romantic feels the societies of the past were somehow able to escape from the economic and social pressures of mundane life: H.P. Lovecraft, Miniver Cheevy, and - perhaps - John Curlovich?

As to the cities, let me raise a third point: the cities of the west were in decline long before the barbarians came near them. Trade diminished, industry faded, the wealthy fled to rural estates as the only source of income; all this by the Third Century A.D. It was not the Christians that destroyed the economies of the provincial cities. It was not the barbarians. It was in fact the central dominant power: Rome herself.

"...In the classical age of Greek and Roman civilization, when the city was the effective political unit, it was the city that dominated men's thoughts and emotions. Religion was in the main a communal activity, the worship by the citizens of the gods who protected their city. The virtues which were valued were civic virtues: courage in fighting for one's city, wisdom and public spirit in guiding its policy, and open-handed generosity in contributing to its expenses...The political subjection of cities to kings and ultimately to Rome inevitably weakened civic spirit. Many of its outlets were cut off. As Plutarch regretfully remarks, under the all-embracing rule of Rome a man could no longer win glory by leading his fellow-citizens to victory in war, nor by statesmanlike handling of a political crisis. Civic patriotism survived the political extinction of the city for a surprisingly long period, but, deprived of useful outlets, it was diverted into futile backwaters, and ultimately sank into stagnation. Now that cities could no longer fight one another for freedom or empire, they carried on bitter feuds over questions of precedence and honorific titles, and vied with one another in competitive building programs and games and festivals. Now that any challenge to the oligarchies which the Roman government supported was ruthlessly suppressed as sedition, internal politics degenerated into personal rivalries, in which, as Plutarch is forced to admit, ability or merit counted for little and the issue was decided by the wealth of the candidates and their willingness to spend it lavishly for the city's glory. This competition in extravagance between cities and between individuals was no doubt less destructive than the internecine wars and the party struggles that had been the bane of the independent city-state. But it was economically ruinous, and led to an increasingly strict surveyance by the imperial government of local administration, especially on its financial side, with a corresponding decay of civic initiative, and to a growing distaste for local politics on the part of the wealthy, who alone could take any active part in them...

In the early empire the central government depended largely on the cities for the execution of its orders. It was the city councils which were responsible for collecting the taxes, repairing the roads, levying recruits for the army, and furnishing the supplies requisitioned for its use, and so long as the cities performed these functions efficiently, the central civil service had only to regulate and supervise and could be kept small; its cost was therefore low; its quality could be maintained, and its abuses easily checked. This happy state of affairs, however, depended on the survival of civic spirit; the wheels would go around smoothly only so long as the upper classes in the cities were zealous to serve as local magis-

trates and councillors and take their share in the administrative duties involved. As they became more and more reluctant to serve, and had, by the third century, to be unwillingly conscripted, more and more supervision and regimentation by the central bureaucracy was required to keep the administrative machine in motion. The bureaucracy was expanded in number, its quality inevitably sank, and it became increasingly difficult to control its abuses."

--- A.H.M. Jones, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", HISTORY 40 (October 1955), pp 210-220; reprinted in S.N. Eisenstadt, ed., THE DECLINE OF EMPIRES (Prentice-Hall, 1967).

You would never guess these political and social changes if your information came only from Curlovich. Again he has the facts but misses their significance. He sees the importance of the cities. He knows they disappeared. So he jumps to the conclusion that the "web of glorious cities" was destroyed by the barbarians. What he will not accept, or perhaps cannot understand, is that the civic cohesion that led to civic pride was destroyed by Imperial Rome. The Romans probably never fully realized what was happening, why the bureaucracy kept growing and taxes kept rising. (Plutarch caught part of it.)

There are three areas we today can analyze better than the Romans: economics, administrative systems, and the social function of religion. These three hold the key to the internal sagging of the empire that rendered it more vulnerable to barbarians from outside. The Romans didn't understand, neither did Gibbon, fully, and neither does Curlovich, at all.

I must admit that I am holding a stack of quotes to demonstrate the Romans' poor grasp of how an economic system worked. But it is long. I will wait until Curlovich protests the Romans did know how to calculate GNPs or predict the shift in interest rates with good harvests. (They couldn't.) But maybe Curlovich is more interested in literature than economics, considers economics trivial. What he isn't interested in, isn't important. (The Roman attitude exactly.)

This brings up the fourth point: how exactly did the empire fall in the west? Were the Christians really responsible?

Obviously I can't solve that problem here. Historians have been arguing it since Gibbon at least, since the sixth century in all likelihood, and the debate proceeds to this very day. Summaries of recent scholarship may be found in Haywood, THE MYTH OF ROME'S FALL (1958)...J.J. Saunders, "The Debate on the Fall of Rome", HISTORY (February 1963), 48, pp 1-17...Lynn White, ed., THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ROMAN WORLD (California, 1966).

Why not accept Gibbon's conclusion, that the fall was the "triumph of barbarism and religion"? We know a bit more, for one thing. But this is material for a different study. Now I should concentrate on explaining why Curlovich is such an unreliable guide to fifth century political and religious events.

Did the Christians so hate the empire that they "fostered and even revered the barbaric attitudes that led to the downfall of Classical civilization"? (Note how simplistic that sounds once you know about the ruin of the cities by bureaucracy. Does Curlovich consider the imperial tax-collector barbaric?)

To answer, we have to see when contemporaries realized the empire was dead, and watch how the Christians took credit for killing it, if they wanted it dead. Clearly the old system was tottering when Alaric sacked Rome in 410 A.D. Anguished intellectuals asked what was wrong, why the capital of the world had been overrun.

The remaining pagans blamed the Christians. The gods were angry, they said. Christian emperors cut sacred groves, wrecked temples, removed the Altar of Victory from the Senate chamber. Zeus and Apollo were using Alaric as an instrument of revenge.

Curlovich would have you believe the Christians regarded the sack of Rome as a good thing. But no -- Augustine wrote CITY OF GOD to show the Christians were in no way responsible for such a disaster. His disciple Orosius wrote ADVERSUS PAGANOS ("against the pagans") to defend the Christian emperors by listing the equal number of disasters that happened under pagan emperors. Nobody was writing "God bless the barbarians." When the Vandals arrived thirty years later, the priest Salvian wrote DE GUBERATIONE DEI, describing the Vandals as God's scourge to punish a society rotten with vice and corruption. To quote Jerome, "Nostris peccatis Barbari fortes sunt." (EPISTOLAE 60:17)

The Church Fathers, in other words, saw the barbarians as frightening, monstrous, and extraordinary. Their invasion was to be explained as would be earthquake or plague or other disaster. Christianity was doing well within the framework of Imperial Christian Rome. The emperor and court were Christian. Who would replace a Christian king guided by the Church?

Roman aristocrats who studied history knew Rome had pulled through one close call before, in the third century, between 225 and 284, when the imperial succession collapsed and resultant anarchy nearly let the barbarians in. But then Diocletian had stepped in to restore the empire. Could not Stilicho or Aetius do it a second time? They tried, and likely they were of the same calibre as Diocletian had been. They had the bad luck to run into a simultaneous Vandal invasion from the south and Hun invasion from the east that finally fatally overloaded the limited manpower available to hold the frontiers. The walls went down and were not raised again.

In the third quarter of the fifth century A.D., western Rome ceased to exist as a unified system. Provinces held for decades or generations more, but the heart was dead.

Many modern historians believe the empire might have recovered a second time from 460-485 were it not for the unlikely timing. We might have seen no "fall" but a synthesis of Romano-Gothic culture. (Romano-Gaulic and Romano-British enclaves survived for fifty years after the empire itself fell.) No Dark Ages, no fragmentation of Europe...another Byzantine Empire centered on northern Italy and Germany for half a thousand years...but I digress again.

The Goths found themselves the only organized power in Italy. They wanted to keep the imperial system going to maintain the flow of loot, but lacked the skills. As Saunders says, "The Goths regarded Rome as a career, not an enemy." East Rome (Constantinople), the other capital, remained as an example of what a wholly Christian Roman Empire might have been, rather than the half-Christian, half-pagan uneasy mixture that remained of west Rome.

I am fond of Uchronias, so I'd better not start speculating on how Rome could have survived, which is much more interesting than discussing John Curlovich. (Except to Curlovich, of course.) Check J.B. Bury, HISTORY OF THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE (1923) vol I for a study of the contingencies. By the way, Curlovich mentions Bury in his attempt to relate the Christians to the decline of the cities in the west, but gives no citations. He tosses in the names of Gibbon and Steven Runciman in the same way. Perhaps I should inform him gently that name-dropping of famous historians is not considered valid documentation in the historical profession. What we need are citations: title, volume, and page, so we can look at the same documents

and see if the author's interpretations are valid. (You getting this, John?)

The Germans tried to rebuild west Rome: Karl, Otto, and all the "Holy Romans". They were Christians, under a Christian Church, and they mourned the fall of the empire and wanted it back. The Venerable Bede was quoted as apostrophising the Colosseum, "When Rome falls, falls the world." I think I will give a full citation on this Bede quote, so Curlovich knows what adequate documentation looks like. You will also realize why I haven't given full citations throughout this paper - Don would have screamed.

Bede quote: cited in Saunders, op. cit., p. 2 - "Quando stabit Coliseus, stabit et Roma./ Quando cadet Coliseus, cadet et Roma/ Quando cadet Roma, cadet et mundus." - first published in article "Coliseum" in C. du F. Ducagne, GLOSSARIUM MEDIAE ET INFIRMAE LATINITATIS (Paris, 1678). - mss c 900 (?)

By the year 800, nobody had a clear idea how the fall had happened. There were no decent historians between Ammianus (4th century) and Procopius (6th century), and Ammianus wasn't all that trustworthy. For example, he described Cologne as "destroyed by barbarians" in 355 and as a "well-fortified town" in 356, secure to the extent that the emperor Julian could pay a formal visit. I suspect, and others suspect, that Ammianus exaggerates the damage done by barbarian raids. Does Curlovich accept his first statement and ignore the second? -- Source: Ammianus, XV, 8:19; XVI, 2:3. Commentary: C. Warren Hollister, "Twilight in the West" in Whyte, TRANSFORMATION (pp 179 - 205).

The Middle Ages came and went, with the fall of Rome vaguely heard of. The ruins of the Forum still stood. There were legends of Vergil the Wizard, and German sagas of Attila. Monks copied the histories of Ammianus, the feeble poems of Claudian and Sidonius Apollinaris (alive during the Fall), and of course the Christian tracts of Augustine, Orosius, and Salvian. Bishops loved to give sermons based on Salvian: "Sinful indecency caused the fall of Rome". This theme is still heard today in speeches by Spiro Agnew and Ronald Reagan.

If Curlovich wishes to take this as evidence that the Church was against lust and pleasure, I wouldn't dream of denying him. His condemnations of the medieval Church are quite likely valid for many parishes. In any case, the medieval Church didn't claim credit for the empire's fall.

"Why did Rome fall? How did Rome fall?" -- There was just no way of telling from the ancient documents. They were too scanty. (Are these the documents that Curlovich says tell us what we need to know about the ancient world?) Scholarship grew and rediscovered the peaks of classical culture. In 1665, one M. Godefroy published in Paris the compiled Theodosian Code, all the public laws enacted in Rome between Constantine in 313 and Theodosius II in 439. The laws had been carved on marble slabs for public display in Rome during the reign of Theodosius II, and fortunately the slabs survived until 1665. Careful study of the laws could reveal trends about which Ammianus was silent, and Procopius unclear. One could follow the rise in taxes, the increasing despotism, the loss of farmland to returning forest, the drop in population of outlying districts, the decline in trade.

Montesquieu (1734) and Gibbon (1776-1788) wrote books on the fall of Rome, using the Theodosian Code as a framework. They cited the loss of the navy, the jealousy between Rome and Constantinople, and (Gibbon) the secession from public life by large blocks of Christians. This analysis still has a basic validity. Historians today would add the shortage of manpower, the wave of plagues, and the hypertrophy of the bureaucracy. Some add further the widespread chronic lead poisoning of the upper classes by lead winejars, and the sheer bad timing of the Hun/Vandal invasions.

Conclusion: the defection of some western Christians was significant but by no means the crucial factor. Byzantine Rome became totally Christian, was hit by waves of barbarians, and survived them until 1453. Italian Rome remained half-Christian and half-pagan, was hit by waves of barbarians, and collapsed under the pressure by 476.

Obviously the presence of Christians did not automatically cause collapse. Byzantium repaired damage from barbarians; Italian Rome could not. Why?

Time to halt, time to set a limit. If readers are interested in the theory of decline of empires, it's a fine topic to discuss...next issue. I never even got to explore Curlovich's model of the medieval Church. I pass that temptation now, but cannot resist one comment: Origen's doctrine of self-castration was never the official policy of the whole Church. His followers were a noisy minority, his theology was declared officially heretical. Does Curlovich present him as a typical early Christian?

Let Curlovich attack the Church for its many real evils - God knows there are enough of them - rather than for trivia like eccentric theologians or sermons against hot baths. Criticize deeds - crusades, inquisitions.

If anyone out there feels Curlovich is equipped to analyze world history, if any of you believe he is an even tempered gentleman of cautious judgment and earned renown... then I guess my discussion has failed.

Two final quotes:

First, a passage from the Good Friday Missal used until very recently --

"Almighty and everlasting God, in whose hand are the powers and the rights of all governments, look favorably on the Roman Empire, that the nations which trust in their own fierce might may be overcome by the hand of thy power."

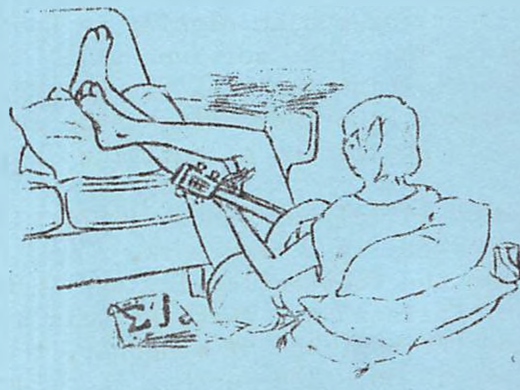
Second, from John Curlovich --

"There are few things I pride myself on more than my love for and knowledge of the classical world, and I hope you'll print my response to him entirely, so I can perhaps salvage some of the damage he must by now have done to my reputation in this area."

The love I don't doubt. The knowledge I question. The reputation -- had Mr. Curlovich refrained from venting his spray of personal insults at me, I would have been perfectly willing to leave him to the quiet enjoyment of such scraps of reputation as he is pleased to assume.

* * * * *

"Faithfulness to the truth of history involves far more than a research, however patient and scrupulous, into special facts. Such facts may be detailed with the most minute exactness, and yet the narrative, taken as a whole, may be unmeaning or untrue." -- Francis Parkman



ELABORATE LIES

FROMM AND MAY

[MARTY LEVINE]

Could you perhaps extrapolate on or explain May's idea, "Anarchy is not freedom?" In an anarchy you would have no actions to base your "counteractions" on, so your subsequent actions wouldn't be dependent on anything. You would be free to do as you wish.

((((I don't believe you really said that. As long as there are two people in the world, there are going to be actions to react against. In an anarchy, the strong would rule over the weak. If your neighbor took a dislike to you and tried to kill you, wouldn't you react? You'd lose as well your freedom to drive an automobile as freely as now, because there would be no laws regulating traffic flow, and nothing to prevent people from blocking roads, etc. Anarchy is, oddly enough, the most restrictive form of government, because there are as many governments as there are citizens.)))

[MICHAEL KALEN SMITH]

Re Fromm's lack of "experimental verification": How do you run an experiment on an entire society (short of being a White House economic advisor, that is)? In your reference to THE SANE SOCIETY (which I confess I've not read), I quite agree that a system of some 430,000 groups of 50 would be a bit unwieldy--not to mention the extra 4300 groups of 50 produced by our annual 1.0% growth rate. In any case, a group of 500 people will surely end up with a ruling clique of 2-3 dozen and an "inner circle" of 5 or 6 people who will actually run things. Thus is was in the "pure" democracy of Athens...

And so we come to THE ART OF LOVING, which I have read. I long ago rejected that word, "love", as little more than a social noise one makes in appropriate circumstances. And I quite understand the distinction between "love" and sexual attraction; I freely admit to the latter. Even in Fromm's sense, a "blending of two humans", I reject the concept. My wife and I have an intimate, mutually dependent (up to a limit) association--and we have 3 kids to prove it. We've long since learned to be tolerant of each other, and we argue about things within that framework of tolerance. But I am still essentially alone, I have been since birth and I will be until (and after) death. Obviously this attitude--"I am a rock" and all that--would horrify a lot of people...but I've never understood why it should. Do most people really feel that insecure? What's wrong with being alone? After all, I have myself. "Who's better than me?"

Maybe I'm annoyed because "love", almost by definition, is irrational and frequently over-emotional (your example of Rosalyn Carter's reaction to the PLAYBOY interview bears this out very well). I'm capable of all sorts of emotional reactions, depending on the stimuli (honest), but I'm very distrustful of excessive emotion. And I have a low threshold. Maybe that makes me cold-blooded and calculating--I don't know...I do know that I could never successfully undergo psychoanalysis. One has to open up completely, and that's something I could never do.

In relation to my parents, I consider myself very independent (or maybe non-dependent) of their influence. I left home at 19 and I've pretty much gone my own way since. My father understands my attitude in this, I think, but my mother never will. She's comparatively a very demonstrative person, and she gets upset if we skip a summer without going "home" for a few days. My kids are beginning to edge into adolescence and I've done what I can to instill an attitude of basic independence in them; I don't particularly want them coming back to visit every summer after they're grown and gone. I want them to realize that each of them is his/her own person--not just a pseudo of some corporate familial "self". Yeah...heartless and cold-blooded, right?

Re May's subdivisions of love: Sex, as you say, is obvious--but it ain't love. I suspect the desire to reproduce oneself is just learned social behavior. You're supposed to want offspring, so most people do want them. But a lot of the post WW II generation have declined to have children, for a variety of reasons, so May's "eros" is far from automatic. And I just can't bring myself to think of friendship ("philia"), comradeship, colleagueship, whatever, as love. It just doesn't fit. And finally I question the existence of "agape" because I have very serious philosophical reservations about the existence of true altruism.

((I suspect that much of the drive to "fall in love" really is the result of insecurity -- "I must prove that I am worth loving by having someone fall in love with me; I must prove that I am a good person by falling in love with someone." I agree that we should strive to make our children independent. When choosing a college, I automatically excluded anything within a comfortable drive. I ended up 850 miles from home. Even if my son chose to go to college a mile away, I'd insist he live on campus.)))

[DAVE SZUREK]

The MYTH on psychoanalysis was interesting, if something of a departure from the usual format. As you know, I am interested in psychology, though I haven't pursued it as far as I might. I should feel humbled to admit that my knowledge of such visible figures as Fromm and May is severely limited. If I were more familiar, I could offer more specific comments. According to what you've said, I find a degree of agreement and disagreement with both men, which is perfectly natural. Each is a little too cut and dried. I don't believe that life is that consistent, regardless of how much order one tries to inject into the universe. I've already written myself blue in the face on the topic of cultural conditioning. I myself have said something similar to May's opinion that in the eyes of society, an individual has significance only when he gives up his significance. Likewise, I remember saying that some people who think of themselves as rebels are really being manipulated by the opposition, whether or not either side consciously knows it. That should be obvious to all of us, but there are people who don't realize it. Still I don't think it applies to all rebels. There are different types, and it all depends on the kind one associates with the word. Those who think more about "villains" than "problems" are, in my view, the most vulnerable, along with

those who "rebel" for no better reason than that they'd rather be in the opposition's shoes. In my perception of May's concept, the most effective form of rebellion would be simply dropping out, which is sometimes true. The best weapon against game playing is to simply stop playing. Although there are some who think they've done this when all they've really accomplished is role reversal. Still, fortunately not all people are out of touch with themselves. One of the many dangers of categorization is the assumption that no true alternatives exist, a philosophy to which I don't subscribe. Fromm is of course the more irresponsible of the two, externalizing like crazy, making universal dogma of his private beliefs and assuming that a political ideology is capable of solving all problems. While certain systems doubtless contribute to mental illness, I think the nature of the beast runs deeper than that, and is not going to be changed by mere changes in government or economics. Naturally I wince at Fromm's overly simplified categorization of human beings - the sexist doctrines and that instant test for determining whether we are biophilous or life loving.

I agree with much of what you say about psychoanalysis per se. I disagree violently with with none of it. I believe that such an animal as mental illness exists - my own mother died a hopeless schizophrenic - but I don't equate it with "being different", an idea which I'd thought passe', but have learned that laymen aren't the only ones who see it in this light. Not all shrinks do either. Men are of separate beliefs, regardless of avocation. Many folk equate mental health with social adjustment. I don't think that's the crux of the matter. Adjustment and contact with oneself is more like it, although not all people who have it together in these respects are well adjusted (read homogenized) to a society geared to the neurotic, as I sincerely believe ours is. Only when one goes a little too far, or channels it in a different direction than prescribed, or sometimes fails to be sufficiently neurotic, do we generally think of that person as in trouble. Sometimes but not always "eccentricity" is simply a sign that one has it more together than one's peers. "Normalcy", as it is generally used, is a misnomer. Occasionally, behavior perceived as eccentric or even abnormal characterizes a person healthy enough to deviate from the norm, while strict adherence is capable of signifying the reverse. That's still not a cut and dried absolute. To pretend otherwise would categorize human beings and deny individuality, which is probably at the core of mental illness. But I suspect it to be true more often than not. I've thought it ironic when a perfectly happy individual is described as "emotionally disturbed". Seems a contradiction in terms to yours truly. (It is also reminiscent of the way "anti-social" was attributed back in high school to a pro-individual but anti-institutional attitude, while when the same individual - me - respected institutions but was down on people, the diagnosis was positive.

((I never meant to imply that I didn't believe there to be such a thing as mental illness, only that I don't think that psychoanalysis is likely to be very effective in curing most types.))

[ROY TACKETT]

Your stand on psychologists surprises me slightly. I would have thought you'd feel different about them. Apologies, sir, I misjudged you. On the whole I agree with your basic proposition. I have never delved deeply into the subject since I am skeptical of it -- and its practitioners -- (and, being a smug, satisfied type, I've never wondered who or what I am, I know) but in the course of a lifelong practice of learning a little bit about a lot of things I have, of course, read a couple of books on the subject. I agree that the main value of psychoanalysis is that it simply enables the patient to talk out hiser troubles. Number one daughter spent

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some time talking to a psychologist a few years ago trying to get her head on straight (as they put it these days) and she agrees that the main value was just in having someone to talk to. Most people, young people particularly, I guess have difficulties in discussing some things with those they are closest to so it helps to have someone to nod the head and say "Uh-huh".

As for the ideas of Fromm and May...well, crackpots are entitled to their opinion, too, but we don't have to pay any attention to them. Incidentally, I disagree with you...or May, as the case may be...that the powerlessness of the individual is more noticeable now than in former times. The only time it hasn't been noticeable might possibly be during the days in America before the closing of the frontier when the individual always had the option of picking up and moving on. But that was the only option he had. We are not developing a societal slave mentality -- it has always been there. Study your history.

((I don't agree. I think man and woman today are more aware than ever before of their inability to administer their own lives. There certainly were times in history which were more repressive, but I don't think people in those days thought that they were entitled to the kind of power about our own lives that people routinely believe that they want today. Whether they really do want those freedoms or not is, of course, an entirely different question.)))

[CHESTER CUTHBERT]

I haven't read either Fromm or May, though I believe I have at least one book by each of them in my collection. As you have no doubt noticed, many occult philosophies use in their own jargon concepts better expressed in orthodox psychology and philosophy; and I have found in psychical research that many pioneers manufacture words to express their peculiar view of phenomena already designated in other terms by other researchers. This practice may serve to distinguish one's views from another's but to the layman it only adds to the difficulty of comprehending the basic phenomenon, or even in realizing its identity. Yet, I suppose, language must evolve; and possibly there is some advantage in expressing much the same field by such terms as psychical research, extra-sensory perception, parapsychology.

[IAN COVELL]

I had never actively considered that psychologists would also be concerned with social conditions as well as social problems; odd omission in my thoughts. I am again amazed at how deeply you can see into a subject you "only dabbled in".

I am becoming worried about the term "love". I suspect that it cannot be defined because it does not exist; there have been attempts to grade it (love of country down to love of self - or up) but that seems sadly to disprove the existence of love at all. Not only does the language not exist but the feelings we are trying to isolate do not either. If we can be graded like that, what are we grading - do we isolate characteristics and say "the more prevalent/violent/consuming the closer to the end of the scale" - and if we can do that, aren't we in fact defining love as those feelings. To prove love's existence we need definitions, but having defined it, it no longer exists. It's another of those things that I know but cannot explain. Fromm isolates those things he sees as love and says without them we become isolated, introverted, rebellious, etc. - does he ever define what he means, I wonder.

On page 5 you define "necrophilous" well, but not "biophilus". I presume we simply invert the characteristics? I suspect there is a core of truth in his division (though I also recall Bester was castigated for his "Life Urge against Death Wish bit) and that the modern world is exhibiting many of the symptoms of the necrophilous

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personality.

From what I can see I agree with much of May's views on society/individual. On page 7, the search for a perfect mate; a man or woman not complete without the other...hmmm, well, we have this two sex system and if the two sexes aren't halves of a whole, what are they? I suspect that the basic individual of the future will be a fusion "man-woman" in nature, that is like our marriage only deeper. I know all that about each should develop his own potential and we don't have to depend on others - or shouldn't; but that's not what I mean. It just seems that in the future there will be no question of being male or female, because you will be a malefemale with your "spouse". And I can't define why this should work, or why it will be done. I don't think the pairings will be for life, nor do I expect them to be...Damn, but I'm finding this difficult to explain. I'd better leave it.

It would be too facile here to use the arguments about increasing disinterest in personal communication; a greater emphasis on shallow relationships; more need to be a "Sanitation Engineer" not a "dustman". Are we building walls and hoping we can hide that way? I think May is probably right about the effects of societal transition (facilely, once the masks are up we can adapt in private to the changed conditions, then re-emerge conforming) but I wonder what he thinks we are becoming, it would be interesting to know.

((It's interesting that you see the shape of the future as involving a strengthening of marriage and closer interpersonal relationships. I see the traditional family structure becoming ever looser, resulting eventually in term marriages, expiring after so many years, divorce on a no-guilt basis, and the increasing fractionalization and alienation of society. In some ways, I hope you're right. But I don't believe it. The nuclear family is, barring some civilization destroying catastrophe, on its way into a new stage of evolution.)))

[GEORGE FERGUS]

Re Fromm: "People can be divided into two groups--those who classify people into two groups and those who don't."

]ARTHUR D. HLAVATY]

I'm afraid that the distinction between "mental disturbance" and "mental illness" is important because acceptance of the "illness" model allows the state to exert more power over individuals in the guise of "therapy" (just as it protects us from diet sodas which are hazardous to your health if drink 800 bottles a day). The individual charged with a crime is protected by a complex system of legal and procedural safeguards. The individual diagnosed as having a mental illness is far less protected, and so many people are locked up or drugged against their will for such thoughtcrimes as communism, homosexuality, promiscuity, and Eastern religion. The therapeutic rationale is frequently used against children. "Juvenile delinquents" are locked up for their own good, rather than being punished for crimes. This approach has meant that in New York City, sadistic juvenile muggers are put on probation, while in other jurisdictions, children are put away for years for trivial offenses. (Gault, whose case established the principle that juvenile offenders have a right to due process, was given a seven year sentence for a soft-core obscene phone call.)

Disciplinary problems in the schools are now said to be suffering from hyperactivity, a form of "minimal brain damage." (The brain damage is usually so minimal that it cannot be detected by any known scientific means.) Thus if a child acts unruly (as

they used to say), the possibility that he is bored is not considered; he is simply given a dose of amphetamines, which appears to calm him down. (I say "appears" because there is some question as to what this treatment actually does. We know that adult speed freaks sometimes spend hours on mindless, repetitive tasks, which is the definition of a good student in many elementary schools. There is some evidence that students who have been given amphetamines expend more energy than they did when they were "hyperactive").

I agree that there are real mental illnesses (i.e., manifestations of physical illnesses), and I suspect that medical science will find more. No one knows of course but my guess is that when/if science does identify a biochemical factor in schizophrenia, it will turn out that the same factor is found in "sane" people who have adjusted to it or learned to use it.

For instance, there is a theory that one element in the blood is chemically similar to psilocybin. Perhaps paranoid schizophrenics have a high level of this particular natural psychedelic in their systems. But maybe visionary mystics and poets like Blake do too. In the same way, the biochemical factor which causes the more aggressive forms of schizophrenia may also be present in leading politicians and generals. I'm not simply being cynical. Many world leaders have had personality traits which would get lesser men put away. This is obvious in people like Hitler, Stalin, and Amin, but it's true of some of the good guys, too. For instance, Lincoln and Churchill both suffered from spells of acute depression. If the scientists can figure out a way to separate the leadership from the craziness, that would be wonderful, but I'm not at all sure it can be done.

((The idea that mental illness may result from biochemical imbalances is, naturally, not new. I did read a newspaper story recently which outlined a unique new approach to psychotherapy, although how accurate the newspaper story was is open to question. Most psychotherapy has traditionally assumed that it should teach people to stop over-reacting to essentially trivial occurrences in their lives. The new approach says that these incidents are not trivial, that they are important, and the attempt is to teach the patient how to function despite the trauma. This might not sound like a big difference, but philosophically it is, and in practice, according to the story, the recovery rate is higher than under conventional psychotherapeutic methods.)))

[WAYNE HOOKS]

On psychoanalysts; since after I receive my MSW, I will be qualified as a psychoanalyst, I had some trouble with your comments. However, a good many of your arguments are valid. Witness the staff feuds between psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers on who is qualified to do what. Or even the infighting between psychiatric social workers and medical social workers. All is not calm in Olympus. If you are interested yet in existential casework, I am working on a paper on existential casework, with women alcoholics, and its validity. If you would like a xerox, let me know.

((Or the infighting between Freudians, neo-Freudians, and Jungists. Or between Skinner and everybody else. Or between Rogers, Piaget, and Anna Freud. Etc. I still remember the furor in the MSU psychology department when a massive study revealed that the remission (spontaneous cure) rate among non-patients with mental disturbances was virtually identical to the remission rate of those in therapy, obviously implying that psychotherapy effectively made no difference. I'm not familiar with "existential casework" and would be happy to read a copy.)))

FABLES AND SUCH

[MARTY LEVINE]

On Guards: I loved it. It had to be a farce, right? I mean, no company would keep such a blatantly terrible "security company" on their payroll for as long as your company did...unless you felt sorry for the company.

((Alas, it was literally true, transcribed directly from my correspondence. I tried for months to change, but there were only two other guard services available, and neither of them had enough staff to take us on. We eventually hired our own guard staff, which has worked out pretty well since then.)))

[DAVID STEVER]

The most disturbing thing about your fables, most Ron Goulart stories (I love Ron Goulart stories), and real life, is that it never ends. In recalling your story of the army and the refrigerators, and now Blatz Security, it frightens me that the situation is not ended, and right does not triumph.

Always willing to forgive a pun (thus quickly clearing the mind, allowing one to mull over another pun in return), I'm not sure if the punning public will forgive Paul his analysis of the form of humor.

[MICHAEL KALEN SMITH]

Ah, yes, puns. Well, "the pun is mightier than the sword," I always say -- And on that note, as the loser of the tournament said to the winner, I shall leave you to your Joust Reward.

[HANK HEATH]

On Guards really made me crack up. You see, among the thousands of jobs I've worked are a couple of stints as - you guessed it - a security guard. Once for Pinkerton's, as a matter of fact. That's why I got such bad gut aches from laughing at your comments.

Facts: 1. Despite the different prices offered firms, all guards start off at minimum wage, with little or no training, more often than not as a second job or something to help out social security. 2. Promotions are more from the outside than from the ranks - lots of motivation and understanding result. 3. It's been proven that pilferage and stealing are not lessened by the presence of guards, but insurance companies keep requiring them (wonder whose hand is in whose pocket?)

So let's look at your tale. I suspect Blatz is a code for Burke (((wrong))), but let's overlook that.

The keys to the Detex clock are notoriously easy to remove from their posts. A smart guard has two plots for getting away with keeping them in the guard shack. One: allow enough time between punches to make the tape look good. Two: transpose a couple of keys in order so that he has to justify a new (and possibly better) route instead of having the keys. This latter can even get a promotion or a raise for "constructive suggestions", though usually it just means no hassle.

There's something to know about misuse of Detex systems. This is a symptom of more than bad guards. The route might be too long or too hard to justify all that effort at minimum wage. Especially when someone can get as much or more for unemployment and welfare.

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Collusion between guards and workers is almost impossible to get rid of. Consider: an underpaid guard, usually not allowed to be armed, is walking around in a strange plant, wearing a uniform that makes him stick out like a sore thumb.

Forgive Us Our Puns was good reading. Like they say in football, with third down and long, drop back five and pun.

((The reason most insurance companies insist on a guard is not to guard against theft specifically, though in theory that's much of the reason, but also as a means of insuring that a fire will be reported as early as possible. I don't believe it is a significant factor there, either. Mike Blake, sometimes letterwriter to MYTHOLOGIES, is a Pinkerton guard.)))

[MARK M. KELLER]

On puns: Paul has rendered us all a valuable service by giving us choice terms of insult to hurl at perpetrators next Pun Night. "You rotten paranomasiac, get off the field! You bum!"

[HARRY WARNER JR]

I gather from Paul DiFilippo's article that the Renaissance punsters didn't indulge in the variety of puns which seems most popular today. None of the types of puns which he lists embraces the kind of wordplay which depends on the listener's knowledge of some famous quotation or a brand name of a product or a cliché or some other stock phrase for its effectiveness. Most of Walt Willis' most celebrated puns fell into this variety, including his most complicated and apparently spontaneous one, the time during a meal when the salt cellar was empty and needed to be filled from a package of salt and Walter announced: "The salt lies not in our jars but in our shelves." Even some famous science fiction puns which do not involve distortion of one or more words' sound need this sort of background to be appreciated, like Henry Kuttner's title, "Knight Must Fall"..

((Daniel Dryfoos will always live in my memory because he wrote a story titled "Blunder Enlightening".)))

[DAVE LOCKE]

The Blatz encounter is, presumably, fiction. A Fable, you say. The name of the company isn't quite the same as the name of the place where you actually do work. And I can't believe that any manager would put up with such horseshit with no action other than a series of complaint letters. It was amusing, though.

Executive Guilt is, just as presumably, for real. I don't feel guilt-ridden when I put myself in the position of firing someone, but I do approach the subject cautiously. People react in different ways. They get mad, or they cry, or they're embarrassed, or they argue, or they act like they're going to punch you out. The last person I fired acted out all of that, except for the last item. It was a real academy performance. She started out by being incredulous, then got mad and demanded to know why such a thing was happening, then got a hangdog look when I told her what she already knew, then started crying. Jesus Crickey.

Here's a gimmick I learned the hard way, and it's a key element if you're firing someone who decides to get steamed and wants to argue the subject with you. Just say, "If you need a reference in this company, I can give it for you. If you want it." Immediately the other person gets a mental image of bridges burned behind them, and the confrontation concludes quickly at that point. It works.

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((As mentioned above, On Guards was literal truth. Executive Guilt was mildly exaggerated, but refers to my early career as a businessman. Six years later, I've overcome most of my own insecurities about my professional competence. I cut my staff from eleven to two, and get more work done now than we did before.)))

SCIENCE FICTION

[PATRICK MCGUIRE]

I thank you very much for the copy of Keller's fascinating essay. In IS THERE LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS?, Anderson says that centauroids might have evolutionary advantage on high-gravity worlds (Wotan in his Technic Civilization series, Jupiter in THREE WORLDS TO CONQUER), or maybe would develop by chance even in lower gravity.

There are fairly good reasons why most extraterrestrials encountered in the Technic Civilization series are more primitive. In IS THERE LIFE Anderson speculates that for reasons of stellar evolution the Solar System is slightly ahead of the pack. Also, we don't know just what touches off a scientific revolution -- many of the non-technological societies in the series in fact have a longer recorded history than Earth; like China, they just haven't quite hit on the path for technology. Besides, if other societies are modernized by Earth, then you can have everyone at a fairly even level of development, giving you interesting wars and whatnot. Of course you can do it the other way and have Earth brought up to a higher level, as in Anderson's AFTER DOOMSDAY or in LeGuin's future history. This latter approach is probably more realistic and is less exploited, so I like it better. But the parallels to the present position of the US are less, which may be important if you are making political commentary.

Naqsa first appears in THE STAR FOX (1964), which Keller obviously hasn't read, since he misses substantial allusions thereto, including the cameo appearance of Gunnar Heim. Naqsa's role in the earlier book doesn't look like the Arabs to me, so I doubt that the planet was named with that in mind. Perhaps Anderson just ran across the "alien-looking" word and used it. Still, it may have suggested the use of that particular planet in FIRE TIME. In point of fact, the fit into that future history isn't particularly good, since it seems perfectly clear from STAR FOX that New Europe (and not Munomar) is the first colony to declare independence of Earth. But Keller is obviously right about the approximate analogy to the Middle East, and I shake my head that for some reason I hadn't noticed this earlier myself.

I thought that coal and oil deposits were the result of the fact that on Earth there were no decay bacteria for millions of years. If this didn't lead to insuperable problems here, why should it on Ishtar? I would suppose that the heat at Fire Time might lead to a mechanical breakdown of complex molecules. Otherwise, perhaps the T-zone would have energy resources that could be exported outside the zone, or used to facilitate industrialization. Given also their immunity to Fire Time, one might expect the T-natives to do rather well for themselves, at least given a little help from Earth or other sophonts.

[DARROLL PARDOE]

There are a lot of serious errors in Keller's arguments. The analogy with biodegradable detergents is all wrong, for example. In the fifties, when synthetic detergents were coming into use for domestic washing powders, it was the branched-chain ones that were used, not the linear ones. The molecules in question weren't phosphates, either: they were mostly alkylarylsulphonate types. Because they were efficient

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surfactants, the washing powder formulations didn't need much phosphate added to give a product with the desired properties (the phosphate is put in to modify the basic detergent properties to those wanted).

However, when these new synthetic washing powders had been in use for a while, the rivers started sprouting huge masses of foam all over: the detergents were being flushed into the sewers, and because they weren't biodegradable, they were accumulating in the rivers and causing this foam to form, which was the most obvious manifestation of how the natural waters were being affected. So, the detergent companies had to replace the branched-chain formulations by linear ones, which were biodegradable, and so didn't hang around in the rivers but could be eaten up in the sewage plants with any remaining being rapidly mopped up by the river bacteria. This cured that problem, but raised another: since the linear detergent molecules were less efficient detergents than the old branched-chain ones, more phosphate had to be included in the formulations of washing powders in order to give the desired properties. So much more in fact that the phosphate level in rivers and lakes rose to the point where it encouraged the growth of algae. That problem we still have.

If someone could come up with a highly efficient biodegradable surfactant molecule there wouldn't be any need for these high phosphate levels (not that I think there's any need anyway: but most people apparently aren't willing to put up with a slightly less efficient washing powder formulation).

Nor is it true that the decay of animal bodies causes racemization of the amino-acids in the protein molecules. Decay is a biological process: those amino acids are being incorporated right there into bacterial proteins, which are of the same chirality as the animal ones were. It's only over very long time periods, on the geological scale, when there are free amino acids lying about, that chemical racemization processes can occur. Fossilization is a chemical process, and the amount of organic material remaining in a fossil is precious little.

The amino acids in earthly organisms are all of one chirality, but the situation is not nearly so clear cut for sugars. It's not true to simply say that Earth and Ishtarian lifeforms had dextro-sugars and Tammuz life forms levo-sugars. The words are not dextro and levo in any case, but D and L (usually written in small capitals). Just because the form of glucose normally used by living things is D-glucose doesn't mean that other sugars also involved will all be D-ones. Proteins are made up by stringing together amino acids in which the chiral centers remain intact all the time; but in sugars much more complex chemical changes take place, and one sugar which is a D-sugar may be converted to another which is an L-sugar very easily. Sugars generally have several centers of chirality, not just one, and this makes them not just a case of "one or the other", but a much more involved problem.

I can't see why a single organism shouldn't develop enzymes that would enable it to assimilate both D-glucose and L-glucose, if both were around in reasonable quantity for it to eat.

[DAVID STEVER]

Ian Covell really yanked my chain with his whitewash of Poul Anderson's works. As to his women characters, one has to only go as far as Kathrin MacCormac in THE REBEL WORLDS, Evalyth Sairn in "The Sharing of Flesh", Eriisa in THE DANCER FROM ATLANTIS, and Sandra Tamarin in WAR OF THE WING-MEN (young) and MIRKHEIM (older). These are human beings, with entire spectrums of very human emotions, that Ian seems to have missed. And who can doubt that the characters in FIRE TIME had their

doubts as they began to conspire as they did? Isn't it so very much like real life, when the people do "fall in and out of love like lightbulbs testing a circuit"?

If Ian wants good Anderson fantasy, my favorites might be THE BROKEN SWORD, as you say, A MIDSUMMER TEMPEST, and HROLF KRAKI'S SAGA. The solar system that FIRE TIME takes place in was designed by both Hal Clement and Poul, for a stage for both of them. Hal has said to me that it might be years before he comes up with a story situation that uses it, however.

((The female character by Anderson that I find most memorable is a villain, Storm Dalloway from THE CORRIDORS OF TIME.)))

[GREG BENFORD]

Mark Keller's further remarks on my basic idea--a planet with two biospheres because the crater is impassible--confirm much of my own thinking. The wind circulation generated by temperature gradients would indeed be strong. More's the better: lifeforms won't migrate easily through such a storm, and through large temperature gradients. Spores might make it, though. Of course, I could legislate a type of continental drift (suitably perturbed by tidal forces from a nearer sun) which forced powerful mountain building at the equator. Then the high, cold regions at the mountain chain would force spores to such altitudes that they might not readily survive the swift descent to the desert, once they'd crossed.

Clearly it's going to be hard to conjure up a believable split biosphere, if I'm to get by sharp eyed critics. (And I suppose after my banging the drum for weaving the science in sf in with the other elements, I'd better try especially hard.) However, the book I'm using this idea in probably doesn't require a genuinely split biosphere--just a pair that're hard to connect. So I may not have to put up with head-battering storms.

Ah well...I'll let matters percolate for a while, while my subconscious works on the problem. I needn't finish the novel this year, add in fact most of my work takes a long time as a matter of course. (The novels appearing this year have taken 5 and 6 years to complete. I like to mull some things over. Also, I struggle with themes and emotional issues a long time, to try to get them right.) Anyway, I appreciate Mark's comments. Feedback is invaluable.

[RICK BROOKS]

Sometimes I wonder. Ian Covell finds Poul Anderson's characterization unconvincing. I find it very convincing. His people seem realer than the people I meet. Yet many writers that do character studies really fail to convince me. Probably the worst book I have tried to read in years was Silverberg's DYING INSIDE. Nothing for me there as well as a character that made absolutely no sense to me. I got 60 pages into it. I only pushed that far because it was a Hugo nominee. This cultural standard is in flux again, I suppose. Silverberg is just writing for a different audience whose viewpoint is too alien to mine.

((Sigh. In issue #1 of MYTHOLOGIES, I had a long article in which I said that DYING INSIDE might well be the most important SF novel of the 1970's. Clearly, I'm one of those with a point of view alien to yours. Admittedly, I see a lot of myself in David Selig, and this is likely to prejudice me towards the books. But with whatever objectivity I can muster, I'd still claim that he is probably the most fully realized character in modern SF, and that the novel lost a lot of

its readers because they interpreted the end as pessimistic. I, on the other hand, believe the ending was basically a 'happy one.)))

[IAN COVELL]

Anderson has written a masterpiece; it is called A MIDSUMMER TEMPEST, and it will probably never be surpassed on artistic, poetic, or...look, that ending is so powerful it shocked even me, and I - as a Britisher - have been waiting the event since my school days...While I am about it let me record that I think Brunner wrote a better work than his rather heavy and formless STAND ON ZANZIBAR. The better is called THE JAGGED ORBIT, together with the delightful TRAVELER IN BLACK.

[MARK M. KELLER]

OK, Anderson's Ishtar could have a core of gold or copper. But the elemental distribution on the surface is pretty close to Earth's (the food is edible by humans), implying Ishtar doesn't have too weird a mixture of atoms. And in planets the age of the Earth and Ishtar, iron would be much more common than gold or copper. Besides, isn't there mention of a magnetic field? How about a planet of a later generation sun? It might have a larger percentage of heavy metals, yes - more gold, more mercury, more uranium. But would it show continental drift, or more accurately plate tectonics? The crustal plates move on Earth because of plumes in the mantle. How critical is the composition of the rocks: sima, sife, etc.? With more uranium in the crust, would granite plates ever solidify at all, or would the surface stay molten?

On archaism in SF stories: In your reply to A.D. Wallace, you suggest, Don, that SF readers like stories with pseudo-medieval backgrounds because of an inability to "face the present", and SF writers produce such stories because of a failure of imagination. I think you have missed the point. Let's take a look at how a writer constructs a future society, and what makes a reader accept such constructions.

The characters of the story move within a setting and a social system. It has to impress the reader as a viable system, one that has lasted for a while. The technology may be invented, the social relationships may be invented - but they have to look as if they can hold together.

Patchwork backgrounds jolt the "suspension of disbelief" and turn the reader off, even if the reader isn't consciously aware of what is dissonant. Examples: a repressive theocratic America (Nehemiah Scudder) with public sex and booze orgies televised daily; an extreme energy crisis combined with universal automobile transport written into law (John Jakes ON WHEELS); a world of sexual equality in which women are chattel. These don't hold together, they don't make sense, they ring false. A skilled writer could cobble together some plausible excuse for each of these backgrounds, I'm sure, but would it be worth the effort?

How does one produce a viable social combination, or at least one that will seem viable for the duration of the story? You can check an imaginary machine against the laws of thermodynamics. You can check an imaginary ecological system by applying the concepts of energy and evolution. You can check an imaginary society by... well, what can you use?

There is intuition, and a sense of what has worked in the past. There is no "social science" that will help. Sociology is incurably present minded; it can show you 1950 extended five hundred years into the future, but it can't show you how a new arrangement might rise. Anthropology has a wider range, since it covers many cultures and not just "modern western industrial", so you can take an actual

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primitive society from Earth and place it on another planet. It will appear alien to most readers, and it will be cohesive, since it is based on a real society.

History ("intuition and a sense of the past") is not a bad guide. Historians study social change - how much, how fast, how complete? - and erect rules to find a pattern in such change. Reconstructing the hypothetical past and generating the hypothetical future are quite similar in methods used.

You try to construct a whole future society: laws, rules, norms, allowed deviations, forbidden deviations, material base, ideology, demographics, etc. You take some of this from what you know about the way people behave (how they have behaved in the past). You invent some of it from extrapolations of how people would behave if some new factor were part of their environment (star travel, telepathy, artificial intelligence). The effect has to be that of a different stage within which the human personality acts, a stage not found on Earth today.

That's been used as a definition for SF: "human experience within a different environment", and I think it's a good one.

But suppose the actions of the human players don't require any truly different background. Suppose you have the standard story of the passions and failings of the human heart. Then you can use pre-existing environments with minimum changes. You don't have to invent a whole new galactic civilization to frame a story of betrayal and revenge - that fits quite nicely in a medieval setting. A story of duty versus personal honor can fit very neatly into a military setting - for SF, make it the Space Navy.

You could go the other way: imagine actions that could only take place in a very different setting from modern Earth. In this case, the background needs huge amounts of work. This explains the shortage of stories about "real" aliens; the work needed is usually too great.

Medieval life wasn't really "simpler" than ours in emotional terms. But since few people today understand all the details of such life, it can be in effect a bare stage set for an action story. The medievalist will notice what's been left out, and feel uncomfortable, and maybe discard the story. The average reader won't notice anything wrong.

Let me toss in a historical metaphor here, borrowed from the structuralists. Societies don't change all at once. Some aspects change in progressive one-way flow (technology), while other aspects fluctuate back and forth in medium length cycles (fashion). Still others represent almost a constant, hardly changing at all over generations (religion). All three levels have to be shown to present an authentic seeming society.

Some societies show constants and slight fluctuations, very little progressive change: stable agrarian peasant cultures. Other societies show mostly swings of fluctuating fashion, with underlying constant hidden: "playboy" party urban rich. You might imagine a society that showed mostly directional change: SF territory.

If you want to know how a society will change in the future, you must grasp these levels. You must know which aspects are volatile and which are stable. In a hundred years, the volatile elements will be gone beyond tracing; the stable ones will still be there, recognizable even if greatly modified. The hard part is knowing which is which. Postulate: alien spaceships land in North America in the 1860's.

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They are peaceful missionaries, fortunately. Look forward a hundred years to the 1960's. Did the US Constitution survive? Did the style of American folk music? Both? Neither?

One writer will do a story in which the US is still a representative democracy, but music imitates alien forms. Such a writer believes political structures are stable, artistic structures evanescent and labile. Another writer would have a wholly new form of government - cargo cult or technarchy, perhaps. But in the changed cities, amid human-alien hybrid architecture, a street singer is playing a guitar and singing "Shenandoah". The second writer thinks that political forms are the fragile ones, far shorter lived than folk melodies.

Which feels right to you?

The way to estimate future change is to study past change. Holding the past in memory, viewing the present in "real time" - this gives a double vision, an overlap, a stereoscopic view. You see what has changed, what has stayed; what is flexible, what is stubborn.

Those who "live in the present" cannot have such awareness. To them, all parts of society are equally stable. Thus they are constantly surprised when things change - surprised and hurt. These are the people who ask "what good is studying history?" in firm faith that what happened in the past has no significance for today. These are people who attack SF fans for "living in fantasy", or SCA fans for "living in the past".

Someone with no memory always "faces the present" because he has no recall of the past. Such a person is not an optimum human being but a cripple. That's what Santayana meant in his aphorism about those who don't learn from history being forced to repeat it.

((Whew, you certainly read a lot more into my remark than was ever intended. Of course, I never said anything about ignoring the lessons of history, and quite agree with you. But I don't agree with you on a number of other points.

Firstly, I think you're trying to have things two ways at once. You say, and I agree with you, that most readers would not know the difference if a writer constructed a real, primitive society inaccurately, and by implication, you also assume that most writers either lack the knowledge or can't be bothered to do the research to do an accurate, thorough job at depicting an unfamiliar (but real) culture. I agree completely. That's my point. You also point out, correctly, that it is impossible to construct an entirely new society and have it be totally consistent, complete, and integrated. But if the average reader can't find the flaws in a real society depicted by an average writer, then how can he pick out the flaws in a totally new society depicted by an author? The answer is, he or she can't, unless the story is blatantly nonsense. You point out ON WHEELS, and I concur. I'll offer as well Piers Anthony's TRIPLE DETENTE, which forces the reader to assume outrageous machinations in interstellar politics, based on sudden mutual agreement among three races to subject their populations to the total, dictatorial rule of the other races. Nonsense, and the story can't save the book.

On the other hand, RINGWORLD is just as good a book despite the Ringworld being unstable; I enjoy DUNE no less for knowing that dune worms are impossible, and it didn't mar my enjoyment of Piers Anthony's RINGS OF ICE an iota when Sam Long told

Me that Anthony's meteorology was absurd.

I admit that there are good reasons at times for not bothering to create a new society - though I submit that these are generally questions of practical convenience. Obviously an author doesn't have time to work out highly intricate social systems every time he or she wants to write a new story. I suspect that this is why the future history is so popular in SF; the author can make extensive use of a particular background, fleshing it in as he or she proceeds. But while there may be good reasons for it, this remains a failure of imagination as far as I'm concerned.

Or take the extrapolations of our own future. John Brunner has recently been attempting to portray an integrated look at a future in which a large number of factors (overpopulation, computerization, energy shortages, racial conflicts, etc.) have all evolved. Most sf writers, though, concentrate on a single facet of our present society. Well, things don't evolve in a vacuum; they affect and are affected by other changing aspects of our environment. One might argue that the other matters would be distracting irrelevancies when the author wants to concentrate on a single phenomenon, but this is a spurious rebuttal. If an author seriously wants to examine something about our society, he has to take into account other contributing factors, or he is just wasting his own and the reader's time.

Finally, I personally often attack SF fans for living in fantasy worlds. Despite all our avowals to the contrary, SF fans are just as short-sighted as any other group in the world. The poll in this very publication recently showed that an overwhelming number of my readers read more SF than all other categories combined. I'm one myself, though I have the saving grace of reading several hundred books per year, so that at least I am fairly widely read outside the field. But the overwhelming majority of SF fans are conservative believers in dogma, just as dogmatic as any other subgroup.

For example, I would venture to guess that better than 75% of SF fans believe contemporary literature to be largely without merit. I suspect that better than 90% believe that space travel is the only hope for mankind. Most firmly believe that technology is the only hope of saving our civilization. I don't object to people believing this sort of thing, but what I do object to is that they accept this sort of dogma without question; many of them won't even attempt to listen to an alternative point of view. Their belief system is reinforced by the literature they read, because the writers are, for the most part, caught up in the same dogma. The violent reaction to the New Wave was not because traditionalists felt they were losing their market. They resented a group of writers who questioned the religion of science, who felt that technology was not the only possible answer to man's problems, who felt that man was not basically a likable but ornery critter destined to rule the universe. SF fans generally escape into the future; some SCA people escape into the past. But since the field as a whole does not explore a vast number of alternate futures, fans don't generally learn anything new from the literature. The medievalist who doesn't have time for the mundane present any more isn't learning from the past - but is using it as a cloak to hide the present.)))

[SHAKRALLAH C. JABRE]

There has been a question in other fanzines that has been going around. If you could have one dead author come back and write one more novel, who would it be and about what? My pick is Edgar Rice Burroughs to finish the John Carter of Mars series. The last story of his had poor John Carter trapped on Jupiter far away from his beloved Deja Thoris. What's yours?

((I'd bet that the most common answer to that question would be J.R.R. Tolkien, to complete THE SILMARILLON. My own choice would either be the final confrontation with Cthulhu from H.P. Lovecraft, or possibly the end of Fu Manchu by Sax Rohmer.)))

[BRIAN EARL BROWN]

Re alien aliens: I thought Stableford had made a couple of valiant stabs at it, in his PROMISED LAND and CRITICAL THRESHOLD. Most authors simply tell us that their aliens are un-understandable, without making them really very strange. Stableford left me with the very distinct feeling that we'd never know how his aliens think. Terry Carr's "Dance of the Changer and the Three" was pretty good at making aliens alien.

((Stableford does indeed do fairly well at it, though you failed to mention his really alien novel, and my personal favorite of his works, THE BLIND WORM.)))

[RICH BARTUCCI]

Several years ago, I had occasion to read a book entitled MEN AGAINST FIRE, a discussion of the factors that go into small-unit effectiveness in infantry combat. The conclusion of the author was that there exists a sequence of "concentric circles" surrounding the individual soldiers, the layers of his psychic armor and his motivation for remaining in battle and fighting effectively. He advanced the proposition that after all else is stripped from him -- love of country, hatred of the enemy, fear of his superiors -- the one thing that keeps the soldier in the front line is the fact that he is unwilling to abandon his friends. Only in rare cases -- usually in elite but very fragile formations, like the Ottoman jannissaries-- will this sort of "we're-all-in-it-together" solidarity be overridden by national pride or fanaticism.

This, of course, speaks for regular military units, and must except partisans (in many cases), ghazis and other crazy people, who aren't brave men as much as they are situational psychotics.

In the books of Jerry Pournelle, courage in combat tends to play an important role. Normally not subject to more than fits of nausea when seeing Laser books, I found myself purchasing one of them recently. It had a Freas rendition of the CoDominium Seal and Jerry Pournelle's name on it, and I confess temptation. An early Falkenberg story, it is not particularly well-endowed with original concepts; one might call it secondhand Dickson or Anderson, with a healthy slathering of space opera, transferring a Hawkish reminiscence of Korea or Vietnam to the star-studded future. It's a John Campbell type of story, something ANALOG would publish.

Not that there's detraction in any of that; I delight in John Campbell type stories, and want more of them. I'm unabashedly delighted to read space opera when I can get it, and Pournelle writes competently if not brilliantly. The story is not only of Young Falkenberg, dedicated officer of the Line Marines, but of the 501st Provisional Battalion, a scratch force of replacements and incorrigibles that Falkenberg must make over into elite troops in order to quell a revolt and restore order to a strife torn colony world.

If you can ignore the cliches (the 501st is pretty obviously named after the 501st Parachute Battalion, which later became the 501st Parachute Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division; and the use of Kipling and French Foreign Legion lore is sometimes a little uncomfortable), the story is rather exciting. The 501st must organize itself under horrible conditions with minimal resources in a politically

volatile situation. Its only hope is to establish a sense of unit consciousness, a battalion esprit that would enable the men to fight effectively. Throughout the book, Falkenberg attempts to build this feeling of solidarity, and succeeds (well, you knew he would...). Of course the story is simplistic, the problems are unsatisfying in both their form and their solution and the godlike Falkenberg is never once discomfited -- Kimball Kinnison in a CoDominium uniform. But the book does illustrate the basis of military effectiveness, the root of courage under fire -- unit solidarity, esprit de corps.

((I also found WEST OF HONOR enjoyable, despite recognizing the faults you mention. Falkenberg never gets ruffled, although he does in THE MERCENARY, a far better book. Pournelle's other Laser book, BIRTH OF FIRE, is not in the same class at all.)))

[DAVID TRUESDALE]

This fake loc is mainly on your review of NEW VOICES IN SF. I was lucky enough to get a review copy too...but didn't sit down and write the review until two days before I read your review. Seems we agree on the overall quality of the collection. The final lines of my somewhat lengthy review are: "NEW VOICES IN SCIENCE FICTION is one of the most well-conceived, well-rounded, well-written original anthologies to come my way in a long time...Congratulations, George." But it's curious to note that the story you laud as the best while not even science fiction -- Effinger's "Differentials" -- was the piece I found to be the most unoriginal (though we pretty closely agree on the Berman story). "Mom's Differentials" is a good story, not outstanding, about a man whose job consists of planning intercourses and cloverleaves for superhighways. Real exciting stuff, no? Well, this mouse of a man withdraws horribly when his wife leaves him for another man, and before long he is at the point where he is able to receive messages from his dear departed mother by spacing off...to piped in Muzak. The whole point, I suppose, is whether or not he is imagining this contact with his mother, or if indeed she is truly able to contact him through the Muzak...

((I thought it was pretty obvious that he was not in contact with his mother. The story is about the man's disintegration as a personality as the result of a disruption of his life. Incidentally, I hadn't noticed it till now, but considering the fact that he spends most of the story trying to get his new girlfriend into bed, I find it somewhat amusing that his job was "planning intercourses". I wonder if that was intentional.)))

ROBERT F. YOUNG

[DAVE LOCKE]

Yes, Young got overlooked when one-author paperback collections came along. Another is Charles DeVet. Have you included him in your little known author series?

((Not yet.)))

[DAVID STEVER]

While I've liked a large number of the stories that you mention, I have also been utterly bored by a few as well. Was there really only two stories in that 1970 space whale series? I thought there were at least three. I remember the pictures that the whale showed the pilot, explaining how it had two hearts, instead of the usual one. I also remember a story, Young I think, in which an alien race must leave Earth because the symbols in their language for male and female are superimposed in our skies as the constellation Orion.

(((There has recently (June 1977 F&SF) been a new story in the Space Whale series, titled "The Star Eel". The story you mention about the superimposed symbols is "Written in the Stars" by Robert F. Young.)))

[IRA M. THORNHILL]

It's horribly frustrating to have you come up with an author who has written almost 150 stories but who has never been collected. I'm not a collector of the prozines, have only sporadically even read them, and do not have easy access to any extensive collections -- therefore, your little article on Robert Young serves only to instill me with a senseless (and impractical) desire to rush out and purchase the issues containing some of his stories. Thanks. Every now and again I need to be gently reminded of how damn much there is out there that I've not only never read, but often never even heard of. By the way, have you given any thought to someday collecting all of your author studies into a single book(let)? It would make fascinating reading and a valuable reference work.

(((Yes, I've thought of it. One of the projects that has been pushed aside indefinitely at the moment is to initiate a line of short run paperbacks - or pamphlets - or what have you, to be sold at cons and through the mail. I wouldn't just do my own things, of course, and I wouldn't confine the subject matter to sercon areas. The idea was to pay royalties to various fan writers and publish things like THE BEST OF DON-O-SAUR, Eli Cohen's series about becoming a Canadian citizen, OUTRAGEOUS ESSAYS by John Curlovich, and suchlike. One of these days Real Soon Now...)))

[RICH BARTUCCI]

While I've only read a few of Young's stories, those that've fallen my way -- like "Nikita Eisenhower Jones" -- strike me as clever, well-crafted pieces. The publication date of "Nikita" (1960) surprised the hell out of me when I read it some years ago; its approach, structure and content seem much more contemporary than its publication implies.

[RAY DAVIS]

It came as somewhat of a surprise to learn that Robert F. Young has never had a story collection, but I don't see much mystery involved. I could very easily be misjudging Young, as I haven't read many of his stories, but he doesn't strike me as being a particularly distinctive writer. His stories may be consistantly good but they aren't memorably individual in style or content in any consistant way. As a result, the casual reader of one Young story is not likely to connect it with others he might have read -- explaining the lack of interest in a Young collection. I must confess that the only story by Young that I recall easily and with pleasure is the remarkable "Starscape with Frieze of Dreams", which would seem to be a most unusual part of Young's work. But despite any reasons for the current lack of a Young short story collection, I agree that one is long overdue.

(((The whole point of my article was to point out that there was a consistant pattern in his work, more than one in fact, and that from the body of his work there are enough distinctive stories to make up at least one fat collection. He did have a hardbound collection, incidentally, released in paperback in England. But I remembered Young's better stories distinctly before re-reading them recently, even though I had first read them over a decade before, particularly "Goddess in Granite" and "To Fell a Tree". And look at the really mediocre authors who do have collections in paperback, despite their lack of distinct quality -- Alexander Malec, Lin Carter, Edward Hoch, John Jakes, even Roger Lee Vernon, for heaven's sake.)))

[GARY DEINDORFER]

Robert F. Young is a writer I have read over the years, but who has not stayed in my thoughts for very long. And yet as a humanist and psychologist he has made some interesting contributions to the canon of feelings stories. He is basically a feelings writer, and for that reason reminds me of Clifford D. Simak. In "Goddess in Granite" he travels the length and breadth of the Jungian Anima...a bold and original thing to do, to take a woman and make her a grand and great fact of nature. And yet except for that story, there is nothing else that I have read of Young's that I would have remembered without reading your essay. But I think that if a good all Young story collection were published, I could benefit by studying it. I can't help thinking that there are hidden treasures in some of his stories, and that it would be worth my while to try to find them. The fact that with the exception of "Goddess in Granite" all I remember of Young's stories are washes of emotion going back and forth between the page and my mind indicates to me that there may be something to his stuff that is worth further study.

((There is also a curious phenomenon I've noticed where some writers don't seem to be doing anything significant in their individual stories, but whose work when read in batches seems far better. This is true within the field of David R. Bunch, among others. Outside the field is John Updike, who used to write nice collections of short stories, like PIGEON FEATHERS, until he decided to become a best seller writer and started turning out things like COUPLES. Another is Sherwood Anderson. His individual stories are unmemorable, for the most part, but the collection, WINESBURG, OHIO, is marvelous. The same is true of Joyce's THE DUBLINERS.)))

[GEORGE FLYNN]

There's something about the flavor of Young's writing that I've never cared for. For one thing, I think he has too much of what you refer to as "not plausible enough to be SF, but...excellent fantasy", nevertheless masquerading as SF; this is also what puts me off about Bradbury. Also, the emphasis on size seems to me overdone; I'm afraid "Goddess in Granite", with what you consider "one of the most powerful scenes in SF", has always struck me as rather silly; I must admit that it does stick in the memory, though.

((That's your hyper-rational scientific prejudice showing, George. Don't I recall you're not liking George R.R. Martin's "With Morning Comes Mistfall" for the same reason? If I can enjoy blatantly jingoistic books despite my aversion for the politics of the writer, why can't you enjoy a book that discounts rationality and the scientific method as irrelevant? And the charge that the giantism is overdone is spurious. They're separate stories after all. Is it fair to say that Poul Anderson overdoes winged aliens, that Sheckley overdoes surprise endings, that Fred Brown wrote too many vignettes?)))

[JACKIE FRANKE]

It's shocking to read that Robert F. Young has never had a collection of his own. While he's not an author who readily springs to mind, less prominent writers than he have been afforded their own volumes.

[ROBERT F. YOUNG]

I enjoyed reading your comprehensive article on my fiction. This is the first such article ever to appear -- to my knowledge, at least -- and I am indebted to you for going to so much trouble.

A few of your selections for the "20 Best" surprised me. They shouldn't have: writers are poor judges of their own stuff, which is why, possibly, a recent

collection I put together myself got nowhere -- either in the paperback or hardcover field. (Only one of my selections coincided with yours. "The City of Brass".)

URBAN COURSING

[DAVID LOCKE]

Beautiful cover. It's interesting to note that the figures themselves would not be too appealing without that simple but effective background.

Bonnie's story was amusing, even if I do like cats and squirrels and dislike dogs. With a bit of polish, I think this could sell.

[JON SINGER]

Dear Eevile Courser: Don't you dare send your nasty big doggie-poo after my poor defenseless ancient kittycat. If my dear papa doesn't get his mittens promptly upon the death of my cat, and you are the cause, your miserable life will be forfeit. So there. Your advocacy of wanton destruction of other people's private property will get you in a lot of trouble. Poo. My cat is almost as old as you are, anyway, and wants to have a little talk with you about this business. (In all truth, the evil little monster really is 16 and 3/4.)

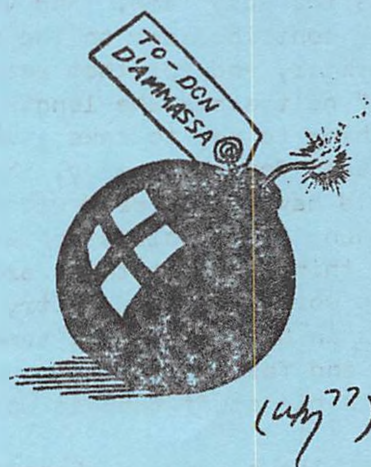
[ANNE SHERLOCK]

As you can see, I really enjoyed the article by Bonnie Dalzell on urban coursing. I wonder if she has any suggestions on the technique for coursing homo postawful people. In my opinion they are the worst form of urban wildlife known to the civilized world. In my area they haunt the streets anywhere from 10 to 12:35 and have a habit of delivering my mail to the restaurant next door.

Other people in our area who need to be coursed are the homo taxistop people. These people and an animal they call a cab stop along our street during rush hour and cuase others of their species to honk and groan for five or ten minutes, making it impossible to speak in my apartment. If you have a technique for handlin these folk, please inform me.

[MICHAEL KALEN SMITH]

I was intrigued by Bonnie Dalzell's piece on urban coursing (and delighted with her cover and incidental drawings). "Working" dogs hereabouts run to retrievers, scent hounds, and just "hay-nds". But she fails to mention what the handler should do when a courser gets in over his head. Does a courser never unexpectedly become the coursee? All of my three cats, I'm quite sure, could make it to the top of the front porch roof in one leap if charged by a baying Borzoi. They're not cowards, but they ain't stupid, either. But Sam, an orange Tom and the largest of the three (and the oldest), has terrorized the local canine population for several years now. The boxer up the block has a few scars on his muzzle from approaching too incautiously, and the benighted little beagle across the street has been chaser home more than once. The other two cats (coal black twins) have evidently learned



by watching. One of them recently leapt off the front window ledge onto the shoulder of an annoyingly persistent Mormon door-to-door missionary (perhaps cats are telepathic; I had been considering a similar action myself). Incidentally, does Bonnie not consider proselytizers, solicitors, and other unwanted callers to be fair game? I would think a refreshing sprint by the hound and quarry to the boundary of one's front yard would improve the courser's fore-game.

[ROY TACKETT]

Very good. Very amusing. A delight.

[SUE ANDERSON]

"Urban Coursing" is splendid. I particularly like the illos of the Borzoi chasing the German shepherd. They look so happy.

[T.L. BOHMAN]

"Urban Coursing" was the most enjoyable part of the issue even though the last half seemed to run downhill. Is it perhaps part of a larger work in progress? The cover was absolutely dazzling.

[BRIAN EARL BROWN]

Urban Coursing sounds like the hobby to replace wargaming. The rules are much simpler, while the actual situations are infinitely varied. The suspense is far greater. And think of the redeeming social value! I am curious about the "alert punk-hunting status". How does the dog get out of the car so fast?

((Practice.))

[BRENDAN DUBOIS]

Bonnie Dalzell's cover is excellent, as usual. The unicorn and hound seem to leap from the cover and onto your lap. It's breathtakingly beautiful.

Bonnie's article was great. It was very funny, and I liked the illos that accompanied it. No doubt, some individuals are coursing muggers in the cities. Wouldn't it be something if citizens actually went out to look for the muggers (instead of vice versa) in order to get money from the police when they haul in the captured muggers?

[D. GARY GRADY]

The Urban Coursing thing was plain weird, but I liked it. (Probably because I'm plain weird, I can hear someone mumbling).

((Probably because you're plain weird. Mumble mumble.))

[MARK M. KELLER]

I often wondered how people with large breeds of dogs gave them enough exercise in large cities. Chasing punks down alleys should do it. Thanks, Bonnie. Other cautions: don't set the hounds on any pet wolverine or badger. These will not run, but rather crouch down with back against a wall or tree and grab at dogs' legs with intent to break. Punks wearing karate-gi with brown belts, or swinging nunchaku sticks are also high risks. Cat lovers or attack dog owners wearing National Rifle Association patches are especially dangerous. They will almost invariably be carrying a small repeating handgun which they may haul out and start blasting away at the landscape on minimal provocation, e.g. your dogs taking one of their pets.

[PAULA GOLD].....
 Bonnie Dalzell's cover is gorgeous! I particularly enjoyed her article "Urban Coursing". We have recently acquired a Borzoi (at age 2 months she's really cute, but not very big in the smarts department). She's doing very well in the art of coursing on her own, spending several hours each day coursing the family cats and has already caught her first rabbit. (I have the feeling that the poor rabbit was elderly and probably slightly arthritic, but now matter, it was still good practice.) I showed the article to my mother, who owns four or five Borzoi pups. Mom was particularly interested in the tips on Coursing Children and Hints on Coursing Punks which will prove to be very valuable in her neighborhood.

((Sheila and I currently have two Borzoi, both about 8 months old - Hilary and Silver. Bonnie has three - Genghis, Grindel, and Aurora, and at the moment, 6 two month old puppies. Our family cat, Phred, was not very pleased by the new additions to the family, but they seem to have worked out an accomodation.)))

[MICHAEL BISHOP] I think the cover on #11 is absolutely the best one that Bonnie has done for you so far; I've liked others, but with never quite the intensity, it seemed to me, of some of the other people who wrote in to praise Bonnie and to congratulate you on acquiring her services -- but this cover knocks me flat. The drawing has a rare clarity and dynamism, and as the title suggests, the Borzoi appears almost as much a fanciful, mythological creature as the rearing unicorn. Hey, Bonnie, very, very nice. Good use of contrast, too.

[JERRY POURNELLE]
 Thank you for the kind words about "Silent Leges". Thank you even more for Bonnie Dalzell's delightful essay on urban coursing. I don't agree with some of her prey -- in my experience, for example, most military-type dogs are very well trained indeed and I have never seen one molest anyone or anything they weren't told to attack, (the trained ones, that is) while I've seen plenty of retrievers and various other coursing type gazehounds make nuisances of themselves in the local parks. Her essay was fun.

I notice in one of my magazines an advertisement for half-wolf puppies; some chap has a female police dog and an old lobo wolf and raises the progeny; if I didn't have small children in the house I'd be tempted to get one, preferably a female for crossing with my Husky-Shepherd, which might produce a very interesting dog indeed.

TECHNOLOGY

[DAVE LOCKE]
 Technology has the general problem of having to elbow its way into a fixed operational pattern, and then adjust all the interfaces so that everything harmonizes. The Longshoremen fought against containerized shipments because it meant their workforce would be cut drastically. But containerization was a great step forward for everyone except the Longshoremen, so it won out. But it still hasn't interfaced successfully. For example, state law here in California has said that merchandise still in the unopened original container was exempt from the yearly floor tax, but when containerization started the "original container" suddenly became the containerization module itself rather than the shipping cartons carried within it. In other words, progress was taxed and made less desirable. This situation still stands, despite lawsuits and a concerted effort to make the law reflect more favorably upon progress.

[DAVID STEVER]

Speaking of technological change, I just read something that spells interesting changes in the country within about two years. The new video disk machines that are coming in are nothing more than glorified computer data storage units. With the rise of video game machines, one of the first series of disks will be fancier games, with sound effects, better visuals, more games. From here, we get microfiche disks, with nothing more than pages of print and pictures, which you flash up on the screen, and advance at your own pace. At the same time, you get hardware to hook up a home terminal (with its timesharing computer somewhere), your TV set, and the video disk, and use the screen for display, and use the disks for your own data storage. This whole set up will be possible within two years, and will be cheap (a system for the cost of a big stereo) within four years. Picture yourself at the helm of a spaceship in battle, looking out your viewscreen. The view can be yours in three years.

((As a confirmed video game nut, I'm intrigued.)))

[DAVE SZUREK]

Some people might resist technological progress, but hasn't social and/or spiritual progress been resisted even more strongly? It's sad that so many have chosen to define progress along exclusively technological lines. When I look upon how slowly we've advanced socially in the midst of far greater technological progress, it's downright unbelievable. Although I don't believe that it's impossible to have both, I'd much prefer to see a few years of our technological progress sacrificed for the sake of development as human beings. I'd recommend a moratorium on technological progress if I really thought that would be the result, but of course I don't.

((Don't say that sort of thing too loudly around SF fans. Most of them view such statements as heretical. After all, technology is man's only hope, isn't it?)))

[ROY TACKETT]

I wanted to write about technological change. (Even though I seem to have forgotten what originally set off the discussion.) This whole thing of the way people object to or resist technological change seems to be one of the myths that has begun to build in the last few years and, except for a few dichard reactionaries, it isn't true. It isn't technological change that shakes people up: it is the accompanying sociological change. I grant you that there is a tendency for people to grump about new innovations but after the initial objection there is rapid acceptance of new technology. But new technology can cause vast social upheavals and that is what people object to.

I know several people in their 80's and 90's -- people who have lived through this whole vast technological revolution that has been going on for the past 80 years or longer. I know one old lady of 96 who lives in Tennessee. Her family lives in California. She thinks jet aircraft are the greatest thing around and practically commutes between Memphis and the coast. When she was a child the airplane hadn't even been invented. But what she does object to are the numbers of "Foreigners and nigras" she sees in the cities these days.

George Flynn puts down the fundamental problem: ever-growing population. And the ever-growing demand that government furnish more services. Without expanding technology the whole structure of our society would collapse.

SEX ROLES

[JESSICA SALMONSON]

Well, first, it might be a faint interest to no one that Amos never really existed. It is not the name my parents gave me. Amos was a persona I created long ago, and through which I communicated with fandom for a couple of years -- for various reasons too vague and complex to outline -- while adjusting to myself as a woman, suppressing all masculine elements of myself except the Amos persona/pen name imposed on fandom from afar.

But, of course, I was male, whatever his name might have been. And as such, I did have male privileges. And with such, unbeknowingly, I did oppress women, as everyone with male privileges does. I did not expect to lose a lot of social status simply by becoming female. I sort of realized that women's cultural role was wildly different, but until I was actually there, I never felt the oppression; I was shocked to discover a societal attitude that I was property. I was shocked by a lot of things, and ultimately angered to the point of being a man-hater (which I think I've evolved beyond). I remain angry. I am currently working as a secretary. I do not want to be a secretary, and I'm not sure how I ended up in this job, except that I've gone through a lot of resocialization and succumbed to a lot of undefinable pressures that say secretarial duties are what I'm best suited to. Had I never gone through gender reassignment, I wouldn't be a secretary today. I cannot always put my finger on how the patriarchal society gets me in situations, jobs, and head-spaces I do not prefer, but there it is, and here I am. It stinks. I rebel. I can never regain male privilege, but I can work to destroy your privilege, and replace it with equal privilege for everyone; then we'll both be freer, because men will never be completely free until women are free.

Oppression from men is not the reason I am lesbian. I am lesbian because women (especially one) fulfill me spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually, physically. Yet lesbianism is political to a patriarchal society. A culture that says everything is for the man makes lesbianism a revolutionary concept.

Most of the differences in men and women may be cultural, although I believe there are inherent emotional and spiritual differences attributable to hormonal systems. This difference is most often designated, patriarchally, as aggression and passivity; but I think the real difference is competitiveness versus cooperativeness. With exceptions caused by hormonal influences on the fetus, the natural inclination of women is to be cooperative, to consider the needs of the Whole (as evidenced by the findings at Anatolia, an advanced matriarchy that did not need walls about its cities because there was no war, no conception of property and individual wealth and greed...and hence no hunger, no lower class, or elite. Utopia did, apparently exist; Eden: a pre-bronze age civilization to which Anatolia is the tail end -- and Sumaria is not the birth of civilization but merely the birth of patriarchy after the fall of cooperative, matriarchal civilization). Males tend to competitiveness, finding personal gain far more important than harmony. Property is a patriarchal conception; when mother rule was replaced by father rule, it became necessary to insure the faithfulness of women -- the chastity belt was conceived, hymen worship perpetrated, virginity in women necessitated until marriage. Women became the first "property". And being cooperative in nature, those early women were ill prepared to risk many lives in the name of the Goddess. When men were utterly subject to their mothers, and ignorant of their role in procreation, Eden flourished. But when the symbolic Eve gave the forbidden knowledge into the hands of men, Utopia was lost. Mothers were always sure of their offspring -- fathers could never be sure unless their mates were enslaved.

I do not believe that humankind is inherently evil, that we are descended from killer apes, that our natural inclination is to destroy nature and harmony. I do believe in a humanitarian future -- and I suspect this will be achieved, again, when mother rule is reborn, and the competitive nature of men is again subject to the cooperative nature of women.

((Jessica, you know darn well that what you've outlined is just as sexist as anything proposed by the most reactionary male. You don't want a correction of social wrongs, you want an imbalance in the opposite direction. The idea that women are inherently cooperative and men inherently competitive is in the same class with the idea that Blacks just aren't capable of the high degree of intelligence found in the white race and are inherently lazy, or that Jews are inherently obsessed with accumulating capital, or that Italians are oversexed, etc.

I reject your attempt to ascribe chauvinist guilt to me. Just as I reject liberal guilt. I have never personally oppressed a Black, and I make an effort to prevent people I know from doing the same. I don't tolerate intolerance, but I don't feel guilty about those institutionalized wrongs which I cannot correct. I occasionally take advantage of individual women in my daily activities, but I do so in the same manner that I would take advantage of that same person if he were male. I do not take advantage of their sex, only of their personalities.

You are never going to win equality by legislation. The only way that racist, chauvinist, or any other reprehensible attitude is going to be expunged is by having individual members of society expunge it from themselves and those around them. The laws are only a stopgap. But you are never going to be able to make me feel guilty, because I have no guilt. Even if you can point out specific instances where I am guilty of such things, I would be committing these sins through ignorance, would alter my behavior, and would still be completely without feelings of guilt. There is no guilt where there is no intent to sin. No matter how imperfect an individual's actual performance, he or she should feel no guilt, so long as an honest attempt is being made to act properly.

Yes, I think male privilege should be removed, but I also feel female privilege should be removed. The three years I spent in the service brought home to me the fact that half of the population was automatically exempt from this type of enslavement. Divorce laws favor women just as surely as marriage laws favor men. Economically and politically, women seem to get the short end of the stick. But remember, women are actually a majority, so they must be assisting in their own oppression in rather substantial numbers. Support for the ERA is considerably higher among men than among women, you know.

You say that in our society lesbianism is a political issue related to women's rights. Crap. Societal pressure against male homosexuality is just as strong, just as political. The action is political all right, but it is a political action against homosexuality, male and female, not against women. If you prefer to make your personal sex life a political statement, that's your business. To me, a homosexual liaison is just a variation of sex I'm not interested in. Political sex strikes me as a perversion, if that word has any meaning at all.

I agree with you completely that "men will never be completely free until women are free", but I'm not sure that you believe that yourself. If you do, then you seem to be contradicting yourself. Your depiction of Anatolia rings false, but I'm willing to be convinced if you'll direct me to a reliable source for some information.)))

[JESSICA SALMONSON - 2nd letter]

You produce one of the most literate (if not the most) literate fanzines I receive, and Anne Logan's letter is especially indicative of this fact. Your reply, however, reflects an alarming ignorance of feminist ideology. It is very tiring for me to find valid issues of women's oppression swept aside with a casual, "Ah, but men are oppressed too." Of course they are; that is a feminist issue too. But men shaped and control the power structures, and are therefore their own oppressors as well as ours.

You say eventually "men are going to revolt from the idea that we (must) bring home the bacon". In reality less than 7% of the women in this nation live the sort of "ideal" homelife, with men the sole providers, which is part of Amerika's burdensome image. Most women are bringing home a good chunk of that bacon themselves (and keeping house besides), and a vast number are the only money earners in their households (widows, singles, divorcees, and a good deal others). Yet women's average earning power has gone down in the last five years, in spite of higher minimum wages and presumably greater opportunities. The greatest percentage of women currently entering the job market are finding the lowest paying jobs; as more women work, the salary averages drop. The salary averages of men continues to rise.

Yousay men will revolt against their "subsidiary role in...upbringing...children." Again, men fashioned the power structure to serve men. It has served you economic and authoritative power. This has cost you a satisfactory part in child rearing. and set many responsibilities on your shoulders that are of minimal value to the nuclear family (with divorce rates excessively high, wife-beating intolerably common, one of the arguments against the ERA is that it will destroy the family as a nuclear unit. It looks to me that the system, as it stands, has already destroyed the nuclear family). Ultimately, your own freedom will not come by griping about "restraints" placed upon men by society (society shaped by men), but by giving up some of that economic and authoritative power denied women. The proper axiom is, "only when there are free women will there be free men".

That "minority of men (who) are going to revolt" is already here, but they have a more constructive attitude than your own. They call themselves effeminists and their goals are to: (a) pin-point the ways they oppress women and one another and struggle to overcome these culturized attitudes, (b) give up as much of that destructive male privilege as they can under cultural limitations so that privilege will be equally distributed and the class system will dissolve, (c) find emotional support from peers rather than mother-archetypes. If you feel oppressed, Don, find your nearest feminist book dealer and ask her for "Double F", the journal of effeminism, and struggle for your freedom in a manner compatible with all others'

((I'm going to interrupt Jessica here as she goes off onto another aspect, and I want to respond here before getting onto the other issues. First of all, I never swept away feminist issues in my reply to Anne Logan. As I mentioned, support for women's rights are stronger among men than among women. More than half of the women in the country oppose the ERA. That means that, barring a major change in attitude among those women, the only way that feminist issues are going to win is with male support. I find this very hopeful, because more than half of the males in the country support the ERA. Now, the reason I believe that many men do support feminist issues is that they do recognize that the oppression of women includes as a matter of course the oppression of men. And I think that it's important that both men and women recognize this, because if it ever becomes solely a women's issue, or solely a men's issue, the chances of the movement succeeding are diminished greatly.

My remarks to Anne were not directed at her specifically, but at all the readers, because, as I said, I think she weakened her argument by not pointing this out. I wasn't accusing her of chauvinism, but of a weak point in her argument. I used to teach high school English and the urge to correct people's essays is hard to shake.

The same reasoning applies to the Effeminists. In a series of letters, Jessica and I have gone into this subject, apparently without getting our basic points across very well. The word "effeminate" is not a touchy one with me. I have friends who are gay. Who cares? But I think it is a tactical error to adopt a name like that if this group wants to arouse general support for their programs. If I want to form a group to convince the city of East Providence that it should not continue its present hiring policies, because they discriminate against Blacks in a subtle manner, I wouldn't call the group the Anti-Racist League of East Providence, because that would automatically raise counter-emotions and scare off many potential supporters. Neither would I call it the Committee for Black Infiltration of Our Power Structure, for the same reason. I'd call it something like Concerned Citizens for Fair Hiring Practices. This is not a minor point. Most groups agitating for social change attract a number of people who are professional rebels. They usually don't even recognize it themselves. They feel that they should go out of their way to shock the establishment. They are as outrageous as possible. The reason, of course, is that they don't really want to win, they want to be martyred freedom fighters. I'm sure this kind of activity is very rewarding to some individuals, but I personally prefer to win.

Maybe my attitude is not as constructive as it could be. I'm no superman. But I refrain from any conscious sexism and racism, and when someone points something out to me in my behavior, I evaluate it, and if I agree, I cease. As I said before, I am not responsible for the sexism of institutions. I'm not going to engage in a lengthy justification of my own noble motives, but let me give you one concrete example. The company I work for, in common with most companies, pays its clerical help (all female) a scandalously low wage rate. A few months ago, I did an analysis of her work and presented it to the vp of manufacturing, recommending that she be given a 15% raise immediately, and a further 10% raise after four months, in order to be recompensated adequately. When he indicated reluctance to give her such a large increase (everyone else was getting 5%) because she was female and unmarried, I had to be rather pushy to force him to grant it. Now that might not seem like much (except to the one individual in question), but if there's going to be progress in the economic status of women, it's going to be the result of a lot of little battles like this one, not the result of some sweeping piece of legislation, or of some small group of men sitting around wringing their hands with guilt.)))

[JESSICA SALMONSON - again]

George Fergus' article is exhaustive -- and exhausting. He might want to add to his studies new findings from American, French and Canadian research in papers delivered at the October 76 International Congress of Sexology in Montreal, Quebec. SISTER had a representative in attendance at that symposium and we had a report in the SISTER magazine APPLE #1; there should be a second report, centering on specific papers, in #3 (APPLE is available from SISTER, 100 NE 56th, Seattle 98105). Several researchers, though warning against sweeping conclusions, have independently discovered correlations between aggressive/passive traits and pre-natal androgen/estrogen activity. The most promising discovery is that although prenatal hormonal influences do appear to establish certain character traits (that are culturally exaggerated), there is no indication that, say, the estrogen-linked traits are most apt to appear in women; post-adolescent hormone activity has no matching correlation.

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The research also indicates -- though it is dangerous to extrapolate too far at this point -- that homo and heterosexual preferences are established prenatally, though separately from character traits. Thus that critical first few months of womb-life and the endocrinological occurrences establish (a) physical sex (b) sexual preference (c) gender traits. An interesting exception is in the case of transsexuals; you'd think they'd fit neatly into these discoveries, but they completely baffle the researchers. Just because a person of a given sex has the gender traits of the other sex established prenatally does not mean there is any emotional rejection of physical sex.

One major conclusion offered at the Sexology Congress was that bi-sexuality is not humankind's "natural" state; nor is heterosexuality. Homo, hetero, and bi are all naturally occurring variations that would occur even within a culturally adrogynous society. My own conclusion is that our society is going to have to offer a greater variety of human archetypes, and define more culturally acceptable "norms" so children can, as they grow, "choose" the behavioral patterns closest to what prenatal influences dictate.

I wonder if you recognize and/or accept and/or are working to overcome your tendency to self-righteousness. It pops up so often in so many places that it starts to get me down. You paint yourself as an honest, moral man (as though morality were not entirely or largely subjective). You're even honest about your dishonesty. But that self-righteous tone is always there -- and a self-righteous individual is by (my) definition neither honest nor moral.

((That's quite an indictment, Jessica. Let's see if I can describe myself. To be sure I believe myself right until shown wrong. I have changed a lot of opinions over the course of thirty years. And I certainly am every bit as opinionated as you, possibly more so. My ego was suppressed for many years because I was very insecure up through college, and I suspect that my ego tends to overreact at times. I'd rather not describe myself as moral or immoral. Although I do have my own peculiar religious beliefs, they don't include a code of behavior. I think I am ethical, which comes to the same thing. I agree with you that ethics, or morals, are subjective.

But I don't think you're being entirely fair. If I'm honest about my dishonesty, I'm self-righteous. Hell, then what should I do? I'm sorry if I fly in the face of your own preconceptions, but maybe you're own perceptions need some examining. Broadly speaking, I try to act so as to do the most good for myself and those I associate myself with, without in the process doing injustice to anyone else. I sometimes err through self-interest, and more often through poor judgment. If having strong opinions about right and wrong, and being outspoken about them is self-righteousness, then I admit it. I'm self-righteous. But so are you, Jessica.

And while I'm on the subject, I have to bring something up. Over the course of the last few years, I have on more than one occasion been involved in heated arguments of one thing or another in fanzines. From time to time, I receive a letter from one of my opponents in the debate apologizing for arguing with me. This is ridiculous, and I want anyone considering this to stop it. The whole point of an argument is to examine one's own opinions in the light of the opinions held by others. I make no apologies for my own opinions, and expect no apologies from others. The cliché says that if you can't stand the heat, you should get out of the kitchen. I don't like arguments that devolve into personal invective, but as far as I'm concerned anything else goes. I censor personal attacks (horrors) out

of MYTHOLOGIES for that reason. I think Jessica asked a legitimate question, though she phrased it rather unfortunately. I'm not mad at her for asking it, though I have to admit I don't know of any satisfactory way to answer it. It's one of those have-you-stopped-beating-your-wife questions. I've had a few people write and tell me that the level of argument in MYTHOLOGIES is too intense for them on one issue or another before. The only thing I can say is, you can't experience life by running away from every conflict of opinions. But a difference of opinion, even a strong difference of opinion, doesn't mean a breach between people. On my list of five fans I'd most like to meet are three with whom I've argued - often with heat - repeatedly: Jessica herself, Don Thompson, and John Kusske. I think they're all crazy, and wrong, mind you, but that doesn't mean I can't go on liking them as people.)))

[DAVE SZUREK]

Pournelle may not agree, but I think that Fergus has him over a barrel on the issue of sexism. George's answer was about as precise and definitive as possible, even if some of the technical aspects did reduce the value of it as entertainment reading. That's no complaint. I agree that no author is compelled to observe the matter, and not doing so does not automatically qualify his work as sexist in nature. It only becomes sexist when he makes a case for it as "the way things should be", wallows in stereotypes as the highest form of realism, depicts the stereotype as exemplary, or derides those who depart from it. Simply failing to take a stand on the issue or presenting some characters in the traditional mode without passing moral judgment isn't enough to convict a man.

We don't need reverse stereotypes. What we need are individuals, and it's not inconceivable that certain individuals would superficially fall under the stereotyped category. If that's their identity, they've a sacred right to it. The tragedy of any human categorization is that we are being intimidated into neat little roles by somebody outside ourselves. When you come right down to it, it doesn't matter who the dictator is.

((I agree. To look at the reverse side of the coin, there are some feminists who firmly believe that if you were to educate every woman in America, show her the various alternatives open to her, that none of them would choose to be house keepers. The supposition is that all women who fill the "traditional" role in the nuclear family are unhappy with their lot. People who take this extreme attitude are betraying their own intolerance; they wouldn't choose that way of living, therefore, no sensible, intelligent person would.)))

[LAURIE TRASK]

Your comments about THE ART OF LOVING were quite provocative. I'm glad you did not take Fromm's discussion of masculinity and femininity that seriously. And how could he possibly have viewed the feminist movement merely as an attempt "to smooth over the differentness/separation/uniqueness of individuals, leading to even more conformity and less love." This is simply not true. While feminists are certainly fighting to have the law consistently treat men and women as equals, they are also encouraging women to be strong individuals. I think I'd like to read THE ART OF LOVING, if, for nothing else, to see how this movement could possibly lead to "even more conformity and less love".

Now to take you to task. "If a man and a woman feel a close relationship, they recognize it as love, and therefore conclude that it is necessary for them to have sex." I gather this is an attitude that you are debunking. But where did you find this attitude? ((High school, college, RISFA, NESFA, conventions, at work, in

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movies and on TV, in books and magazines, etc. Sorry for interrupting.))) From personal experience, I haven't seen many couples decide "Gee, since we're in love, we've got to go tuxed together." That's nonsense. People have sex drives. They may or may not wish to engage in sexual intercourse, depending on a number of variables.

As for May's contention that "Sex is something we can do when we run out of conversation", hasn't he ever realized that people can converse while engaging in sex (and I do mean more than "OOOhhh!" or "More!")?

Pournelle has made a very thoughtful study about women and men, but immediately makes mistakes by generalization and misinterpretation. I have never heard a woman, ardent feminist or otherwise, call for "equivalence" of the sexes. Equality and equivalence are two different things. I strongly believe in sexual equality - that both men and women receive equal treatment under the law, are accorded equal respect in the job market, and are considered equal intellectually. (Jim Mann has pointed out, and I agree, that women tend to interchange the actual meanings of equal and equivalence when using them in discussions of civil rights movements.)

[SUE ANDERSON]

Why do psychologists like Fromm, who like to dichotomize human characteristics - active/passive, inner directed/outer directed, constructive/supportive -- so frequently label the categories "masculine" and "feminine"? It destroys - for me, anyway - any claim to credibility they may have, and no subsequent weaseling statements that "every individual has traits of both types" can save them. They provide Pournelle and his side useful "scientific" quotes: "Noted psychologist _____ has stated that there are clearly defined masculine and feminine traits..." but that's all.

As I waded through George Fergus' article - erudite, thorough, etc. -- and didn't find any comment hooks, it occurred to me that the relative length and different styles of his and Pournelle's entries may bias the letters you get. Busy fan reads Jerry's couple of pages, short paragraphs, lions, jots down a quick comment like "Gee, that's interesting, we open minded scientific people should think about things like that". Fan turns page, meets "No Vinism" (nice title, but John Jakes used it in 1965) and somehow can't find anything to say about it, since everything is pretty well covered. George's article certainly isn't "overkill", but I'll be curious to see whether your various readers respond in any detail.

I particularly noted Pournelle's apparent contention that all the social upheavals since 1940 are the result of women's performing "many functions previously reserved for men" during World War "Twooic". I'd be interested in hearing how the process worked -- should be great fantasy.

But the real prizewinning line is "I suspect...that certain onerous but necessary tasks are better performed by women simply because these tasks are less hateful to women than to men." That's right up there with "Lower animals (natives, females) don't feel pain the way we do; those screams are just reflex activity." Jerry and others have been brought up to believe that it's "natural" for women to be "passive, supportive, protective, enduring" and put up with whatever they're handed by the system that parcels out the jobs. Let's see a breakdown between women's "onerous but necessary tasks" and those that men are better suited to, before we unjustly condemn anyone, but if it turns out that the "men's shitwork" is the stuff that lift trucks and steam shovels were made for, and "women's shitwork" is everything else, then the stupidity of the statement will stand.

[DON AYRES]

Mark Keller's quotation of Darwin is unfortunate, in one sense. Darwin did not personally relish the theory, conflicting as it did with his own beliefs, so his judgments were sometimes more deprecating than they really warrant. Natural selection is not hinged on the discovery of a single example of altruistic behavior, thanks in large part to the extent of the work of Darwin himself. Such an example would be one against a multitude of facts that do fit such an outline. In any event, the quote still reflects the goal-directedness idea of its time, rather than accepting something as just an observation.

This reflects too on your editorial and my principal objection to the behavioral sciences and their procedures at the moment. I think we have taken the so-called "hard sciences" (physics and chemistry; I specifically exclude biology) and their techniques too much to heart. What is overlooked is that these sciences have a history of observation which extends back at least to the time of Galileo's organizational techniques (and actually much farther); this is several hundred years longer than biological theory, which cannot honestly be said to begin until Darwin's day; still, there has been a certain amount of observation.

Yet, the social sciences in particular have fallen into the trap of placing their emphasis on experimentation, when I suspect that an insufficient amount of observation has occurred. It is difficult to produce a general theory when normal behavior is unknown. Example: masturbation was long regarded as deviant behavior, and any number of theories have evolved from that opinion. An entomologist comes along and (happily) instead of trying to experiment to find out what causes such deviant behavior or how to prevent it, he decides to observe a sample, and find out what the norms are in the first place. The entomologist, of course, was Kinsey and the observations indicated that, if masturbation is deviate behavior, most of us are deviates.

No, I'm not trying to discredit experimentation, but I am suggesting that observation should precede an experiment. By the same token, observations made in the course of an experiment which run counter to the expected results or which have nothing to do with the original questions may be reported as observations, but another experiment should be conducted before accepting them as experimentally validated.

So, frankly, I'm not particularly willing to accept much of Fergus' data without knowing more about sampling techniques, sample sizes, extent of repetition/replication, and measurement criteria. It's easy to say, "With most species, the appearance of the female is no more visually stimulating than that of the male..." but how the hell do you prove it? Beyond that, Fergus (probably unwittingly) makes the suggestion here that attractiveness is a matter of visual suggestion, which is true of homo sapiens but not of much of the animal world. IQ tests are under considerable fire for various reasons, so I'm inclined to regard those with a jaundiced eye (I never took one, but suspect that I would have several varying IQs at various times of my life had I done so).

I've admittedly picked a couple of obvious (to me) examples, largely because I don't want to write as long an article as George did. I don't think he read the same article I did, or we at least have different notions of the "major points" of Jerry's article; I'd certainly retain the questions he asked in the second paragraph, though Fergus doesn't seem interested in them.

A couple of technical nits: I recall seeing the XYY chromosome theory tied to

violence; I know of no suggestion ever from a responsible scientist that the presence of the extra chromosome made the individual "more masculine", nor is it possible to make one (unless "masculine" behavior is "violent" behavior in Fergus' vocabulary; if so, I dispute it). Sexual behavior in the human female is not limited to the ovulatory period, as it is in most animals; as one endocrinologist put it, "most women are essentially in perpetual heat". Perfume manufacturers will be unhappy to know that humans are "...completely insensitive to...olfactory stimuli", as will the deodorant companies, come to think of it. I also recall reading somewhere (probably Desmond Morris) that subordinate male apes will assume the female mating posture to avoid further aggression from a dominant male, who would then mount the subordinate and cease further hostilities.

One further comment: Fergus' position is subject to the unfortunate stance that "I don't believe anybody should tell a writer what to write but..." The easy answer to that is "Put up or shut up!", which I hope to avoid but really cannot. Example is better than suggestion, as we've all seen countless times in suggestions to beginning writers. George has a point of view that he's interested in seeing in print in fiction, so I sincerely suggest that he do so.

((You were doing fine up until that paragraph, Don, but then you blew it. That argument - that one shouldn't criticize unless one can do better - is the most intellectually bankrupt position I can imagine. What you are saying in effect is that no one is qualified to point out what is wrong with a piece of fiction unless one can do as well or better. That's utter nonsense, and I expected better from you. You lay yourself open to the same charge. If you could have presented a more accurate presentation of male/female behavior than George did, then why don't you, instead of saying that you don't want to write a long article, "Put up or shut up." If you don't think proper observational techniques are used in the behavioral sciences, why don't you personally conduct them rather than just criticizing them from a distance? "Put up or shut up." If you don't think present IQ tests are reliable, why don't you design a better one rather than disparaging them in print? "Put up or shut up."

I firmly believe that there are many ways to look at problems. A creative person is usually a synthesist. He takes disparate stimuli and synthesizes them into a book, a poem, a play, an experimental approach. There are also a number of different analytic approaches. While I would like to be a top quality novelist, I recognize that my main talents seem to lie in an ability to detect patterns in the work of a writer. I suspect that I write better reviews than fiction and always will. So be it. But if any writer tries to tell me I have no right to criticize his book unless I can do better (as Dean Koontz once did), then my response is that he has no right to criticize my review until he proves that he can do better at that. There's a place for both modes of thought.)))

LET HE WHO
IS WITHOUT
TYPER PUB
THE FIRST ZINE!



[JENNIFER BANKIER]

Initially I would like to take issue with your comments to Jessica Salmonson, which seem to suggest that women and men are interchangeably oppressed. I agree that this society oppresses everyone, and that many decent men are also injured by sexual stereotyping. It would be preferable if no one was conditioned into either "dominant" or "submissive" roles. The fact remains, however, that as long as such role-dichotomy exists, the submissive role will be far more destructive for the group it is imposed upon than the dominant one. In short, men as a class oppress women as a class, while any oppression of men by women or women by women will be isolated, individual instances.

I will be specific. Women do not rape men, and men do not have to be afraid of going out of doors at night for fear of sexual attacks, or, indeed, any kind of attack by women. (They may have to fear aggression by other men, but that cannot be considered sexism by any standard.) Men, as a class, are not underpaid for doing work of equal value to that done by women, with the possible exception of the case where single-parent fathers are refused welfare that would permit them to stay home to look after the children, and even that is the result of decisions of primarily male legislatures. Even the tormenting of males who do not fit the macho stereotype is primarily perpetrated by other men. The denial of access to contraceptives or abortions also primarily affects women rather than men.

I even think it is fairly well established that in the traditional male-female emotional relationship it is the "submissive" woman who is expected to make the emotional and other sacrifices in favor of the "dominant" male. Even the best intentioned men have trouble in overcoming their conditioning in this area, and must constantly have its effects pointed out to them, or engage in continuing internal struggle against what are often unconscious habit patterns. In view of this fact, it is a rational position for a woman to conclude that she cannot longer spare the energy to cope with the hassles of fighting male conditioning, and focus both her giving and receiving of emotional support and love upon other women, either as a matter of practice or as a matter of principle. This is not a position that I have myself adopted (I prefer to abstain altogether from love/sexual relationships except with the occasional and unfortunately rare male who is both temperamentally compatible and trustworthy in the area of sexism, given the vicious persecution to which gay people of both sexes are exposed), but it is one that I find reasonable and understandable.

((Well, first of all, I never said nor meant to say that the two sexes were interchangeably oppressed. What I did say and continue to believe is that everyone is oppressed by the current set-up, not just women and "many decent men" but even the indecent chauvinist. You have stressed that women are oppressed physically and economically, and I suspect that you're partially right. Naturally women don't often rape men, but I believe this to be a sexual and not a sexist issue. I think there is a decided difference there. Assuming the physical possibility of it, I have no doubt that women would be just as likely to rape men.

But psychologically, both sides are oppressed, and since there is no reliable way to measure psychological pain, I leave open the question of how is more oppressed than the other. I don't think it matters a goddamn, anyway. The reason there is a feminist revolt (if you will) rather than a masculinist one is not that women are incredibly more oppressed than men, it is because the means that the oppression takes are more obvious and visible. Psychological problems are largely hidden, even to the sufferers. And just as it is true that men cannot really judge the psychological effects on women, neither can women judge the effects on men.

.....

Let me give you an example from your own letter. You say that most of the oppression experienced by a male who doesn't fit the macho image comes from other men. Well, as one of those men who doesn't, and never did, and really doesn't have much interest in it anyway, let me tell you that you're dead wrong. It wasn't the occasional remarks from the males in high school that bothered, it was the fact that one could not get a date unless one participated in one of the sporting events, or won a lot of fist fights behind the school, or whatever. And the audience at those fist fights was mostly female.

Picking a few more nits, I'd like to point out that those "primarily male legislatures" were elected by primarily female electorates. I am perfectly willing to agree that sympathetic men are hard to find, but I somehow doubt that you'd find the percentage of sympathetic women much higher. I don't want to be repetitious, nor to put too much weight on what I suspect is a misleading statistic, but remember that most women in the US are opposed to the ERA. They, like everyone else, have an innate fear of too much freedom.)))

[RICK BROOKS]

George Fergus had an interesting article (rather more than I care to know about the subject) but I'm afraid that we will never really be able to tell built-in differences in the sexes. There will always be some sort of cultural bias built-in as the person(s) grow up.

I do think Jerry is oversimplifying when he places so much blame on WWII forcing so many women into the labor force. The women mainly went back home after the war. Just as much blame could be put on several other factors such as the stresses of the Cold War, the USA having to play a major world role, or even the jolt that WWII gave to the theory that all progress is good and each generation is better off than the one before. Nazism is one wave of the future that luckily got beached.

I may be doing Jerry an injustice, but to me he is saying that working women bear most of the blame for the breakdown of family units. We seem to be in a period of sweeping cultural changes. I doubt that any one thing can be found to carry even one quarter of the blame.

[BRIAN EARL BROWN]

George Fergus has produced a tremendous article. Clearly he's put a lot of research into it. It's a bit hard to respond to the debate between Pournelle and Fergus because I haven't even read MOTE. I find Pournelle's explanation for the stereotyping that seems to abound in the novel (judging from numerous reviews) to be more of a rationalization than a legitimate reason. Just as in the opening pages of Poul Anderson's MIRKHEIM there are several references to the reappearance of "old customs" that add up to the cultural customs of Poul's generation.

Germaine Greer mentioned in THE FEMALE EUNUCH that Freud defined the feminine as the sick antithesis of the masculine. (Not in those words, but Freud's categories of feminine traits were all things despised in the masculine). This is something to keep in mind when people blithely start to talk about masculine and feminine principles.

The last line of Pournelle's "Afterword" is interesting. He's thinking about the children...How many times have "the children" been brought in to end discussion of an issue? TV, pornography, sex-education, speeding on the highway, drugs, homosexuality. It leads me to suspect that "the children" is just a dodge to justify some adult's dislike for the matter in question.

[CAROLYN DOYLE]

Something I've noticed in SF stories purported to be "equal", that have a female lead, is that they read as if the writer had written the whole story with the main character being a man named Joe, sent it to the publisher, then had it sent back with only one request - make the hero a heroine. This consisted of scratching out "Joe" and substituting "Jean". Somebody ought to tell some of the writers out there that there's a difference between men and women (obviously none of these writers have taken time out to find out for themselves). I simply cannot understand why admitting an obvious difference in the two sexes gets one labelled as "chauvinist". Good hearted souls though the ones shouting "chauvinist" might be, the way to be open-minded, and to treat both sexes with courtesy is not to say that women are just like men. Rather, recognizing that we are different, yet not letting that stand in the way of liking and relating to both sexes is, to me, the best way to go.

Juanita Coulson (who certainly ought to know) remarked that women, if faced with a choice between personality breakup and the final step, catatonia, will pick the former. It's a survival valve. They're still surviving in some fashion, they're still "sane" in a way. Males will not take this step. (There has never been a report of a male with multiple personalities.)

((I don't imagine anyone has ever claimed that there were no differences between men and women. But I'm not sure from your letter what the obvious differences you see between the sexes are. Maybe those differences obvious to you are just as obviously not real differences to someone else. Similarly, I'd like to comment on your remark about interchangeable heroes and heroines, except that you didn't cite any specific stories.)))

[GEORGE FLYNN]

Now what shall I say about Jerry Pournelle vs George Fergus? I'm certainly on George's side of the argument, but I have the feeling that Pournelle does a better job of presenting his case, such as it is. (Well, he is a professional writer.) One quibble against George: I think "the main reason for the lack of female heroes" is simply that most authors are male and write of what they know best; but this merely pushes the argument back one step (why are most authors male?). Otherwise, I largely agree. While Pournelle has a point on the legitimacy of depicting a cyclical future, which need not imply the desirability of what's depicted, it's fair to criticize when the author has made known his value judgments on the question, either by direct statement (as Pournelle has here) or, less reliably, by implication from many stories weighted the same way.

[JEFF FRANE]

The bulk of my notes revolve around the Pournelle-Fergus pieces. As I read Pournelle's initial article, I noted a great many anthropological points, mostly based on research I had done for an article of my own. As it turned out, virtually everything I had thought of, and a good deal more, was included in George Fergus' excellent discussion. My own conclusion was quite different from his, though, operating from the possibility that male dominance was at one time a desirable characteristic for the survival of the species (based on observed behavior in primates such as the baboons, which thrive in a habitat similar to that which our ancestors lived in; the contention being related to the relative helplessness of human infants, which is directly related to the anatomical necessities of upright posture), but that the characteristic was no longer of any value, and is in fact a negative factor. I likewise take issue with the arguments of both Pournelle and Fergus, that a biological blueprinting is the be-all and end-all of human choice. One might assume

that the hunger-mechanism is about as basic and unchangeable an animal drive that one can consider, yet a study performed after WWII established a good deal of doubt about that.. American prisoners in Japan were found to be literally starving to death, even though they were being given the same amount of food as the Japanese soldiers. Their allotment was doubled, tripled, and they were finally given more than four times the diet of the Japanese, yet they were still suffering from mal-nutrition by the end of the war. The original assumption was made that the Japanese were hereditarily different from the Americans. However, when Japanese-Americans were fed on the diet of those native soldiers, they too were starved! It became apparent that the amount of food required to satisfy the body was very much under the influence of cultural conditioning, within very broad limits of "real" requirements.

However I might quibble over interpretations with Fergus, I cannot adequately express my disgust for Pournelle's statements, particularly his response. Pournelle makes it very clear that he has no evidence to support his statements about women, and about their temperament, yet he persists in making them. ..What I find appalling beyond his condescending attitude toward women, is his pronounced ethnocentrism. It is clear that he views Western technological MAN as the norm, although the group only makes up a fractional part of the entire species. The question is "human nature" and the very limited scope of his personal experience is not adequate to the task. He says "certainly the survival of primitive tribes with strange customs says very little of relevance to us." (emphasis mine) The term "primitive" is scientifically meaningless, as well as being a connotative slur, and I am amazed at the incredible ego required to term other customs as strange, and to further eliminate consideration of those people as being relevant to us is beneath contempt. This attitude presupposes that what "we" do is "basic human nature" and that any other behavior is aberrant. It carries over into SF by continuing to suppose that "we" will be the only group to carry our culture into the future. Now, I wonder, does someone with such blatant ignorance of the discipline of anthropology make any extrapolations about human society. I contend that his argument for a cyclical pattern for history is merely an after-the-fact attempt to excuse either a lack of effort or a lack of imagination.

As a side note into the division of labor, I had an anthro professor who suggested that men were essentially useless production-wise in hunting-gathering societies. Most of the time, their "hunting" consisted of merely wandering around in the woods, avoiding the real work of horticulture. Only with the advent of mechanical improvements and the domestication of draft animals, when the work of farming became much easier, did men begin to dominate that area. That attitude still persists, where the most tedious work, in the factory or the office, is relegated to women, while the interesting or creative work is considered to be the province of men.

[D. GARY GRADY]

George Fergus presents his case well, but his arguments are marred by his rhetoric. To imply that no serious scientist accepts the notion of a sex-linked tendency for aggression is erroneous, as reference to a few standard texts in psychology will reveal. The issue is an open one. Nor is it the case, as George strongly implies, that everyone who happens to disagree with him is a raving sexist. His swipes at homosexuals and his misuse of the term "virility" were also unfortunate.

George rather blandly presents conjectures as facts in a few instances. For example, he tells us that "most of the behavior we think of as characteristically masculine or feminine originated less than 10000 years ago." I'm not even certain what the statement is supposed to mean, since he has left the term "behavior we

consider characteristically masculine or feminine" up in the air. In any event, I suspect it is somewhat excessive to make blanket assertions about things that happened between men and women in prehistoric times, especially in a statement as vague and open ended as this.

In criticizing George's rhetoric, I would obviously be guilty of hypocrisy if I did not at the same time apologize again for my own excesses. I do regret saying a number of things which have left me open to misinterpretation. Still, I wish some of those who have lambasted me had kept in mind the first sentence of my first remarks on this subject in MYTHOLOGIES: "I strongly support doing away with most of society's distinctions between men and women."

[WAYNE HOOKS]

With Jerry Pournelle's article I had much trouble. He states man has a "nature" yet he never defines nature. It is hard to comprehend what is not explained. What is a nature? Since my practice is grounded in existentialism, I cannot see equating animals and men. If an animal does so, then must man. An animal eats its own placenta. I doubt many women do this. Behavioral science, such as Skinner did, I have serious doubts about, except in the broadest terms.

[M.R. HILDEBRAND]

I read Mr. Pournelle's original argument without any feeling he was either anti-female or anti-feminist. It seems extremely unimaginative of him not to be able to envision any society but the one he is presently living in, but all writers have their handicaps.

I felt that Mr. Fergus wrote an excellent article in return, citing many new and interesting studies which have been done demonstrating that the way it is isn't the only way it can be. I was extremely disappointed in Mr. Pournelle's "Afterword". He is quite justified in asking Mr. Fergus to provide references, but it is extremely opinionated and unscientific of him to follow with the answer that he wouldn't look them up anyway.

I also found Mr. Pournelle's statement concerning "certain onerous but necessary tasks are better performed by women" quite upsetting. I have performed much work which was distasteful to me in my life from the merely boring to the stuff which left my stomach muscles sore from the physical effort not to vomit, but I was never aware in any way of being more suited to this than a man.

[CHIP HITCHCOCK]

There is this peculiar attitude running all through Pournelle's remarks. I think his first problem is that he considers biology, as a science, somewhere on par with psychology. This is an unfortunate attitude; the fact that a researcher can't draw nice neat six-places-of-decimals figures around his observations doesn't destroy their validity. Anyone can destroy his own credibility by dragging his beliefs into what purports to be a scientific argument.

The differences in the primary reproductive system are the only absolute differences between the sexes; all the other differences are statistical, and we are finding that those differences are of far less significance than is generally believed. Even the primary differences need not be significant; there is no particular reason why the possession of vagina and uterus should demand of a woman even such basic things as being penetrated and bearing children (to say nothing of such concomitant factors as being sexually passive or raising children instead of choosing a career), any more than being a 6'0" ectomorph should require a man to be a basket-

.....

ball player rather than a well known professor of economics (J.K. Galbraith). The key here is one that is important in every facet of human relations: it is necessary to deal with any person as an individual rather than a representative of any class of which that individual happens to be a member. Certainly many other physical differences between men and women are statistically significant; with a population of several billions to consider, a difference can be very small but still mathematically significant. Because of this the overlap can be very large.

And even if this large overlap in physiological characteristics did not exist, it would be invalid to make psychological generalizations from physiology for two reasons. First is that we already cheer those who can overcome what is more generally acknowledged to be a physical handicap, whether it is the British pilot who fought in WWII even after losing both legs, or the woman who came back from polio to become a champion swimmer. The second is even more important to those who think clearly: assigning psychological characteristics on the basis of observed physiology is the foundation of such nonsense as palmistry and phrenology, and I see little difference between those pseudosciences and any other attempts to rationalize psychological prejudices on the basis of physiological differences. I do not deny the possible role of heredity; the absolute environmentalists are just as wedged as the absolute hereditarians. But I think that George Fergus (and many others) have provided convincing evidence that we cannot reasonably assign any psychological characteristics other than the spatial visualization he mentioned to genetic or other physiological causes.

As to the crux of the matter--whether people would be happy and our society survive if an order of equality were established--I think the first thing to point out is George's comment on page 34, that the most behaviorally "feminine" women and "masculine" men "...experience the greatest trauma in middle age when their previous goals in life no longer seem appropriate." This applies with particular strength to Jerry's remarks about broken homes as a contributing cause of delinquency. In my own experience and in most of the material I've found the most important factor in homebreaking is the realization by one or both of the partners (most commonly the woman) that the masks and roles imposed by society are no longer tolerable. A mask is all very well for conventional social intercourse but maintaining it can put impossible strain on any close relationship. Certainly it is possible that our society is more orderly than it would be in the presence of true equality; on the other hand, South Africa and the pre-Civil War South were quite orderly, but I see very few Americans today who are willing to hold either of those societies up as good examples.

What is natural and proper anyway? Homo sapiens is something of a biological monstrosity as it is -- the females permanently sexually receptive, both sexes living far beyond the end of their fertile period, diseases and genetic defects not allowed to take their proper quota. Under the circumstances any arguments calling our social order unnatural ought to be far more sweeping, since under the circumstances they bear a distinct similarity to some of the arguments against changing the King James edition of the BIBLE. Perhaps the most striking evidence against our current society is the fact that men tend to have lifespans almost 10% shorter than women even though they retain reproductive capacity much later in life.

Jerry asks that we not neglect to read what he has said, nor chant slogans at him. This would be a reasonable request were he not so obviously guilty of just those faults himself. This talk about family structure and family governance is just such slogan chanting. Why doesn't he just wave Mom's apple pie at us and be done

with it. He mentions family structure. Does he really think there is something sacred and eternal about the nuclear family? The modern family structure is a relatively recent artifact -- not too many generations ago the notion of a broken home happening through a single separation would have been surprising due to the greater depth and breadth of family structure within a small area.

Insum, I do not believe anything; I see that many people are prevented from fulfilling desires which cannot be demonstrated to be harmful to society. I see that, unlike most of the rest of the life on this planet, we are already denying biology in a variety of ways (if George's analogies to primates are suspect, why aren't those analogies of Jerry's which seem to rely on even more primitive forms of life). Within this context, we have reason to continue doing so on an even broader scale. In short, Jerry's objections to the full equality of the sexes (and that, despite his protestations, is indeed what is being asked for) bear a distinct resemblance to the position of "It might be harmful so let's not do it" taken with respect to everything from saccharin to recombinant DNA research -- a position I am divided on but which many people oppose.

[MARK M. KELLER]

I should mention to Jerry Pournelle that Lysenko's takeover of Soviet biology did not depend on his theories meshing with Marxist ideology. Just about all Russian scientists found some way to tie in their projects with the "advance of the proletarian revolution". What Lysenko promised was the "test of practice" -- actual results. He got them, too, by faking his reports and switching samples. See the accounts by Medvedev and Jovarsky.

How hungry were those female lions? If they get fed an impala by the park rangers every few days, they could well let a male walk off with some surplus meat.

George Fergus did an impressive job of summarizing some current lines of research on sex differences in humans. I do wish he'd given some sources, not necessarily a full citation but just the name of who did the research and the date it was published, so those interested in more details could track down the works in an index. In its present state, the summary is of very little use to those who might want to know more, or check on George's conclusions. I am possibly more familiar with this field than most readers of MYTHOLOGIES, having just compiled a bibliography on sociobiology -- I was able to recognize sources for about one-third of the material (John Money, Ann Oakley, Maccoby & Jacklin, Tiger & Shepher, McEwen). But the rest are mysterious.

For a supplement you might look at Kenneth Lamott, "Why Men and Women Think Differently", HORIZON (May 1977), pages 40-45. Excerpt: "It's not only social conditioning, after all. New research shows that the brains of males and females are not alike and are intended to perform in different ways." Lamott covers genetic traits, right brain and left brain functions, and how sex hormones affect intelligence. The differences? Males show greater visual and spatial abilities, females more verbal abilities, on the average. Meaning?

Studies which test male and female college sophomores (as so many do) miss significant changes that occur earlier in life. For example, adults of both sexes show functional divisions of the two hemispheres of the brain. Generally the right brain dominates in non-languagespace-perception tasks and the left brain in linguistic tasks, in both men and women.

Newborns and young children don't have this division: their brains are equipotential,

.....

unspecialized. In boys the right brain becomes specialized for visual-space tasks at age 5-7, so that boys are better at identifying shapes held in the left hand than the other hand. (Right brain controls left hand.) Girls retain equipotential hemispheres; both hands are equally skilled in recognizing shapes.

The right brain in girls specializes for visual-space tasks at age 13 or so. Thus pre-teen boys generally score higher than pre-teen girls on tests that measure spatial perception.

On the other hand, girls are better able to repair injuries to one brain hemisphere by transferring functions to the (unspecialized) other hemisphere. They are less vulnerable to dyslexia and speech defects. This difference in development rate possibly has some evolutionary significance, but what it is I don't know. Reference: Sandra F. Witelson, "Sex and the Single Hemisphere: Specialization in the Right Hemisphere for Spatial Processing", SCIENCE (30 July 1976), 193, pp 425-427.

This might shed some light on those "unknown" reasons for male emphasis on visual-spatial skills and female emphasis on verbal skills.

Math skills in the US seem to show the same unequal distribution. The Baltimore Study of math genius kids (IQ 160-190) showed a male/female ratio of 8:1 in the twelve-year-olds they studied. The study team feared accusations of sexism and went out of their way to try to explain why so few girls got into the special enrichment classes. If a report that math genius shows up equally in boys and girls in Sweden is correct... This is a case in which omission of all source references is infuriating.

Male display ornamentation has returned, or hadn't you noticed? Conventional men's clothing has blossomed out in bright colors since the mid-sixties. Men's cosmetics have gone beyond after shave lotion; there are now colognes (perfumes) and "bronzing powders" (facial make-up) being used by businessmen in conservative firms. Men are signed up for cosmetic surgery as ardently as women: face lifts, nose jobs, pinning back ears. Shall I mention Senator Proxmire's hair transplant? Presumably the display is aimed partly at other men ("I'm young and tough"), and partly at women ("Choose me and you'll have a great time"). Pardon me while I wander over to the bathroom mirror, pomade my moustache, carefully comb my beard, and mutter to my reflection, "You handsome devil, you."

The women in West Africa particularly didn't like being shunted out of the commercial economy by British colonial habits. In Nigeria there was the "Lugard plan" for indirect rule in the 1920s - the decisions were to be made by way of traditional chiefs with English "advisors". The Ibo had no chiefs, since each village was autonomous. Ibo market women found they were subject to new taxes without being consulted. The English resident shrugged off their discontent until 10000 angry women staged a riot at Aba in 1929 that took army assistance to suppress. The Ibo men thought it was a great joke on the English, who were amazed that women would become so violent.

All in all, a good job, George. If you cut it by a third, trimmed some of the repetition, and included references, it would have been even better. I'm afraid its very length would discourage some potential readers who might have found it interesting.

As a note to Jerry's afterword - the habits of "primitive tribes with strange customs" are of no particular relevance to ^{our} past or future social system in and of

themselves. However, they show one thing. Under the right conditions, almost any system may be advantageous. Some environments encourage tight clan units, isolated in forts; others encourage widespread exchange of children, women, and men among many villages. Some economies encourage monogamy, others polygyny, still others polyandry.

That's what a study of primitive tribes indicates. This means that a system which worked well for Paleolithic foragers need not be the one that works best for us now. To announce that one system is "natural" and therefore best just because it is oldest makes no sense. The Mormons in the 1850s had many more women than men. In their particular circumstances, polygyny made more sense biologically than monogamy. It wasn't the best system back east, where the ratio of men:women was 1:1, but it was the best system for Utah, at that time. Two generations later the sex ratio in Mormon society was back equal, and monogamy was restored.

[JOHN BARTELT]

I found Jerry Pournelle's article a little bit incredible. If someone else were citing the type of evidence he uses to support his thesis, to substantiate some physical or engineering theory, he would laugh at it, I'm sure. George Fergus' article was a more than adequate reply.

[VICTORIA VAYNE]

I'll get back on my "sympathize with some feminist ideals but I am NOT a feminist" soapbox. Without referring ahead to the Fergus article and arguing primarily as a possible future SF author: I dislike ANY representation of ANY person/animal/thing as unrealistic except where the intent is satiric or comic. The dumb broad stereotype, the simpering sex kitten who does nothing but slink around in inadequate clothing and provide the necessary side-tracking of the hero at some crucial point of plot, but contributes nothing else, can be done without -- surely those wonderful talented writers can think of something more realistic. The dumb scientist's daughter off whom the theory and explanation has to be bounced for the edification of the reader and who can later on be rescued conveniently from a tentacled horror, can also be done without. But nowadays I suspect uses of female characters like this would be satiric in intent. At the same time, the dumb macho jock stereotype can be done without, or the ineffectual milquetoast type bumbler who makes good in the end. These types might exist in real life, but if they must be in a story, let the events flow realistically.

To be sure, women may have been treated unfairly more than their proportionate share, because of the society that the writers grew up in and their conditioning. But just as the science in the novels becomes more authentic in modern SF, so should the images of women. So yes, I do feel that women should be treated realistically in novels. What about sympathetically? "Realistic" strikes me as a reasonably objective idea -- straight comparison of the fiction to the outside world fact and how well they jibe. How do you gauge it? It depends entirely what the author's opinions are, and a woman can be represented "realistically" and still with an unsympathetic bias imposed by an author who happens to feel that way. How do you propose to stop an author from doing that? You can't measure sympathy because everyone has a different outlook on it. It's true that this can be said for perception of realism but still to a lesser extent. If a novel has as partial purpose the author's desire to portray his own opinions, why can't he sometimes paint an unsympathetic portrait?

((There's no reason why he can't, but there's equally no reason why readers can't

loudly point out what they see as a warped picture of reality. I had this argument with Michael Coney in and out of the pages of GRANFALLOON. If an author consistently portrays women as inherently inferior to men, then his stories will suffer no matter how talented he might otherwise be. I tried to get across to him that the only female character in any of his fiction with any depth was Carioca Jones, a villain based on his mother. And for an example of a current writer who still uses the dumb woman as a foil for the explanations of the hero, see Duncan Lunan.)))

[GEORGE FERGUS]

I guess I expected more of a response from Jerry. I'm not sure that he did more than skim my article, since some of his rebuttal does not appear to be related to what I actually criticized. For example:

I suggested on page 35 that an SF writer should not simply ignore trends he doesn't like, but ought to show us how an existing trend he does not advocate, such as the reduction of sex roles, might lead to an undesirable future. Jerry responds (?) by complaining about those critics who assume that the writer is an advocate of any future scenario he describes.

I suggested on page 18 that writing about the future involves extrapolation, not the mere reproduction of common behavior patterns of the present, and complained about an occurrence in THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE. Jerry's defense (?) is that what he wrote was, by golly, drawn from an incident in real life!

Jerry accuses me of failing to pay attention to his statements (in other publications) that a basic assumption for the universe of MOTE is that history is cyclical. I must reiterate that I have seen no discussion by him till now of whether he thinks sex roles vary cyclically or not. Now that he says they do, I will restate my objection more explicitly. It seems to me that there is always a component of linear change on which such cycles are imposed, and that it is patently ridiculous to assert that any cycle will return to exactly the same situation every time.

I suppose I may as well go on to a more specific critique of the assumption of cyclicity in the particular case of sex roles. There is at least some justification for theories of cyclicity in the political and economic spheres, since the rise and fall of empires and the boom/bust cycle are historical facts. But in other areas, such as technology, any cyclicity appears minor compared to the general pattern of linear growth. It is my contention that the changes in sex roles are of the more linear type.

There was little variation in the relative roles of men and women in Europe between the heights of the Classical age of Athens and Rome and the depths of medieval times (see Vern Bullough's THE SUBORDINATE SEX - A HISTORY OF ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN (1973) for a comprehensive survey), but there is considerable change occurring now.

It is meaningless for Jerry to attach significance to isolated assertions of sexual equality that have appeared from time to time over the last few centuries. Some writers also asserted that slaves from Africa were really human beings, but this does not mean that the historical position of blacks has undergone cyclic changes! And as it was with blacks, almost all "scientific" investigations previous to the 20th century concluded that mental differences between the sexes were biologically based. (These were concerned primarily with women's supposed inferiorities, but

also on occasion justified their "moral" superiority.) See THE FEMININE CHARACTER-HISTORY OF AN IDEOLOGY (1946) by Viola Klein, or "Science and the Woman Problem: Historical Perspectives" in SEX DIFFERENCES (1976) edited by Michael Teitelbaum.

As I said to Jerry in a letter, I didn't know if those reading my article would be interested enough in references for me (and Don) to undertake the extra work involved in citing all of them. But if anyone cares to amplify the discussion of a particular point, I will do my best to note the most easily accessible sources.

Jerry suggests that failure to "act the appropriate sexual role" is bad because it causes inadequate sex role differentiation in one's children, which according to psychiatrists is what leads to delinquency and anti-social behavior. There is a grain of truth in this. As I noted on pages 33-34, rigid sex role expectations by this culture often cause identity problems for those whose temperaments do not fit the stereotypes. The resulting social maladjustment can sometimes lead to anti-social behavior.

However, except for those cases where complete absence of the father as a role model leads to compensatory hypermasculinity in the son, I do not think Jerry is correct in saying that most psychiatrists attribute delinquency primarily to inadequate parental sex role behavior. Perhaps some may have in the past, but if Karen Horney (cited by Jerry) is one of these, I would like to point out that she is nearly as unrepresentative of current psychological theory as Freud himself would be. It wasn't until about the time of Horney's death, some 25 years ago, that a few developmental psychologists began to supplement traditional psychoanalysis (which seems to me relatively useless) with actual observation of infant behavior and family dynamics. I think this has made considerable difference in the viability of some of their theoretical formulations.

In order to develop properly, children need a loving caregiver, and are better off having one of each sex, but this has little to do with having parents fill "appropriate" sex roles. In those extreme cases where the occurrence of neurotic pathology may be tenuously related to parental sex roles, it is the stereotypical behavior that is more injurious. On the one hand, too much mothering may become overprotective "smothering". Alternatively, if one defines traditional masculinity as including a relative lack of empathy, affection, and nurturance, then it can be asserted that very "masculine" fathers are those most likely to cause delinquency or psychopathology in their children. This hardly supports Jerry's argument. If we want to reduce anti-social behavior, fathers must become more involved with their children. See Henry Biller's FATHER, CHILD, AND SEX ROLE (1971) and PATERNAL DEPRIVATION (1974), Michael Lamb's excellent compilation THE ROLE OF THE FATHER IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT (1976), or James Levine's less academically oriented WHO WILL RAISE THE CHILDREN? (1976).

Caring for children by men is, in fact, generally acknowledged to be the ingredient that was missing from past campaigns to achieve equality between the sexes. Earlier in this century, women expanded into formerly "masculine" areas of activity, but men were seldom encouraged to expand into the traditionally feminine areas. Such one-sided "liberation" must be considered one of the contributing factors in the failure of the sex role experiment of the Kibbutz, whose particular feminist ideology ordained that women be free to work alongside men at any vocation but failed to extend this privilege to the opposite sex. It was feared that men might indoctrinate children with attitudes of male supremacy. As a result, no man ever participated in bringing up the next generation, which simply caused most of

the children to redevelop the traditional view of women as nurturant and men as active.

The men's revolt that you predict, Don, has already made its appearance in the US, with half a dozen books on the subject of The Liberated Man suddenly in the last two years.

((A half dozen books does not a revolution make, although it is a start. I was thinking in terms of a generalized mass awareness among men that they have somehow been excluded from an important aspect of existence, such as has become prevalent among women in the past few years.)))

[JERRY POURNELLE]

I dashed off the afterword portion of the discussion with Fergus without paying a lot of close attention to Fergus's piece. I'm not proud of that, but I plead the necessity of work and a short deadline. I'm still having trouble reading Fergus's essay, though; it's long, dull, and worse, so full of flat assertions without proof that it is both tedious and infuriating to wade through it.

More, since I know some of his statements of fact simply are not so, I cannot know which of the remainder I can accept; and as he gives few references, it wouldn't even be possible to check those I have no knowledge about. Finally add to that Mr. Fergus's rather patronizing tone and attitude of infallibility, and I guess I don't even want to.

But. As an example, Mr. Fergus speaks of the "apparently 'masculine' nature of many of women's activities in the early pre-Christian sources of Western civilization: the Sumerians of Mesopotamia, the ancient Egyptians, the Minoans of Crete, the Mycenaens of Greece..."

As it happens, I am writing a Bronze Age historical about Crete and Mycenae, and I've waded through just about all the archeological sources I can find; corresponded with Sir Dennis Page, visited Thera and seen some unpublished frescoes, wandered through the National Museum in Athens, all over Crete, out to Pylos; I have, in sum, done considerable research on that period.

I would not myself offer the Myceneans as very good examples of sexual equality. The best descriptions we have of their culture are probably the Homeric epics; the warrior kings of Mycenae don't seem to have accorded women the freedom that Crete did, nor the religious importance, and I don't see any shred of evidence to the contrary. In Minoan Crete women certainly had freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland, and a very great religious importance, but the various frescoes and seal stones--the only direct evidence we have since we cannot read Minoan Linear A, and the Linear B tablets we can read are inventories and deeds and tax records, and probably stem from a later time when a Mainland dynasty had taken control--do not, at least to me, indicate a very "modern" cultural attitude toward women.

At another point, Mr Fergus says that "The Greek historians' references to Asian Amazons are believed to apply to the nomadic Sarmatians of what is now Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union." His statement implies that there is some universal, or at least very broadly held, agreement. To the best of my knowledge this is simply not so. Donald J. Sobol's 1973 book THE AMAZONES OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY mentions the Sarmatian theory, and recounts current Soviet popular archeology as "appropriating the Amazons entirely" for the Soviet Union, but the Soviets do not

.....

seem to have much evidence for the view beyond a strong desire that it be true that "the Amazons were not an invention of ancient writers but lived on the banks of the Ural River in what is now Russia, more than 2000 years ago" (Science and Life, a Soviet magazine).

The truth is that there are dozens of theories about the origins of the tales of the Amazons, ranging from the view that it is all pure myth borne of desire for it to be true, through the view that misinterpretation of some statues and reliefs depicting (now known to be male) long haired kilted clean shaven warriors generated the theory, to the view that it is all literally true; and if there is any broad consensus among archeologists and pre-historians, neither I nor the professional literature is aware of it.

In fact, Mr. Fergus asserts as proved that which remains very controversial. He says, "Recent studies of day-care centers have now laid to rest the fears of adverse effects on normal child development." What the hell does that mean? That we know what normal child development is? What is this proof anyway? Laid the fears to rest among whom? Horse pucky. It may well be true that there is no ground for fear, but we all know bloody well that the social "scientists" don't agree on any-thing, much less so startling a proposition as that. (I did recently hear a study that tended to show--the data were unambiguous but the sample was small, and there were some exceptions that might have been statistical flukes--that early intervention in the lives of children from poverty families had effects lasting much later into life, and that such intervention was cost-effective because the children with enriched early lives stayed out of jails and remedial classes as they grew older; if that holds up it has important policy implications; but even the author of the study wasn't willing to assert it as universally true. Yet.)

Further Mr. Fergus tells us that there are differences, and these are particularly important in primitive times, in the behavior of men and women; but he seems also to assert that over the very long period of pre-history there was no adaptive evolution. Men and women had different roles throughout upward of a million years, but they had no basic changes in their inherited responses (no, I don't mean Lamarkianism, I mean that in 10^6 years good old natural selection should have plenty of chances to play a part.) Well, perhaps. But perhaps not.

Incidentally, I was recently privileged to have a conversation with the world's most intelligent chimpanzee while visiting Oklahoma University. That's another story, but it was rather interesting to observe the sex differences among the chimps; behavioral dimorphism is extreme. I wondered, in fact, what the chimps made of us--a very obviously female human was responsible for much of their education, and was an authority figure; and humans certainly did not behave toward each other as the sexes of chimps do. This example of human culture doesn't seem to have changed the chimps very much, though.

I am a bit weary of this argument. I have never done more than assert that there are temperamental and probably intellectual differences between the sexes, and that these cannot be accounted for by cultural factors alone. Comes now Mr. Fergus to tell me about hormones and hormone treatments, which seem to wash out sexual behavioral differences, and I would have thought, thereby prove my basic point.

It does seem to me that if there are real differences in the sexes of humankind, it is worth knowing that. If there are not, that's worth knowing too.

.....

Meanwhile Mr. Fergus, cheer up. At the end of your essay you say that with present plans about 36 nations will have access of plutonium by 1980. Well, President Carter has cancelled the present plans. Meanwhile, laser isotope separation methods, plus the existence of a world market in uranium, will probably make weapons grade uranium accessible to 100 countries by 1984.

((At risk of repeating a cliché, no one is ever going to put the atomic genie back in the bottle.)))

HISTORY

[JOHN LELAND]

I think the distinction between "democracy" and "representative democracy" is overworked. I know of no society in which the sole, or even the chief, day-to-day decision-making apparatus was the entire local population. In the Greek city-states, which are usually cited as "pure" democracies, the government was actually run by committees appointed by lot. Certain issues were decided by full public meetings, which acted perhaps as legislative bodies, but most of the functions of government were delegated. The same is true of New England towns: most day-to-day affairs were (and are) run by selectmen, with a town meeting (sometimes only annually) to set general policy. As far as the Greeks were concerned, it may be noted, what made a state a "democracy" was not whether the citizens participated in government, as was true of nearly all states, but how large the citizen base was. Athens was a "democracy" because the small farmers and sailors could (during certain eras) vote, and be eligible for being chosen (by lot rather than election as we know it) for at least some offices.

I might add that in Renaissance Florence, the town meeting (balia) was actually regarded as an instrument of tyranny--a would-be tyrant would call a meeting, see that only he and his followers attended (by the simple means of putting guards around the square where the balia met) and have himself voted special powers by hand, setting aside the normal constitutional magistrates (chosen by lot). Personally I see nothing very special about the use of the populace as a kind of special legislative assembly, especially as it was generally manipulated (in Greece as well as Italy) by the local elite anyway.

((What ever gave you the idea that I was advocating pure democracy? I prefer representative democracy because it provides a buffer between the vacillating will of the populace and the body of written law. I'm all for it, and the harder it is to pass laws (within reasonable limits) the happier I am. I merely wished to point out that there is a difference between the two forms of government. And naturally no "pure" democracy ever existed, just as no pure representative democracy ever existed. We have had authoritarian leaders in the past (Huey Long and Richard Nixon) and will continue to do so in the future. Remember, not even Congress or the President has legal access to all CIA activities.

I want to argue briefly, though, with one of your examples. The day to day operation of a society falls under the executive rather than legislative arm of government. The fact that a President or selectman or triumvir or whatever doesn't have to call a meeting to approve any action does not ipso facto mean it is not a pure democracy. But a society in which all individual citizens had to be consulted in advance for all legislative acts would be as nearly a pure democracy as we are likely to see. Ideal descriptions of governmental forms may not be realistic, but they are useful means of measuring relative qualities between societies.)))

[DAVID STEVER]

Mark Keller. I have mild objections to his first point to Curlovich, in that the Eastern Roman Empire was the heart of the old empire, and thusly the objective of almost every group that the Romans had tangled with in Europe. The Western Roman Empire was off to the side of the stage, as it were, and a more easily defendable piece of turf to defend. This, plus removing themselves from the site of the rot (Rome) allowed them extra time.

[REED ANDRUS]

I wonder if your economics professor has learned a little bit about government regulation during this winter's natural gas fiasco. The shortages you folk are experiencing on the Eastern seaboard are due primarily to government controls on natural gas since - I think - 1955. While we moan and groan as the rates increase, I'm firmly convinced that regulations should be lifted, letting the price reach its own natural level - the ensuing stimulation of that part of the economy would allow greater research and exploration, as well as added transportation of our supply. A form of Keynesian pump-priming as it were, without using artificial cash flow. Does this make sense to you?

((If you have to have some variation of our present system, I'd say yes. I tend (though acknowledging my own lack of sophistication in the area) to favor a version of Debs' idea. The gas company's can produce as much as they want, and sell it at a price sufficient to justify research and exploration. The catch is that it can only be sold to the government, which owns the distribution system, and which ensures that a uniform price is charged regardless of how far a given area is from the source of supply. The difference, of course, comes out of taxes. I personally would be more than willing to pay more taxes, if I thought an equitable distribution of government services resulted from it. In theory, the government should be able to take advantage of economies of scale this way and raise the average standard of living considerably. We all know what is more likely to happen in practice.)))

[JONATHAN ADAMS]

Your insulin example is not a good one. The demand for insulin should be totally inelastic (independent of price) precisely because people must buy it, a "drop in demand" is impossible. More generally, if a firm can get away with charging high prices, it's not going to wait until demand drops. With high prices the firm can make even more money when people are beating a path to its doorstep.

((Nothing is totally inelastic, of course. Some diabetics are going to run out of money and die, thereby causing a drop in demand.)))

[ROBERT BRIGGS]

You answered my reply to your statement on competition between the US and the USSR by evading the point -- which was that communism is a typical near Eastern religion similar to Islam in its world conquering dynamic. The energy and fanaticism that once went into religious wars have been transferred to political systems.

First you deny that the USSR is communist. This is like denying that the Pope is Roman Catholic. You refer to "socialist trappings". Would you say that King Philip had "Catholic trappings"?

((I'm going to make another exception and interrupt a letter, because I don't want to launch into an essay at the end. First of all, I wish you would look up

the definitions of some of the terms you discuss. Russia has a Marxist system, many of the aspects of which are socialist, but which is overwhelmingly an oligopolistic system. They are not communist in any meaningful sense of the word except as a convenient label for a general school of Marxist belief. Russia, China, and Cuba all have "communist" governments, but they all have different forms of government. The term is meaningless as it is used, and inaccurate in its real meaning.

Second, the world conquering dynamic that you mention is indeed a part of the communist system. It is similar to another near Eastern religion - Christianity - in that respect, and to another popular belief system - capitalism - as well. It is hardly a point of difference between our two societies; it is in fact one of the stronger similarities. Back to Robert.)))

Let's go into your list of common interests:

1. Environment: I have seen nothing in the press to indicate this was a Soviet high priority.
2. Diminishing resources - Soviet resources are expanding. Khrushchev announced discoveries of coal and iron.
3. Energy shortages - None. See above.
4. Nuclear proliferation: The USSR worries about China. We don't.
5. Space: We are both cutting back.
6. Standard of living: They are under no pressure to increase their people's standard of living. Instead they build tanks.
7. The Third World is not a problem to the USSR but an opportunity. They are supplying arms to insurgents.
8. I agree we are moving in the Soviet direction but deny they are moving in ours.

((We could go back and forth forever, but let me take one more stab. Whether or not it is a high priority with the Russians, they do share a common environment with us. No matter who makes the world unusable, neither of us will be able to use it. Soviet resources are not expanding; they are simply locating more of the already existing resources. All world resources of oil, coal, etc. are diminishing, Soviet or otherwise.

Maybe you don't worry about China, but most of the rest of us do. They are almost certainly developing an ICBM. Even without it, the US would not be happy to see China use atom bombs on Japan or Taiwan. And who limited it to China. Among the countries suspected to have nuclear capability already are India - certain, France certain, Israel and South Africa - probable, Taiwan, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Brazil possible in the near future, as well as a number of Arab nations.

The Soviets most certainly are under pressure to increase their people's standard of living. Production of consumer goods has increased drastically and will continue to do so, in all likelihood. When you give people a taste of the good life, they demand more and more.)))

[GARY DEINDORFER]

Read a biography of Thomas Paine and you will realize that he wasn't "pretty sure the odds were with him" in Don Fitch's phrase. He was very lonely and very brave, and died pretty much unrecognized as the theoretician of the American Revolution, at a time when George Washington and Benjamin Franklin had since been canonized. The people of our then new country would have credited him with writing "Common Sense" and helping topple George the Third, if he hadn't gone on and challenged

the basic assumptions of their belief in Christianity. To become a hero, that's something many men dream of. But how many of them would do what Paine did and, once having become a hero, attack the religion of their countrymen in such unpromising terms as to ensure they ended up despised and distrusted by many of the people they could have been canonized by?

FINAL WORDS ON THE SCA

[JOHN LELAND]

As regards the question of whether my referring to the Trekkies was a fair analogy or not, I would make two points. First, it was unfair to judge the entire SCA by the conduct of one possibly substandard group. I grant that the SCA may be held responsible to some extent for the errors of the Pittsburgh barony, but I still think that any discussion of the SCA that assumes that chapter is typical...cannot be considered just. I agree that fandom does not license the trekkies, and is not responsible for them, but I still think that they are a part of the science fiction fan subculture and not a "rival organization". In other words, I think there is more merit in my analogy than you allow.

I might also explain further that SCA supervision of local groups is necessarily far from tight. In theory, only the National Board of Directors could remove the accreditation from a local group, but in practice the board has almost no supervisory machinery of its own. The supervision that is exercised is exercised at kingdom level.

((I frankly agree that the SCA should not, except in the mildest way, be held responsible for the sins of a single group. But I still think your analogy is wrong. Trekkies are analogous to, say, a rival medievalist society dedicated to reliving the year 1588 only. If you were to make the analogy to, say, NESFA, I would be more willing to accept your analogy, but it would still be wrong. However slight the responsibility, the SCA does - by your own admission - have some slight obligation to oversee its member groups. SF fandom has no central structure. There is no organized group in any way responsible to ensure the good conduct of those crazy people in Boston in NESFA (or LASFS or RISFA or MITSFS or Denver or Orange, Connecticut. And that's where I think your analogy is wrong.)))

[JACKIE FRANKE]

As for what you say are your objections to those who go overboard in SCA fantasy, doesn't that hold true for virtually all human social activity? I know Boy Sc out leaders so obsessed with their "role" that they risk job security and family for their "work with the boys".

((Yes, virtually all "hobby" activities, anyway. What I had hoped to do was get some general agreement that certain forms of obsessive interest in the SCA were bad, so that I could then analogize to similar forms of other hobby activity, most specifically SF fandom. If I had started directly with SF fandom, I figured, I'd have to contend with a lot of defense mechanisms from many of my readers who are unwilling to admit that they devote too much of their time to their "hobby", that it has become an obsession. My plans went a bit astray, however, because the discussion centered too closely on the SCA as an organization, and not as a state of mind. I learned while teaching that you can't always shape a conversation among many parties the way you would like it to, and this particular one has been particularly stubborn. I'll try to ease into it from another direction in some later issue. Be warned.)))

[JENNIFER BANKIER]

As to the question of why people participate in SCA, I can, of course, speak only for myself. The quality that I value most in SCA is, I think, a kind of vividness that is lacking both in my mundane life (and as a lawyer I have an exceptionally interesting mundane job), and in fandom. The music, the costumes, the dancing, and even the fighting have qualities of beauty and stimulation that are lacking, unfortunately, in most of our society. Modern male dress, for example, is ugly compared to the better SCA costumes, and really does not add all that much in utility to compensate. Women's fashions in the present day retain considerable attractiveness, and do offer greater utility in their day-to-day form, but the more spectacular court dresses are again much more beautiful and interesting than the stereotyped evening dress. As a fighter I of course have the advantage of being able to wear male costumes for convenience and female ones for beauty. I could make similar comments with respect to the other areas I mentioned above, but this example should be sufficient to make the point.

As a "spin off" from my SCA involvement I have acquired many skills I would not otherwise have, in the use of tools, sewing, embroidery, leatherwork, etc. My interest in fighting has also given me the incentive to lose weight and try to get myself in decent physical shape for the first time in my life (mundane sports bored me too much for me to put in the work), with consequent benefits for my health. In short, in the area of skills, SCA has made me a more rounded individual.

The same can be said in the area of personality. Before I joined SCA I was a prime example of a workaholic, working 16 hours a day in the related areas of law and political activism, with the result that I ran myself literally to the end of my strength, with assorted manifestations of exhaustion. SF and fandom did not help very much because they involve an extension of the same kind of verbal skills that I was using in my professional work. SCA, in contrast, involves a much wider range of activities, including the non-verbal, and a change is as good as a rest. I have quite consciously used SCA to put a limit on my excessive work orientation (e.g. I resolved to do as much work in the Bar Admission Course as was possible without interfering with SCA, got a good first-class average though not a medal, and enjoyed myself and maintained my energy levels all at the same time.)

The position of women in the Society has been improving over the last few years. The bar against women fighting has been removed, and I and a number of other women have qualified as fighters and participate on a regular basis. The remaining problems are analogous to and no worse than those faced by a single woman in other areas of society, although there is a very heavy couples orientation in SCA as elsewhere. The activities that SCA engages in, however, are such that it is usually possible for individuals without a regular partner to engage in them (e.g. it is far more common to see two women dancing together given the game-like nature of SCA's dances than in the more modern sexually oriented ones, and it is quite acceptable for women to ask the men to dance).

((Jennifer wanted to challenge me particularly on the point Jackie Franke brought up above, and I hope that my answer there explains why I was trying to bring out what is quite possibly a non-significant aspect of SCA involvement. On our trip to Toronto a few months back, we were unable to meet Jennifer (my recollection, by the way, is that an attempt was made to reach you but without success. The party at Victoria's was not planned in advance, as it was uncertain when we would be arriving.) We hope to repair the omission soon. We found Toronto - both fannish and mundane - to be a very pleasant city, and I want to spend another \$100 at Dakka.)))

[DAVE LOCKE]

I can understand your mixed feelings about being nominated for the Fan Hugo. While on the one hand it's always an honor to be nominated for an award, no matter how shitty you know it really is, due to the nature of the beast you then find yourself getting backhanded by placing after "no award" in the final balloting. I think I could live without receiving such an honor, and hope that I continue to do so.

((I expect to see history repeat itself twice this year. I'd like to thank all of you who nominated both myself and MYTHOLOGIES this year -- I'm told that we both made the ballot. I suspect I could actually win a Hugo for MYTHOLOGIES, if I tripled the print run, quadrupled the art work, and tolerated a lot more deadwood on the mailing list. Unfortunately for the latter, I'm not that interested.

[JODIE OFFUTT]

With regard to euphemisms and death: A neighbor of ours, a ten year old boy, is dying of a form of cancer called Burkett's disease. A couple of weeks ago I saw his aunt and asked about him. At the time I didn't know he had cancer--although she probably did not realize I was unaware of that. I was told that he wasn't "responding to treatment".

A couple of days after that I talked with his mother who told me that he was "critical". Later still I asked an aunt by marriage and who hasn't been in the family too long about him, and was told that they were trying to keep him comfortable and that they expected him to live a very short time.

My point is that I had to talk to a member of the family who wasn't too close to him before I got the straight scoop. The others just couldn't be totally frank. Of course, I couldn't ask them a direct questions, either.

[LAURIE TRASK/MANN]

I agree with your observation that death is repressed. But why is this necessarily bad? A child does not understand death and fatal disease.

((The reason they don't understand is precisely because it is repressed. The result of hiding death (or mental disease or fighting between married couples or whatever) is that it provides the child with a distorted view of life. An individual that comes to adulthood with no experience of these things is in for a real shock. I lost several close friends just about the time I was graduating from high school. One came down with Parkinson's disease. He shrank from 200 pounds to 90 pounds in a matter of weeks, was often delirious, and died soon after. Another friend died unexpectedly of a brain tumor. Both were an acute shock to me. Real people don't die; people only die on TV or in books. To this day I have confused emotional responses to death.)))

[MAE STRELKOV]

To Chip Hitchcock: Another brilliant mind, pointing out the danger of in-groups, for that's very true. When you're a member of a little tribe, the rest of the world becomes your enemy. Even to feel part of all Earth is not enough, for there's the whole Cosmos beyond it waiting to be taken into the heart, too. Takes practice... Viciousness in anything is unnecessary and a waste of energies. Even viciousness in driving one's own self in search of some sort of perfection, when coasting along's more fun! Why work to "succeed", till there's no time just to be and become? If I should evaluate my life since 1917, I'd say my success was in living, that's all.

Really living, all the time, the best I could.

Will Norris and you both spoke about parents who can't relax. Yes, poor things... but maybe one needs leisure even to practice relaxing, and if there wasn't time for it when young, later's too late. When driving oneself while younger to keep body and soul for a family together, the only time for relaxing one has is "between moments", a swift, quiet retreat into an inner world or personality one is building up through the challenges of daily events. A sort of interior quiet "talking within the soul -- to a God, if possible. If one lacks faith, to one's own indestructible built in core.

True, too much retreating into that "core", and refusal to live outside it too, leads to paranoia and the like. So even during the deepest momentary "slipping between the interstices of matter" to escape stress and strain, one must still be viewing and hearing and attending to all that's around, and ready to react when need be, at once.

((I suspect that part of the difference in attitude between a lot of people in my generation and our parents is that they had to live through a depression while we didn't. Few of us know what it is like to go hungry consistently because there is no work, hence no money, hence no food. Now we have welfare, a rather mixed blessing, in the US -- and much of the pressure to work at all, let alone be successful at it, is gone.)))

[STEVEN SAWICKI]

It was mentioned by George Fergus that the prison system is inherently incapable of rehabilitation. Amitai Etzioni wrote a book on Complex organizations which states the same thing. Etzioni breaks all organizations down into three types -- coercive, normative, and utilitarian. He then ties in variables such as goals, communication, recruitment, socialization, consensus, and involvement. A prison is a coercive organization whose goals are to control a population. Rehabilitation is not one of the goals of a prison, the prison is not set up to rehabilitate. Part of this is the fault of the people on the outside. Rehabilitation would mean that the prisoners would have more freedom, be able to leave the prison for a weekend, work on the outside, and so on. The people who lived near a prison would not stand for that.

[MIKE BRACKEN]

Your reply to John Boston on page 69 was much too pat. You say that "It's been known for years that the death sentence does not deter crime." It has been known for years by whom? While the death sentence may not be the perfect solution to crime, it is, at least, one of many imperfect solutions. It can, and probably has, kept a number of potential crimes from happening.

((Mike went on to cite two kinds of murders prevented. First, a convicted man cannot commit another crime. Second, knowledge of the death penalty deters people from committing crimes. The first is demonstrably incorrect, if you accept the alternative of a non-parolable life sentence. That leaves only murders within prisons themselves, and naturally no system is perfect. (On the other hand, there would be occasional executions of innocent persons -- which also amount to murder, committed by the state.) The second case is probably impossible to prove in either direction, and I don't have the time to do a lot of reference citing. But for a general overview, try JUSTICE by Richard Harris, or CRIME IN AMERICA by Ramsey Clark. Hijackings are more prevalent than ever. Most murders are "crimes of passion" in which considerations of consequences are rare.)))

[RAY DAVIS]

Prison as a deterrent to crime: More important than the oft-cited recidivism rate might be that other well-worn statistic -- for every 100 crimes, only 3 people are sent to prison. And that's only reported crimes. With odds like that, there's not much of a threat to the criminal.

As long as I'm on the subject, it should be pointed out that the idea of punishment (any punishment) as a "deterrent" to crime is almost as ridiculous as the idea of "rehabilitation". People who are going to commit a crime almost never give any thought to the possible consequences -- it just doesn't happen that way. The people who would think about the penalty and might let it dissuade them from committing a crime would not be likely to break the law no matter what the penalty might be. The idea of deterrence seems to make sense logically, but it doesn't work that way in reality/

((Because most people don't think logically either. There are some interesting contradictions in the whole legal system. For example, many of the same people who want the courts to put more people in prison will steadfastly vote against building more prison space to accommodate them. In at least one state, the courts were instructed that they could impose no more prison terms until adequate housing was found for those prisoners already sentenced. Although I suppose I am more or less "liberal" on this issue, my personal irritation is the leniency of the juvenile courts. But rather than imprison them, I'd like to see the formation of some kind of involuntary service organization - similar to military basic training - which would use up some of that excess energy, provide a little of the discipline usually lacking in the home, and provide job training and community service where possible as side effects.)))

[DON AYRES]

There is a fine line in science between observation and theory which many are not aware of: evolution, for example, is almost as much an observation as it is a theory, but we blend the two. Anti-evolutionists point to the "fact" that we have never seen a species evolve as evidence in their favor -- but there are numerous re-evaluations of older works which alter the taxonomies based on more recent experience, on new samples from the same area: this is exactly what we would expect if the theory were true! Not errors in the previous work, but subsequent change for whatever reason to new conditions, perhaps imperceptible to us.

I've been doing work with snake scutellation over the past couple of years and it has become clear that the range of variation in the numbers of various scales varies considerably in young animals, far more so than in the adult (reproductive) population. We may therefore assume (with more studies of juvenile populations) that there is a reason for this narrowing of the range once all the freaks are eliminated -- but why a snake with 25 midbody scale rows should be better equipped to survive than one with, say 27, who can say? But it is an observable phenomenon. And in other species, those figures are reversed. It has raised a number of questions, but there are no answers for me in the literature.

And you get to see mistakes like that in THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE about there only being one species of domestic dog (p.30 Pocket); I imagine that if we knew half the phylogenies of the animal kingdom as well as that of the hound, we'd dispense with 2/3rds of the species. Yet, by every posited definition of species I know, the St Bernard and the Mexican Hairless are separate species. In truth, it serves no useful purpose that they should be, but the designation is not awarded always for the same reason.

[DAVID VERESCHAGIN]

I don't believe we are evolving any more, although, presumably, the change would be so slow that I'd never be able to notice, nor be around long enough to see any change. Animals evolve in response to environmental changes, right? However, since we can change our environment to suit our wishes, there is not pressure for man to evolve, as I see it.

Having worked in my high school library for three years, I think I might have something to say about that subject. School librarians have to walk a tightrope. I know that our library was willing to carry some explicit material, but we always had to be thinking of what outraged parents would say. Also, some heavy, often subjective decisions have to be made as to whether, despite sexual or other controversial content, a book deserves to be on the shelves.

Parents are always complaining about THE CATCHER IN THE RYE. Yet it is a major work and can't be ignored. Complaints also surface about FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON. On the other hand, I played a part in keeping BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS out of the library.

((In Lafferty's NOT TO MENTION CAMELS he mentions that the human ear is the only part of the body to have evolved in recorded history. I don't know if this is a fact or just another bit of Lafferty's insanity, but I do know that man does not control his environment yet. And even if we were able to control the physical environment, you would still have evolution and selection because man does not control his society.

I'm curious. Why did you want to keep BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS out of the library? It's not Vonnegut's best work, but I enjoyed it.)))

[GEORGE FERGUS]

Brett Cox reiterates the age old hope that competitive games serve as "harmless outlets for aggressiveness that might otherwise be expressed in a more dangerous fashion". I doubt that this is really true except for enurotic individuals. In the first place, the view that aggressiveness is some sort of drive that builds up and must periodically be released (the "drive-discharge model") has now fallen out of favor among ethologists. Nor has it ever been shown that harmful aggression is reduced by providing "harmless outlets". Cultures that have combative sports, for example, tend to be more violent and warlike than those which do not have such "outlets".

From Mike Glicksohn's description, it sounds like the college psychology experiment he participated in was not administered properly. The purpose of such games is usually to see if people tend to be competitive even when the maximum "reward" can be obtained only through cooperation. However, since most board games are competitively structured, it must be pointed out to the players that they can get good results in this particular game by cooperating. But, as Mike says, he never realized this. Of course, the possibility remains that Mike was merely part of a control group whose behavior was to be contrasted with that of another set of players who were told.

I found Eric Lindsay's comment on courage to be the most insightful to date. People fail to applaud "moral courage" not because it is nonphysical, but because it typically involves opposition to values widely held in the society, whereas what you have defined as "physical courage" really involves battling either natural forces or some perceived "enemy". Terrorism obviously involves physical courage, but is seldom applauded outside the terrorist group itself.

John Kusske's statement on school library censorship is illogical. Certainly libraries have no obligation to purchase books to please any particular segment of the population, but this is far different from some administrator actually taking an existing library book out of circulation--a book that some librarian presumably thought was worth getting in the first place.

Another thought occurs to me on the subject of "hard" vs "soft" sciences. At the same time that the former have become increasingly specialized, the behavioral sciences seem to have begun borrowing from each other, with interdisciplinary research becoming increasingly common. Perhaps behavior is not as easily compartmentalized as the physical world. Or perhaps the state of the art in behavioral science has simply not progressed to the point where an interdisciplinary transition becomes as unwieldy as that between quantum mechanics and chemistry.

Since Guy Harris apparently misunderstood my remark, perhaps I ought to mention that on the subject of race and IQ, my saying that Jensen is not as easily dismissed as Shockley means exactly what it says. I am still convinced that they are both wrong, but it is not the sort of thing that one can assert with an offhand remark. Even the Genetics Society of America has issued a statement that they can't come to a consensus about who is right. I haven't forgotten that I promised you an article on this -- let me know when you feel like having another longish one by me.

On page 43 of M 10, George Flynn says "government must grow faster than population merely to maintain the same level of services." Damned if I can figure out why this should be so. It implies that, some day, the number of people employed in government would have to be greater than the total population, in order to keep things running as always. If you understand George's reasoning on this, can you explain it to me?

((I'd be interested in that article any time. Although I have most of the material for MYTHOLOGIES 14 on hand or promised, I have little for #13 or #15. And I'm starting to plan these things farther in advance.)))

[GEORGE FLYNN]

Let me refute Gary Grady again on that Indiana bill about pi (unless there were two of them). It wasn't anything so simple as to set pi = 3, but a very garbled endorsement of a local circle-squarer's theories, giving no coherent value. He offered the rights free if the state would endorse it, so the Indiana House passed the bill (unanimously), thinking they were getting something for nothing. No joke, at least not intentionally. The date was 1897. For details: Peter Beckman, A HISTORY OF PI, 170-73; W.E. Eddington, PROC. IND. ACAD. SCI., 45, 206 (1935).

[JEFF FRANE]

I'm curious about the amount of letter response you get to a given issue of MYTHOLOGIES.

((Since the last issue was mailed, I have received 106 locs, although the short gap between 10 and 11 meant that I received two locs from several people, who had not had time to write during the brief interim. I normally get 60 - 90 letters, depending on the content of a particular issue and, I suspect, the time of year it is mailed. That's out of a circulation of about 300 that go out in the first month of publication, with about 50 new people being added with each issue (and about 40 of the old dropped).

[JACKIE FRANKE]

Alas, Tony Cvetko did indeed goof on exactly what the government regulates in the trucking industry. Rates are set by the rules and regulations and little else. No trucking firm is granted exclusive territorial rights, though I do believe in which territory a particular firm serves is restricted by its license (which can be changed by a new license application). But to imply a trucking company is guaranteed an income is ludicrous.

[PAUL SKELTON]

BBC had a "horizon" programme on a few weeks ago about the search for alternative sources of energy. Governments all over the world are spending billions on such researches. They're looking at solar power, even up to an enormous collector-convertoir to beam the energy down from orbit...they're looking at obtaining energy from the temperature differential in water at different depths. Wind power, Tidal Energy...the Japanese are already virtually committed to replacing their electric power cables with a piped hydrogen supply...and all this time our dependence on oil could be removed at a stroke by this sugar engine? And all these governments are sitting twiddling their thumbs and shovelling fortunes into huge dustbins saying, "It's a shame Gulf's sitting on that sugar engine." Even I'm not that naive. Be great if it turned out to be true though, now that some US company has managed to synthesize sucrose and the French are panicking at the prospect of a huge Euro-mountain of surplus sugar next to the mountain of surplus butter and the lake of surplus wine, not to mention the beef mountain.

I have an article hanging over the precipice of my mind, but need some information. I intend to prove that time travel is impossible, or that it will not be discovered within the next fifty years or so, simply because if it were possible we'd be up to our armpits in dead grandfathers, it being a basic postulate of time travel that the first thing that one does when one discovers it is to go back and murder one's grandfather. Why do SF writers hate their grandfathers so? Anyway, in order to discuss this in a scholarly manner I need some "evidence" and unfortunately I can't remember the names of any stories which utilize this device.

((I can remember a couple, but I'm damned if the titles spring to mind. Maybe readers can provide a few names for next issue?)))

[D. GARY GRADY]

In Virginia, North Carolina, and many other states, it is perfectly legal to make a right turn on red. Are you telling me that this is dangerous in Rhode Island and safe in North Carolina? Hmm...must be the latitude...

((It's legal in RI too, but only if you stop first...)))

[VICTORIA VAYNE]

Letters were interesting again, as always. Why doesn't Mark make novels about some of his speculative ideas? He generates more possibilities in one letter than most would-be authors do in a year, I'm sure...Good issue, and let no letter go by without praises for the cover.

[TARAL WAYNE MACDONALD - whose letter I misplaced until just now]

George Fergus' article was one of the best pieces of fanwriting I've read, ever. If I decide I have the time (and inclination) to tackle a fanthology for 1977, I would love to include his piece. But it is so long! And it is probably to George's better interest to try to sell that article to ANALOG. It's a darn sight better

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than a good deal of what has appeared in that mag as "science fact".

I was a security guard once, and I believe every word you say! For that matter I was guilty of some of the things you complained about. It shouldn't be any surprise. Most guards are old, tired men, people with low intelligence, and recent immigrants who are confused by our ways. Nor does being a security guard give one much self esteem. Everything is designed against it. Your employees treat you like a schmuck (as the regional coordinator who fired you over the phone demonstrated), the client company treats you like a watchdog, and people on the street are sure that you Know Your Place. And that place is on the bottom. The only people who are normally found in that place are people who cannot get away, or who naturally gravitate there. Among other things, one of the reasons I am leary of the Dorsai Irregulars is that I met so many serious, security-minded, Fearless Fosdicks as guards who remind me of some of the people who are most enthusiastically Dorsai.

As demoralizing as being a guard is, it doesn't explain or excuse routine theft, total dereliction of duty, and utter stupidity. It was too much for me, and after telling a strutting, pompous bastard of a client where he could put his job, I left.

Among other things, I remember standing guard over the scene of a recent disaster. A chemical plant had blown up the night before and killed four men. Guards were needed to keep snoopers out until Fire Investigators could do their own snooping. I was stationed with one other guard one drizzly cold night. We took turns outside while the other warmed up in a shed. I emerged for my round and saw that the idiot had filled a bucket with hydrocarboniferous goob from a fire-break trench and had set it alight to keep warm. Guess where he put the bucket. You guess right if you guess under a tree. I managed to tear off the burning branch before the entire tree went up and burned the place down for the second time...Wouldn't that have looked good in the papers?

What an SF novel! PINKERTONS SHRUGGED! The story of a world whose night keepers go on strike, and nobody cares except for insurance firms who notice there are statistically fewer fires and industrial accidents after hours...

My admiration for Bonnie grows in leaps and bounds. Not only another excellent cover, but she can write too. Another candidate for the 77 fanthology, if indeed, I do one. The only thing I wonder about is Bonnie's conspicuous omission from the FAAN ballot. How can anyone conceivably nominate the people represented there but not Bonnie, who is without doubt the best of the lot? You'll have to publish more often, Don, or Bonnie will miss out on next year's ballot too.

((I suspect that part of the problem is that Bonnie has so little published in fanzines outside of MYTHOLOGIES. On the other hand, she's now doing work for Ballantine and GALAXY, and those markets pay.)))

[MIKE BLAKE]

You're probably lucky that Sheridan Silver could not afford Pinkerton's at the time you were charged with overseeing the security operation there; it is entirely likely you would have gotten the same kind of service for a much higher price. What you pay a premium for with Pinkerton's is the "world famous" name. And perhaps there is some justification in thinking the display of a name with high-recognition value as a leader in the industry acts as a deterrent. But in truth incidents similar to the ones you cite are not only commonplace in Pinkerton's but throughout the security industry.

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The security business is one of the lowest paid and worst regarded fields in existence. With a few years experience in the field I know whereof I speak. In a recent survey of the status with which Americans view different forms of employment the job of night watchman/security guard ranked something like 77th out of one hundred. Below stenos and taxi drivers, but at least above garbage collectors and dishwashers. Traditionally a security guard is paid scant pennies more than minimum wage. And raises are non-existent. I have known old men who have worked for Pinkerton's for 15 years and never seen a raise. The only time the pay goes up is when the minimum wage goes up. If he was getting \$1.80 when the minimum wage was \$1.60, he got \$2.20 when it went up to two whole dollars. When guards are being given this kind of pittance to live on, you in turn are getting the type of service you are paying for.

The benefits are pitiful. Most companies in different fields of employment, such as the jewelry factories that proliferate throughout this area, contribute the majority or sometimes all of a worker's Blue Cross payments. Not Pinkerton's. They split the cost down the middle. A single person like myself pays a total of over \$40 a month for Blue Cross; someone with a family even more. There is a magnanimous benefit unique to the industry though --- the whopping thousand dollar insurance policy paid to your survivors if you are killed in the line of duty while on the job.

The way in which paid holidays are handled will give an indication of how employees are treated. Many people seem to think you are supposed to be paid double time if you work on a holiday. The law does not say this. Working on a holiday is equated with working overtime. Therefore you need only to be paid time and a half. Neither is the night differential prevalent in many industries required by law. Rest assured Pinkerton's will not pay you any more than they have to.

But there is a further catch. In order to make just enough money to survive, most guards work over 40 hours a week, receiving their time and a half for overtime. I knew one guard who complained whenever he didn't work a minimum of a hundred hours a week. It's illegal to allow an employee to work over eighty, but Pinkerton's wasn't going to report anything. Now say within the overtime you worked there was a holiday. You're going to get time and a half for a paid holiday, right? Wrong. You get time and a half because you worked overtime that day. In other words you do not receive a single penny more for having worked that day than if you stayed home. You certainly are not going to be paid twice - that would be triple time and the law says time and a half. So it's all legal. Only the minority of employees who are full time but never work more than forty hours come out ahead.

In addition, if you do not note on the pay slip you fill out that one of the days in a week was a paid holiday, you won't get it anyway. The company won't keep track of such things for you. Their attitude toward giving guards assignments and then not working them there is similar.

Pinkerton's often tells two guards to show up for the same shift as this increases the odds that at least one person will probably be there, with any luck. If both should happen to show up one usually gets sent home, perhaps after an hour of being trained in the procedure for that particular assignment. Well, there has been a provision in the law for some time that if you are told to show up at some certain time and are not given any work when you do, you must be paid for three hours' work. And if you do work for less than four hours, you must be paid for at least four hours. However, this only spread by word of mouth among Pinkerton guards who started listing these hours on their pay slips within the last year. Before that, if we didn't know Pinkerton's wasn't going to tell us. And again, if you don't list that hour you

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spent being shown the rounds at some factory as the four hours minimum work, the company isn't going to correct your mistake.

The above is not construed as an excuse to be dishonest, lazy, drunk and untrustworthy. That security guards are so treated by their employers is no pretext for such behavior as you have described. It is simply that under these conditions this is, for the most part, the only kind of person you can get to take the job. They are usually people who can't find any other sort of job, or those who can't keep any other.

The two major age groups guards comprise belong to the former class. These are the young college students and the old retirees. The students may be intellectually over-qualified but have no job skills. Many college women do office temporary work, but the men don't seem to think of this or don't have any office skills. As the supermarkets and fast-food places get taken over by high school kids or dropouts, this leaves a good many with the choice of factory work or guarding. At least as a security guard there is some time at night to study textbooks and write papers.

The old men find they have been prohibited by their age from the professions at which they have worked all their lives and that social security does not provide enough for a couple to live on. So between guarding and social security they barely manage to eke out a living. Just barely, however, as they are prohibited from earning over \$2500 a year or they lose their benefits. I have met retired school teachers, engineers, factory foremen, store-owners, and a former Naval captain working as guards in this situation.

If the ones who can't find any other job fall into the extreme ends of the age spectrum, those who can't keep any other sort of job tend to fall randomly between the two. This class is composed of two groups also: the drunk and the dishonest.

The problem with the alcoholics is that they keep forgetting to show up, and when they do they're drunk a good part of the time. This is why they can't keep any skilled jobs but since being a security guard on the third shift usually requires nothing more complex than walking and punching a time clock, they manage to get away with it for long stretches at a time. Until finally, as happened with you, they at last pass out while on duty or...forget to throw away their beer cans. They tend to be middle aged and forcibly retired early from their previous jobs, such as Army sergeant or cop. Or one I knew who was said to drink because his best friend stole his business and his wife. After working with him for a while I wondered if probably his best friend had stolen his business and wife because he drank. Too much and too often.

I don't have too much personal experience with the dishonest. I avoid them. And in any case I usually hear about such things by word of mouth after they have been caught rather than witnessing any outright theft myself. That so-and-so was stopped walking out with an armload of copper or some other fellow was found loading toys into his trunk at Hasbro. And yet surprisingly enough in these situations where the very watchmen need watching the penalties are ridiculously light when they get caught. A typical punishment for the guard caught pilfering the first time is to be suspended from working for six months. If they haven't found a better job by then they come back. Or they quit the company altogether and go to work for a rival guard firm. A typical case was that of a father and son who ran the security for Pinkerton's at a national manufacturer's plant in nearby Massachusetts. The firm began to suspect that between the two of them, unsupervised on the second and third shifts, they were making off with hundreds of dollars' worth of trinkets, junk jewelry and watches.

Without telling anyone the owners hired Pinkerton's chief rivals to investigate. Using an invisible chemical sprayed on goods likely to be stolen that turns an indelible bright color when exposed to body heat, they caught the guards blue handed. Pinkerton's booted them and the manufacturer booted Pinkerton's, giving the contract to the other agency. The father and son promptly went to work for yet a third security guard company, and believe it or not for more than they made with Pinkerton because they came with years of experience! Not to judge too harshly, however; it is possible that agency was justified in giving them a second chance -- I understood they were guarding a gravel pit, which must have presented a lot less temptation.

If all of the above does not inspire much confidence in your readers in the security industry, it wasn't supposed to. I do not mean to imply that all security guards are undependable, crooks or misfits. A majority at any one time may be totally honest, but because of the nature of the job as I have described it these are precisely the type who do not stay, and in the continuing turnover often only the Peter Silisky's remain constant. For the young students and retirees it is a dead-end from which only the young escape. If an opportunity arises in which they have any real choice of an alternative, they, like myself, will usually end up leaving.

Anyone in your situation is probably just as well off hiring somebody off the street with a clean record and dressing them up in a uniform made of bits and pieces from an Army-Navy store as going to a professional security agency. The unfortunate thing about the type of incidents you recounted in your article is not that they happened to you in particular. The pity is that they are widespread throughout the entire industry.

((I'd like to make one minor cavil, and then suggest something. The cavil is that, unless things have changed greatly, there is no law requiring an employer to pay a minimum ~~off~~ pay for a call in. That's subject to contractual negotiations.

If things are as you describe them, Pinkerton is in violation of the law. The employer, not the employee, is obligated to keep track of hours worked, overtime worked, and actual pay due. If a complaint was made to the NLRB, it would likely result in a full scale wage and hour investigation and cost Pinkerton a fortune. There is no statute of limitations on wage investigations, either, and the company would be obligated to search out and compensate every past employee. If no records exist, the courts would likely award a lump sum to be split among all past and present employees, apportioned by number of hours worked, or some such formula.

Oh yes, and the law setting an upper limit to the number of hours you can work in a given week has apparently been overturned by the courts on the basis that it discriminates in some fashion.)))

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Back issues are generally not available except for issue #11. They can be had for \$1.00.

I am totally out of interior art work (except for two pieces). Please do not send anything with large black areas, as it causes severe mimeo problems. Note that I am very fussy about artwork, often rejecting good quality stuff that I don't particularly care for.

All letters of comment should be addressed to the "Editor".

Several copies (particularly Canadian ones) of MYTH 11 seem to have gotten lost en route. If you should have received a copy but didn't, drop me a card and I'll send you a copy.

Since I had such excellent luck last time by listing some of the books I've been searching for (thanks particularly to Chester Cuthbert), I'm going to provide a few more titles this time as well. I'm willing to pay \$1 each for the following, but drop me a postcard before sending any, because I only want one copy of each.

Philip MacDonald - MYSTERY AT FRIAR'S PARDON
CRIME CONDUCTOR
THE WRAITH
PERSONS UNKNOWN
THE LINK
THE NOOSE
THE WHITE CROW

Fred Brown - COMPLIMENTS OF FIEND
THE FAR CRY
THE SHAGGY DOG
KNOCK 3-1-2
MRS MURPHY'S UNDERPANTS

THE HANGMAN'S HANDYMAN - Hake Talbot
BEYOND THE DARK - Kieran Abbey
TOUCH OF EVIL - Arthur MacLean
CARIBBEAN CRISIS - Desmond Reid
ANGER AT WORLD'S END - Desmond Reid
KIDNAPPER - Bloch
NAKED STORM - Eisner
CRY FLESH - Karp
GIRL ON CROWN STREET - Karp
CIPHER OF DEATH - Franklin Gregory
HALF - Jordan Park

LAZARUS NUMBER SEVEN - Sale
LAST SECRET - Dana Chambers
CONTINENTAL OP - Hammett

I'm looking for any "Lone Wolf"
mystery by Louis Joseph Vance other
THAN THE LONE WOLF, FALSE FACES, &
THE LONE WOLF'S LAST PROWL.

Leslie Charteris books I still need are: ANGELS OF DOOM, DAREDEVIL, BANDIT, WHITE RIDER, X ESQUIRE, PRELUDE FOR WAR (TRUST THE SAINT), SAINT AND THE SIZZLING SABOTEUR, SAINT ON THE SPANISH MAIN, FEATURING THE SAINT.

Finally, I need a new copy of A HANDFUL OF TIME by Rosel George Brown, Ballantine.

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And finally I'd like to thank all of those people who contributed in some fashion to this issue of MYTHOLOGIES. In addition to those people actually listed below, I also heard from: Jim Lang, Marty Levine again, David Merkel, Dirk Mosig, Tom Morley, Jodie Offutt again, Pauline Palmer, John Thiel, Adrian Washburn, Susan Wood, Bruce Arthurs, Michael Bishop again, Sheryl Birkhead, Cliff Biggers twice, Carl Bennett, Doug Barbour, Bill Bridgett, Robert Briggs again, Michael Carlson, John Costello, Jim Cooper, Ian Covell again, Gary Deindorfer again, Graham England (I'll let you know about your mailing plan), Randy Fuller, Stu Gilson, Jim Goldfrank, John Hastings, Ben Indick, John Koening, Jerry Kaufman, and Robert Coulson. I also received letters too late for this issue from Sheryl Smith, Ray Davis, Eric Lindsay, and Robert Whitaker. And I've probably forgotten others.

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If you have an "X" at the end of this line, you must write to get #13 .