

SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

"The Doctored Fanzine"

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Dedication

This issue is dedicated to Anne Braude because of the invaluable aid she has provided in making NIEKAS what it is today. She is now, deservedly, a contributing editor (or, as she would like it to be known, an unindicted co-conspirator).

This issue is also dedicated to Fred Lerner on the occasion of the receipt of his doctorate. We wish him the best that anyone could hope for.

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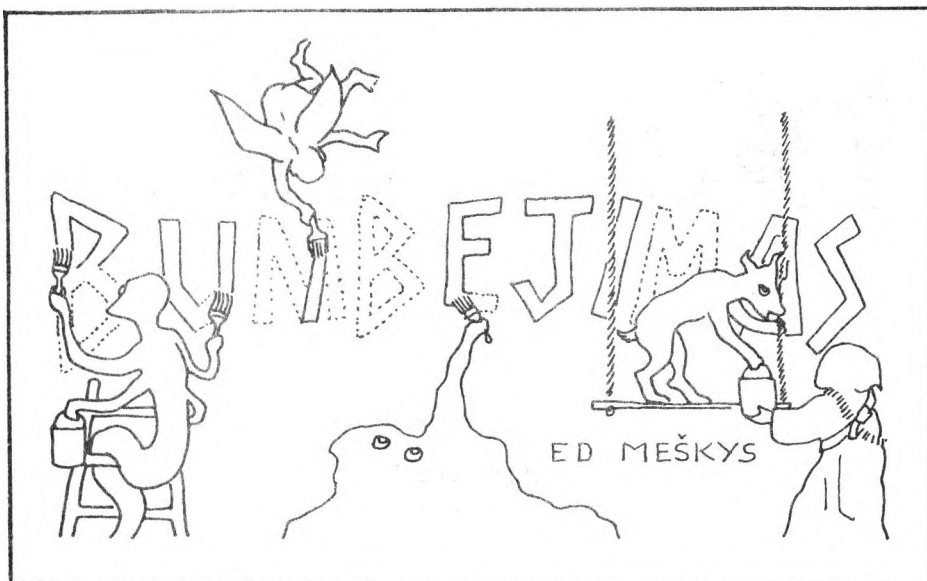
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Of Games and Space

I was fascinated by Poul Anderson's lead novelette in the 2 Feb. 1981 *ANALOG*. The premise behind "The Saturn Game" is that crew members on long space trips occupy their minds with role-playing games. A story is, of course, about a problem. A manned expedition is exploring the Saturn system and it took six years to get there; the longest space voyage to date. Some people have been playing the game so long that they have become obsessed with it. One subgroup of four scientists is on one of the moons and three of them completely flip out.

The game is a cross between various ones currently in use in the Primary World. It reminds me a bit of *Dungeons and Dragons* in that it is fantasy based with sorcerers, enchantments, high romance, etc. On the other hand there is no Dungeon Master who knows the territory and presents it to the players as a challenge. The players make up a scenario as they go along.

As an aside, it is interesting to note how *D and D* has grown in popularity. I first heard of it when I attended Mythcon in California in 1975. Two or three of the attendees were absolutely stuck on the game and tried to explain its nature and their fascination with it to me. Then I heard more and more about it, especially from John Boardman who is into all sorts of war and fantasy games. I remember going to a *D and D* tournament in New Jersey a few years ago. About three years ago I observed a game at Boskone for about half an hour and found it rather interesting, but I am afraid I was never much of a game player.

Now even a little bookstore in the village of Wolfeboro, NH is featuring the game in their radio advertising.

I wonder how much of this Anderson story was inspired by the current interest in *D and D* and by a game which swept up parts of Los Angeles fandom a decade or two ago. That game was called *Coventry* and had been developed by a number of fans in Pasadena while they were still young and before they had discovered fandom. I only remember that the late Ted Johnstone (who lived under his pen name and wrote SF under his real name of David McDaniel) was one of those in it from the start. Their game was SF rather than fantasy orientated. The scenario involved a generation starship in space where most of the population lives a 20th century existence with no knowledge that they are in space. The kids' neighborhood in Pasadena was really this section of the space ship and only a small portion of the inhabitants, who were the crew of the ship and the social engineers who kept the society functioning, knew the true nature of things. And of course the players were these crewmen and engineers. I believe there was also supposed to be a third level to reality but I no longer remember what it was. I was never involved with it but only read about it in LA based fanzines of the time.

As the players grew up, the game became less important to them--but more sophisticated. Bruce Pelz got his masters in library science and moved to LA from Florida and became involved. In fact, he became their most articulate spokesman. Bruce and others started writing fiction

set in Coventry and published it in fanzines. They said this was an easy thing to write about and it gave them good practice with narrational characterization. They became very involved with the game and this put some people off. Then, perhaps to bug these people, the players really began to put on a big show of living Coventry. This upset many others in LA fandom and there was a virtual civil war over the matter ...one of the many senseless fannish feuds. Many members of of LASFS were dead set against Coventry and Bruce Pelz became editor of the club magazine *SHANGRI LA'FFAIRES*. He ran the first half of a two part Coventry story he had written in one issue. There was such a blow-up that the magazine was taken away from him and, if I remember correctly, the second half was never published. It has been at least 15 years since I have heard any mention of Coventry, but then it is very hard for me to follow the fanzine field. I suppose the matter slowly died down and I hope my mentioning it now does not reopen any old wounds. I certainly do not intend it to do so.

I suppose that the identities taken on by the more active members of the Society for Creative Anachronism also have some similarity to the ones in the Anderson story. Readers of the old *NIEKAS* were in on the birth of the SCA. Back around *NIEKAS* 15, Diana Paxson wrote of how on a whim she and several friends held a mock tournament in her back yard and they had so much fun that they decided to do it again. From this came the SCA with its thousands of members all over the US and even in other countries.



And what gave Diana the idea for holding a tournament? I had two friends who were into fencing with real swords: Ken de Maiffe and Dave Thewlis. Diana wanted to observe them fighting and be able to ask them to freeze and explain why they made a particular move. I introduced them so that she could do this to improve her drawing of action scenes. Slowly, others got involved and they got the idea and put up posters all over Berkeley for the first tournament. Many fighting enthusiasts surfaced and hence the SCA.

The Anachronists quickly evolved into their current form. Each member picked an SCA name and created an identity and history to go with it. Most were Medieval European, some were Arabic, and at least one (Barry Greene) was Japanese. The members know of the disease and poverty of the Middle Ages but celebrate an idealized form. Initially the emphasis was on fighting. One had to earn nobility in the battlefield and the members had to be very active physically. They played their roles to the hilt. [PUN ALERT!] Here they, like the Coventrians, quickly came in for criticism for taking their roles too seriously. Within a year or two I heard mutterings that the "anachron-aunts" were losing sight of reality and were living their roles. The Anachronists started in Berkeley 5 months after I left the Bay Area and of course I heard everything long distance. I would guess that most of the criticism was unjustified.

It is funny how I seem to have been a sort of catalyst in the SCA without ever becoming very active in it. I have a beautiful blue Wizard's robe that Diana made for me and which I have worn to a number of events such as SF con costume parties but I have never become involved beyond that. Anyhow, there were several abortive attempts to start an East Coast branch of the SCA but it didn't take off until I introduced Marion Bradley and Barry Greene to each other at a Lunacon. They had the right combination to make things work.

As the Eastern Kingdom grew, friction developed between it and the home office in Berkeley. There were a number of misunderstandings due to distance, the chafing of the East for autonomy, and the insistence by the West that they set the rules. After much hostility and feuding, the problems seem to have worked themselves out. The problem had nothing to do with taking SCA identities too seriously. Rather, it was a matter of small-group politics.

There are many Society events now which involve no fighting at all.



Today, other activities include heraldry, medieval music and dance, metal smithing, and period cooking.

I know that Poul and Karen Anderson have been very active in CA fandom for many years. They have seen Coventry come and go and seen the rise of D and D. Poul was also active in the SCA as were several other west coast authors (I have heard that at one tournament in LA, Harlan Ellison did very well).

All of an author's experiences go into his fiction. I wonder how much of D and D, Coventry, and SCA went into the background of "The Saturn Game" either consciously or unconsciously.

* * *

Superblink

I have over the years read the autobiographies of three blind people who have become successes in their respective fields: If You Could See What I Hear by Sullivan, a singer; To Race the Wind by Krankz, a lawyer; and White Coat, White Cane by Hartman, a medical doctor. I have just finished the Hartman book, published by Playboy Press and recorded both by RFB and the NLS of Library of Congress.

Many such books have been written but I do not go out of my way to find them unless something calls my attention to a special one. All three of these tell interesting tales of struggle and final success. I especially recommend White Coat in which the first and the 15th chapter are the most noteworthy. In the first chapter Hartman talks about the real frustrations of being blind and being treated as

such by sighted people who marvel that you can do anything. Another stumbling block are professional "helpers" of the blind who try to convince blind persons that they can do nothing so it is best not to bother trying. When a blind person does achieve success, the counselors refer to him as Superblink. Hartman insists, however, that he has normal intelligence but got through medical school only by studying twice as many hours as his fellow students. He was born very nearsighted but had fair vision until he was about seven. He says his memory of vision--what things look like, spatial relationships, etc.--helped him in his struggle to get through college and medical school and feels that without that he would never have made it. However, he will not say that another congenitally blind person could not have done as well. He is provoked at "counselors" who keep telling their blind clients that they cannot succeed in what they want to try to do and should look for something less challenging. He comes back to this theme in talking about the "blindness establishment" in chapter 15. Most of the 700 or so agencies for the blind have a vested interest in keeping the blind in their place. Employees are only interested in keeping their jobs secure by "helping" them. There are very few organizations that offer any real hope to the blind person. As an example, he says that since he got his MD degree, only one school for the blind has invited him to come talk to their students and encourage them to dream their dreams.

As far as I know, David Hartman was never a member of the National Federation of the Blind but he really has their philosophy down pat. Many blind people stay away from it

THE BLIND DO HAVE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES.



because they feel it too militant in its demands for fair treatment by the agencies and equality in opportunity to try. I was a little nervous before joining it because I did not like all the fighting I saw going on. But as you have seen from these pages, I have become a dedicated member and believe that it is only in concerted group action that the blind will win their freedom.

* * *

Of Cons and Politics

As usual, I went to Boskone and Lunacon this year. The cons were 5 weeks apart. They ran in mid-February and mid-March. Boskone had a total attendance of about 2K while Lunacon had about 1K. I never stopped going to Lunacons but about 6 years ago it became stylish to downgrade the con and say it was lousy. Attendance fell way off and perhaps programming was a bit weak but I always had a good time. Then the downtown hotels became unavailable and Lunacon had to go to the suburbs. In 1978, 1980, and 1981 it was near the George Washington Bridge, in New Jersey and in 1979 it was at LaGuardia Airport. The New Jersey location seems far better and attendance has been slowly climbing again.

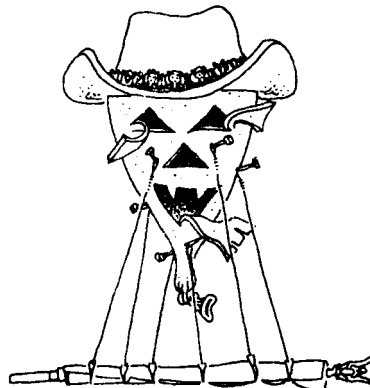
Boskone suffered because the committee was still recovering from Noreascon II only 5 months earlier and several regular participants didn't make it this year. I was huckstering NIEKAS and could make fewer program items at either con but there were far more at Lunacon that I wanted to attend.

The 1980 Boskone had been at the Radisson-Ferncroft in Danville, about 20 miles north of Boston. This was a low-key Boskone and had an attendance of only about 1K. However, it was very enjoyable and the prices were reasonable. The feeling we got at Boskone at the Boston Sheraton this year was that they no longer wanted us. They gave ridiculously high room rates--people with business, education, and law enforcement connections were able to get rooms well below the con rate. The hotel tried to swindle a number of people by charging them for TV movies in their rooms which they had not viewed.

There is considerable agitation among attendees to go back to Danville. I talked to several Boston people about this at Lunacon and they said I had the wrong impression. The hotel had a new manager and there were some misunderstanding. I was told that the management did want to keep Boskone and that the problems would be worked out. If the con were to move to Danville it would have to

become a smaller con and very different from recent true Boskones. Also the committee knew the Sheraton and its staff from having put on close to a dozen cons there so that things went very smoothly for the most part. NESFA's inclination was to stay downtown but I think they will have to do a major selling job to the attendees.

Boskone had a good, large hucksters' room and NIEKAS took a table for the first time. We shared it with Diana Folch-Pi and her GREEN DOME magazine devoted to THE PRISONER. The partnership was perfect. Our 'zine was aimed at largely different markets but still had enough in common that when someone would stop to look at one half of the table



they would also look at the other half. Both of us picked up extra business this way. Also by pooling the staffs of NIEKAS and THE GREEN DOME we were able to keep the table covered when someone wanted to catch some of the programming. It worked out well and NIEKAS picked up many new subs.

Two more years and we might break even.

The only problem with the Lunacon Huckster Room was its size. There were very few tables available, these were smaller and there was less room behind them. All tables had been reserved before the Lunacon progress report had gone out. We could not get a NIEKAS table but Scott Green, a dealer in semi-

prozines, kindly gave us room for a stack of NIEKAS on his half table. Total sales were about 1/6 that at Boskone and half of those were made in the bar or at parties.

At both conventions we re-achieved contact with several old readers. The hunt goes on.

In the mid-1960's, I remember Dave Kyle was complaining that the Worldcon rotation plan had taken all of the excitement out of convention bidding. Most years only one group would put in a bid and walk away with it. He wanted to do away with the rotation plan. Also, one year he put in an out-of-rotation, but legal bid for Syracuse. Initially there were three bids for 1966, but all three dropped out and, to save the convention, the three groups united and put in a single bid for Cleveland. For obvious reasons they called their convention "Tricon." The following year there were four bids all in the Eastern Zone and New York took it. Since then, things have stayed pretty active. At Lunacon there was lots of talk of con bidding and many parties to publicize bids.

New York and Los Angeles are the two cities that periodically suffer from competing bidding from a single city. This time NY started out as a single bid for '86 but for reasons that I do not understand the group fissioned and there is a competing bid to hold NASFIC in '83. Since that is the only NASFIC bid at present, if the Worldcon goes overseas they are sure to get it and so short circuit the other group's bid for '86. At Lunacon I felt great vibrations of hostility on both sides.

As I said last time, there are three bids for '83: Baltimore, Copenhagen, and Australia. This is the first time that there are two foreign bids. This is a good sign of international fandom but it is likely to split the foreign-favoring vote. I originally leaned towards Copenhagen but am beginning to swing to Baltimore. Listening to the Baltimore people, I am becoming convinced that they have a good committee. Also it is only 8 years since the con was in Australia. The Baltimore people point out that foreign bids can be placed at any time and do not have to wait for rotation. They suggest that Australia bid for '85. Unfortunately bidding committees, after the disappointment of losing, rarely can stay together to place another bid. Or, if they do, their heart just isn't into it. This goes all the way back to the San Francisco bid for 1953 which they finally achieved in 1954. This was before my time in fandom but I

understand that their spirit was somewhat blunted. Usually after a city is defeated it takes two or three cycles for it to gather strength for another try.

Los Angeles had a bidding party for 1984. This brings back memories of their unsuccessful campaign for Mordor in '64, called that because IA is the desolation of Smaug. I am interested in hearing what other cities are planning to bid and I offer a free 1/6 page ad to any committee bidding for a con. The ads will be too late to influence the outcome of the 1983 election, so I will start for 1984. I would prefer informational ads listing top committee members, hotel, convention center, etc.

I listened to a lot of talk at the bidding parties at Lunacon. Fans are again worrying about the growth in the size of fandom and are proposing "remedies". One suggestion was to discourage the people whose main interest lay outside of mainstream SF. Have no all-night film programs and other media events, no catering to specialized fandoms like costume-fans, comics, media, dragons, ERBdom, Tolkien, etc. I remember attending a lunarian meeting about 10 years ago where the attendees were debating limiting participation by comics fans. Lunacon had grown a lot but the huckster room was dominated by comic dealers.

Lunacons went into a decline shortly after that and the problem of overpopulation solved itself. The only large faction attending SF conventions today are the media fans. Someone in the group at Lunacon that I was listening to said that at Boskone there had been complaints about "all those books" in the huckster room. I do not see how any group can really be excluded. Many top fans today came out of Star Trekdom and most of the media people attending cons are also into written SF. I do not see any realistic way they could be excluded. It seems to me that any attempt to do so would cause a lot of bitterness, both among those with an interest in media and those without such an interest but with a feeling of fair play. And the all-night film programs were instituted in part to solve a very real problem. Namely, it gave the new people with no contacts in fandom or knowledge of the parties a place to go at night. It took a lot of pressure off of the room parties tho' all were still free to attend whatever open ones they wanted to.

Amazon Fantasy

I had heard of Arthur J. Burkes but

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had never read anything by him. I believe some of his stories had been published by a small house in Buffalo, NY about 2 or three decades ago. This same house had also reprinted books by Robert Chambers and so the two authors were lumped together in my mind. Recently the Xavier Society for the Blind recorded Burkes' collection of shorts Children of the Southern Cross. I was surprised by the 1968 copyright date (the publisher is Marshall Press). The jacket blurb does not say that the author was born in 1898 and started writing in 1920 and had written many stories for WEIRD TALES magazine. He apparently spent many years in the



"She turned it down.
They wanted her to come
back as a mundane."

jungles of Brazil and wrote these stories while there. There is no indication of just when he did write them. According to the jacket blurb he was still alive when the book was published. He would now be 83 and I do not know whether he is still living, and if so, whether he is still writing.

The stories are about the adventures and concerns of young children, about 5-7 years old, of the Munderiku tribe on the river Kuruku. (I can only guess at the spelling from listening to the talking book.) The stories are set in a time when Caucasian civilization has left no significant marks on the tribe. A missionary down river is mentioned briefly in one story and a distant airplane is seen in another; but otherwise the tales

are timeless. Families have spiritual relationships with animals, insects, and trees. Legends abound of turtles turning into people and dancing on the river bank; there are other supernatural happenings as well. None of the stories are strictly fantasy as all the incidents are explained as dreams or hallucinations. However, the hints of fantasy are handled very well and I would guess that Burkes' straight fantasies must be very good. I would like to read some of them as the fourteen stories give an excellent portrayal of a drastically different culture and of the concerns of small children trying to grow up.

Star Wars

I have heard some of the installments of STAR WARS on the National Public Radio. The story is given in considerably greater detail than it was in the movie but of course the radio presentation is three times as long. I have often been away from home and have missed about half of the installments. Has anyone out there taped it off the air? I would be interested in swapping tapes. I only have mono equipment in either cassette or open reel.

The Galaxy Awards

I first heard of these when I got a flyer from Ballantine bragging that several of their titles had received the awards. They are supposed to be for excellence in SF but with a "spiritual touch." The December 1980 LOCUS has a letter listing all the award winners thus far and I am puzzled by the criteria used in selecting the award winners. The list as published in LOCUS is:

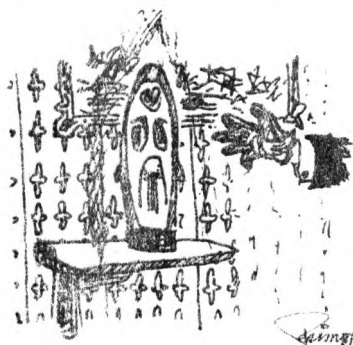
1977 Star Wars

1978 Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Mindbridge, The Living One

1979 The Fountains of Paradise, Splinter of the Mind's Eye, Unto Zero Forever, OMNI MAGAZINE

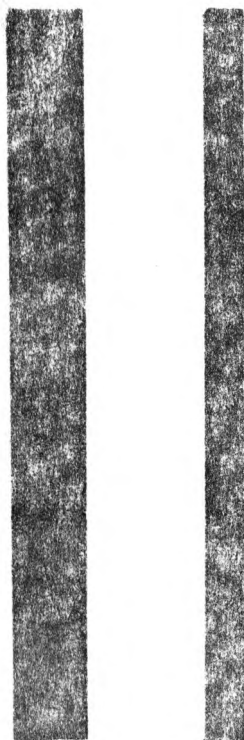
1980 The Empire Strikes Back, Star Trek - The Novel, OMNI, and one book still to be selected

I noticed a very heavy emphasis on media related titles. I do not know anything about The Living One or Unto Zero Forever. Of the remainder, the only titles that make any sense to me are CE3K and Mindbridge. I am particularly puzzled by Fountains and I wonder what the committee's definition of spirituality is. Obviously it is not a fundamentalist Judeo-Christian one as the Clarke book makes a major point of denying any sort of deity.



MATHOMS

ANNE BRAUDE



NEW REALMS OF GOLD -- III

Diana Wynne Jones differs from the subjects of my two previous columns in that she writes a number of different types of fantasy. Of the eight of her novels that I have read, three are set in Dalemark, a fantasy world resembling parts of Europe around 1600; two are set in a quasi-Edwardian alternate of our world, in which magic is normal; and three are set in our own world--but all of these deal with magic in a different way. (There are at least two other books that I have not seen. Since

the author is English, there may be still others not yet published in the U.S.) As the books are of such varied kinds, it is difficult to rate them in comparison with each other, so I will simply state which I like the best. Even that isn't an easy decision.

The Ogre Downstairs belongs to the tradition of E. Nesbit and Edward Eager, in which a group of children get involved with a magical gizmo or creature which causes all kind of serio-comic problems and has to be concealed from the surrounding adults. The Ogre is the father of Douglas and Malcolm, who aren't too keen on him, and the brand-new stepfather of Caspar, Johnny, and Ginny, who absolutely detest him. They also detest their stepbrothers, who return the sentiment with interest. In a rare gesture of conciliation, the Ogre gives Malcolm and Johnny each a chemistry set, in which half the chemicals prove to be magical. Unsurprisingly, all of their experiments lead to near disaster, but they do result in increasing rapprochement between the two factions, partly because they have to keep getting each other out of trouble and partly because of mutual resentment of the increasingly oppressive Ogre. An experiment in which Caspar and Malcolm accidentally switch bodies for a day also prompts understanding. But the whole household is thrown into turmoil when a spilled tube of Animal Spirits brings to life the Ogre's pipe (which proves a charming pet) and a batch of toffee bars (unmitigated disaster--they aren't housebroken and they start reproducing). Eventually the situation becomes so strained that the mother leaves home. The younger children suspect that the Ogre has done away with her: Johnny, who by now has discovered invisibility, tries various means of killing him or, alternatively, pretending to be murdered himself and framing the Ogre; and even gentle Ginny tries to poison him. When the Ogre realizes how much they all hate him, he changes his ways--he is not really evil, just extremely insensitive--and the others are willing to meet him halfway. The reconciliation proves useful in dealing with the magic: only the Ogre knows what to do when Douglas inadvertently sows dragon's teeth, with the classical result; and he is the one to recognize the nature of the last remaining chemical, Petr. Philos., with which they turn an assortment of awful oddments into gold. The story ends with a reconciled family moving into a larger house, with more space, more mutual understanding, and--to everyone's relief--no more magic.

Magic in this story is used as a gimmick, rather than being organically related to the world-frame or to a character. The real theme of the book is the working out of tangled family relationships; magic is the means and humor is the mode.



Cart and Cwiddier is the first of three (of a projected five) novels set in the imaginary land of Dalemark, a basically feudal world with a few technological advances: there is a steam organ in this book, and one of the characters in Drowned Annet invents the rifled gun barrel. Once a unified kingdom, it is now divided into petty earldoms. The earls of North Dalemark are enlightened rulers, and there is peace and freedom there; but the earls of the South are quarrelsome with each other and tyrannical toward their subjects. Among the few people who move freely between North and South are traveling singers like Clennan and his wife, the enigmatic Lenina, and children: Brid, Dagnar, and the dreamy Moril, the book's POV character, to whom the legends of the heroic past sometimes seem more real than the present. But reality breaks through with a vengeance when Clennan is murdered and Lenina promptly remarries. The children set off North with Clennan's horse and cart; their frequently annoying passenger, Kialan, who turns out to be the son of the Northern Earl of Hannart, escaping from captivity in the South; and Moril's legacy from his father, the cwiddier (a sort of lute) of his ancestor, the legendary singer Osfameron. According to the tales, Osfameron was able to work magic with it, but Moril must learn to know and to master himself before he too can use the cwiddier to make the mountains walk.

Drowned Annet is set in the South Dalemark earldom of Holland, which resembles Holland in name and geography but not in national character. Where the Dutch are sturdy champions of national

independence and popular government, Hollanders are the most oppressed people of South Dalemark: their taxes are heavy, their earl is cruel and dictatorial, and his spies and agents are everywhere. About the only fun they get is the annual festival when the Earl and his household carry the straw figures of Poor Old Ammet and his wife Libby Beer down to the harbor and cast them in. Nobody is sure just what this ancient ceremony is supposed to mean, but everyone knows it would be terribly unlucky to omit it. Nevertheless Mitt, the hero of the book, plans to use the occasion to assassinate the earl and simultaneously betray the rebel group to which he belongs, because he holds its leaders responsible for betraying his father to his death. But things do not go according to plan: Mitt's attempt fails, another assassin succeeds, and Mitt finds himself fleeing for his life. He hijacks a boat belonging to two of the earl's grandchildren, Ynen and the spitfire Hildrida, and forces them to take him north. Despite their mutual contempt, they are forced to work together to keep the boat from sinking; and they find themselves (especially Mitt) re-evaluating themselves, their values, and their opinions of one another. They are hijacked in turn by the real assassin and sail to the Holy Isles, the one place of enchantment in the South Dales, where they find that Old Ammet and Libby Beer are really gods and are taught their true names and powers. Mitt, whose real name is actually Alhammitt (= Old Ammet), turns out to be the chosen of the gods and invokes their powers to defeat the villains.

The Spellcoats, third of the series, is set in the mythic prehistory of Dalemark, when there are no northerners and southerners but only the people who live by the River and the invading Heathen. Tanaqui, the narrator, and her brothers and sister are forced to flee down the River in their boat, because their neighbors have turned against them: they are fair-haired like the Heathen,

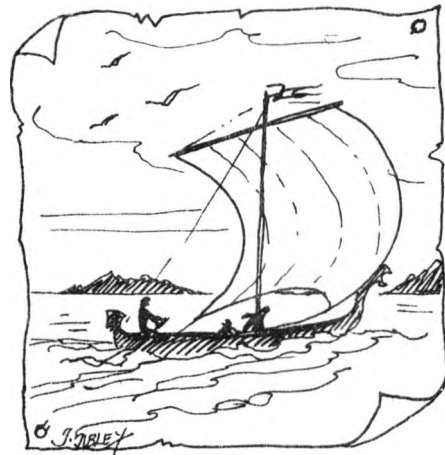


and they do not worship the River like all proper villagers. Their gods are the Undying--the One, the Young One, and the Lady--whom they take along on their flight. In the course of their journey they meet with the mysterious Tanamil, who seems to be involved with them in a way they do not comprehend; their own king and the king of the Heathens (whom they prefer); and the evil sorcerer Kankredin, who is the real enemy of both sides. He has set a net at the mouth of the River to catch passing souls, and is trying to grind the soul of the River itself. Tanaqui's family proves to be central to the conflict, for they themselves are the children of the Undying. It is Tanaqui's own gift--the power to weave true stories into the rugcoats she makes--that brings about the defeat of Kankredin and the unbinding of the River and the other gods.

Although there is evil sorcery in The Spellcoats, the story operates primarily on the mythic level. Names are important in Cart and Cwiddar and have magical power in the other two books. In all three the magic is significant, occurring only at the climax and after the character who is to wield it has undergone a process of self-understanding--a rite of passage which validates his or her right to such power. As in Ogre, most of the story involves ordinary human characterization and interaction. Diana Wynne Jones is able not only to make her magic truly awesome but also to evoke humor, suspense, and sheer terror on the realistic fictional level.

Power of Three tells the story of the three children of Adara and Gest--Ceri, Ayna, and particularly Gair, the middle child. Life on the Moor is precarious at best, what with the uncertainties of harvest and hunting and the danger from powerful Giants and shape-shifting Dorig; but Gest is a wise leader and his village, Garholt, is prosperous and secure. The real trouble begins when Adara's brother Orban and his villagers arrive as refugees, driven from their homes by the Dorig. Orban is a nasty fellow who as a boy had murdered a young Dorig prince for his golden collar. The dying prince had cursed the collar; and his people had sworn revenge on Orban, though vowing not to harm the compassionate Adara.

When the Dorig attack Garholt, Gair and his siblings escape and wind up being befriended by a pair of young Giants. There is a suprising plot twist here: we discover that the Giants are really ordinary English humans. The Dorig and the Lymen--as the latter call Gair's people--are presumably what we would call fairies or Little People, though they indignantly reject the label.



The Giants are having problems too, which seem to be caused at least in part by the fact that they have come into possession of the cursed collar. Although the interests of the three groups seem to be in irreconcilable conflict, human and Lymen children make friends and even win over a couple of young Dorig, the children of the King whose brother was murdered by Orban. (There is a lovely scene in which they are all sitting around having tea and bickering over which ones are really people.) In hopes of ending the fighting, Gair and Gerald, the human boy, go with Hafny the Dorig to try to win over his father. The curse almost destroys all three, but their courage and friendship appease the Old, Middle, and New Powers invoked by the curse; and the common sense of the various adults finds a way for them all to share the Moor in peace.

The magic in this story resides in the Gifts (psychic powers) of Adara's children and in the curse and its workings. The terrifying climactic scene, in which Gair nearly becomes a ritual sacrifice, derives its force equally from its supernatural elements and from purely human dramatic impact. As in the other books, it is the characters' self-knowledge and mutual sympathy that enable them to bind the magical forces for positive ends.

Charmed Life is set in an alternate universe in which magic is not only a commonly practiced trade but even has civil servants to regulate it. The chief of these is the enchanter Chrestomanci. He is a cousin of the orphaned Cat and Gwendolen Chant, whom he brings to live at Chrestomanci Castle. Gwendolen is delighted; she has been studying witchcraft and feels that the move offers all sorts of opportunities to achieve her ultimate ambition, which is to rule the world. Shy and self-effacing Cat doesn't mind where he goes as long as he has Gwendolen to cling to. But her plans receive

a setback when she is forbidden to study magic at all. In revenge she plays increasingly nasty magical tricks on the household, until she is finally deprived of her magic. She does manage, however, to flee into another parallel universe, leaving Janet, her alternate from our own world, in her place in the Castle. Cat helps Janet out as much as he can, filling her in on his world's history (America is Atlantis; the French won the battle of Agincourt) and trying to protect her from the magical revenges of Gwendolen's various victims. It is not an easy time for Cat: he has never been able to work magic himself; and he misses Gwendolen terribly, although it is obvious to the reader that Janet is infinitely preferable. They get caught in the middle of a plot against Chrestomanci concocted by Gwendolen and her warlock friends; and Cat almost gets killed before he discovers that he does indeed have magical powers: he is in fact a nine-lived enchanter like Chrestomanci himself.

This is primarily a humorous story, although there is real terror in the climactic confrontation and the treatment of Cat's secret is a well-worked-out mystery plot. The characterization is shallower than in the other books, and the moral conflict is less essential to the plot. But it is one of my favorites, simply because it is so much fun.

The Magicians of Caprona is a much darker book, with more serious themes, although the humorous element is present. It is also set in the Chrestomanci-universe, but in a pre-Garibaldi Italy rather than in England. The city-state of Caprona is famous for the powerful spells of its two leading families of magicians, the Montanas and the Petrocchis, whose talents are equalled only by their mutual hatred. Their spells, however, don't seem to be working as well as they used to; and Caprona is in trouble, threatened with invasion by its powerful neighbors. The most potent spell in the city is a song brought to the First Duke by an Angel and used to banish a White Devil, who is still trying to get back into the city. The present Duke sets the Montanas and Petrocchis searching for the original words to the tune, in hopes that they will save the city. Caprona is saved, of course, principally by the efforts of Tonino, the youngest Montana; Angelica, the youngest Petrocchi; and Benvenuto the cat--though an assist from Chrestomanci is required before the White Devil is unmasked and finally routed. And, equally unsurprisingly, the feuding houses of magicians are reconciled.

This book doesn't quite come up to

the level of Charmed Life, but it is still very enjoyable. I particularly liked the vivid depiction of the noisy, bustling, and frequently dramatic home life of the extended family of the Montanas. There are the same sly touches of humor as in the preceding book: the favorite reading of Tonino, for example, is fantasy--stories set in a world in which there is not magic. (But the fact that one of the few characters to arrive in a motor car is called Mario Andretti is, I believe, a mere coincidence.)

But how shall I describe Dogsbody? If I were forced to choose the best of Jones's books, I think it would have to be this one, although Charmed Life comes awfully close. It is a dog story, a mystery, a fantasy, science fiction, myth--all blended into one delightful whole. It opens with the luminary Sirius being convicted by a court of High Effulgents of negligence and murder. A luminary has been murdered with a Zoi, a mysterious power device, and the Zoi itself lost. Sirius, protesting his innocence, is sentenced to be reborn as a creature on the planet where the Zoi is believed to have fallen; if he recovers it, the court will reconsider its verdict. The planet is Earth, and Sirius finds himself reborn as a dog. As a puppy he is rescued from drowning by Kathleen, an Irish terrorist's daughter living with some unpleasant English relatives while her father is in prison. Until he matures enough to become aware of his real identity and to use its higher intelligence, he is always in trouble, with Kathleen his only comfort until he manages to make friends with the family cats. Eventually he undertakes the search for the Zoi, aided by Sol, the denizen of our sun, and menaced by mysterious villains who turn out to be the real criminals. He finally recovers the device, after running with the hound of the Wild Hunt, and wins reinstatement as a



High Effulgent at the price of parting with Kathleen.

This book succeeds splendidly on all levels. All of Jones's particular gifts are on display here: carefully structured plotting, believable and sympathetic (or, when appropriate, detestable) characterization of people and animals alike, and mastery of a variety of moods ranging from comedy to near-tragedy. So far none of her books has won a major award, although Dogsbody was named an ALA Notable Book. I think that this shows that people just haven't been paying attention. Diana Wynne Jones is a remarkably talented and versatile writer, whose books I wholeheartedly recommend to all lovers of fantasy.

* * *

The Ogre Downstairs (1974; E.P. Dutton, \$6.95)

Cart and Cwiddier (1975; Atheneum, \$6.95)

Dogsbody (1975; Dell, \$1.50)

Power of Three (1976; Greenwillow Books, n.p.)

Charmed Life (1977; Pocket Books, \$2.25)

Drowned Ammet (1977; Atheneum, \$7.95)

The Spellcoats (1979; Atheneum, \$7.95)

The Magicians of Caprona (1980; Greenwillow Books, \$7.95)

"Past-to-Future/A Rebuttal"

Who the heck would want to see
A Niekas really typo-free?
Going back thru history
Niekas never was, you see
typed without an error(sic)
That gave us other Zenes so slick.
I understand the yearning, truly
To make the reading less unruly.
Somewhere further on in time
When someone writes a better rhyme,
The Computer-software Committee
Will program Niekas, typo free.

M.M. Shepard



ASSURBANIPAL GO BRAGH

by John Myers Myers



"Muse, whom should I salute as patron saint of bibliophiles?"

"His nibs of Nineveh, Maker; Assurbanipal, of course."

"But didn't he slaughter more galoots than Egypt's crocodiles
And outrob Jonathan Wild without a hiccough of remorse?"

"Well sure, he killed and stole a heap, for that's how monarchs hold
Their standing in the Tyrants Club. But though he acted bad,
The verse and yarns he conned were unadulterated gold;
And so on balance Bani was a right high calibre lad.

His subjects, though, were stinkards; if they'd lift no lives nor steal

The books they read would spook a werewolf into tremens fits;

The tales were bedlam muck purveyed as rugged bedrock real,

The verses awful offal, impostuming Nineveh's cits;

For thus the mind, why, thus the man--a guy is what he reads,

As any skink can tell you. Assurbanipal knew it, too,

And vowed that he'd reform or skin the nasty centipedes

Envenomed by such modern prose and ditto metric goo. GOOD-BAD-UGLY

He flung his private library wide and promised he would scrag

The lass or lad who didn't take his reading cue from him;

And after he had hoisted some and so made good his brag,

Survivors buckled down to getting morally in trim

By hauling up their literary slacks, you know." "Gadzooks!

You've made your great persuasive point, sagacious Muse of mine,

Old Bani, as you style him, was in truth a saint of books;

And next time that I ink a quill, I'll hail him in a line

Loquacious of his virtues, but still wistfully withal;

For why can't we fums profit from a wisdom at the helm

Who'll slay the rats who write or publish rank, bubonic gall, DEATH & LIFE

Restoring health to wan Columbia's long infected realm?"

"Aye, Maker, you have cause to wail. The only certain light

To reach a man retracts from lines on papyrus or clay;

And lacking Assurbanipal, of course the cheated night

Is sullied by a dirty moon which foul balls hail as day."

PRESERVATION



TITLES-LABIN



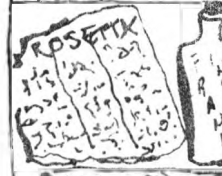
WRITING PROSE



RELIGION



RELIGION



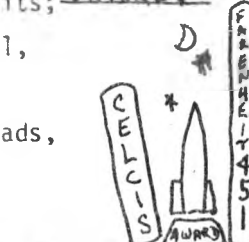
RELIGION

RELIGION

RELIGION



FUTURE



GOOD-BAD-UGLY



GOOD-BAD-UGLY



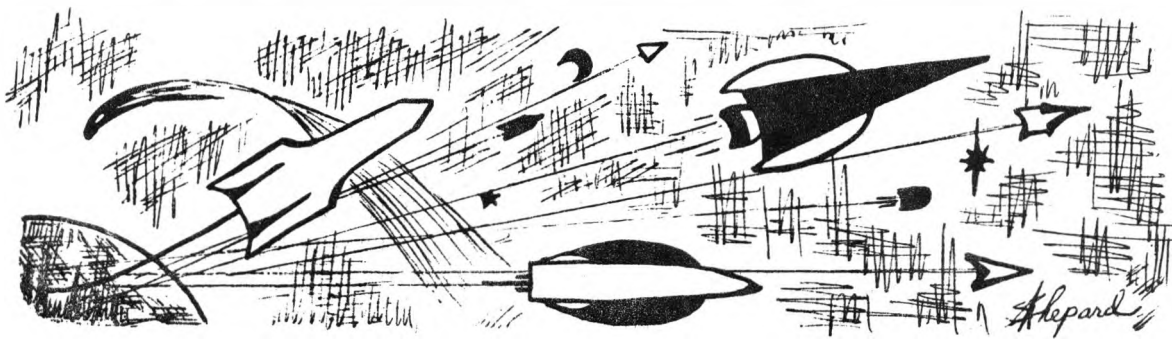
DEATH & LIFE



NATURE - HUMAN

NATURE - HUMAN

NATURE - HUMAN



SHERWOOD FRAZIER SCIENCE FACT

NASA Readies First Space Shuttle Payload

NASA scientists and engineers are making preparations at Kennedy Space Center, Fla., for installation of the first payload to be carried into space aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia during STS-2, its second test flight, now scheduled for this fall.

The payload is called OSTA-1 for NASA's Office of Space and Terrestrial Applications which is providing most of the seven experiments. It is designed to demonstrate the Space Shuttle's capability as an operational space platform for scientific and applications research. The experiments are concerned primarily with remote sensing of land resources, atmospheric phenomena and ocean conditions.

The payload experiments include an imaging radar (Shuttle Imaging Radar, or SIR-A) to help test advanced techniques for mapping geological structures important in oil and gas exploration; a multi-spectral infrared radiometer (SMIRR) to measure the solar reflectance of mineral-bearing formations; a feature recognition system (Feature Identification and Location Experiment, or FILE) designed to discriminate between water, bare ground, vegetation, snow or clouds and thus control sensors to collect only wanted data; an air pollution measurement experiment (Measurement of Air Pollution from Satellites, or MAPS) designed to measure the distribution of carbon monoxide in

the middle and upper troposphere (12-18 kilometers or 7.5-11 miles altitude); an ocean color scanner (Ocean Color Experiment, or OCE) to map algae concentrations which may indicate feeding areas for schools of fish or pinpoint possible pollution problems; a night and day optical survey of lightning storms (NOSL); and a biological engineering experiment (Heflex Bioengineering Test, or HBT) to determine the relationship between plant growth and moisture content in the near weightlessness of space.

An engineering model of a Spacelab pallet, a 3-meter (10-foot)-long, U-shaped structure that mounts in the Shuttle's cargo bay, will carry most of the experiments. The pallet is equipped with subsystems which provide power, command, data, and thermal interfaces for the instruments.

The imaging radar, radiometer, feature recognition, pollution measurement and ocean scanner experiments are mounted on the pallet; the lightning and biological engineering experiments are mounted in the Shuttle's crew compartment.

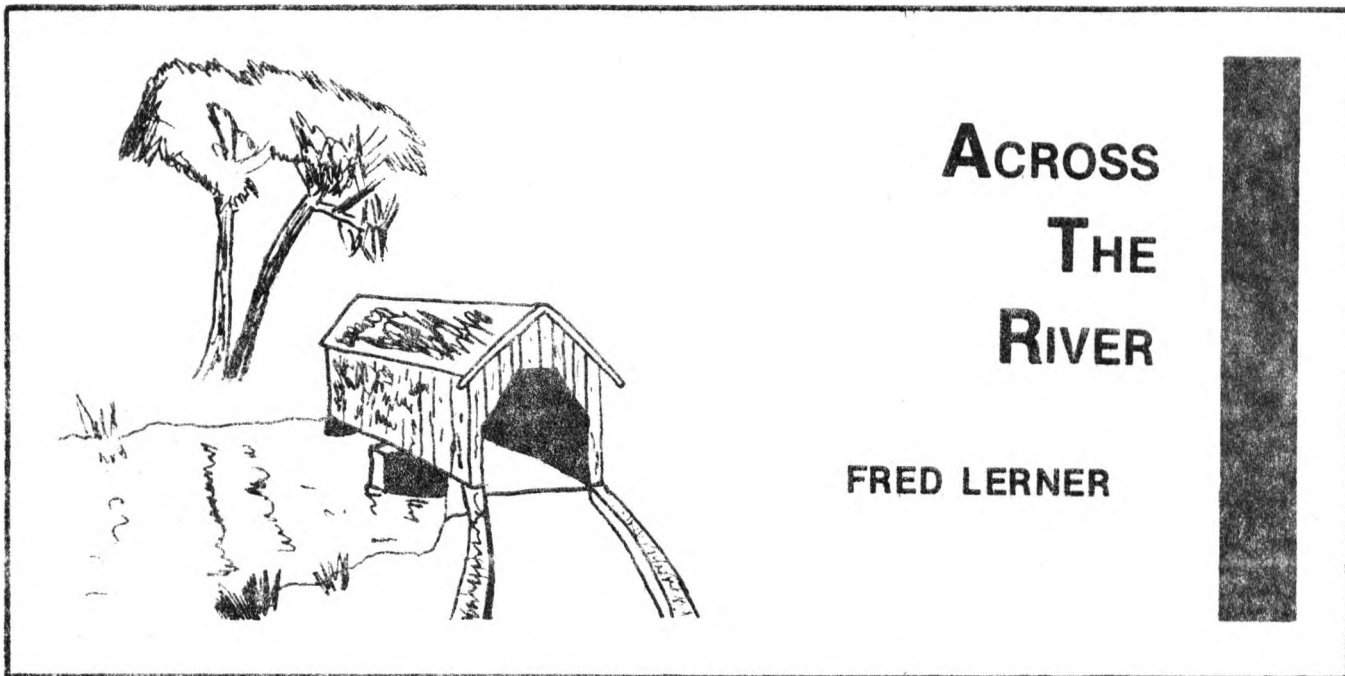
STS-2 will be launched from the Kennedy Space Center into a 280-km (174-mi.) circular orbit with an inclination of 40.3 degrees. For approximately 3.5 days (88 hours) of the four-day mission, the Shuttle will be in an Earth-viewing orientation. In this attitude, the Shuttle payload bay faces the Earth on a line perpendicular to the Earth's surface. During this period, the instruments will be operated and data collected. The mission will

conclude with a landing at Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards, Calif.

The flight operations of OSTA-1 will be controlled from the Johnson Space Center Payload Operation Control Center (POCC). The air pollution and feature recognition experiments operate continuously for the whole mission with the imaging radar, radiometer and ocean experiments taking data over preselected sites. The lightning experiment is a "target of opportunity" instrument. Experiment housekeeping data is available in the Payload Operation Control Center to monitor the status and health of the instruments, and the payload can be commanded from the control center, or by the astronaut crew via the Shuttle's general purpose computer.

Since most of the Shuttle data transmission capability will be utilized with Shuttle status data for the second orbital flight test mission, all the OSTA-1 scientific data will be recorded on board on tape and film. The tape and film will be removed from the Shuttle upon landing and turned over to the experimenters for immediate screening and analysis. The instruments will be removed from the Columbia after it is ferried to the Kennedy Space Flight Center.

All scientific experiment data will be in the public domain and subsequently made available from the National Space Science Data Center, Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.



A few weeks ago, I defended my doctoral dissertation at Columbia University. "Modern Science Fiction and its Reception by the American Literary and Educational Communities, 1926-1970" was accepted by my examining committee; and I have deposited the requisite number of copies in the requisite form with the requisite functionary. Barring complications, I will have received a diploma testifying that I am a Doctor of Library Science by the time this column appears.

The two questions I've been most frequently asked by people who learned of my candidacy are "Why did you enter the D.L.S. program?" and "What will you do with the degree when you get it?" My usual answer to the first question is, "Because it seemed like a good idea at the time." I would be hard put to justify after the fact the work and expense involved in getting the D.L.S. But now that I have it, I have hopes of making good use of it.

There are days that I'm not proud of being a librarian. I don't know that I care to associate myself with a group of people who spend a lot of their time agonising over whether librarianship is a "profession": who communicate with each other in journals of almost unrelieved triviality of content; and whose apparent consensus on political controversies reveals both a political naivete and an ethical immaturity. But there are also times when I become convinced that a technologically-dependent society is only as effective as its informational infrastructure; and that that infrastructure depends

upon the efforts of librarians, by whatever name they're called.

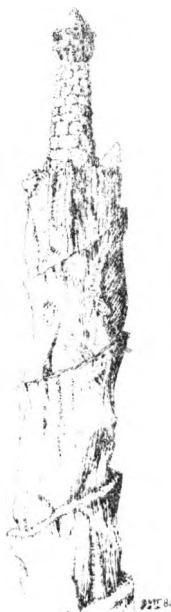
And there are several of these names. In many corporations and institutions, "information managers" are supervising the gathering, organisation and retrieval of facts and figures and opinions. The nature of information, and the behaviour of people who produce and use it, is being studied by "information scientists." And on the front lines are people called "information specialists," who make it their business to gain access to all sources of information, printed and other-

wise, on their fields of concern. It is people such as these, some of whom still call themselves "librarians," who make it possible for a large part of the civilised world to get its work done effectively.

I want to be a part of this. My work in several library settings has been enjoyable, but never more so than my present position in a small, high-technology research and development firm. It is in companies such as the one I work for, in research institutes and experimental stations, in industrial laboratories and testing facilities, that the future of our society is being shaped. And there is not one of these places that does not need a well-designed information service.

I hope to contribute to the improvement of information services, by helping to train future information workers, and by studying ways to provide information more effectively to those who use it. At some point I will probably seek a faculty position in a library school or similar institution, and undertake a career of teaching, research, and consulting in librarianship and information science.

A particular interest of mine is the planning of information systems for rural areas in the United States and other industrialised nations, and for developing countries. At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, industries had to locate at the source of their raw materials or at some site to which those materials could easily be transported.



This is still true today--but the nature of the raw materials has changed. The mechanisation of transport has made almost negligible the difficulties of moving mineral or agricultural materials to an industrial site. What is more important--in some industries, of the utmost importance--is proximity to information.

I don't mean to say that a modern industry can't succeed unless it's located next door to a research library. But I do mean to say that few industries can survive without a well-trained workforce: that is, a group of people who possess the information necessary to do the work. In the Middle Ages, only a very small proportion of the workforce needed specialised training; today, there are few jobs in industrialised countries which call for unskilled labour. And there are many important industries in which the need for people who possess highly specialised knowledge outweighs all other considerations.

In such industries, the best location is the one which possesses or which can attract the most highly-skilled workers. And in many cases, those locations are not those which have traditionally been centers of heavy industry.

Until recently, strong technical libraries have been confined to the major industrial centers or to a few rural university communities. This placed severe restrictions on the growth of high-technology industry; for while a major corporation could afford to build its own technical library, the small, innovative firm--and it is in such firms that a disproportionate amount of technological progress is made--could not. Unsurprisingly, such small companies tended to cluster in large cities and university communities.

Things have changed. Not that there has been a proliferation of technical libraries in the boondocks; something much more important has happened. The computer revolution has swept the countryside.

I run a one-man technical library in a small company. We're just down the road from Dartmouth College, and we have access to its excellent library system. But we don't need it quite as much as once we did; and if we had to, we could probably now get along without it.

The reason is DIALOG. By hooking up a telephone to a Decwriter, and doing a bit of dialing and typing, I can make contact with a computer in Palo Alto, into whose memory the Lockheed

Missile and Space Company has placed the content of over one hundred bibliographical files. Lockheed's DIALOG system gives me access to the equivalent of a major reference collection, and allows me to find information in ways that would be impossible using the printed versions of the files. More importantly, for the point I am making here, DIALOG levies its charges on a per-use basis. I don't have to spend thousands of dollars on a set of Chemical Abstracts; I don't have to subscribe to the Engineering Index. Instead, I pay so much per minute for each search I do. The information provider gets his royalty; Lockheed gets their fee; and my company gets its information.

Well, my company doesn't exactly get its information; what it gets is a citation to the printed version of the information. But the next step is already being implemented; I can order, using the same system, copies of the documents I need. And Lockheed has competitors whose databases contain not merely citations to documents, but the full texts of the documents themselves.

I doubt that this is news to many of my readers. But let's consider some of the implications. My company couldn't function without access to current technical literature. Ten years ago, that would have meant that its location would have been determined by that need: it would have to be in a large city or near a large university. Today, a com-

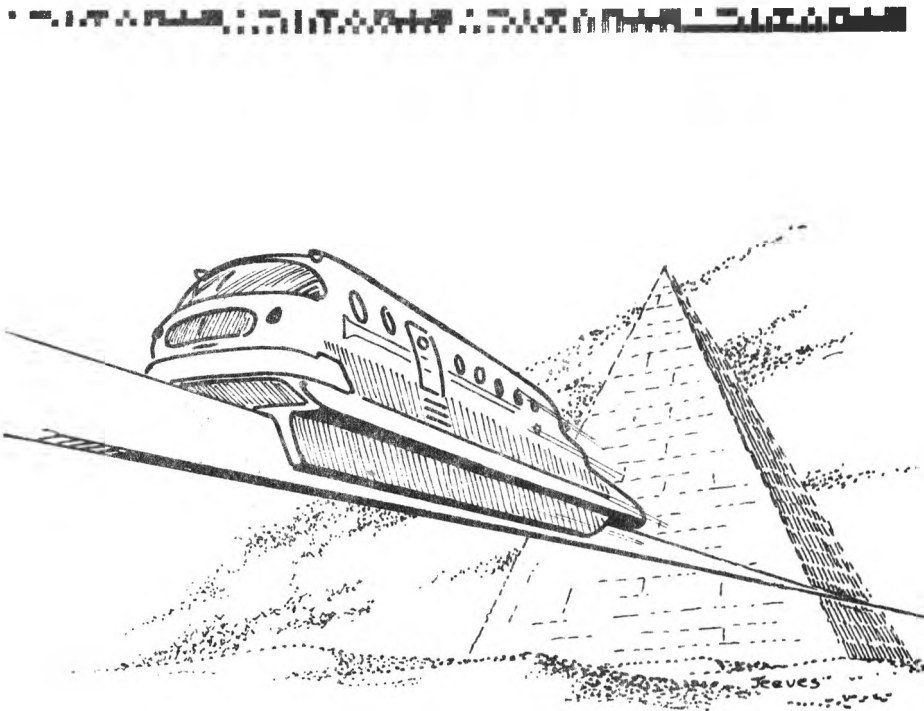
pany like mine could be located anywhere, provided that it had access to a functioning telecommunications system.

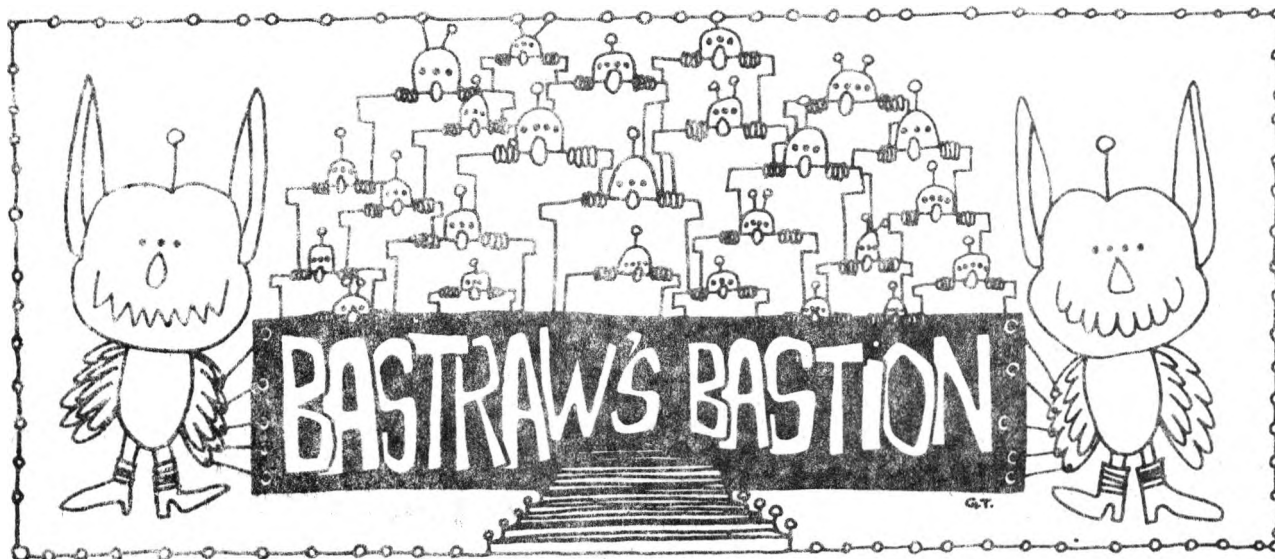
It could be located in a small town in the hills of Vermont. It could be located somewhere in the Amazonian jungle, or in the Australian Outback. It could be located on a good-sized houseboat. It could be located anywhere--or nowhere.

A high-technology, information-dependent company could be wherever its people individually chose to be. So long as each person could stay in communication with everyone else in the firm and with the outside world, and so long as they could assemble for in-person communication when necessary, there's no real reason why there would have to be a "workplace" at all.

This sort of thing will not make the little Carnegie Library down on the Village Green obsolete. But it will open a lot of options for the design of information systems; and I think that there will be some interesting opportunities for a person with a lively interest in information, a reasonable amount of training and experience in information work--and enough familiarity with science fiction to anticipate rather than dread change.

And somebody will have to plan a technical information system for that first L-5 Colony...





Well, folks, it's True Confessions time. Up until about 3 months ago, I had been a Space Hypocrite. I write this now with the hope that I might save others from living in this self-made Purgatory

Before my redemption I had always paid lip service to the furtherment of the U.S. Space Program. That's about all it was, really: I would talk and talk with friends (some of whom have yet to see the light) and collectively and singly we would wring our hands and despair.

"Why, oh, why can't those Politicians see that we must continue and intensify our drive to Conquer Space for the Good of All Mankind? Don't they know that space science has spun-off enough new technology to pay for itself several times over? Huh, huh, HUH?"

First off, They--Them Who We Elect--do know these things. What they are not convinced of is whether or not this is where the American people want their tax monies spent. (Remember, They do still have to get themselves elected...We still seem to be needed for that.) Even proponents of space research find that their hands are tied. They can keep pointing out how necessary space is and that People really want more work done in this area. But if they don't have evidence to present in legislative "courts", they are at the mercy of their opponents who point to this lack of evidence as proof that they, by cutting space spending, are on the right track. (They don't care to consider that if this spending was increased they might get just as few letters condemning that course of action.)

It took the receipt of a publication called WRITE NOW to get me off my procrastinating butt and do my share.

WRITE NOW was published by John and Bio Trimble around the beginning of the year. In it is a comprehensive package on the status of the Space Program and what we as private citizens can do about it. They list addresses for various government officials (pro and con) and explain the various points of access we as taxpayers have a right to use to make our wishes known. They be: letters, telegrams, and telephone calls. I do not mention note-covered rocks as I believe these would tend to lessen the impact of any intended message (how's that for a convoluted pun, Anne?). The effectiveness of the channel you take pretty much is in proportion to the money you spend. Any politico will understand that you really mean business if you shell out several bucks for a long distance phone call or telegram.

In most cases, I am sure that any communication made will just boil down to a tick on someone's legislative scorecard; at least on the side of the Opposition. But I am equally sure that any letter sent to an official who advocates increased space involvement will be saved and will be loaded into the bandolier to provide ammo for their assault on governmental nearsightedness.

In most cases, you will receive no indication that your letter was received, let alone heeded. Of all the letters I wrote, only two fetched back a first reply. Predictably, they were from Congressmen.

Below is a list of people to contact --no names, just an order of importance. If you can't scrape up the money for rocks it will cost to at least write and send a half-dozen letters, let me know. I will send you a list of names. This will be my penance for waiting so long to make my

voice heard. YOU will no longer be able to use any of the following as excuses:

I don't have the money.

I don't know who to contact.

I don't have their address.

So get your mental eraser out and delete the above from your cerebral excuse list

The following are things I can't help you with except to grieve for your endangered soul:

I am not smart enough.

I don't have the time.

I can't be bothered.

If you can get by these "I don't"'s and "I can't"'s, then, to coin a phrase...

WRITE NOW!

Them To Write To, Now:

Rep. Edward P. Boland (Mass.)
Chairman, House Subcommittee on HUD & Independent Agencies
2426 Rayburn House Office Bldg.,
Wash. D.C. 20515 (202) 225-5601

Rep. Don Fuqua (Florida)
Chairman, House Subcommittee on Space, Science & Applications
Room 2321 Rayburn Bldg.
Wash. D.C. 20515 (202) 225-5235

Hon. David Stockman
Office of Management & Budget
Executive Office Building
Wash. D.C. 20503

Sen. Jake Garn (Utah)
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on HUD & Independent Agencies
5121 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Wash. D.C. 20501 (202) 224-5444

Sen. Harrison Schmitt (New Mexico)
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on

Science, technology & Space
Room 709-A, Immigration Bldg.
Wash. D.C. 20501 (202) 224-5521

Pres. Ronald Reagan
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Wash. D.C. 20500

Of course your local and state representatives might have less actual clout but they will be more receptive to any opinions coming from their constituents.

B B B

I type this last segment of my Bastion less than a week before we mail out this issue. Consequently, mine is the only open ground left to fill. We had received some nifty last-minute items that we wanted to run badly enough that both Sherwood and I took a cut in our column space.

No applause please.

First off, I did want to direct you to one of the newest and most singular fans now in operation. His name is Eddie Abel and I run his ad at the end of my column for a couple of reasons: he has an interesting story to tell--in his zine and also if you write him--and he has offered us similar space in THE SCIENCE FICTION MONITOR.

Tit for tat and all o' that.

Also I would like to expand a bit on the dedication to Anne Braude which is found on page 1. When NIEKAS was reactivated with issue #22, that pretty much exhausted most of the material we had on hand from before the hiatus.

Now what? We had committed ourselves to a quarterly schedule and wanted to have something between the front and back covers.


To a large extent, Anne Braude kept us going until we could redevelop various contacts for fresh material. Issue to issue she has provided more wordage than anyone else. And her comments on other material has for

the most part been equally helpful.

(But why, oh why, does she persist with this delusion that NIEKAS is riddled with typos. Doesn't she know that the American language is in a constant state of flux?)

I echo the sentiments Dean Dexter expresses at the end of Gincas. Why is this person not a full-fledged full-time writer? If all it takes to be a great writer is imagination, technique, and heart, why is Anne associated with an anti-profit rag like ours and not playing among the literary stars?

I hope she doesn't find the answer.

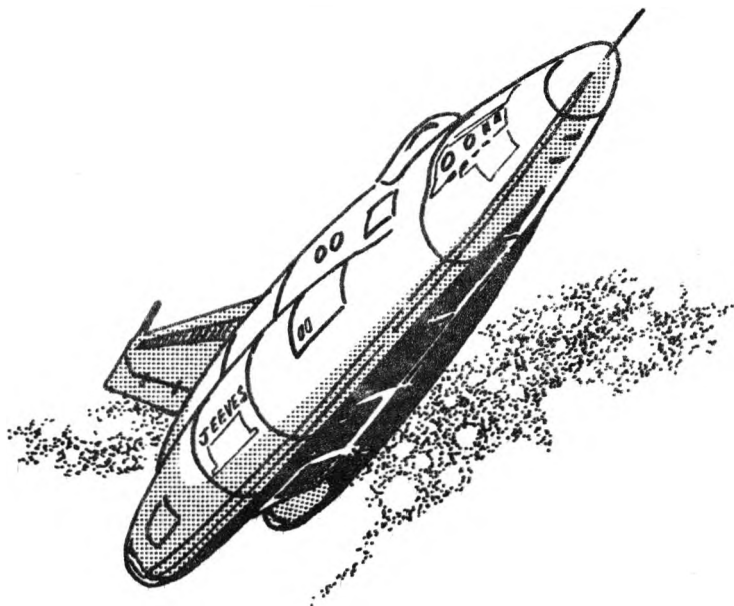


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THE SECOND FOUNDATION
521 E. 14th Ave. #18
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"To the Space Shuttle: an Acrostic Sonnet"



High Above earth you strode with mighty grace--
A mortal star, bearing our hopes on high
Into the dark and icy realms of space,
Leaping beyond the blue familiar sky.
Trembling, we marked your passage as you soared
Out of the flame and thunder of your rise,
Cleaving your way like legend's fiery sword
On past the limits of our dazzled eyes.
Like fabled phoenix springing from its nest,
Upwards in fire you flung, but at the last
Made your way softly to your earthly rest,
Borne by the burning air through which you passed.
Icarus flamed and fell, but in your flight
An ancient dream is kindled into light.

---Anne Braude

FRANKENSTEIN IN THE PATENT OFFICE

A number of the ailments which plague humanity are hereditary. These range from serious afflictions like Huntington's disease (which killed Woody Guthrie) to minor nuisances like color-blindness and albinism.

Cures would therefore involve an actual tampering with the mechanism of heredity. This has, however, become a highly controversial topic lately. But the human race has been controlling the heredity of many animal and plant species for thousands of years, a practice which is usually called "agriculture". The cattleman who kills every dwarf calf that appears in his herd is just as much a genetic engineer as is the biologist who rearranges the genes within a chromosome.

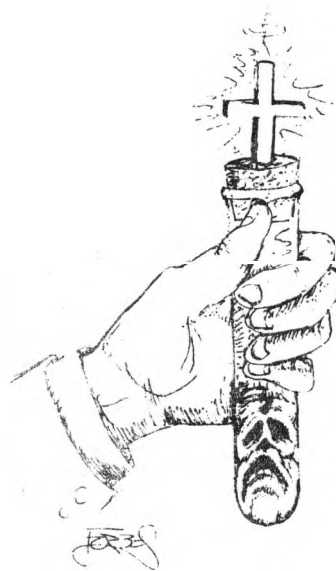
Mary Shelley's classic horror novel Frankenstein, which she wrote as a teen-age runaway in 1816, has tended to dominate the discussion of genetic engineering, particularly as the story was brought to the screen with Boris Karloff playing the part of the monster. Whenever the topic of altering heredity comes up, the spectre of Karloff's shambling ogre (usually given his creator's name) is raised. To some extent even the proponents of genetic engineering have accepted these terms for discussion. They have taken to calling the opponents of genetic engineering "a crowd of peasants with torches".

The reality is far less dramatic. For example, the Plant Introduction Station at Iowa State University has seeds and other germ plasm for over 21,000 species of plant. A computerized data bank stores information on the characteristics so that breeders can get germ plasm --the cells that carry hereditary characteristics--for their desired goals. New varieties of corn, oats, and other food grains have come out of this program. It may soon be possible to deal in the same way with animal germ plasm.

Sometimes changes can be made in germ plasm with ridiculous ease. Dr. William P. Switzer once changed the characteristics of a colony of Bordetella bacteria simply by starving them. The result was Strain 55 Bordetella, which is used in a vaccine to prevent kennel cough, a disease of dogs. Dr. Switzer and a co-worker have applied for a patent on the process that produced this new bacterial strain, under a decision issued by the U.S. Supreme Court on 16 June 1980. Under this decision, it would be possible to patent the bacterium strain itself, though this was not done for Strain 55 Bordetella because existing patents provide sufficient protection.

Designer Genes

john
boardman



Patents for new inventions were first introduced by some Italian city-states during the Renaissance. They proved to be a great stimulus to invention. But the extension of patent protection to new life forms might have changed the course of history if it had been introduced many millennia earlier. Imagine what would have happened if an ancient Mesopotamian farmer had patented the mule!

The mule, incidentally, shows that opposition to the production of new life forms is not a product of our own times. The Old Testament explicitly forbids the breeding of mules. (Leviticus 19:19)

ANOTHER BOUT - SAME VERDICT

Most religions claim that they alone can answer the question, "Where did life come from?" Attempts from rival fields of human activity to answer this question have met with strong opposition from the most influential religion in the vicinity. In

Hungary, in 1948, the government took over the school systems from the churches and began to teach evolutionary biology rather than using Genesis 1. A prelate named Jozsef Pehm, who also used the name "Mindszenty", objected violently. Since the government was a Communist government, it over-reacted; Pehm received a life sentence for treason and was regarded by the religious as a martyr.

It is still going on. In July, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious leaders sent a letter to President Carter urging that geneticists be kept from "playing God", whatever that means. Three months later, Pope John Paul II "warned of dangers posed by organ transplants, genetic experimentation, artificial insemination, birth and fertility controls, and new drugs". He considered that the fetus-deforming medication thalidomide, which had nothing to do with genetic engineering, was a tragic example of what might happen with new medical techniques.

The Vatican is proceeding very cautiously in this field, as befits men who don't know what they're talking about. Certain individual Vatican officials have been critical of organ transplants and genetic experimentation, but no official pronouncements on these topics have yet been made. After all, abortions were legal in the Papal States until well into the 19th century. Haste is not regarded as a virtue in the Vatican.

The Pope committed a common logical fallacy in his speech on medical ethics on 27 October 1980. "Science is not the highest value to which all the others must be subordinated," he said. "Higher is the right of individuals to their physical and spiritual life and to their psychic and functional integrity." The rise of science and its attendant technologies over the past few centuries has not damaged the life of the individual human being. On the contrary, that life has been rendered longer, healthier, more productive, easier, and more psychically satisfying by the products of technology. It is hard to see how the abolition, through genetic engineering, of such scourges as Huntington's disease, Down's syndrome, diabetes, or sickle-cell anemia will endanger the "psychic and functional integrity" of the individual. What will be endangered is the belief that the solution to human problems must be sought through other than human means, by an appeal to the supernatural forces invoked by the clerical enemies of science.

PATTERNS & Notes from Elfhil

by Diana L. Paxson

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS ?

Recently, Mike Bastraw sent me a review of what appears to be a remarkably silly new book about Tolkien (I understand that there will be a lot of comment about that review in this issue-- my first sentence should indicate what my opinion of it is going to be).

I suppose it is a measure of Tolkien's literary stature. We are now in the second generation of Tolkien criticism-- the one that attacks the conclusions of the first generation. In this case, the authors are apparently maintaining that other scholars think Tolkien's plots were "conjured out of northern mists," and are then attempting to replace this view with the idea that Tolkien depended on 20th century authors such as H. Rider Haggard. The article does not state from whom the authors of The Shores of Middle Earth think Haggard and company derived their material...

That such a book of criticism could be published bears witness to the enduring popular confusion regarding the process of literary creation. Where do authors get their ideas anyway?

In the Middle Ages, writers felt obliged to refer to some reputable authority, whether they had ever read his work or not. In some cases (as for instance the mysterious 'Kyot' cited as source of the Grail legend by Chretien de Troyes) one may question whether the source ever existed at all. Chaucer's Wife of Bath seems scandalously liberated to the other pilgrims because (among other reasons) she appeals to experience rather than to Authority as her guide. Despite the current cult of originality, this medieval attitude seems to have survived in the realm of literary criticism. Scholars seem unable to believe in the possibility of originality, and spend their time trying to prove that Book X is 'really' a reworking of Book Y.

Where do these critics get their ideas?

Mr. Giddings and Ms. Holland should have read Tolkien's essay "On Fairy Stories." As an author and scholar, Tolkien was better equipped than most people to discuss the process of literary

creation. In the essay, he offers the metaphor of the 'cauldron of Story' into which are cast all the figures, motifs, plot twists and elements cooked up by generations of storytellers, only to be ladled out again by their successors, spiced up and recombined to feast new audiences.

"There is nothing new under the sun," saith the proverb, but to say that Tolkien derived his 'story' from Haggard and Buchan is just as foolish as asserting that he was inspired by nothing later than the 16th century (although, given Tolkien's known prejudices, the latter is more likely to be true).

Certainly Tolkien may well have read and enjoyed Haggard, Buchan, and the others, as he did the more generally accepted writers of earlier centuries. But it seems to me that if he was indebted to them, it would be in the area of form, not content.

Obviously, Tolkien believed in suiting his style to his story. The Hobbit is told in the manner of a children's folk tale, while the Silmarillion reads like Scripture (and by the way, the suggestion, stated in the review, that a man who was

one of the translators of the new Jerusalem Bible would need to go to a contemporary romancer for the name Moria can only be described as silly).

The form and style of a book should be tailored to its content and purpose, and it would have been stupid of Tolkien to ignore some of the most popular adventure story models around. Lest my argument be misinterpreted, I should point out that

I am extremely fond of all three of the books mentioned as models for Tolkien in the article-- The 39 Steps, The Wind in the Willows, and King Solomon's Mines. But surely it does not diminish them to deny that they were all that Tolkien had to draw from!

No one criticizes an engineer for studying other people's bridges before he begins to build, so why do critics find such satisfaction in the idea that a writer might have benefited from the example of his predecessors or even his contemporaries?

So much for Tolkien's literary debts-- but what about his originality?

To quote another proverb, "No man can step into the same river twice." However greatly Tolkien might have been inspired by the work of other authors, from Snorri Sturluson on down, the Lord of the Rings was so unusual that it took the literary establishment ten years to begin to deal with it. Many cooks may use the same ingredients, but not all of them are Chefs. Why is it so hard for people to believe in Tolkien's achievement?

Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that the single question most commonly put to writers is "Where do you get your ideas?" Before I started selling stories, like Harriet Vane about the blunt instrument, I never really believed that people said it. But it has even happened to me, most recently from a group of earnest undergraduates in a writing class at Mills College. This must indicate some basic drive in the human psyche undiscovered by Drs. Jung and Freud.

In the past eight years I have sold six short stories and sent several novels knocking on publishers' doors. This



does not make me a Great Expert, but irrespective of the quality of my results, I have certainly racked up some experience in producing them. In addition, I live in a sort of writer's colony, and have had the opportunity to encounter a good many others at conventions and through SFWA. All the evidence indicates that finding ideas is the least of a writer's problems. The Truth is...

A wide-eyed fan is said to have asked Robert Bloch the Question one too many times. According to the story, he very seriously replied that published writers were allowed to subscribe to a magazine called Ideas, which listed story ideas which writers could sign up for, and...

The truth is, ideas are everywhere.

The second question that writers dread to hear is, "I've got a wonderful idea for a story-- why don't you write it?" If ever a writer was stuck for new ideas, he could pick up a dozen in any bar. (Writer's Block may prevent one from getting a story written, but not from having the original idea).

Story ideas can happen in any number of ways. The Writer may read something in the paper and think, "I wonder what if...", or catch a remark tossed across the tea table with the observation, "There's a story in that!" (often followed by the remark-- "That's nice, Marion/Diana/Paul, why don't you write it? I've got a novel due...")

Sometimes ideas come from dreams, or day-dreams that flash one a character or sequence of events. They can also be generated to meet the demands of some editor or market. Most of my sales have been to anthologies because I find that starting with some requirements helps me to narrow down the possibilities. Some people start a story with no idea where it's going, and resort to frantic consultations with their friends midway through the book, while others make detailed outlines (it's a great way to put off actually Writing) first and lose interest because they already know how it ends. Some stories are forced out through gritted teeth (paralyzed fingers?) word by word, while others demand to be written whether you want to or not. But no matter how they work, most writers have a notebook full of ideas somewhere.

So what's so mysterious about that? Everyone has ideas, though they may appear in different forms. The physicist gets insights about physics, the fashion designer has ideas for new gowns, the salesman gets a flash on a new pitch, the cook thinks up a menu for company dinner. Having ideas, like having babies, is a natural function of humankind.

But environment influences the process too-- the kind of ideas one produces depends on the sort of thing one normally does. A writer gets story ideas because he or she has learned to think in terms of plot and character. Like an antique dealer who sees potential in every piece



of junk, the writer has an inner scavenger who is always on the lookout for insights and incidents that will come in handy some day.

But as with a baby, the problem is not in having an idea, but in knowing what to do with it once it arrives. Some ideas are plain dumb, or have been done too many times, or won't work for the length or the market you are aiming at. You may have a splendid idea which is beyond your capacity to carry out (although I tend to feel its better to try and flout than to expend infinite pains on grooming a flea-- bad examples of both extremes can be found on the bookstands).

This rather lengthy personal digression should make clear why I became so indignant about the review of The Shores of Middle Earth. Although it is interesting to identify Tolkien's sources (I might want to raid them myself one day), such an analysis has little to contribute to an appreciation of The Lord of the Rings.

Tolkien's achievement lay not in his choice of sources and models (though he followed the writer's rule of only stealing from the best), but in his use of them. Gandalf may be the Wizard of innumerable fairy tales, but he is also a memorable character whose beard juts in a way that is all his own, and who suffers and learns lessons that no one else in the story could face.

Upon the framework of the adventure-quest (which certainly pre-dates Buchan's use of it), Tolkien build a variety of cultures, scenery from the most homely to the sublime, languages and legends, horror and tragedy and in the most unexpected places, humor as well. As for his protagonist-- perhaps the only real mystery regarding Tolkien's sources is that of the origin of the words, "in a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit..." which Tolkien found himself writing upon a blank examination page.

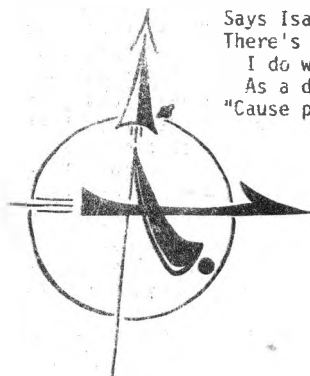
Now if only I can come up with an idea for my next column...



Son of Going Out on a Limerick Dept.

Says Isaac the writer, turned pro
There's ladies wherever I go
I do what I can
As a dirty old man,
"Cause people expect it, you know.

M. Shepard



HAIR
TRANSPLANT!

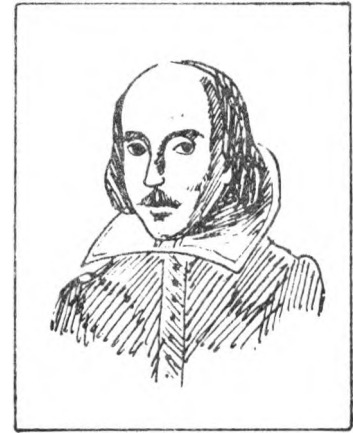
There was an old Chineee named Fu
who did not mean to construe
that tho' he was hairless,
carefree and careless
he knows his ass from his elbu

M. Bastraw



SHAKESPEARE AS A SUBJECT IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

ruth berman



Shakespeare as an author of children's literature has a long history: directly, in excerpted poems and songs, and indirectly, through the re-tellings of the Lambs and other writers. Shakespeare as the subject of children's literature has been an inspiration to many writers. The resulting stories vary from excellent to execrable, but the average is high. Even in stories where the Shakespearean material is not an integral part, the writers' love for their subject often gives the treatment a charm beyond the formal demands of the theme.

Shakespearean children's stories may be grouped:

I. Allusive. Most often, the allusion takes the form of a performance of one of the plays.

II. Direct.

A. The world of Shakespeare.

1. Children on the Elizabethan stage.
2. Fictional biographies of Shakespeare.

B. The world of Shakespeare's plays.

1. Not *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.
2. *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

The allusive stories, for the most part, are stories of stage-struck youngsters. The love of performing is the heart of the action, and it would not much matter if some other play by some other playwright were performed. The heroine plays Mustardseed in Noel Streatfeild's *Ballet Shoes* primarily because *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is the play of Shakespeare's considered most suitable to children and most likely to be known to a child reader; the heroine plays Ariel in Streatfeild's *Theater Shoes* because *The Tempest* is the play of Shakespeare's second most suitable and likely to be known.[1] There is some thematic relevance in

the choice of fairy plays. The (literal) magic of the action suggests the (metaphorical) magic of the theater, but the connection is not stressed in books. The presence of roles children can play professionally is also a factor. In Lenore Glen Offord's *Enchanted August* the heroine loses her chance for a speaking role in *Dream* through thinking Shakespeare is educational and horrid, but gets a less well-known child's part: Lucius in *Julius Caesar*.

Josie Brooke in Louisa May Alcott's *Jo's Boys* can be more ambitious as she is trying to demonstrate talent, not win a particular role. She does bits of Ophelia, Portia, and Juliet. Again, the particular choice does not matter much. The delight in the wonder of the theater is what matters in such scenes.

Almost any story about stage-struck children brings in Shakespeare somewhere along the way, if only as one type of theater among many. The youngsters in Gwendoline Courtney's *Those Verney Girls* and Pamela Brown's *The Swish of the Curtain* put on scenes from Shakespeare along with other material. In Geoffrey Trease's *Black Banner Abroad*, the production of *Romeo and Juliet* is chiefly a device to get the protagonists to France (their own mild love-problems echo the play faintly, but the main interest of the story lies elsewhere). Mona in Elizabeth Enright's *Melendy* family stories does not get to play Shakespeare, but in *And Then There Were Five* a chapter is devoted to her half-enthusiastic, half-pretentious attempt to talk in Shakespearean quotation.

When the use of Shakespearean allusion is integral to the theme of the story, the result can be searingly effective. The irony of the values represented by Shakespeare and betrayed by the cynically worse-than-Quincean performance of the

Duke and the Dauphin is a major part of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. Heinlein uses poignant contrast in *Have Spacesuit Will Travel* when Kip defends humanity as worth keeping alive by quoting Prospero (the speech "Our revels now are ended") and realizes that his sample of worthwhile art describes the destruction that will happen if his judges are not convinced.

* * *

Among the direct uses of Shakespeare in children's fiction are the stories of Elizabethan boys[2] onstage. These are similar to the stories of modern youngsters. It is the theatrical atmosphere that matters more than Shakespeare himself who functions as a *deus ex machina*: a perfectly wise and understanding father figure whose appearance signals the end of the hero's problems, even if the resulting solution requires strained plotting. For instance, John Bennett's *Master Skylark* is separated from Shakespeare arbitrarily after their first meeting so that Master Skylark may take some part in his own rescue by getting to Stratford on his own where Shakespeare solves his remaining difficulties. The solution in Sally Watson's *Mistress Malapert* requires that Shakespeare take Val's grandmother to the Mermaid Tavern and have her live with him while in London (surely a combination that would provoke scandal, despite its innocence).

In addition to the pleasure of theatrical atmosphere in these stories, there is the pleasure of the historical period. The artistic expansion is matched in the material world by the explorations of Drake and Hawkins. Elizabeth is a political muse, inspiring the explorers and those who defend England against conspiracy or invasion. The Armada is much discussed although the chronology of Shakespeare's stage

life prevents direct portrayal of the great battle. Equally, Elizabeth is an artistic muse, inspiring the actors. Appearing before her is a high point in many of the stories, as in Master Skylark, Trease's Cue for Treason, Sally Watson's Mistress Malapert, or Margaret Jowett's A Cry for Players. In Marchette Chute's The Wonderful Winter, Robin does not see Elizabeth but the plot is so arranged that his chance to go on stage follows directly after the company's performing for her; Andrew Talbot, who does not succeed in going on the stage in Elizabeth Janet Gray's I Will Adventure, is given hope by the sight of a barge with Elizabeth in it even though he cannot see the Queen herself.

These children are always Elizabethan, not Jacobean.

Despite the sameness of the plots, these stories are all enjoyable--even if read one after the other. Except for Mistress Malapert, which is clumsy in its attempt to suggest period dialect and to evoke period atmosphere, all are skillfully researched. The authors' love for both the plays and the period is transparent. A series of letters (in the University of Minnesota's Kerlan Collection of Children's Literature) to Marchette Chute from her illustrator, Grace Golden, documents the care and research they both put into The Wonderful Winter. They argued over such matters as Robin's age, height, and reasonable growth rate in the winter of the story, the geography of his entry into London, or the shape of St. Paul's Cathedral. In one of the letters, Grace Golden interrupted her discussion of sources for information on London of the period to remark that so much labor is not really justified because it's the spirit of the book that matters; she then reverted to asking about St. Paul's and Bishopsgate.

* * *

The stories of Shakespeare's life also make use of a saintly Shakespeare (with one exception). As their Shakespeares are major figures in the stories and none of the authors has the rare skill of portraying a convincing saintliness, the fictionalized biography The Greenwood Tree by Edward and Stephani Godwin, Imogene Clark's Will Shakespeare's Little Lad, and Sara Hawks Sterling's Shakespeare's Sweetheart are all unpleasantly saccharine. The Greenwood Tree, following fact closely, is the least syrupy. The other two are quite dreadful--the Sweetheart is perhaps the more cloying. It has

Anne Hathaway, jealous of the Dark Lady, running off to London disguised as a boy. There she rehearses and performs Juliet to her husband's Romeo, unrecognized by him, and learns that he never really loved the Dark Lady.

A more recent story makes an acceptable use of a saintly Shakespeare by being cast in a comic and more realistic mode. Will's Quill, a picture book by Don Freeman, is a whimsical story of a goose who is befriended by Shakespeare and repays him by giving him feathers to make reliable pens.

Another recent story, Rosemary Anne Sisson's Will in Love, abandons saintliness and attempts a more human Will Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway. The characters are made admirable, on the whole, but subject to plausible bad tempers, fits of rashness, and misunderstandings; the story benefits accordingly.

* * *

At first glance, the idea of writing stories about Shakespeare's characters might seem unfruitful. Most of the characters in a play are put in a more or less unchangeable position at the end--killed or set to ruling the nation in tragedies, married and given a position in society in comedies. The larger worlds of the history plays, with their larger casts and larger number of sub-plots, allow somewhat more freedom for further adventures, but even Shakespeare had trouble finding another plot for Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor.

This limitation applies to most of Shakespeare's characters. However, Joanne S. Williamson managed to retell the story of Julius Caesar while telling an original and interesting story: that of the pageboy Lucius in The Eagles Have Flown. Lucius is onstage enough of the time in the play to provide a reasonable viewpoint of the major events, but he is minor enough to be undefined, his fate unknown. Williamson thus had the freedom she needed to imagine her own Lucius.

More often, the influence of Shakespeare on such stories is slight. Richard III and Henry VI may have influenced the portrayal of the young Richard in Robert Louis Stevenson's The Black Arrow, but Stevenson did his own research and owed more to histories and chronicles than to Shakespeare. In John Bellairs' The Face in the Frost the hero is a wizard named Prospero but the opening explains that he is not the one you're thinking of. "The fretful porpentine" mentioned in

Hamlet is expanded into an amusing and original character in Dan Wickenden's The Amazing Vacation.

In the "Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens" section of The Little White Bird, J.M. Barrie put Mab as the queen of the fairies into Kensington Gardens with Peter Pan as the fairy piper. This Mab is not much like Mercutio's except in diminutive size. She does not rule dreams. She seems to be a flower fairy. The stress laid on ingenious use of miniature props is found in Shakespeare's fairies but is more characteristic of the Mab of Drayton's "Nimphidia."

The sentimentality of doting on the prettiness of the little dears gives a cloying quality to most of the works using diminutive fairies for any great length (if that is not a contradiction in terms). In Barrie, the sentiment is undercut at most points by humor. However, the joke of parodying court etiquette by showing it on a Lilliputian scale was already old when Barrie was writing, and the fairy scenes in The Little White Bird are not entirely effective.

In expanding and re-working his image of Peter for the play Peter Pan and again for the book Peter and Wendy, Barrie moved away from the fairy court. Tinker Bell is a vulgar, common fairy, named for her work as a tinker, repairing pots and pans. The contrast between Tinker Bell's conventional prettiness and her bad temper makes her more amusing than the fairies of The Little White Bird.

Queen Mab disappears from the play entirely but reappears briefly in the book as the name of a type of furniture: Tinker Bell's bed is a genuine Queen Mab. The implied displacement of Mab to centuries past is a decorous way of underscoring the differences between Barrie's fairies and those of folklore and tradition.

* * *

Apart from such characters as these (and Mab is next door to Titania, anyway), most of the examples of Shakespearean characters in children's literature are from A Midsummer-Night's Dream.

During much of the nineteenth century (approximately 1820-1870) there was a vogue among English artists for paintings of fairies--and fairies from the Dream especially. Fuseli, Thomas Stotland, Francis Danby, Richard Dadd, Sir Joseph Noel Paton, R. Huskinson, and John Simmons were among the artists who drew versions of Shakespeare's fairies. There was not immediate response to their work in fiction.



In 1874 appeared the first story about Puck known to me: Juliana Horatia Ewing's Lob Lie-by-the-Fire. Unlike the painters, who worked directly from Shakespeare's descriptions, Mrs. Ewing took her Lob chiefly from the folklore of the helpful brownie. The name she took for her brownie does not appear as such in written records. The creature of that name mentioned in The Knight of the Burning Pestle by Beaumont and Fletcher is the child of a giant. Mrs. Ewing may have found the same name in local, unrecorded folklore; or she may have decided that all lobs must be related, whether the lob is a Lie-by-the-fire or Milton's "lubber Fend" in "L'Allegro" (of the helpful brownie type), or Puck, called "lob of spirits." Unlike most of the writers who made use of Puck later. Unlike the Victorian painters, she did not choose to portray a world where fairyland is "real." Her hero is Puck only in simile and Lob Lie-by-the-fire only in disguise. Again unlike most later writers, her Lob does not represent the world of the imagination but the one of the country tradition, assumed to include moral and social stability.

The writers who followed her usually saw Puck and his fellows as an embodiment of the powers of imagination. Two of the most interesting examples of this use of the Dream are not really part of the field of children's literature but are by authors who were also famous for their children's books: James Barrie's play Dear Brutus and Walter de la Mare's novel Henry Brocken.

Barrie had used Mab as an incidental figure to Peter Pan; Peter himself carries the weight of the symbolism in his story. In Dear Brutus Barrie uses Puck--under the name of Lob--as the main symbolic figure who casts into the wood of lost chances. The mock-sentiment of Barrie's humor always threatens to spill over into sentimentality and sometimes does in Dear Brutus, especially in the main story of the alcoholic artist perhaps redeemed by the loss of his might-have-been daughter. Even the more satiric comedy of the other characters, who find themselves still the same in the wood of might-have-been, sometimes grows tiresome. But the idea of the wood has a mythic impact similar to the idea of Neverland. Lob, a sort of Peter Pan come at last to old age without ever growing up, is an effective characterization of an old and lonely (but still mischievous) Puck.

Walter de la Mare, in his first novel Henry Brocken, showed a youth's journey through the world of imaginative literature. The book is a tour de force as Henry Brocken encounters one famous character after another, each in some way trapped forever by the action of the famous story past. At the same time, the book is effective (despite its episodic structure) as a portrait of Henry Brocken, the dreamer and the idealist. Two chapters, "V. Nick Bottom," and "XIII. & XIV. A Doctor of Physic," are based on Shakespeare. Bottom is a wistful portrait of a human bewildered by loveliness more than he can understand, longing for

his old, simple life, forgetful of his own identity, and still bewitched. He is an emblem of one side of the condition of a dreamer like Henry Brocken. The Doctor of Physic is a sympathetic expansion of Lady Macbeth's doctor, haunted second-hand by deeds of blood.

De la Mare included two Lobs among his children's poetry, "Lob Lie By the Fire" in A Child's Day and "Lob-lie-by-the-fire" in Bells and Grass. Both, like Mrs. Ewing's Lob, are based on the helpful brownie of folklore rather than on Puck. The first is part of a series of undistinguished poems written to accompany photographs of a little girl's day. Lob is not part of her day; after she has gone to sleep he puts bird-songs in her dream, as well as doing his more usual night-time work of guarding household food and fire. The later "Lob" in Bells and Grass is similar but more compact and thus more effective. The earlier poem is in anapestic dimeter, the short lines intended (as in so much fairy verse) to suggest fairy lightness; but the extra verbiage allowed by the three-syllable foot undercuts the tripping quality, especially in lines further crowded by extra syllables, such as "Lob will rouse up and shuffle." The later poem is in iambic dimeter ("Keep me a crust/ or starve I must").[3] The later "Lob" drops the sentimental attachment to a child (out of pure good heartedness) and has Lob stick to his traditional guarding and blessing of the household in return for his food.

The most famous--and perhaps the best of all Pucks in children's literature is Kipling's in Puck of Pook's Hill and Rewards and Fairies. Kipling drew from both Shakespeare and folklore in creating his Oldest of the Old Things. Kipling varied the theme of fairyland as a world symbolizing the imagination, such as de la Mare or Barrie used. The Otherworld is implied in Puck of Pook's Hill and Rewards and Fairies, but Puck cannot bring Dan and Una to it--the People of the Hills have gone away. Some of the episodes in the books deal with the flitting of the Old Things, and touch the Otherworld briefly in showing its disappearance. But the world which Puck gives Dan and Una for the most part is their own world, England, in the richness of its history. England itself is part of the Otherworld, however, for it is "Merlin's Isle of Gramarye." [4] This patriotic myth deftly fuses love for the land and love for the good in what its people have done and may do.

Thus, in varying degrees, Barrie, de la Mare, and Kipling were able to

draw on Shakespeare's fairy lore to symbolize imagination. The elements of humor, grotesque appearance, and potential dangerousness in their fairies (Puck especially) helped keep them from degenerating into the merely pretty fairies found in much children's literature.

Without such anti-romantic elements in the portrait, even Puck and his fellows can become the merely pretty fairies denounced by Kipling's Puck. Alfred Noyes fell into the trap of portraying Fairyland as safe and cozy, a refuge from life's ills, in most of his versions of fairies from Shakespeare. His fullest use of the Dream mythology was in his verse-play Sherwood, with Oberon, Titania, and Puck acting as guardian angels to Robin Hood and Maid Marian. Pease-blossom and Mustard-seed make a briefer but similar appearance in his verse-tale The Forest of Wild Thyme. Later, he used the character of the mad fool, Shadow-of-a-Leaf, from Sherwood as his persona in the opening section of Songs of Shadow-of-a-Leaf and other poems. Perhaps his only successful use of Dream mythology was his least ambitious, a short poem, "Peter Quince." It is also the least "Shakespearean." There is no obvious identity between his fairy-stolen boy enchanted away by a magic book, and Shakespeare's confused impresario. The language of the poem imitates country dialect ("a gurt wide book," [5] etc.). The restriction to vocabulary and imagery appropriate to the dialect was probably a useful discipline for Noyes; in many of his other poems the sound is splendid at the expense of meaning--but not in "Peter Quince." Moreover, the Fairyland is ambivalent in this poem--the changeling left in Peter's place seems stupid, but may be wise as he sits "in a trance, for hours, / Talkin' softly to bees and flowers" [6] with a magic glow in his eyes; the true Peter is lost forever from having found beauty. This ambivalence is a welcome contrast to the unmixed sweetness of his other fairies. [7]

Two modern writers have found striking ways to build on the mythology of Puck, one comic and one romantic: Maurice Dolbier and Patricia Gordon. Dolbier's The Magic Shop tells of the adventures of two children in keeping a magic wand away from a wicked magician after they get it at the shop of a good magician, J. Wellington Oberon (not the one in the play, he says--his brother); Puck is the shop-assistant. As in E. Nesbit's stories of magic talismans, much of the humor grows out of mishaps in learning the rules to control the magic. Puck, in his traditional role of trickster, adds

temporarily to the children's difficulties. Gordon, in The Oldest Secret, takes the myth of the floating island and makes the island the source of all magic islands and (because her island is wooded) of all magic forests--Delos, Brendan's Isle, Keats' "perilous seas in faery lands forlorn," Coleridge's Xanadu, Shakespeare's wood outside Athens, etc. She puts Robin Goodfellow on the island, and the climax of the story is built on the hero's belief in friendship and the trust he gives the trickster Robin against all appearances.

Shakespeare did not create Oberon, Titania, and Puck [8] any more than Homer created the Greek gods, but he fixed their characters, as Homer did those of the gods. In doing so, he created a pantheon similarly useful to later artists searching for local habitations and names for the airy nothings of their imaginations. But this pantheon was especially useful in children's literature: the originals were in a work likely to be known to children, their size made them child-like, and Puck was additionally child-like in his low sense of humor and in the absence of sexual escapades among his adventures. Furthermore, it was a pantheon associated by the original author with the theme of the powers of imagination, and it has been this theme which has appealed to most of the authors of stories based on the Dream. (Mrs. Ewing is the only important exception.)

Thus, despite the formally narrow limits of the possible uses of another writer's characters, this group of stories is large and includes several classics.

All three types--modern stories alluding to Shakespeare, historical novels including him as a character, and Dream-based fantasies (and the rarer stories drawing from other plays)--show Shakespeare's influence as strong (and usually beneficial) in children's literature.

FOOTNOTES

[1] David Benidt, of the University of Minnesota, in an unpublished paper, "Shakespeare in Children's Literature," surveyed 48 collections of re-tellings of Shakespeare's plays. The four most popular plays were Dream and Merchant of Venice, each appearing in 20 collections, and Tempest and As You Like It, each appearing in 19 collections; in addition, in surveying 33 anthologies of poetry for children, he found three songs from Tempest, one song and a speech from Dream, and two songs from As You Like It among the eight selections from Shakespeare most often chosen. (The most popular selection was the only one not from a popular play, "When icicles hang by the wall." Love's Labour's Lost was included in only three of the re-tellings.)



[2]A disguised girl together with a boy in Trease's Cue for Treason; a disguised girl in Watson's Mistress Malapert; otherwise boys. There is an unconsciously sexist attitude in stories of acting children, both those set in contemporary times and the historical novels. The authors assume that the stage is not a serious career for a boy to want except in special circumstances, and they assume that boys in fact do not want to act. Thus, of these Elizabethan boys, only Harry in A Cry of Players, who has the excuse that his father was a player, plans to continue on the stage. Master Skylark has to be kidnapped and browbeaten to be got on stage at all. Books with contemporary settings about acting children are nearly all books for girls about girls, most of them serious about a career in the theater, e.g., Alcott's Josie, many of Streatfeild's heroines, Elizabeth in Those Verney Girls, or Mona in the Melendy family stories. Boys in these books are steered away from acting. For instance, Mark in Theater Shoes enjoys singing--not acting--but prefers the navy. The Owl in Those Verney Girls wants to write. A science fiction book (not specified as a juvenile by the publisher, but dealing for most of its length with the adolescence and young manhood of its hero), John Morressy's Star Drift, begins with the boy in theater (with various Shakespearean allusions); but gradually he drifts into travelling as a troubador

instead of acting or play-writing, and at last he settles down entirely as a head of a family. The boys in The Swish of the Curtain are seriously interested in theater as a career (and successfully battle their parents' assumption that acting is somehow unmanly), but the girls in the group are more interested in acting as such; the boys lean more to stagecraft, music, and direction. There may well be a large audience of stage-struck boys as hungry as stage-struck girls for encouragement, if only publishers and authors would give it to them.

[3]De la Mare, "Lob Lie By the Fire," in A Child's Day (NY: E.P. Dutton, n.d.), p. 54; "Lob-lie-by-the-fire," in Bells and Grass (London: Faber and Faber, 1941), p. 85.

[4]Kipling, "Puck's Song," in Puck of Pook's Hill (NY: Doubleday, Page, and Co., 1906), p. 4.

[5]Noyes, "Peter Quince," in The Elfin Artist and Other Poems (NY: Frederick A. Stokes, 1920), p. 19.

[6]Ibid., p. 20.

[7]Some other examples of overly pretty fairylands are to be found in the "Bruno's Revenge" chapter of Lewis Carroll's Sylvie and Bruno (Sylvie and Bruno as fairies of Oberon's court are at their most cloying); Netta Syrett's play Robin Goodfellow; the original sections of Walter Jerrold's The True Annals of Fairyland, The Reign of King Oberon (an anthology with a framework of Oberon calling for stories); and

some of the poems of Elizabeth MacKistray's Puck in Pasture.

[8]For information on their background in folklore, see K.M. Briggs, The Anatomy of Puck: An Examination of Fairy Beliefs Among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and Successors (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959).

I wish to thank the University of Minnesota's Kerlan Collection of Children's Literature and Laura Jane Musser for the opportunity to do this study.

I started trading fanzines with Ruth Berman in the late 50's when she was in high school and then in college where she majored in mathematics. Later she switched to English and I saw a lot of her in the early 60's when I was working in Livermore, CA and she was taking an MA in English at Berkeley. It was she who helped to enrich fandom and NIEKAS by discovering in her classes Diana Paxson and Anne Braude and bringing them to Little Men's meetings. She then returned to Minneapolis, got her PhD in English, and is now teaching in Oklahoma. Ruth is widely published; not only in general fanzines and Star Trek publications, but in literary journals and magazines devoted to Liberal Judaism.

erm



SOUNDS



R.C. Walker

I Winter winds blowing
Past my window do not hide
Sound of eager claws.

II I hear soft creaking.
In May breeze slowly swinging:
Door I had just locked.

III Easter night I wake
And hear the cautious footsteps
Coming up our well.

A Personal Look At Illustrating SF

by Terry Leves

If defining SF is difficult, illustrating the stuff can in some ways be even harder. Oh, almost anyone who can wobble a pencil can produce an illo which has obvious SF connotations; but to take a specific yarn and produce a piece of artwork which brings it to life presents all sorts of problems.

Perhaps the most obvious pitfall is the fact that each reader "creates" his own mental concepts of a story, its characters, setting, and gimmickry. Woe betide the artist whose visualisation of the Cosmic All differs from the "correct" one held by the reader of the story it illustrates...then try to please 10,000 such readers and--to paraphrase Barnum (or was it Bailey?) --"You can't please all the people, all of the time."

Way back in the fifties, at the Supermancon held in Manchester, Alistair Paterson (then-editor of THE VARGO STATTEN* MAGAZINE) planned to use this "can't please everyone" syndrome in a talk he gave. He asked for a fanartist from the audience to come up and illustrate his idea on a blackboard....I was volunteered by a group of fen who manhandled me onto the platform.

Paterson handed me a stick of chalk, waved me to the blackboard, and began. His theme was the difficulty of pleasing everyone when it came to cover design of the VSM. He asked the audience for ideas on just what would make a good magazine cover. I realised what he had in mind... accept every "idea" and leave muggins to make a mess of the resulting hotch-potch; thus proving the can't-please-em-all thesis.

I resolved to turn the tables. "It should have a spaceship," yelled one character...."something astronomical," called another...."a robot" yelled a

third...."alien scenery" came from another.

"Right, let's start with those," said Paterson turning to look at me. Happily, I had a nefarious plan cooked up. I quickly sketched a robot standing by an observatory set amongst jungle and hills watching a spaceship streak across a star-studded sky. It was at this point that Paterson would have to ask for MORE subjects.

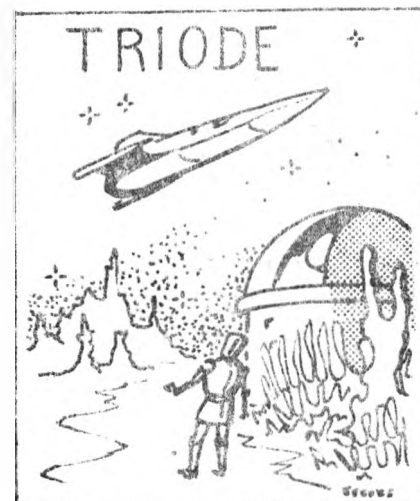
So I got in first.

"One thing missing, Mr. Paterson," I called out. "Here's your cover design but it needs the magazine title." Before he could say VSM, I had lettered in the word "TRIODE" across the top. Pandemonium reigned; Paterson had lost the battle. For those who miss the significance of the title, TRIODE was the new fanzine which was just being launched by Eric Jones, Eric Bentscliffe, and myself (mainly by leaving leaflets all over the con hotel). Sometimes... just sometimes, you can please all the people.

Well, all except Alistair Paterson.

Since then, I have dabbled in all sorts of SF illustrating. My first professional sale was to NEBULA, where I had to illustrate the crew of a disabled spacecraft gathered around the defunct gravity generator. One reader said the result looked like below-decks on the Queen Mary.

When Phil Harbottle published VISIONS OF TOMORROW, I got commissioned to do a stack of SF "fillos". These would get plugged into any gaps in the magazine which turned up at the planning stage. As far as I know, no one ever commented on them at all so maybe you can also



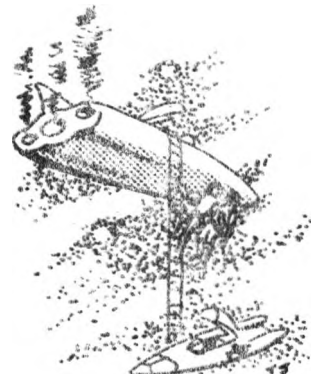
strike the middle line between pleasing and displeasing your audience.

If so, I managed it.

The only true solution to this please-em-all problem is to illustrate your own concept to the best of your ability; then sit back and hope for the best. Even then there are pitfalls...

'Round about 1936, I was given a hardcover annual of short stories (not one of 'em on SF) with a "space" cover. It was a beautiful painting of one spacesuit-clad character rescuing another from a damaged spacecraft. Even to my young eye, it had two outstanding errors. The rope ladder was hanging taut and straight under the combined weight of the astronauts and the rocket smoke was rising straight up as if from a chimney.

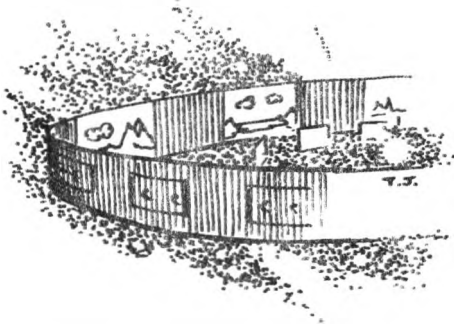
Moral: in addition to depicting an aesthetically pleasing scene, the artist must--especially nowadays--



be as technically accurate as possible. In that connection, I remember seeing a cover design for Larry Niven's excellent Ringworld in which the day sections (interspersed with shadow--anel-produced "nights") were skillfully depicted as vertical picture panels with gravity acting firmly down the axis of the ring. Of course, we all realise that such views should have been shown in plan form with gravity acting radially outwards from the axis of rotation, don't we?

So, the artist must be technically accurate, please his audience, and, on top of all that, his illustration must fit the facts of the story. In the soot-and-whitewash days of the pulps, numerous "honey-blond" heroines became black-haired beauties. Or even worse, as happened when ASF "lost" a Doc Smith story to a competitor--after the illos and cover had been prepared--we got a spaceship being sliced into neat helpings to accompany a story containing no such incident.

These of course, are the more obvious problems which beset the SF artist, but there are still others.



How to decide what illustration will best fit a story is another. In the early days, the action-type tale needed but a robot, a spaceship, or an asteroid to fit almost any story. Frank R. Paul gained fame for a plethora of superbly gigantic machines (with even delicate time machines sporting colossal gear-chains and cogs). He also featured pudding faced characters and a stable of jodhpurs-wearing heroes. His heroines tended to make do with an old bedsheet draped in the Grecian style. Somehow, I never accepted Paul as SF's Great Artist. Prolific, yes; grandiose and even highly competent, but never Great.

Which raises the question of just who do I put on my own pedestal of excellence? In my book, the greatest (black and white) SF illustrator--and the least honored--was Charles Schneeman. His characters, alien or human, were living, breathing life forms. His machinery and space scenes only needed the press of a button to make them perk up and go.

On the fantasy side, Lovecraft's Gothic horror and eldritch monsters are unbeatable as is his dot/stipple technique. We all try to copy it; no one has yet succeeded. For that tenuous borderline twixt fantasy and SF or for a touch of humour, who can beat Edd Cartier? Superbly credible aliens...especially where he was mated to Sprague de Camp's zany humour.

When times changed and fewer robots, spaceships, and asteroids were called for, illustrators often experienced difficulty in selecting a story hook on which to hang their talents. Hubert Rogers in particular would annoy me intensely by simply



producing a character's head--usually a baby-faced, yet stubble-chinned hero--with the chap's name tastefully lettered into its border. This changing story content ushered in the experimental era of SF artwork where pen lines were water-smudged, ink blots became a staple background, and many a distorted rectangle or tortured line would convey all (or nothing) to the viewer.

To be fair, SF illustrators had other problems and no doubt still do. If they were lucky, the editor would send them a story and say, "Do me an illustration for this". More likely, he wouldn't bother but would simply ask for two illos: one of a man being chased by a monster, and another of a time machine in action. Further complications arose when the artist had to work for a specific page, left or right. It makes a difference psychologically. Readers accept a character looking to the right on a right-hand page (i.e. out of the book); but for a left hand page, it seems more acceptable to be looking into the book if the illo is to the left of the page or out of the book if it is nearer the centre. Likewise, and this is a frequent pitfall for amateur sword-and-sorcery artists, when composing a scene depicting a sword-toting hero, one likes to see the blade. So, he should be standing to exhibit his right-hand side, since 90% of swordsmen are right-handers. The average amateur whips up a heroic posture only to find the hero is facing left and the sword would be

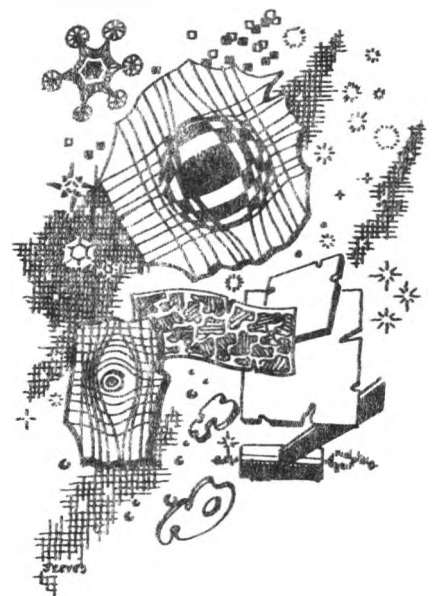
hidden unless Korman the Ballbearian becomes a southpaw.

Then there are problems of media. There is no use doing a nifty multi-tone semi-nude if the magazine only uses soot-and-whitewash on its blotting-type paper. Alternatively, if the magazine is slick, like OMNI which can use color, will it enhance that gloomy Gothic torture chamber to use color; and if so, how best to employ it.

One perennial problem arises where the heroine gets stripped by the lecherously-inclined Venusian slime-mould. Enough bosom and lissome leg must be shown to titillate the teenagers, but strategic areas must be craftily hidden behind seemingly random bits of scenery.

Perhaps the most difficult poser is how to come up with fresh and different illustrations for stories set in the same old grooves: the space scene, the mad robot, the female-grabbing alien, etc. I suppose one can vary the trim on a custom-made space yacht or robot; but solving the problem of invisible men, operating time-travel machines, or a frenetic anything-goes Rafferty story, must drive many an artist to the brink of the bottle...or beyond. How, for instance, would YOU illustrate the symbiotic alien detective featured in Hal Clement's Needle?

Problems, always problems: and not for fabulous amounts of money either. SF illustrating is largely a labour of love and its appreciation should be the same. So next time you lam-baste an illo desecrating your favorite author's opus, spare a thought for the poor old artist who drew it, will you?





Avalon...

The apple isle of Avalon,
Above the Western Sea,
Where Arthur went for healing
By Morgan and the three...

* * *

The amber shores of Avalon
Are ardent with delight
Beneath the argent northern sun
And milky northern night.

Apollo walks in Avalon,
The god the Druids serve,
Caressing with enchanted smile
The ripened apple's curve.

His music sighs through Avalon
Beneath the summer stars,
And Arthur dreams of Guinevere
And rubs his half-healed soars.

The music sobs in Avalon
And Arthur in his sleep
Begins to dream of Camelot,
Remembering, to weep

For Guinevere and Lancelot,
The Table and the Grail;
He reaches for Excalibur
And wakes; his brow is pale.

The music whispers, "Avalon,"
And Merlin, far away
Enchanted, dreams of Vivien
Beneath a rock of gray.

by Anne Braude

The music pours from Avalon
Across the Western Sea;
Morgan in her silken bed
Murmurs restlessly;

And far and far from Avalon,
Veiled in her amber hair,
One the world knew as Guinevere
Wakes all night long in prayer.

* * *

Apollo sleeps in Avalon;
The music is no more,
The lute is dumb, and silent is
The apple-scented shore.

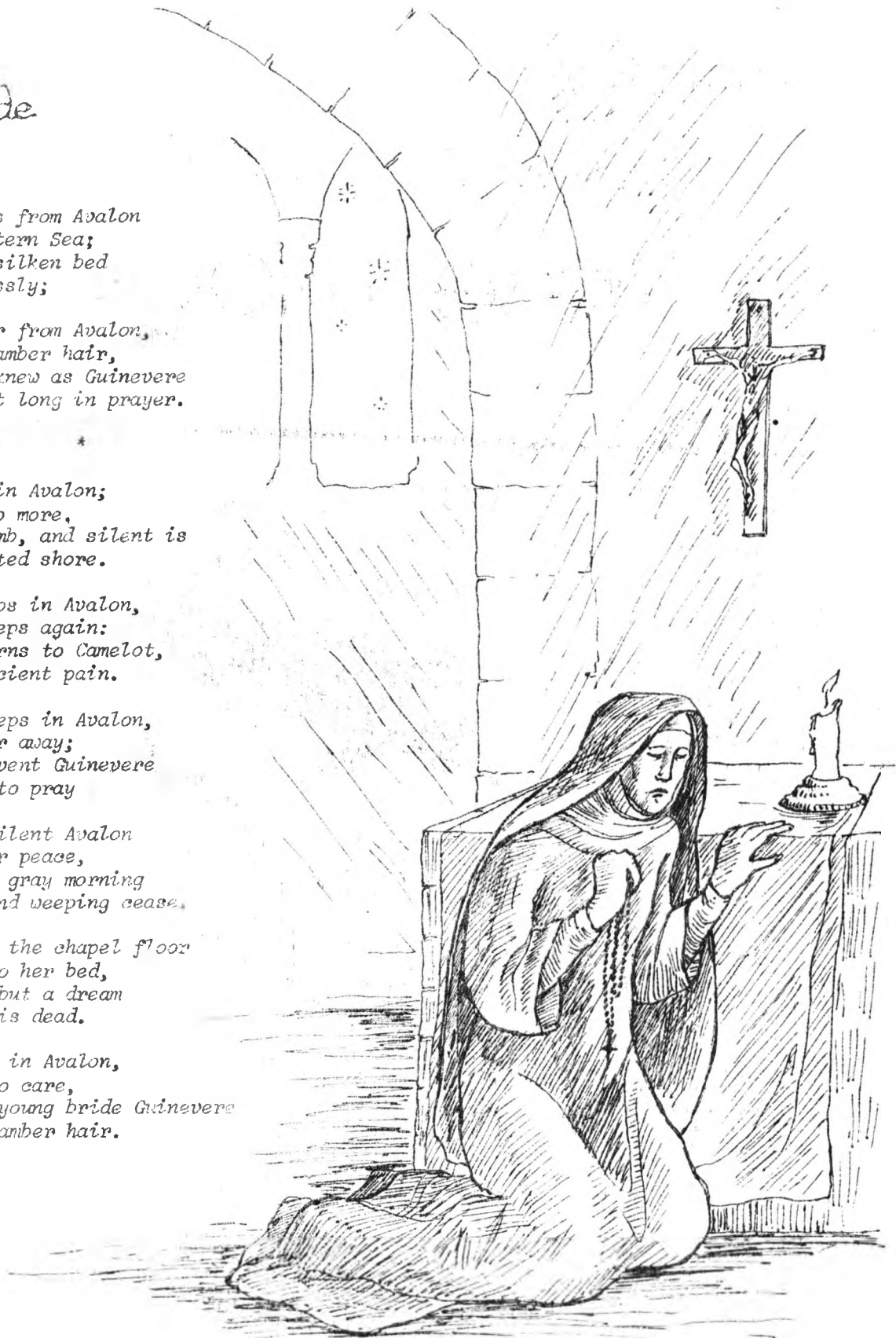
The music sleeps in Avalon,
And Arthur sleeps again:
In dreams returns to Camelot,
Forgets his ancient pain.

Now Morgan sleeps in Avalon,
And Merlin, far away;
But in her convent Guinevere
Remains awake to pray

And dream of silent Avalon
Asleep in amber peace,
Until the cold gray morning
Bids prayers and weeping cease.

She rises from the chapel floor
And stumbles to her bed,
For Avalon is but a dream
And Lancelot is dead.

Across the sea in Avalon,
Arthur, lost to care,
Dreams of his young bride Guinevere
Veiled in her amber hair.



a review of Madeleine L'Engle's Time Trilogy

- Wayne Shumaker

The first volume of Madeleine L'Engle's science fiction trilogy, *A Wrinkle in Time*, is already moderately celebrated. The other two volumes, *A Wind in the Door* and *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*, whether or not less read, seem to have been less written about; but all three deserve discussion. They are children's books--my ten-year-old granddaughter has read the first volume twice with evident enjoyment--but, like all the best children's literature, they can absorb adults as well.

A Wrinkle in Time has to do with the efforts of three children to rescue their father, a distinguished physicist, from captivity on an unlocated planet named Camazotz where he is imprisoned in a transparent column. He must be freed before he allows his will to be sunk in that of It, a disembodied and oversized brain which preaches the bliss of surrender on the grounds that thereafter the pain of choice will disappear. The hominoid inhabitants of Camazotz do things precisely on schedule: go to work, take in their evening newspapers, turn lights on and off; and even children, when bouncing balls or skipping ropes, do so in identical rhythms. The planet is a gray one in which, by official doctrine, the dullness of peace and security is more than compensated for by the absence of stress. The few nonconformists--for example, a little boy who bounced his ball out of the usual pattern--are "reprocessed" by the authorities of CENTRAL Central Intelligence, housed in a huge, square building in the capital city.

The method by which space travel is achieved is called "tessering" or



"tesseract", words meant to indicate use of a fifth dimension but actually derived from *tessera*, an Ionic form of a Greek root meaning "four".

Camazotz has been dominated by a Dark Shadow which the three children, from the peak of a high mountain on a planet in the belt of Orion, have been shown blotting out whole galaxies of starlight. The shadow is Evil, perhaps Satan himself, and is intensely cold. It has already made serious inroads on the celestial universe and constantly threatens Earth; but the children's fight against it is assisted by three beings of changeable form called Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which. As is usual in such fiction, they help the protagonists by taking them where they must go but then leave to them the essential acts of heroism. Although Mrs. Whatsit had, we are told, once been a star who had voluntarily exploded in order to fill a darkening part of the universe with light, we are meant to recognize the three as guardian angels.

Of the children who constitute the rescue party, one is the daughter of the physicist and a biologist and another their son. The third, Calvin O'Keefe, is a neighborhood boy from a disorganized home who is ultimately to become a medical researcher. Meg Murry, the daughter, is shortsighted, plain, and a trial to her school teachers because, the pace being too slow for her, she pays attention only spottily. She is obviously bright (especially in mathematics) and we know too that her ravishingly beautiful mother had been unattractive as a child. The characterization of these two is generally good and sometimes excellent. Concerning the third child, Charles Wallace, opinions may vary. He began talking only when he was four--but then in complete sentences. At five, he has avoided learning to read for fear of outstripping his future schoolmates. Yet there appears to be little he does not know and less that he cannot understand, and his speech and emotional reactions are often fully adult. He has, moreover, the gift of mind-reading,

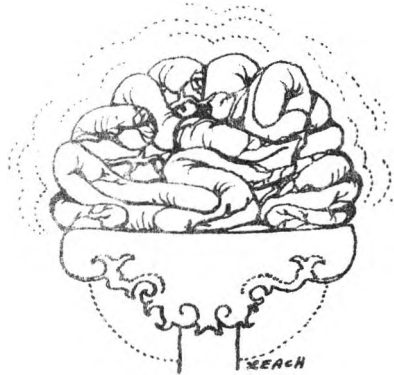
as we learn first from his heating of milk for Meg when she is to come down to the kitchen from her attic bedroom because she fears a storm. Ultimately the gift is to cause serious trouble because, in trying to understand it, he becomes subject to its power: an event which requires Meg to make a second, and this time solitary, trip to Camazotz.

The story is doubly thematic: the quasi-Communist society on Camazotz is bad because it suppresses choice, and divine powers assist well-meaning human beings in resisting Satanic evil. So far so good. In reading, despite the Hollywood theory that what counts in all the arts is merely entertainment, most of us appreciate meaning. A story with drift is preferable to one which merely passes time, for it engages attention at a deeper level and therefore invites fuller absorption. Unfortunately, in attempting to resistance; and in science fiction far-out notions that break down under scrutiny may lessen or, at worst, destroy the reader's willingness to cooperate imaginatively.

It is necessary to distinguish. The idea of tessering will pass muster for two reasons, the first being that without it the story could not have been told at all, the second being that because it makes severe demands on the imagination, no reader can be sure he has earned the right to deny it. The intervention of Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which is similarly acceptable. Not only are they essential to the narrative machinery, but we are willing to grant to authors, as to other people--and may ourselves perhaps believe--that Divinity cares about us. Other devices may provoke different responses in different people. For me, what is bothersome is a serious reliance upon mind-reading, which in the entire trilogy bears a heavy responsibility for the protagonists' successes. Although practised with increasing skill by Meg and Calvin as the series progresses, mind-reading is essentially Charles Wallace's native gift. Because of it we are to regard him as a greater genius than his physicist father, who is a frequent consultant of presidents, and his biologist mother, who is to win a Nobel prize.

The difficulty is that ESP, with which in one of its forms mind-reading is identical, in recent years has become increasingly doubtful, serious flaws having been discovered in virtually all the evidence that has been offered for it. Martin Gardner, for years the author of a feature called "Mathematical Games" in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, has been an especially

persuasive opponent. A reader who is aware of the development may be resentful of Miss L'Engle's failure to keep up with research or of her rejection of it. To him, the victories achieved by mind-reading or by kything (the word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *cyðan*, "to make known", and means both mind-reading and thought transference) will seem



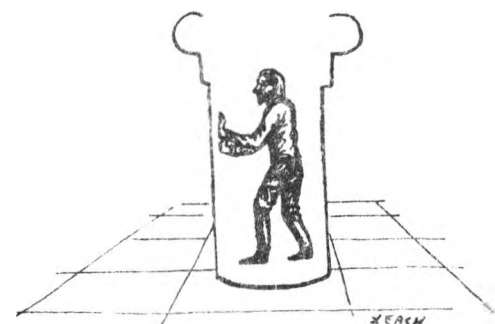
either dubious or incredible, with the result that willing suspension of disbelief is compromised and the narrative sinks from a "might-be" to a self-indulgent fantasy. As has been said, it is a danger to which science fiction is especially subject.

The appropriate moral is not, I think, that science fiction ought to be written only by authentic scientists like Isaac Asimov but that authors who are not themselves scientists ought to be especially dubious of ideas that have a powerful emotional attraction for them. Miss L'Engle wants strongly to believe in the reality of spirit, as she has every right to do, but she imputes to sheer mind more than it is capable of performing. The reader who does not believe in Charles Wallace will be made so impatient that he may reject not only the volume he has in his hands but also others the author has written or might write. And that would be a pity, for the books have many merits.

The second volume of the trilogy, *A Wind in the Door*, makes even greater demands for the alteration of usual modes of consciousness. The essential situation is that Charles Wallace, now six, is suffering from a disease within the mitochondria of his body cells. Specifically, the problem is with the farandolae, organisms so tiny that their existence cannot be verified by the most powerful electron microscope. The name appears to come from the French *farandole*, "a spirited circle dance of Provençal derivation". The term is beautifully relevant to the book's climax, in which rebellious farandolae, instead of Deepening (rooting themselves to develop into

mature fara), perform a wild dance which must be broken if Charles Wallace is not to die. I suspect, but am not sure, that both the word --which I have been unable to discover in dictionaries of medicine and biology--and the micro-organisms are the author's inventions. Although at one point Meg, Calvin, and the school principal, Mr. Jenkins, are transported by a Teacher and a cherubim (who when Calvin objects that "cherubim" is a plural form replies "I am practically plural") to a planet two trillion light-years distant from earth, instead of space travel we have mainly what might be called inward travel. All of these personages, except the Teacher, find themselves at length deep within a mitochondrion in Charles Wallace's sickly body, where it is their task to disrupt the dance in order that after Deepening the mature fara may supply the lungs with oxygen. Their success is due finally to Love, the essentially curative force in all three novels. At the end, Charles Wallace sits up in bed and asks for a turkey dinner. The book's title comes from a passage on the last two pages in which the violent blowing open of a door reveals to us that the cherubim, in X-ing or destroying himself to accomplish his mission, has not ceased utterly to exist.

The evil stems from the Echthroi, or Enemies, who are to *A Wind in the Door* what the Dark Shadow is to *A Wrinkle in Time*. Miss L'Engle's animism or panpsychism imputes all destructiveness to failure of love; and the Echthroi embody hatred. As in the earlier novel, the Echthroi's effort is to persuade, or, if persuasion is impossible, to force everything that exists--and everything is conscious--to surrender to the bliss of essential nothingness. The mission of the good in the universe is, in contrast, by an outpouring of love to convince, but never to force, even such miniscule particles of reality as farandolae to recognize the implication of everything in everything else. There is no such thing as limited spheres of influence. The universe is meant to sing and dance in a single all-embracing



harmony like the Cosmic Dance of the Middle Ages and C.S. Lewis. The disharmony of any fragment, however tiny, endangers the whole.

As the second volume of the trilogy is more complex than the first, so the third is more complex than the second. In A Swiftly Tilting Planet, the unicorn Gaudior at one point says, "there is always a moment when there is a Might-Have-Been. What we must do is find the Might-Have-Beens which have led to this particular evil.... It is possible that you can move into the moment of a Might-Have-Been and change it". The essential mission undertaken by Charles Wallace, now fifteen, is to change the past--and thereby the present--by altering the heredity of a South American dictator, Mad Dog Branzillo, who is threatening to unleash nuclear warfare against the United States. In other words, the task is to replace the existent present by another which is less perilous.

Accordingly Charles Wallace is made to voyage into varying historical pasts in order to bring about a change in Branzillo's heredity. The travel is not only backwards in time but also within persons whose behavior, at critical moments, he can alter. Thus at one point he prevents the hanging as a witch of a woman who is to become a remote ancestor of the different Branzillo. At another he contrives the sending of a nearer female ancestor from New England to provide an opportunity for her to marry a better paternal ancestor-to-be in remote Vespugia (in Patagonia, oddly described as a hot country). But there are more such journeyings Within than can conveniently be described here.

The means of influence is often something called Patrick's Rune, a traditional Irish charm which invokes the sun, snow, fire, lightning, wind, sea, rocks, and earth to do things which will alter a bad situation. The successive lines of the rune provide the chapter headings. In the end, it turns out that Mad Dog Branzillo is not, after all, the power-mad terrorist he had been at the beginning but a quite different man with the Welsh Christian name Madoc. Mr. Murry, who had said of the earlier Branzillo on p.16, "He is mad indeed, and there is no reason in him", on page 254 says of the later one, "He's always been known as a man of peace". The earlier present has left no memory because it has been made never to have existed. Only Charles Wallace and Meg, who throughout has followed his nearly fatal adventures by kything with him as she lay in her attic bed, remain temporarily aware that there had been danger of holocaust. The source of the rune has

been Mrs. O'Keefe, Calvin's mother and now Meg's mother-in-law, who although outwardly unprepossessing and even stupid, turns out to have retained some awareness of "the ancient music" and hence also to be a magician of sorts. Her remembering of the rune has been an essential part of the redemptive process. For the rest, the story deals heavily with Welsh legends and Indian cultures, in neither of which was I able, despite strenuous efforts, to take much interest.

Does the central notion have the relative and conditional credibility which permits fictive belief? I do not speak for others but must confess that for me it does not. That time is relative in the sense that it passes at different speeds for people remaining place-bound and other people traveling at near the speed of light is now generally acknowledged. That in some imaginative sense all times are simultaneous, as in Charles Williams's All Hallows Eve, although probably untrue can perhaps be granted for the duration of a fictive spell. Scientific time--for example, that of astronomy and of evolution--is, however, unilinear and irreversible. No other hypothesis about it will fit the scientific evidence. That what has really happened--what we know by the author's own testimony has been actual--should be made un-actual and wiped out except in the fading memory of two or three paranormal people boggles belief. A Swiftly Tilting Planet accordingly lacks the permanent fascination of such a classic as Edwin E. Abbot's Flatland, which remains firmly within the realm of the Might-Possibly-Be.

Since the books are aimed primarily at children, my objection can be phrased in a different way. When I finished A Wrinkle in Time, I was eager to give it to my granddaughter, who as I have said turned out already to know it. When I finished A Wind in the Door, I was uncertain whether to give it to her as I had intended. When I finished A Swiftly Tilting Planet, I wanted to hide the book away where she would be unable to find it.

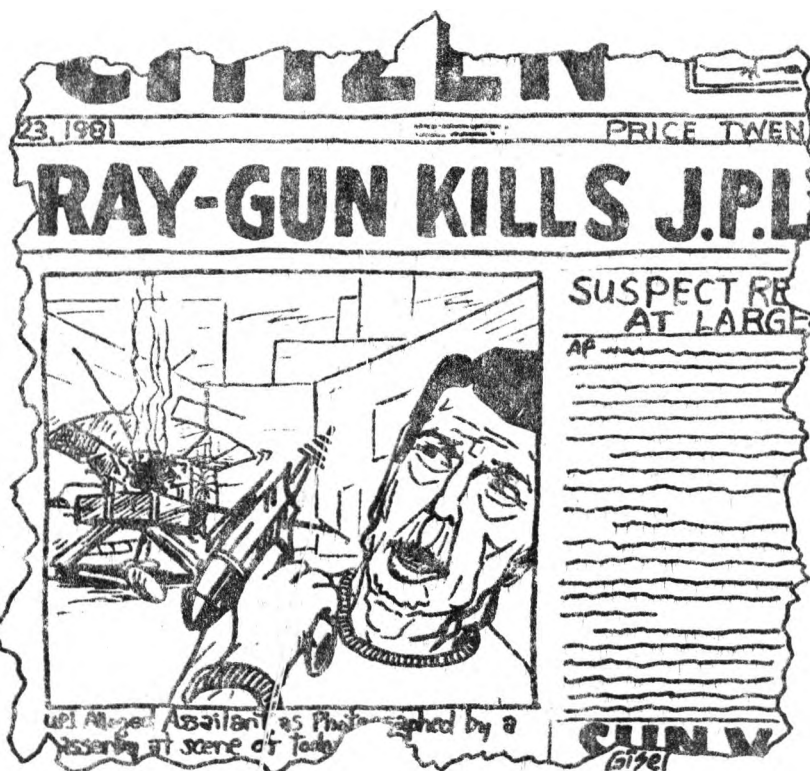
It is good for minds to be stretched, but not good for them to be deluded. They can be made imaginative, flexible, receptive to ideas not of an everyday kind, but they ought not to be perverted. In retrospect my fear is that even in the first two volumes of the trilogy, elements of a world view to which I take vigorous exception are embodied in such ways as not to be consciously noticed but nevertheless subtly to encourage a mysticism which long

study has convinced me is erroneous and damaging. An especially important stratum of Miss L'Engle's mysticism is the animism or panpsychism already noticed: the belief that everything in the universe is endowed with consciousness and perhaps will. We have noticed this in the faradolae, which, if real, science must suppose to be merely chemical organisms. Again, the wind gives knowledge to the unicorn Gaudior, who drinks it when he is puzzled; the singing of the stars is not a poetic fiction but is to be taken literally, as Pythagoras took it; puddles of water form images of the future; and so on indefinitely. For the author, such notions appear to be authenticated by their antiquity and world-wide distribution; but a more plausible explanation is that they derive from the inability of young children to distinguish between the living and the lifeless, so that the floor on which a doll's head has been broken may be punished by spanking. Maturation both for the individual and for the race is in considerable part a slow, and sometimes painful, growth in the understanding of true causation.

In sum, what bothers me about the very skillfully written trilogy is a fear that it may seduce bright but uninformed young people especially, but perhaps also some not very hardheaded older ones, to believe that man, the world, and the universe are what they are not. To say so much is not to revive an old, and properly discredited, belief that fairy stories are harmful. Miss L'Engle appears to propagandize for her panpsychism in a way that fairy stories do not --to be engaged, indeed, almost in an effort to convert. But we dare not, as a people, rely upon runes, kything, and visits from guardian angels or unicorns for the solution of our problem and the birth of a braver new world. Her morality seems to me to be not only acceptable but perhaps profoundly right; but I wish she had grounded it upon different, and firmer, metaphysical preconceptions.

Mr. Shumaker is an Emeritus Professor of English from the University of California, Berkeley. He has written three books more or less on occultism (one soon to be published, and still a fourth nearly finished). Of these the most relevant to this review is The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance (Berkeley: 1972).

His specialty is seventeenth-century English literature, especially Milton, and has long been interested in the writings of Tolkien and C.S. Lewis



This is being written 1 March, 1981. As I type, I have no idea what the final budget for NASA will be, but the general outlines are clear, and thus we can summarize what the Planetary Exploration Program will be for the 1980's.

Dismal.

To understand the present bad situation, we must go back to 1977. That year, NASA made a decision that would plague us for years. The Titan-III launch pad was closed down after launching the two Voyager spacecraft on their journeys to Jupiter and Saturn. All future launches would be made from the Space Shuttle Orbiter.

But the Orbiter was mostly a means of getting into low-Earth orbit. To be able to launch planetary probes or heavy satellites into Clarke Orbits (sometimes called Geo-synchronous orbits), an upper stage was needed. The original shuttle plans had called for a Space Tug, but this had to be delayed because of lack of funds.

To fill the gap, an Interim Upper Stage (IUS) was proposed: solid fuel and un-manned. The Jet Propulsion Lab was told to work on future space projects with this combination and we did. The sights were set for 1982 when the shuttle would be fully operational and there was a very favourable "launch window" towards Jupiter.

In addition, that was the best time to launch a mission to Halley's Comet, in its once-every-76-years

visit to the inner solar system. A rendezvous was planned using an ion drive spacecraft. Launched in 1982, it would glide alongside the comet as it approached the sun in late 1985. The world of science looked forward to the mission.

As for the Jupiter window, we came up with the Jupiter Orbiter and Probe: JOP. It would be a double spacecraft. One part was an orbiter designed to cruise around the Jupiter system. The other was a Probe which would descend into the atmosphere of Jupiter and make measurements for half an hour. But it had to be launched in 1982 because any other year would require a greater amount of power than the Shuttle IUS could give us.

That was 1977. 1978 was a disaster as far as funding goes. The mission to Halley's Comet was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, but it also would cost \$500 Million. "Millions and Millions of dollars," as Carl Sagan would say. Despite an outcry from the scientists, the mission was not funded.

We almost didn't get the JOP, either. In fact, it was cut-out in committee and reinstated on the floor of the House of Representatives. We pointed out that if it was not funded, there would be no continuity at JPL as far as space operations went. The Voyager mission to Saturn would terminate at the end of 1981 and JOP was needed to take up the slack. We got JOP, barely. We also got

news that the Shuttle was having a few problems that might delay the first launch scheduled for 1979.

No other planetary missions were authorized, although JPL had several good candidates. We were told to be happy with JOP. Money was tight and needed for the Shuttle.

1979 seemed to be a good year (or at least better than 1978). This was when we wanted two starts, both for launch in 1983, when we would have two good windows.

The first was the International Solar Polar Mission. The idea was to put two spacecraft over the poles of the sun. Now, this is not as easy as it may seem. We can't see the poles of the sun from the earth and there is no way we could launch a spacecraft directly to the poles.

Ahhhhh...but in 1983 we could use another favourable Jupiter launch window to send a pair of spacecraft to pass over the both poles of the giant planet. A single Shuttle/IUS launch was all that was needed. Using the assist of Jupiter's gravity, the two spacecraft were to be flung out of the Ecliptic Plane and then head back towards the sun. They would arrive in 1986/1987.

This was not an arbitrary choice of years. This was when the sun would be at its quiet stage in the 11 year sunspot cycle. This was when the best measurements of solar activity could be made. We signed a contract with the European Space Agency, ESA, in which they would provide one of the spacecraft, and we would provide the second as well as the Shuttle/IUS.

1983 was also one of the best years to send a spacecraft to Venus. And JPL wanted to do just that, with a Radar Mapper on board. The radar would scan the planet giving resolutions of one kilometer. And it could be handled by the Shuttle/IUS combination.

We got Solar Polar, we didn't get the Venus Radar Mapper, and there seemed to be yet more delays and problems and cost over-runs with the Shuttle.

1980 was the end of any serious planetary programs for the 1980's. It started bad and ended worse.

First off, the Shuttle was obviously in trouble. It was going to be late and under-powered. It became obvious that the Shuttle/IUS could not launch the Galileo Mission as a single spacecraft. That is what we had re-named the JOP...Galileo. Sounded rather good, actually. But now we had to split the project. The launch date was set back to

1984. The two spacecraft were to be launched as separate vehicles which would involve a fairly extensive re-design. A separate Shuttle/IUS for each craft added substantially to the mission cost, and the need for money soon involved the Solar Polar.

NASA broke its contract with the ESA and unilaterally decided to delay the launch from 1983 to 1985. Not only would this degrade the science return of the mission, but it also involved the separate launches of the spacecraft, raising the cost of the mission. This hurt the ESA and they howled.

And there was also the end of the comet rendezvous plans. After the loss of the Halley Mission, JPL had come up with a back-up idea. This involved a fly-by of Halley's Comet followed by a meeting with Comet Temple Two. This also involved an expensive ion drive engine. President Carter gave the order to cancel the project. Comet chasing was at an end. Period.

The Venus mission was delayed from 1984 to 1986.

1981 started off with a new President, one who had said he would cut fat and waste out of the government. JPL knew what that really meant.

Meanwhile, back at the Shuttle, the IUS was in bad trouble. It was going to cost a lot more than was planned, and probably not be powerful enough to do its assigned job anyhow. NASA dithered for awhile and decided to cancel the IUS. The decision was made to develop the existing Centaur stage for shuttle work.

Now this presented its own problems. The Centaur is a liquid hydrogen/liquid oxygen upper stage. There would be problems in adapting it for use on the Shuttle. Expensive modifications would have to be made to Shuttle #4 as well as to the launch pad.

And so the launch date of Galileo was set back from 1984 to 1985. But it was noted that both the Galileo and Solar Polar could revert back to a single launch each. No need for double launches with the much more powerful Centaur! But this involved new costs for the ESA as they once again had to re-design their spacecraft. They were not amused.

* * *

The Ray-Gun budget came out, with the cancellation of the fourth space shuttle as one of the basics, plus total elimination of all PLANETARY exploration, at least in the preliminary stages.

The Military came to the rescue of

the fourth shuttle, which among other things, had been the shuttle designated to be modified to handle the Centaur.

As for Galileo, Solar Polar, and anything else, that is in the hands of Congress. Many of us are very upset at the fact that no mission will be flown to Halley's Comet.

And the ESA is also upset. If we do manage to keep the Galileo mission and its 1985 launch, it seems almost impossible not to have the launch date of the Solar Polar slip to 1986, with further degradation of science returns, more cost, and much bad feelings.

* * *

One of the results of all this bad feelings was that the ESA refused to allow NASA to have any part in its own mission to Halley's Comet. Named Giotto, it will be built by the ESA, launched by the ESA on an Ariane rocket, and all tracking and experiments will be ESA. The U.S. has been deliberately froze out.

Just to add to our humiliation, it might be noted that the Japanese will also be launching a spacecraft to the comet. They now have their own rocket, equivalent to our Delta; they have the technology; they have the will.

The U.S.S.R., with France in tow, will also observe the comet at long distance from one of the spacecraft they will be sending to Venus in 1986.

But, egotistical as it may sound, the JPL spacecraft could do a better job than all three combined. No joke. Our spacecraft would be 3-axis stabilized and far better pictures could be obtained. But Ray-Gun has said "no".

THE FUTURE SPACE PROJECTS OF JPL

What can we look forward to in the 1980's and 1990's as far as the exploration of the planets goes? As you have just read, the 1980's may very well see one, and only one, mission: Galileo. Possibly there may be a flyby of Uranus by Voyager Two in 1986 and, just maybe, a flyby of Neptune with the same spacecraft in 1989. (This last will be at the same time as the 1989 World SF Con.)

The Sun: At this moment, the sun is being monitored by six spacecraft. Four of these are the Pioneer spacecraft (6, 7, 8, and 9) which are still working much to everyone's astonishment. They were planned to last six months. Orbiting between the orbits of Venus and Earth, they have tracked the sun through one entire sunspot cycle.

They were joined in 1974 and 1975

by the two Helios spacecraft. This is a German project, with JPL doing the tracking. The orbits of the two spacecraft range from near-Earth to closer than Mercury.

So, what of the future? Well, there is the Solar Polar mission, but this is facing so many problems that it may yet simply be cancelled. We also launched the Solar Maximum Mission in 1980--an Earth-orbiting spacecraft that monitored the sun--but that has come to a premature end due to spacecraft problems.

JPL has a plan called Solar Probe. This involves a spacecraft designed to come within two solar diameters of the sun...almost a graze. To achieve this, the spacecraft will be sent out to Jupiter. Every mission planner likes Jupiter and its gravity well: there is so much you can do with it. This time it will be used to kill off all velocity with respect to the sun. The probe will then fall almost straight into the sun, faster and faster. The actual mission will be over in three hours as the craft streaks by the surface of the sun.

Mercury: JPL's triple flyby of this planet in 1974 answered a lot of questions but, as usual, raised a lot of new ones. We only photographed half the planet, and were taken by surprise when a magnetic field was discovered.

JPL came up with the idea of four Polar Orbiters, mass-built to bring down costs. One each would be sent around Mercury, Venus, the Moon, and Mars. Orbiting for over a year at a time, they could map the four bodies with resolutions better than the flybys could ever do.

But money was lacking and the Shuttle doesn't have enough power to send a useable spacecraft on its way, even with the Centaur upper stage. There are no plans whatsoever to return to Mercury as far as the 20th Century goes. Maybe with a more powerful system than the Shuttle...or maybe with an ion drive...or maybe never.

Venus: Venus remains the #2 target of the planetary program after Galileo. The Venus Radar Mapper grew out of the proposed four-orbiters mission. Unlike the orbiters around Mercury, Mars, and the Moon, the spacecraft would carry a Synthetic Aperture Radar. This could pierce through the cloud cover and map the planet with a resolution of one kilometer.

In 1978 JPL launched SEASAT and it has a SAR on it. It worked superbly. The 1978 Pioneer-Venus had a much simpler radar but the glimpses it gave encouraged the planners to finalize the Venus Orbiting Imaging Radar: VOIR (which is the French

word for "to see". NASA does get a little too cutesy sometimes.) Still, it was VOIR that we asked for to be launched in 1983...later delayed to 1984...delayed to 1986...now maybe delayed to 1988....

The Moon: And why return to the Moon, you may ask? So did Congress, as they refused the money for the Lunar Polar Orbiter: LPO.

Well, all we really know of the Moon came from the Apollo missions. They didn't really cover the poles all that well, and it was 1960's technology anyway. After all these years, we could do a far better job.

We had not support from either Congress or the L-5 Society. The latter would benefit since the polar regions is where they propose to set up launchers to bring material out to the L-5 point. Probably, like Mercury, we won't be visiting it again in the 20th Century.

Mars: In the wake of the Viking Mission, and its overwhelming success, a host of ideas cropped up. The Martian Polar Orbiter was the very simplest of these. I could do a whole fanzine article on nothing but the many weird and wonderful ideas that cropped up (any takers?). But it all came to nought. Money was short. Finally, even the basic Mars Polar Orbiter was dropped.

There might be, somewhere far down the line, another mission. Current thinking is that it might as well be a Mars Soil Sample Return Mission. If the Viking missions did nothing else, it showed that we really don't know much about long-range soil analysis. So why not bring some of the stuff back and work it over here on Earth? Got a billion dollars, anybody?

Just as the four orbiters for the inner planets were designed to save money, so was a parallel proposal for outer planet spacecraft. The outer planets have one big difference... lots of atmosphere but no surface. Thus came the idea for each Orbiter to have a probe carried with it which would be dropped into the atmosphere for detailed readings.

Thus was planned JOP; with SOP as the follow-on: the Saturn Orbiter and Probes. Two probes actually, one for Saturn and the other for Titan, the only moon in the Solar System that actually has an atmosphere worth bothering about. And Uranus and Neptune also had their Orbiter and Probes, but these were not within the range of the Shuttle's power.

Jupiter: JOP was re-named Galileo and it remains the #1 priority mission at JPL. The 1982 launch has

slipped to 1985, the cost has increased in a staggering manner, but it goes on. It may very well be the only planetary mission of the 1980's.

The basic plan has remained the same. Drop a probe into the atmosphere and see what it really is. Then send the spacecraft to all parts of the Jupiter system for at least 20 months, exploring in far greater depth than the two flyby Voyager spacecraft ever could.

Saturn: Saturn is at the limit of the Shuttle/Centaur capabilities. As such, an ion drive mission has been proposed. SOP is now renamed Chronus. The basic idea is still the same, and much along the lines of the Galileo mission. Drop a probe into Saturn, another into Titan, and cruise around a couple of years, with special attention being given to the rings, of course.

Uranus and Neptune: These may be visited by the Voyager Two spacecraft if the equipment holds out. But don't bet on it... I know how Voyager Two

is, and it is a sick spacecraft. Too much penny-pinching caused a second-rate spacecraft to be built. But, other than that, any exploration will have to await a better system than the Shuttle/Centaur. The energy requirements to put a useable weight into orbit around the planets is too great. Not in the 20th Century.

Pluto and Beyond: As I type this, three spacecraft are heading for the outer edges of the solar system: Pioneer 10, Pioneer 11, and Voyager One. They will be joined by Voyager Two. Someday they will pass through the Heliopause--the boundary line between the Solar System and interstellar space ~~with its billions and billions of stars~~. This is where the magnetic field of the sun ends and that of the galaxy begins. The best guess is that Voyager One will be the first, around 1990. But this is only a guess.

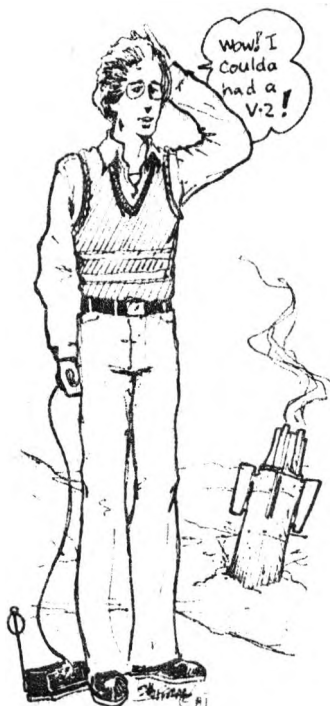
There has been proposed a Pluto flyby in 2020. Why this year? Well, after the journey to and past Pluto, it will head out of the Solar System in the same direction as the sun is moving, and thus will measure the sun's bowshock. Very much a long-shot, it must be admitted.

Comets and Asteroids: Meanwhile, back in the Solar System, JPL would still like to meet a comet someday and also explore the asteroids. Both require the ion drive engine, and both are rather unlikely as far as the 20th Century goes. The cost of the ion engine is its biggest handicap.

So, here is a very optimistic schedule of future programs....

1985--Galileo to Jupiter
1988--VOIR to Venus
early 1990's--Chronus to Saturn
late 1990's--Solar Probe

And this is being very optimistic.



Mr. Andruschak was born on 4 October, 1944, in the outskirts of London during the V2 attacks. On his 13th birthday Sputnik One was launched into orbit, silencing those schoolmates who laughed at his reading all the SF. He came to the USA in 1958 and entered Cass Technical School in Detroit, one of many "tech" schools that taught a heavy science course. He entered the US Navy after finishing high school and in 1973 left to join JPL where he has worked ever since. He is presently a Computer Technician at the Space Flight Operations Facility, building 230. He used to be active in apas but mostly does articles for other genzines nowadays.

GINLAS

THE SUNDAY TIMES, 28 DECEMBER 1980

LITERATURE

Is this where Tolkien found his stories?

Jerome Burne



THE DARK CLOUDS of war are once more gathering over J.R.R. Tolkien's fabled land of Middle Earth. But this time the invaders are a couple of intrepid literary critics and the outraged defenders are led by the denizens of the Tolkien Society.

The attack comes in the form of a book which claims that Tolkien's masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*, is rooted not so much in obscure Celtic and Nordic myths, as is generally believed, but rather as in such classics of Edwardian schoolboy fiction as Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* and even *Wind in the Willows*.

This academic assault, entitled *The Shores of Middle Earth* and to be published in the new year by Juntion Books, is the result of two years' work by Robert Giddings, a BBC scriptwriter and lecturer in English at Bath Technical College, and Elizabeth Holland, an archaeologist and novelist.

The Tolkien Society, alerted to the imminent attack, have already hit back. "They have constructed a horrific fairy castle," says Mrs. Helen Armstrong. "Frankly it's balderdash. Tolkien is either spinning in his grave or having a good laugh."

Naturally both sides profess deep admiration for Tolkien. Giddings, for instance, tends to refer to the great man affectionately as "Tollers." Yet he insists: "The plots of the *Rings* weren't conjured out of

northern mists. Like all great writers Tollers was a tremendous plagiarist. His genius lay in his ability to take an existing plot and turn it into an archetype."

The kind of arguments Giddings and Holland deploy can be illustrated by this apparent parallel between the early parts of the *Rings* and *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.

In Buchan's novel, the hero, Richard Hannay, a simple colonial, visits London and inherits a black book. This tells of a plot for world domination and is explained to him by an authority figure called Scudder. Hannay's flat is ransacked by the Black Stone gang looking for the book. He flees to Scotland, stopping on the way for a meal.

In the *Rings* Frodo, a simple Hobbit, inherits a ring that has the potential for world domination. Its power is explained to him by the authority figure of Gandalf. Frodo's house is broken into by the Black Riders looking for the Ring. He flees from his home in the Shire, stopping for a meal at a farm in a place called--Buckland.

"Notice the name!" cries Giddings triumphantly. "Buck-land. That's just the sort of clue Tollers loved to leave."

It is part of the Giddings/Holland thesis that Tolkien actually wanted someone to spot his interweaving of adventure stories and scholarly references. Tolkien was both a

linguist and a crossword fanatic.

"He dropped clues literally on every page," says Giddings. "For instance--the name of the site of the mines in the *Rings* is Moria. But in the Bible Moriah is the place where King Solomon built his temple. So what do you get? The mines of Moria equals King Solomon's Mines."

Another apparent parallel with King Solomon's Mines involves a wanderer called Umbopa who seems to know the travellers' secret affairs and persuades them to take him along. He then reveals himself to be King Ignosi. In the *Ring* the travellers encounter a wanderer called Strider who seems to know their secret affairs and persuades them to take him along. He then reveals himself to be King Aragorn.

A key role is claimed for the Inklings, an influential literary club which flourished at Oxford during the Twenties and Thirties. It included Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Hugo Dyson, all of whom shared an interest in the light fiction of Haggard and Buchan as well as religion and word games.

"I think that they would have got a lot of his references," says Holland.

On the geography of the *Rings* Holland points out that Middle Earth is simply Mediterranean translated from the Latin and says that its coastline bears a remarkable similarity to that running from

Constantinople to Egypt.

The home of the Hobbits, the Shire, is however, taken from a famous imaginary map, says Holland--the one at the beginning of Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*. A couple of clues indicate how the two literary detectives work.

Through the Shire runs the river Withywindle. The word "withy" means "willow," "wind" is "wind" and "le" is "the" in French, explain our sleuths. Again, on the Willows map there is a Pan Island. In the Shire there is Girdley Island and "Girdle" is a Scottish form of "griddle" which means a flat pan.

George Allen and Unwin, publishers of the Rings (eight million copies sold worldwide in English) are unimpressed by the Giddings-Holland thesis. "Great works attract all sorts of crazy ideas," says Rayner Unwin. "These two seem to be flying a bit in the face of the evidence."

Giddings replies: "We're not saying the Rings is another schoolboy yarn, we're rescuing it from nebulous northern mists and putting it firmly in an Indo-European context. It doesn't just borrow from English fiction, it also has a debt to Hindu and Persian myths, which we deal with in the book. This is the first time it has had the serious critical attention it deserves in this country."

We sent out copies of this item to various NIEKAS readers for their reactions which follow---

My first quick, unstudied reactions:

I thought, first, of The Road to Xanadu, a fascinating book by John Livingston Lowes, studying specific sources of Coleridge's poetry. It's a remarkable piece of literary detective work, though I'm not scholar enough to judge its absolute accuracy. The same applies to the Giddings/Holland book. It may be altogether right, or wrong, or in between. Only Tolkien himself could verify it, and even he might not have been conscious of his raw material.

My thought is that the intricacies of a creative mind, in the long run, are less important than the creation of that mind. The work is what counts.

I don't see that the Giddings/Holland book minimizes Tolkien's masterpiece in any way; nor do I see any reason to take heated defense or offense, but, for Tolkien, only admiration.

Lloyd Alexander

Let me begin my comments with a caveat: Remember the controversy over Bishop Robinson's Honest to God? The book was widely condemned for statements that actually appeared in an article about it and not in the book itself. Keeping that in mind, here are my reactions to the article.

If Robert Giddings is correctly quoted, he shows an astonishing ignorance of literary terminology when he speaks of Tolkien turning an existing plot into an archetype. One does not create an archetype: it is there, like one of Plato's Ideas (from which the notion is derived). The term was used by Jung to refer to images and symbols that are part of the collective unconscious. Take, for example, Hamlet. If we trace the story back from Shakespeare through Kyd's lost play to Saxo Grammaticus and beyond, we cannot say that Shakespeare created Hamlet all by himself. Yet there are aspects of this treatment of the story that are original. And--just to make things more confusing--Hamlet was not really seen as an archetypal figure until our own Age of Anxiety came along and found in the character the expression of our present-day ambiguities and conflicts. Or take an archetype of more recent vintage: the Western film. Its two most familiar images are probably the hero walking down a deserted Main Street to shoot it out with the villain, while the townspeople huddle behind closed doors (HIGH NOON), and the hero riding off into the sunset after all the baddies have been disposed of (SHANE). In fact, I can remember very little about those two films except those particular scenes. But they weren't original with those authors and filmmakers; they derive much of their power from being perfectly crafted examples (the literary word is ectypes) of scenes familiar from hundreds of eminently forgettable Westerns in which the archetype (Western) was built up in the imaginations of the moviegoers of America. Similarly, Tolkien does not "create" archetypes but draws on the power of the whole European literary and mythological tradition, as embodied perhaps in our collective unconscious and certainly in our imaginations.

The parallels drawn with The Thirty-Nine Steps are unconvincing. Richard Hannay is not a "simple colonial" but a gentleman adventurer, hero of a series of Secret Service-type stories. He resembles James Bond (without the promiscuity) far more than Frodo. My recollection of the book is confused by my having seen both film versions. But I'm pretty sure that Hannay did not inherit the book as Frodo inherited the Ring; it was entrusted to him, simply

because he happened to be handy, by a dying agent who had just been shot by the villains. As for the flight to Scotland, most of Buchan's heroes seem to wind up there. He was himself a Scot (though perhaps better remembered as Governor-General of Canada), and his best writing is usually found in pursuit sequences set in the Highlands. In fact, the episode at the beginning of *LotR* where the Hobbits are crossing the Shire at night has far more of a Buchan-like feeling to it than do the mere plot resemblances cited: yet it is in no way an imitation of Buchan. The fact that the bare plot outlines of parts of the two books can be made to coincide is rather like saying that a mole and a wolf are alike because both have spines: the differences are far more significant than the resemblances. I believe that with a little pulling and hauling I could make The Hound of the Baskervilles fit into the same skeletal pattern; but would anyone in his right mind argue that the three books are really alike?

The so-called references to The Wind in the Willows in *LotR* don't work out very well, either. It is remotely possible that Tolkien meant the River Withywindle to suggest Grahame's tale, as a sort of tribute, but the name is more logically interpreted as meaning "winding among willows," which describes not only the river in question but a great number of the English streams that Tolkien might have seen. If you want a real resemblance, compare the Hobbitish coziness of the Shire with the domesticity of Grahame's animal characters, especially in the latter's chapter entitled "Dulce Domum." Again, this sort of thing is too common to prove anything.

The suggestion that Girdley Island in the Shire is a reference to Grahame's Pan Island shows a real insensitivity to both tone and language. Pan Island is so called because it is where Rat and Mole meet the god Pan; the chapter in which this happens, "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn," is suffused with numinous awe. Pan in European literature is often used as an image of Christ (the parallel between the shepherds' god and the Good Shepherd, plus a lot of other reasons that I won't bore you with here), and Mole and Rat's encounter with him is a genuine religious experience. To suggest that Tolkien, who called his own work "an exercise in the linguistic aesthetic," would try to invoke this episode with a vulgar and insipid pun on Pan/pan is not only absurd but offensive.

I mentioned in my comments (#24) on Jungian archetypes in Tolkien that

a lot of symbol-hunters lack a sense of proportion--mere resemblances between two characters, images, actions, etc. do not prove an archetype/ectype relationship unless the two are equally significant in their respective stories. One three-day absence doth not a Christ/symbol make. I remember a conversation I had with an internationally famous literary critic and scholar when he was a visiting professor at Berkeley and I was one of his graduate assistants. We were talking about T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets, and I happened to mention that in one of them, Eliot had thrown in a couple of allusions to The Hound of the Baskervilles. The professor was surprised and intrigued; he was not a Sherlock Holmes fan and had never understood those images. But--and here is the moral--he did not at once rush out to rewrite twentieth-century literary history with a sudy of "The Influence of Conan Doyle on T.S. Eliot"...because it was obvious that it simply wasn't that important. Knowing the allusion intensified the imagery of that particular passage, and shed a little light on Eliot's reading habits; but it did not measurably alter or enhance anyone's understanding of the Four Quartets. I would suggest that the same is true of the parallels drawn by Giddings and Holland. But the more familiar parallels drawn between Tolkien's writing and Norse myth and chivalric romance and legend do illuminate the meaning and add significance for the reader. Tolkien may indeed have been a devoted reader of Buchan, Grahame, and Haggard--but that does not constitute proof that they influenced his writing.

Anne Braude

Naturally I'd like to see the book, The Shores of Middle Earth, by Robert Giddings and Elizabeth Holland before I throw up. The SUNDAY TIMES article looked pretty dreadful. Actually, the book seems to commit two sins. First off, anything that refers to Professor Tolkien as "Tollers" is terminally and vulgarly coy. There is a point at which affection becomes impertinence, but apparently Robert Giddings has not yet discovered it.

Secondly, its main argument seems to be a great throwing about of brains. Of course Tolkien works within a literary tradition, drawing on archetypes and borrowing from works he admired. No one would argue with Giddings and Holland about that. What I'd argue about is what makes them think that they've said anything novel when they've said that.

Now I have no doubt that Tolkien read and enjoyed Buchan, Rider Haggard, and The Wind in the Willows. And I have little doubt that he may have been influenced by them; he wouldn't be the first. For any writer --much less one as sensitive as Tolkien--"influence" is a tricky thing; modern critics like Robert Scholes show how context may influence text. So he may, subconsciously, have worked in references to these works. Or he may have done it as an amusing pun, much like his references to the Hobbit Samwise Gamgee calls Hal, but everyone else refers to as "Halfast" because they think that he is.

So what? While it's a critical fallacy to pretend to read authorial intent, I think that it's safe to say that Tolkien would not have



spent his scholarly and writing life producing volumes and volumes of literary crossword puzzles. His own critical work provides us with the best evidence of that statement. Tolkien was after myth, after what he calls Evangelium (in "On Faerie Stories") or Joy; he was trying to write the sort of romance he made a literary career of studying. Now that's a lot more serious in intent than playing jokes for the Inklings. Certainly, they'd catch references to light fiction, but they'd catch references to Old English, the Kalevala, and the Voluspa as well.

So what are Giddings and Holland arguing about? Look at the last paragraph of the TIMES article. "We're not saying the Rings is another schoolboy yarn." Granted... but what if it were? And by restricting it to sources like King Solomon's Mines, aren't they trivializing it..just slightly? "We're rescuing it from nebulous northern myths and putting it firmly in an Indo-European context." Thank you, Mr. Giddings! I should have assumed that any man who works for the BBC and teaches English at a technical college would know that the "Northern thing," as Tolkien called the corpus of Germanic mythology he loved, is part of Indo-

European philology and mythology. At least it was when I studied Middle High German and Old Norse at Harvard for my PhD. "It doesn't just borrow from English fiction, but also has a debt to Hindu and Persian myths." Also very true: Sanskrit too is Indo-European, and many Indian stories partake of the same archetypes that Tolkien works with. But they are not being especially original: Lin Carter said the same things years ago.

Now, let's come to the last, lovely quotation from Mr. Giddings. "This is the first time (LotR) has had the serious critical attention it deserves in this country." With this statement we come, I suspect, to Giddings' possible motivation for writing this book: to get published. Let me digress. When I was at graduate school, I had an old and extremely canny professor who was a folklorist. He collected proverbs, worked on medieval texts, and invented what he called Whiting's law...named after himself. Whiting's law explained how to get published. Either you take issue with established critics, or you say something so outrageous that freedom of speech requires a publisher to do more than return your postage (and your weird MS) to you posthaste.

What it seems to me that we have in The Shores of Middle Earth is a fine example of Whiting's law in all its multifarious, nefarious permutations. Establish a weird hypothesis, borrow from received critical doctrine while saying that you're doing nothing of the kind, make yourself conspicuous, and you will get published. Apparently Giddings and Holland have. But they've also added something that Professor Whiting never thought of, because he only read murder mysteries, not fantasy and SF. They can say that the Trilogy has never gotten serious attention because the attention it has toene--years ago and rather scathingly from Edmund Wilson or all the fashionable academics who now pronounce LotR rather a bore--is either obsolete or hostile or because the attention LotR gets now comes from the fantasy and SF community in zines and professional presses unsanctified by academic imprimatur. In other words, if it isn't them, it isn't serious, and it doesn't count.

Now, I doubt I'm being fair to these people. But they do seem to have perpetrated the usual tenure-grabber's hoax on potential readers: come up with something strange, trivialize opposition, and then claim originality. But not even this strategy is especially original.

Frankly, I intend to be just to English for words and pronounce the

Holland-Giddings Hypothesizes a great bore. I may read the book when I see it. But I will certainly not go searching for it--and I'm damned if I'm spending my money on it.

Susan Schwartz

Though we haven't seen the book, as reviewed it rather reminds us of the Baconians, or possibly more fairly, some of the more tortured interpretations of the Sherlock Holmes canon such as can be found occasionally in the Baker Street Journal. By picking and choosing the data without regard to context, one can prove anything.

Thus Karen remarked to me that it's absurd to make "Withywindle" mean "The Wind in the Willows"--with a cobbled-on French article, and omission of the other article and the preposition!--when in fact "windle" is a perfectly good Scots verb, one of whose meanings is "meander." As for parallels to novels by such writers as Haggard and Buchan, the story elements mentioned are practically archetypal for thrillers and occur in countless numbers of them.

Not that the issue is of any importance. Doubtless Tolkien slipped some private jokes into his work, as many writers do, but it remains itself--a synthesis as well as an original creation, but nevertheless unique.

Poul Anderson

As for the book The Shores of Middle Earth [sic] (and if they can't get Middle-earth right in the title, can we trust the authors on more complex matters?), the report in THE SUNDAY TIMES makes it sound silly, stretched well beyond the snapping point. I must agree with Giddings when he says that The Lord of the Rings has not had "the serious critical attention it deserves" in England, but his and Holland's book sounds very far from filling that gap if the examples Giddings gave the SUNDAY TIMES interviewer are typical of its over-all content.

Influence studies are nebulous things at best unless we have documentary evidence in the form of letters, diaries, and literary notebooks to supplement what critics think they see in a text. Otherwise, who's to say whether or not two authors arrived at similar points independently?

In the case of The Wind in the Willows, the dates are wrong. The book was first published in 1908: and the best known map of its terrain, that drawn by Ernest Shepard, was commissioned as part

of his set of illustrations around 1931. Tolkien, born in 1896, was too old to be influenced much by a children's book in 1908, and while he may have read it to his children later on, he would have been in the process of constructing his own landscape for The Hobbit by the time the Shepard map was available. In any case, Shepard's and Grahame's river was a particular stretch of the Thames, well-documented in Joan Badger's How the Heather Looks. The puns on Pan and girdle for frying-pan are so far-fetched as to be tedious. Withywindle is simply a name evocative of a willow-bordered, winding river, a reminder that Tolkien was sometimes an effective poet with an ear for word music. Moreover, Giddings is wrong when he says that the Withywindle runs through the Shire. It runs through the Old Forest, outside Buckland, which is itself not quite the Shire, and borders a bit on Buckland.

The "clue" from The Thirty-Nine Steps, with Giddings' "triumphant" connecting of Buckland and Buchan is sillier still.

As for the influence of Rider Haggard, I cannot right now among all the clutter of old newspaper interviews find reference to Professor Tolkien's strong enthusiasm for She (it is not mentioned in Carpenter's biography), but I do remember reading this sometime, somewhere. Certainly there is a scene in She that foreshadows the Bridge of Khazad-dum in Fellowship of the Ring, but in Haggard it is merely a setting for adventure and suspense while in Tolkien it is transformed into a symbolic location above the abyss, a stage for the confrontation between Good and Evil.

And surely this is what is important. The transforming genius, and not the sources. Many things influenced Tolkien--his religion, his language studies, adventure fiction he may have read in boyhood, the English landscape (that same landscape that inspired Kenneth Grahame)--a revelation after South Africa, the Icelandic Eddas, memories of youthful love--all of these things went into The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, just as the whole experience and consciousness of any great artist is poured into his art.

To spend time rooting about in that art for imagined puns seems a remarkably foolish way for a grown man and woman to spend their time.

Nan C. Scott

Speaking as a writer, I can attest to the fact that many ideas are directly or indirectly derived from

one's reading - particularly books one enjoyed during the formative years of youth. So it seems quite possible that Tolkien did indeed pattern his work on the books mentioned - but this doesn't change the fact that he came up with an immensely individual concept of his own. There's glory enough in this effort for all concerned

Robert Bloch

I think that the writers are on the wrong track--it is far more apparent that Tolkien was influenced by legends and older lore than the books they mention--popular in his time, yes, but not the ones which would mean much to him if his biographers are correct in what they said about him.

Andre Norton

"Clues are Where You Find Them"

In their book, The Shores of Middle Earth, Giddings and Holland are all wrong in claiming that the sources of Tolkien's ideas lie in King Solomon's Mines, The Wind in the Willows and The Thirty-Nine Steps.

Actually, The Lord of the Rings is only a thinly-veiled retelling of Peter Rabbit.

First, and most obviously, both stories being with creatures who live in holes in the ground. Both kinds of creatures are furry-footed, and anyone can see the resemblance of the words "hobbit" and "rabbit."

The protagonists of these stories are P-E-T-E-R (five letters) and F-R-O-D-O (five letters). Both names contain an "r." Who first had a character with five letters, including an "R," in his name - J.R.R. Tolkien or Beatrice Potter? Hunh?

Anyway, both these hole-dwelling, furry-foots undertake missions into dangerous territory, Sauron's and Mr. McGregor's. If you don't see the connection between Mister McGregor and Sauron, who was master of the One Ring, you haven't caught on to this game yet. Any dictionary will tell you that "mister" and "master" are variations of the same word. Tolkien was very big on philology.

Odd that Peter lost his jacket and Frodo lost his shirt in the course of their adventures, wasn't it. And you'll notice that both protagonists came home too tired to have fun.

Furthermore...

Stop the presses! I just discovered a new source of The Lord of the Rings, an American beer ad.

You may remember it. It was for

Ballantine Beer and showed three rings left by a beer mug on a table-top. The slogan underneath the picture was:

"Three rings - get it?"

Anne Etkin

SF & R

REVISITED

While I found most of Willis E. McNelly's article interesting and insightful, I wouldn't have chosen Gather, Darkness! as an example of the simple-minded anti-religious brand of sf. Leiber's treatment of the theme is far more subtle. He effects a complete reversal of stereotypes, using the traditional/mediaeval imagery associated with Heaven to represent oppression and deceit, and the imagery of Hell to represent liberation and loyalty (Blake did something like that before him, come to think of it). While the "God" faction is pretty fundamentally atheistic (and materialistic in all the senses of the word), there is a hint (in Sercival's death scene) that true religious faith may be one of the good things the "Satan" faction has preserved. For a purer example of the "religion equals priestcraft" school of sf one might have used, say, Jack Vance's The Blue World.

It was nice to see you mention Michael Davidson's Daughter of Is. There doesn't seem to have been much discussion of it in print (I haven't seen the review in AMERICA), but it must have had a considerable word-of-mouth success, judging by the speed with which it disappeared from bookstores in the New York area. I was impressed by its imaginative verve, its no-holds-barred honesty, and a certain tongue-in-cheek quality that made it all easier to swallow. It does indeed take guts to tackle that kind of subject directly nowadays, at least in the sf field. You might enjoy his earlier novel, The Karma Machine, which deals with a society based on "cybernetic Buddhism", or computerized reincarnation according to karmic merit. As in the other book, the point made is that the mere mechanics of religion (and the feelings they arouse) are meaningless unless they receive a transcendent justification.

I was surprised to see no mention of

Ian Wallace's books. In an unassuming way, he has often illuminated not so much religious themes as the religious dimension in individual lives. He does this most explicitly in Pan Sagittarius: the title character joins a group of "fifth columnists" set on redeeming souls from Hell. These souls have been damned by their own despair, and Pan's task is to make them relive the situation which will help them pull through. Wallace is particularly good at showing how psychological problems can be mistaken for spiritual ones, and vice versa. My favourite stories in the collection are "Von Eltz in Vimy" (a replay of the Pontius Pilate story), "The Bishop's Halo" (about an obsessive-compulsive rationalist short-circuited by an encounter with transcendence), and "Makrov" (in which it is shown that faith, by its very nature, can triumph over psychological conditioning).

Although The Plague Dogs has been talked about quite a bit in the past few NIEKU, unless I'm much mistaken no one has ever mentioned its principal religious theme: that the Fall of Man has affected not only our own species but brought suffering on all Creation, since Eden has lost the Adam who was meant to be its centre and hold it all together. The dogs, who are wholly dependent on Man, feel this loss most keenly and have evolved a half-human mythology to explain it. Adams' theme is a welcome elaboration of the theory about animals C.S. Lewis expounded in The Problem of Pain. By the way, since Shardik has been getting such a bad press that people aren't bothering to read it, I feel compelled to plug it. I read it before it had been reviewed anywhere, and enjoyed it immensely. It seemed to me that the religious theme at its core--Man's freedom in the face of God's revelation--was developed intelligently and excitingly. I loved the way Kelderek, by a conscious act of understanding, allowed himself to be redeemed by Shardik. (By the way, again: my impression is that the story takes place in prehistoric North India. The ecology seems to fit...)

I can't agree that there is "no god" in Donaldson's trilogy. While the Land's Creator is certainly a Deus absconditus, the Land itself must in some measure be a reflection of his essence (as every work reflects its maker), and thus to love the Land is, indirectly, to love its Creator, and in seeking to hurt the Land it is the Creator Lord Foul is attacking (appropriately, "God" and "the Devil" are not placed on the same level). As for each character's free (and laborious) assumption of his/

her responsibility: isn't that the way it works in the Primary World?

One last word: while early sf stressed the supposedly anti-intellectual side of religion, since the '60's there has been a growing tendency in fantasy/sf literature to portray Christianity as a Society for the Prevention of Sex. Fantasy/sf Christians hate pleasure of all kinds, actively seek to suppress it in others, and are generally intransigent and unforgiving in all their dealings. One doesn't have to shop far for examples. In Godwin & Kaye's The Masters of Solitude (which I enjoyed a lot, for other reasons) we are shown a post-holocaust America divided between Wiccans and Christians--the latter being, as expected, a cruel, treacherous, joyless lot. Even in Poul Anderson's The Merman's Children, although care is taken to show good Christians as well as repulsive ones, conversion to Christianity is still presented as a farewell to freedom, imagination and pleasure, and the nicer characters (who are also the promiscuous ones) are the least drawn to religion. And I could go on with plenty of cruder examples. Now I won't deny that religious history has had its harsher episodes, and that theocratic regimes--not necessarily Christian ones, look at Khomeini's Iran--tend to be puritanical and authoritarian (which isn't very surprising, and has more to do with politics than with religion: if you want to have as much control as possible over people, can you do better than to gain control over their consciences, by becoming their religious authority?). Also, given certain recent pronouncements by the Moral Majority, I won't claim that the obscurantist, repressive type of "religion" is extinct here, or even that it is on the wane--although I've never come into close contact with it myself. But I'd have thought that writers who specifically take pride in their intellectual curiosity and rational fairness would have given more weight to the discrepancy between such puritanical cultures and the actual ideals expressed in Christian scripture, and been more interested in the facts of religious experience itself (can they really believe that converts to Christianity are drawn to joylessness?). And I wonder: have these writers all really suffered from such repressive religious environments--or are they just parroting a cliché?

Alexei Kondratiev

There seems to me to be less to say about religion and science fiction, though your contributors say it at considerable length. Look, religion

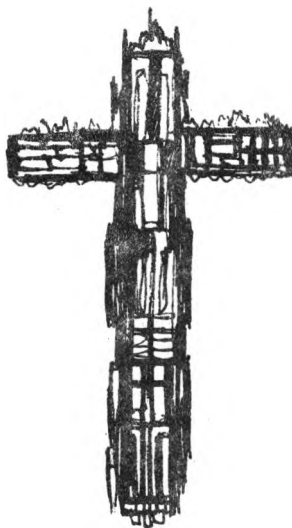
was avoided in early pulp sf because it was avoided in all popular fiction of the time, along with sex, partisan politics (other than wartime Us vs. Them propaganda), and whatever else might really probe the human psyche and stir it up. As taboos began to fall, writers naturally began to explore hitherto forbidden territories, of which religion--as opposed to the rather sophomoric anti-religiousness which had sometimes appeared before--was one part among many. For example, Walter Miller, Jr. wrote not only A Canticle for Leibowitz but at least one powerful story, "The Lineman," whose theme was explicitly sexual. I don't recall any of your contributors mentioning Cordwainer Smith, whose work has a distinct religious dimension but simultaneously goes into a lot of other areas.

Examples could be multiplied, but I have no wish to turn yet another molehill into a mountain. A last remark, though--Anthony Boucher always maintained that the patron saint of science fiction must be Thomas Moore.

Poul Anderson

Buck Coulson misquotes me as saying in my COSMOS review that "science and religion have pretty much agreed that their areas of study do not overlap"--or rather, he quotes the statement as I originally wrote it; I then saw it wouldn't hold water and added the all-important modifier: "ontologically speaking." I meant to say that science has given up looking for convincing physical proof of the existence or non-existence of God (someone once compared this to the characters in King Lear searching their universe for physical proof of the existence of Shakespeare); and religion is no longer telling science that it has the Final Word on physical phenomena (as it told Galileo), which science is not allowed to question. The silencing of Teilhard de Chardin by his ecclesiastical superiors may appear to contradict this; I believe it would be fair to say that they considered themselves entitled to dictate to him as a Jesuit rather than as a scientist, but I don't know enough about the affair to do more than venture a guess. There are of course a few fundamentalist types around who would like to tell science it can't ask certain questions (pause here for Bastraw to remark "Ayatollah you so"), but I believe that they are no more representative of the church (at least the Christian Church) in the twentieth century than the Flat Earth Society is representative of twentieth-century science.

Where the conflict arises is in the sphere of ethics: the issue is action and the arena is a court of law. Such questions usually involve the definition of human life (abortion, pulling the plug on the brain-dead, determining clinical death when it is a matter of organ-transplant donors, genetic engineering). I don't care whether a devout Catholic believes that a newly fertilized ovum is a human being, as long as he doesn't impose his beliefs on those who do not believe this and who desire legal abortions; the converse is no doubt true. I think even the current case in California, where fundamentalists are trying to get creationism equal time with evolution in public-school science courses, falls into this category: it applies to doing something (teaching children) rather than to freedom of thought.



Nor can I go along with Harry Andruschak, who says that "of all the forces that have caused misery, poverty, ignorance," etc., "religion is it." It is perfectly true that throughout history people have been doing terrible things to each other in the name of religion, usually with tacit consent--and frequently with the active encouragement--of the official religious establishment. It is equally true that most of the movements for the alleviation of human misery have also claimed religious inspiration. The result seems to be proof of Finagle's Law--"Under carefully controlled laboratory conditions, human beings will do what they damned well please"--with the added corollary that they will claim to be doing the will of God when they do so. Moreover, we have shown ourselves perfectly capable of persecuting one another on the grounds of race, color, national origin, length of hair, personal wealth (or lack of same),

and the inability to pronounce "shibboleth," without invoking religion at all. None of the notable massacres that I can think of offhand --My Lai, Glencoe, Wounded Knee--were perpetrated on religious grounds. Even the Holocaust was justified on (phony) racial rather than religious grounds. And what is more, good old not-nice-to-fool Mother Nature has shown herself able to cause more human misery than all the religions of the world could accomplish if they thought it out with both hands for two weeks in advance, what with earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and the Black Death.

My own conclusion is that the sum of human misery throughout the ages would not have been appreciably reduced if religion had never existed--which is not to say that the religions of the world should not be brought to book when they have violated their own proclaimed standards of behavior. This is particularly true of Christianity, which makes the loftiest claims of peace and good will; most other religions are more consistent in advocating a double standard. Believers are expected to behave ethically toward one another, but outsiders are fair game. Only Christianity prescribes a single, high standard. We often misinterpret the parable of the Good Samaritan, which was told to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" We recognize that the story reveals the moral shortcomings of the establishment religious types--the priest and the Levite--but are less aware that the Samaritan was not only an outsider, but a despised outsider. To get the same effect today, we should have to make the audience and the man who fell among thieves Ku Klux Klansmen, and the Good Samaritan a black. Someone once remarked that Christianity had not been tried and found wanting; it had been looked at, found too demanding, and never tried at all. It is fair to say, however, that some Christians have actually lived up to Christian standards: at least I haven't heard any convincing Quaker-atrocity stories lately.

The whole issue is irrelevant to me anyway, as now that I have read Dunston Wood, I plan to become a mole in the near future and to devote myself to the worship of the silent Stone.

Steyn rix in thine herte (a mole blessing),

Anne Braude

I was glad to see Ruth Berman kept [NIEKAS 25] from being too completely a Christian discussion. And I enjoyed McNelly's essay, although I

suspect every reader, like myself, kept wanting to add examples. For instance, he mentioned the best anthology of religious SF stories, but I wish Jack Dann's Wandering Stars could have been included, because of its Jewish orientation. (Some of the stories in it are Jewish supernatural, some are Jewish natural, but they fit McNelly's general theme.) And, since McNelly is --I assume--Catholic (I assume it only because his essay originally appeared in AMERICA which is Catholic), I would have liked to have seen his discussion of Philip Jose Farmer's Night of Light!

Joe R. Christopher

...religion and sf [?] Are we discussing the stories, such as "Unhuman Sacrifice" or "The Streets of Ashkelon" for instance; or rather considering the whole congregation of fen, their apostates and heretics, the Gernsbackian Orthodoxy, and Harlan Ellison as the Anti-Christ?

Roger Waddington

...I'm not a Scientologist and have no desire to be one, but I am offended at the anonymous unsupported slur against them you printed in "Random Thoughts." I have a feeling of contempt for people who make such charges, and I question your editorial judgement in passing them along.

Anne Braude's review of Inferno strikes me as an example of condemning a book for failing to be something that it doesn't even try to be. Pournelle has said that the book was written to combine Dante's geography with C.S. Lewis's theology. Specifically, Inferno, like The Great Divorce, shows a Hell where the damned still have at least the possibility of salvation, though few take advantage of it. I prefer this view. To me, as I suspect to anyone with a mathematical understanding of infinity, eternal punishment is so disproportionate to any finite sin as to make it impossible for anyone who believes in it to consistently maintain belief in the goodness of God.

I agree with Anne Braude that the "Moral""Majority" should not be blamed for Christianity. The key word is "majority"; the majority religions will always attract such people, and they will always find something in its Scriptures to justify their approach. One can find the same sexual uptightness, hatred for opposing opinions, hostility to independent thought, state sucking, etc., among Jews in Israel, Moslems in Iran, Marxists in Russia, etc.

[while often sensational, we do consider 60 MINUTES a usually reliable source of information. ed.]

insert Braude reply

Arthur D. Hlavaty

...I was particularly interested in Fred Lerner's "Religion Looks at Science Fiction." It is possible that the mainstream religions have relaxed their views toward SF, but the fundamentalists have not. I think they are even stricter in their views than before. My sister belongs to a fundamentalists church and she won't even read my little zine (THE SPECULATIVE FICTION NEWSLETTER) because it is a tool of the devil speaking through the ones she loves to get her. Granted, I think she is a little nuts, but it is an all too common craziness these days...

Kathleen Taylor

...Your "Anonymous" comment on Scientology understates the case. I lived near Clearwater, Florida when the Scientologists moved in, and I knew Clearwater's major whom the Scientologists libeled and my wife worked for the ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, which newspaper they harrassed. The Scientologists acted in a completely amoral manner, seeking to destroy by any means anyone who criticized them or exposed their machinations. If this be religion, I want none of it.

Piers Anthony

I have always thought that some of the fascination religion has as a theme in SF is due to religion being an earlier system for fulfilling the general goals of science--explaining the universe around us. Since the methods of science and religion are different, and sometimes, at least in appearance, mutually exclusive, religion can be an intriguing topic in SF. But there are pitfalls. The SF can be subsumed in the religion which happened in Lewis' That Hideous Strength, or the author can use the book to preach at his/her readers, a la post-1960 Heinlein. Unfortunately, with the current evangelistic movement, we may be seeing more SF books with the plot thinly plastered over the author's religious message. (I made the mistake of reading one such book about a year ago, but merciful amnesia leaves me unable to recall title or author. All I remember was that it was a new paperback at the time.)

Kathy Godfrey

When I read that your topic for NIEKAS 25 was "Science Fiction and Religion," I thought, wow, what a fascinating subject. It was pretty disappointing to learn that what you really meant was "Fantasy and Christianity." The first part, fantasy, is OK but don't you think the second part, Christianity, is rather limiting?

Now I realize that I have a lot of prejudices against Christianity that come from having grown up a non-Christian child in the all-pervasive atmosphere of Southern Fundamentalism. And I don't intend to inflict these views on anyone. However. There are a couple of things I'd like to point out.

First, there are other major religions in the world, and sf and fantasy have been written about them. What's more--what I'd been looking forward to--there have been other religions postulated, new and different even from the ones we have all heard of in the real world, in this literature we love so well.

Second--and I don't think I have heard this idea expressed before--to me, the Tolkien books, Lewis's books, all the books you talked about in this issue, are terrific books in spite of their theological orientation. When I read these authors I am always coming up against some "fundamental truth" that they have simply assumed the reader will believe in, but I don't. It's a little like driving a car that's missing on one cylinder; a little jolt that interferes with my "willing suspension of disbelief." To me, the system is not quite right. I enjoy the books very much, but I have to make allowances. Damn, I'm not finding the right words.

I think what I am driving at is that the articles in NIEKAS 25 mostly made the same assumption that Tolkien and Lewis made, that everybody believes in the same religious mythos they/you do; and it ain't so, and the assumption annoys me.

Felice Rolfe Maxam

I found Fred Lerner's article on "Religion Looks at SF" quite chilling. Look, I work in a bookstore. We always have had some complaints about some of the material we sell but lately. Lately the book banners have been really coming out of the woodwork. Some are just after specific titles: Catcher in the Rye gets a lot of flack. Some day I'll have to read it to find out why. Others are more general. "Why do you sell books on Buddhism, or Zen, or ..." I think you get the idea. People protest about sexy covers or the fact that we have no age limit

on the books we sell. A ten year old can purchase anything in the store. A couple of librarian friends have told me similar stories. Now all this frightens me. My taste in reading is not ordinary and I suspect a LOT of people would want to ban SF if they knew what it was really like. Most people think it's "that Buck Rogers stuff" which they think rather silly for a grown-up to read but it doesn't bother them that much. Periodicals such as the ones Fred mentions could educate the public and get them down on our heads.

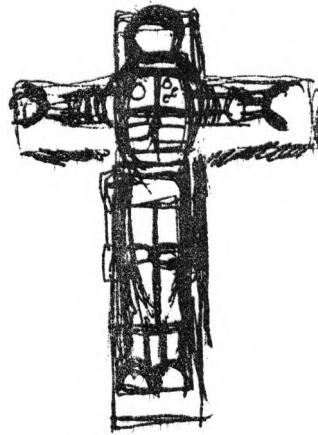
I agree wholeheartedly with Harry Andruschak. For the most part (and my training is in history and anthropology) religion and science have been at odds. Religion generally (at least in Western tradition--Judaism, Christianity, Islam) relies on faith, and scientific inquiry on proof of each postulate. These are contrary in basic world view and the believer can either not study science (and so not acquire the scientific world view at all) or learn to compartmentalize thought (one set for science; one set for religion) or soon learns to take a lot of religious pronouncements less than completely seriously. Nothing new has been discovered in either religion or philosophy since the time of Socrates really. There have been new revelations but.... Just consider all the religious wars: Arians vs Athanasians; Shi'ite vs Sunni; Catholics vs Albigensians; Catholics vs Protestants (that one's still hot in Ireland). Lucretius wrote that religion was the cause of more of man's inhumanity to man than anything else and he wrote before Christianity arrived on the scene. And when you consider that Marxism is really a secular religion (Confucianism doesn't require belief in a deity either), you can really rack up the religious casualties.

After all this I should state that I am of Quaker background and do consider myself a Christian though perhaps not a very devout one. I am also the product of a religious college as well.

I always liked the Arabian Nights tales because they weren't preachy like most fantasy. I find the Narnia books too preachy (and the Christian parallels stick out a mile) and disliked the final Ransom books Perelandra and That Hideous Strength for the same reason, especially the latter. If I want to hear a sermon I'll go to church. I find most fantasy (not all; I really like some fantasy) much too simplistic morally and too much of us versus them rather like a John Wayne film. I then start getting contrary and

root for the baddies which is hardly the point of the novel. I do like the Earthsea trilogy of LeGuin perhaps because she doesn't hit you over the head with moral as she does in "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas." I may be dense but I could never understand why the happiness of the city depended on the misery of the child which made the story trivial. I do agree with her point though. If only she had made it in a more subtle way.

I liked Inferno by Niven and Pournelle which may also show the shallowness of my religious perceptions. First of all, as a Quaker I never heard of Purgatory until I studied comparative religion in college. Hoever.... I also rather liked the assumption that even the damned had some hope. This may not



be theologically correct in Roman Catholic doctrine (I'm no expert) but I do tend to agree with Carpenter. Hell is too much. To punish eternally those who hardly sinned for eternity does not fit with the idea of any God I'd want to worship. As I remember Origen said that one got eternity to try to make it into heaven though he postulated a system of reincarnations until one learned or perhaps earned would be better, a place in Heaven. He was proclaimed heretical however. Probably because he was too rational and sympathetic. (I always found myself more in agreement with the enemies of the "official line" of Church development by the way. I preferred Arius to Athanasius; Pelasgius to Augustine; the Albigensians to the Catholics; Wycliffe and Hus to the Church; Servetus to Calvin. but I think you get the idea.)

I enjoyed COSMOS though I did have a few grotches about it. Sagan tends to get preachy also. Sure, we might ruin the planet--that's one reason I'd love to get colonies out in

space. Leave the crazies here to blow up the place. I did enjoy the parts about the Library of Alexandria however. I did think that Sagan was wrong in ascribing the evil and superstition of the Ancient World to slavery. First of all, someone had to do the dirty work in a society without labor-saving devices. People did not condemn slavery because they could not imagine any other way to order society. This had the unfortunate result of making physical labor (or even useful labor) something to be looked down upon with the result that thinkers did not try to make improvements to devices which might be useful.

But there was another trend at the time. This was the decline in rationality. Gibbon blamed it on Christianity but Christianity was a symptom rather than a cause. Cult religions were the "in" thing. Astrology flourished, and did omens, magic and all sorts of occult matters. This is a very different scene than that of the Athens of Pericles. Christianity was in competition with Mithraism (it borrowed a lot from that religion by the way neo-Platonism (ditto) which unlike Platonism was hardly rational and didn't pretend to be, Isis worship etc. Read The Golden Ass by Apuleius which is the tale of a man's conversion to the worship of Isis. It was banned by the Church but a copy survived to be discovered in the Renaissance. This whole trend bothers me because I see the same thing happening today with the rise of cults, interest in the tarot, I Ching and a lot of other matters occult. In fact a couple of my best friends are very immersed in all this. But for whatever reason we are running away from rationalism at a fast clip.

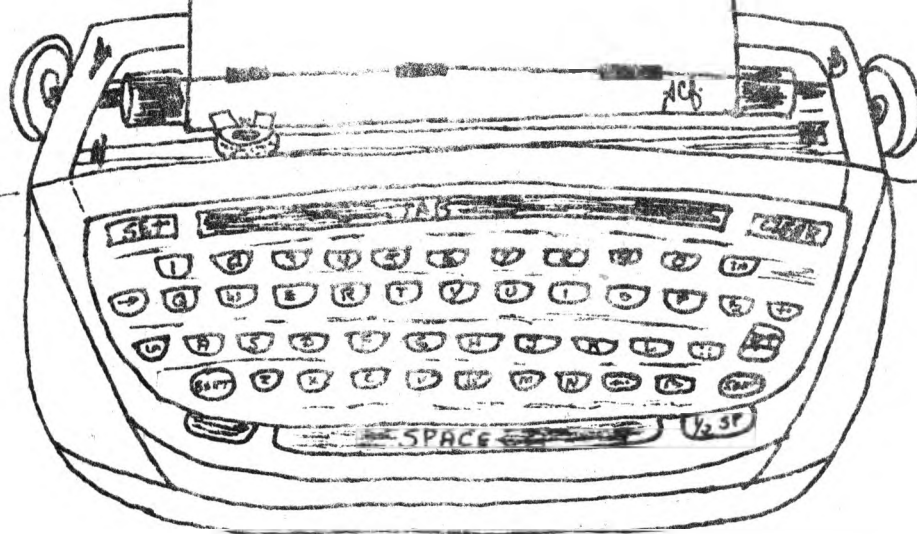
I don't like the violence in a lot of SF either. I avoid the Conan school because of the "if it moves, it's probably hostile so bash it" attitude which pervades it. I suppose female writers tend to avoid this sort of thing more than male ones simply because most women don't settle differences with their fists and there is no societal pressure for them to. Males, even those who look like Woody Allen, are taught to admire macho and the Western (and violent) mystique.

I guess the Middle Ages are what you make them. Some people associate the period with castles and knights in shining armour. I associate it with the Inquisition, the campaign against the Albigensians, the Black Plague, peasants revolts and mass

[CONTINUED TO PAGE 59]



Michael Bastraw
Anne Braude
Don D'Ammassa
Dennis D'Asaro
John B. Geisel
Astryd Hoechstetter
Ed Meskys
rod walker



Prose Bowl, Bill Ponzini and Barry N. Malzburg, St. Martin's Press, 1980, \$9.95

This book is set in the late 21st century, when the government, to counteract the almost universal illiteracy of the late twentieth (!), has turned writing into a major spectator sport, complete with cheerleaders, word-by-word announcers, and a world championship Prose Bowl. Scoring is by word count, although officiating Editors can call penalties for Improper Syntax, Unjustified Generic Shift, Confused Narrative, and the like. In this year's Prose Bowl our hero, naive and upright Rex Sackett (The Metaphor Kid), is to face off against that legendary pulpsteer, master of every form from Futuristic Love-Adventure to Quality Lit, The Cranker. But dastardly villains are out to fix the match: they kidnap Sally, Rex's pure and beautiful fiancée, and threaten to--

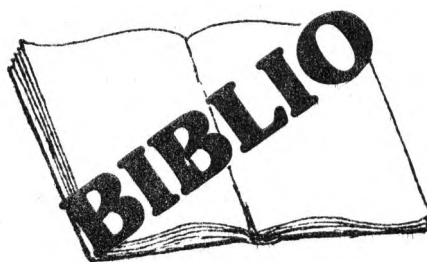
Haven't I seen this plot somewhere before?

Yes, indeed. Prose Bowl is a tribute to pulp writing in all its varied forms. If you really know pulp fiction and pro sports, you ought to get a kick out of this book. I did, even though my acquaintance with both is minimal. The writing/football metaphor is really all there is to the plot; the futuristic society background is otherwise of the sketchiest. However, the authors are also trying to make a Meaningful Statement about the craft and profession of writing, which doesn't come off nearly so well. Whether or not it is a valid statement is for the professional writers among us to decide; I was not convinced, both then I am not all that well qualified to judge, my professional output being limited to one poem. This is not one of the all-time great books, but it is an entertaining read.

ajb

A Ring of Endless Light, Madeleine L'Engle, Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1980, \$9.95

Madeleine L'Engle has one thing in common with Diana Wynne Jones: the variety of her novels is equalled only by their excellence. Her best-known work, the Time Trilogy (discussed elsewhere in this issue) dealing with the adventures of Meg and Charles Wallace Murry and Calvin O'Keefe, is religious science fantasy strongly resembling that of C.S. Lewis, though the theology is much less explicit. She has also written two thrillers, The Arm of the Starfish and Dragons in the Waters, involving the children of a



grown-up Meg and Calvin. And her first two books about the Austin family, Meet the Austins and The Moon by Night, are stories of family life and the troubles and perceptions of teenaged Vicky Austin.

At this point things begin to get a bit more complicated. The Young Unicorns is an Austin novel, although Vicky is not central; it is a thriller set in New York, involving sinister plotting around (and beneath) the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. One of its characters, Canon Tallis, a sort of clerical James Bond, first appeared in The Arm of the Starfish. And the hero of that book, marine biology student Adam Eddington, is one of the protagonists in the fourth Austin book, which also has some affinities with the Time Trilogy. A Ring of Endless Light is an appropriate title in more ways than one.

This is a book about death. The Austins are spending the summer on Seven Bay Island with Vicky's wise and much-loved grandfather, who is dying of leukemia. She also becomes involved with three young men, each hung up on death in a different way, who want something of her: Leo, the slob next door who is turning out to be a real person and a valued friend, but who wants to be more; Zachary, rich and handsome but hollow at the heart, who sees Vicky as all that stands between him and chaos; and Adam, for whom she is at first his friend's kid sister who can help him with his dolphin research project, and later someone he can communicate with on the most intimate and intuitive level.

Vicky is a budding poet, sensitive and self-deprecating. She grows in maturity and insight through all of these relationships. With her grandfather, she reads and discusses everything from seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry to contemporary astrophysics and biology; together they reflect on life and death and eternity, on good and evil, on the nature of love and courage. Working with Adam, she learns to communicate telepathically with wild dolphins,

who convey to her something of their affirmation of life and their perception of non-linear time. She comes to see her family and friends, and her relationships with them, in a more adult manner without losing the archaic understanding, the intuitive grasp of significances, that poets and children share. But despite her growth, and the web of loving relationships in which she is held, she is finally overwhelmed by a sense of despair and helplessness before the random evils of life when a young child dies in her arms in an overcrowded hospital emergency room. It is only the dolphins who can get through to her then, and only Adam who has the wisdom to know this.

I think that this is L'Engle's best book, better even than A Wrinkle in Time. In Catcher in the Rye, Holden Caulfield's criterion for a really good book was that "it made you wish the author was a real good friend of yours and you could call him up." This seems to me an absurd test of an author--I have always felt that way about Lewis, never about Tolkien; yet Tolkien is unquestionably the better author--but often an excellent test of a character. And Vicky Austin--along with Lord Peter Wimsey and Professor Ransom--is for me such a character. What I look for in a book is not so much what kind it is (sf, mystery, fantasy, what-have-you) but whether it has well-drawn characters that I can really care about and a strong moral center, a concern with the basic issues of real life; on both counts, A Ring of Endless Light scores very high indeed.

ajb

The Wounded Land, Stephen R. Donaldson, Del Rey, 1980, hc, 484 pp.

Rarely has a writer in the SF genre made a substantial reputation solely on the basis of fantasy fiction, despite the new respect for that sub-genre in recent years. The Thomas Covenant trilogy was one of those rarities; a trilogy owing much to Tolkien that was original, well written, and widely read. Although there was some controversy over the non-heroic personality of its protagonist, Thomas Covenant, leper and rapist, there was little doubt that Donaldson's next book would be avidly awaited.

Now that we have it before us, this reviewer at least finds it a mix of disappointment and promise. Donaldson is no less gripping and inventive in his plotting, but the reversion to further adventures of the same character seems rather conservative, and Donaldson is risking the possibility of limiting

his appeal. But the novel itself is interesting.

Covenant returns to the Land, this time accompanied by another human, Dr. Linden Avery. Avery adjusts to the reality of this other existence almost instantly, in sharp contrast to Covenant's first advent. But it is a Land transformed. Nearly four thousand years have passed, and Lord Foul has emerged once more as a power to be reckoned with. In some fashion he has perverted the mystical Earthpower and created the Sunbane, a transformation of the sun's energy which causes drastic, erratic alterations of nature itself. The inhabitants of the land have either perished or subsided into a scattering of isolated, mutually hostile tribes, requiring bloody sacrifice to continue to exist.

This is the setting for yet another immense journey, as Covenant and friends first travel to Revelstone to seek the solution to various mysteries, and then eastward out of the Land itself, in search of the One Tree, so that Covenant may somehow return the world to a balanced existence. And lurking offstage throughout all of this is Lord Foul, aided by the non-corporeal Ravers, and a scattering of other menaces.

The story line itself is fairly good, although it suffers from its obvious lack of completeness; this is the first of a second trilogy. It is also hindered by prose that is often awkward. Covenant himself continues to be an exasperating self-despiser, a device for plot movement that is now starting to wear thin. Donaldson has become more lazy as well, and the pent-up wild magic of the first three volumes becomes an easy means now of removing Covenant from any serious trouble he falls into. On the balance, this is still an entertaining novel, but a sharp drop of quality from what has gone before.

dd

The Time Bender, Keith Laumer, Ace, 1981, \$2.25

As I read most of Laumer's stories, I can't help but feel that he is a real champion of the Common (read inept) Man. So often his characters are everyday, garden varieties who schlep through adventures with the ease and elan of a dysomaniac negotiating a straight line.

The Time Bender is no exception. This tale, originally written circa 1966, tells the story of one Lafayette O'Leary. He is a fellow very familiar to those of us who resemble him more than a little bit. He is a dreamer

who is discontented with our all-too-real world of mundanity and tedium. Through the use of mind techniques discovered in an ancient book he finds his venue changed to a land called Artesia. What he mistakes for a product of his dream-mind is an actual alternate world which is just as real as his primary world. Artesia is a medieval land with certain anomalies which help lend much to the humorous aspect of the yard. (A sort of running gag is a highwayman by the name of Red who speaks a form of "Brooklynese" and who befriends O'Leary after a somewhat shaky start.)

O'Leary has the ability to affect this world by the power of his mind alone. But this ability is erratic at best and more than once he is left in the lurch when one of his wishes is shaped askew; like the time when he is lost in a desert and tries to create an oasis--he gets a Coke machine.

There isn't a pretentious bone in the entire body of this book but I can't guarantee that you won't choke.

mb

The Shadow Guests, Joan Aiken, Delacorte, 1980, \$7.95

Joan Aiken belongs to a prominent and prolific literary family. Her father, Conrad Aiken, was a distinguished poet and novelist; and her sister, Jane Aiken Hodge, has written a number of excellent historical romantic thrillers. She herself is best known for her mystery/suspense novels for adults, a number of collections of juvenile fantasy short stories ranging from humor to horror, and a series of juvenile novels set in an alternate universe in which King James III is menaced by plots on behalf of the Hanoverian pretender--The Wolves of Willoughby Chase and its sequels. The Aikens, one might say, are the fortunate possessors of designer genes.

The Shadow Guests is a ghost story, more or less. The hero, Cosmos Curtoys, has returned to England from Australia after losing his mother and elder brother to live with his Cousin Eunice, an Oxford professor of mathematics. He is happy enough at Curtoys Mill with Eunice but has problems at school, where he is rejected by his classmates as a newcomer and outsider. But the importance of his school problems dwindles considerably when he learns of the family curse: the eldest Curtoys son always dies young, in battle, and his mother dies of grief. Cosmos's own mother and brother, learning of this, had

deliberately chosen to die together of exposure in the Australian desert in order to break the pattern and lift the curse. The peaceful tenor of Cosmos's time at the Mill is interrupted by mysterious threats to his life and by encounters, apparently due to time-warping, with eldest sons from the past: Con, a Romano-British slave boy destined to be a gladiator, and Sim, a gentle and studious klutz compelled to go on a crusade, both of whom he tries to help; and Osmond, a member of the eighteenth-century Hellfire Club and the son of a witch, who believes he can break the curse by killing Cosmo.

At the end of the story Cosmo has averted the danger to himself at the Mill and made friends at school, but whether or not the curse has truly been lifted remains ambiguous. I regard this last as something of a flaw, but otherwise this is an excellent story on all points.

ajb

The Dictionary of Imaginary Places, Alberto Manguel & Gianni Guadalupi, Macmillan, 1980, 438 pp., \$24.95, hc

I am not impressed. In most respects this is a disappointment.

I will say that it contained some awfully interesting items and must constitute a pretty thorough survey of the Utopian and Gulliverian works of the 15th-19th Centuries. I know that the text contains at least some inaccuracies at points. The maps are, in many cases with which I am familiar, awful. Those of Prydain, Pellucidar, Dreamworld, Akkama &c. (Zimiamvia, although the name is never mentioned), and some others bear no real relation to the "reality".

Oz and Middle-earth aren't wonderful. There are instances of inaccuracies so dreadful that I can't understand how they occurred. Naturally, such things make one suspect the integrity of the work where unfamiliar books are concerned. Well, at least I've still not been one-upped in terms of the book I someday hope to do. I was worried.

I'm also puzzled by some of the works the authors either chose to omit or simply weren't aware of. Why, for instance, did they take references from THE MIKADO and UTOPIA LTD., but omit PRINCESS IDA, IOLANTHE, GONDOLIERS, and THE GRAND DUKE? Why some of Baum's Oz stories and not others...or why his Ix novel and not those set in Mo or Merryland? How did they miss Graustark, when they picked up its imitations? And how the Hell could they have included The Silmarillion and have no references to Beleriand, Doriath, Nargothrond,

or Gondolin? And after using all the operettas set in imaginary places, they missed the Grandmother of them all, the Grand Duchess of Geroldstein (Offenbach)!! ("We are doing away with the Geroldsteins," Bismarck once said to Napoleon III.) There are many little inexplicable things of that sort.

RW

The Norse Myths, Kevin Crossley-Holland, Pantheon, 1980, \$14.95

Most of us, when we hear the term "mythology," think of the Greek gods; but as William Morris pointed out, for the English-speaking world--as for all North Europeans of Teutonic/Scandinavian descent--the true cultural heritage has its roots in Asgard rather than Olympus. Unlike classical myth, Norse myth is teleological: it portrays a world moving from creation through a bright heroic age which is gradually darkened by the corrupting influence of evil and which ends in Ragnarok, wherein the nine worlds are consumed by flames out of which arise a new heaven and a new earth. Although they are always violent and frequently cruel, reflecting the harshness of life in the bleak North, the gods of Asgard yet stand for law against the forces of chaos and evil. The images of heroism they provide--Odin self-crucified on the World-Ash Tree to gain wisdom; the gods riding out to fight in the final battle in which they know they will be slain--give rise to that indefinable but unmistakable quality of "Northernness" which gripped the imaginations of Morris and later, in our own time, of Tolkien and Lewis.

Kevin Crossley-Holland, a poet as well as a scholar and translator of Old English poetry, has arranged the myths in order of sequence--creation to Ragnarok--and provided translations that reflect the varying tone and style of his sources. The Norse Myths combines very readable (and frequently poetic) retellings of the myths themselves with scholarly and concise notes and critical apparatus providing detailed information about their historical background, literary qualities, and religious and psychological significance. Although he omits the Volsungasaga and Nibelungenlied materials--the tales of Sigurd/Siegfried--as being legend rather than myth, this is the most comprehensive work on the subject I have yet come across. If you want your library to include just one basic work on Norse mythology, this is it.

ajb

Golem 100, Alfred Bester, Pocket Books, 1981, 392 pp., \$2.95 (previously published in 1980 in hardcover)

This appears to be a very controversial novel in some ways; readers either seem to detest it from the start to finish, or lavish praise on it possibly in excess of its true value. I'll have to number myself in the latter, despite the fact that many people whose opinions I value in literary matters have found this to be disappointing and trivial. Perhaps the answer lies in the things the novel implies but is not explicit about, rather than in what it genuinely accomplishes.

In a rather decadent and chaotic 23rd Century America, a small group of bored women dabble in the occult, as the result of which they somehow trigger the release of a hideous creature from the collective unconscious mind of humanity. Set free, this "monster of the id" proceeds to engage itself in a series of particularly brutal murders.

Arrayed against this all too material apparition are a mystic police investigator, a parapsychic, and a brilliant chemist who is himself out of touch with the "real" world, and who lapses periodically into an alternate persona, Mr. Wish, whose activities are morbid at best, downright necrophilic at worst.

From this basis, Bester spins a tale of investigation, both of the murders themselves, and of the subconscious of human existence. Through extensive use of graphics (almost a Bester trademark), the author attempts to convey impressions and situations that do not lend themselves easily to straightforward prose. These attempts are not, as one might expect, entirely successful.

Nevertheless, and despite an ending that I found somewhat unsatisfying, I enjoyed the novel even upon re-reading, and have little doubt that it will find generally high acceptance, be an award contender, and advance its author's reputation. But I suspect that it will be the subject of considerable disagreement



for years to come, and even as fond of it as I am, I'm not convinced that it will remain as vivid in my memory as The Demolished Man or The Stars My Destination.

dd

Glinda of Oz, L. Frank Baum, Ballantine, 1981, \$2.25

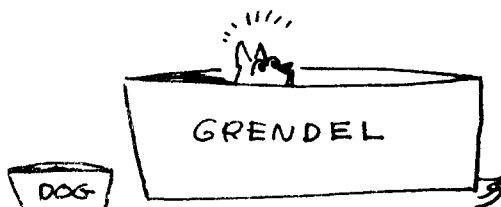
This is it: the Last of the Mohicans. More accurately, this is the last Oz book that Baum wrote before, in May of 1919, "he went away to take his stories to the little child-souls who had lived here too long ago to read the Oz stories themselves." Whether or not someone will re-release any of the further adventures in Oz penned by others, I don't know.

This particular story has fewer side adventures going in it than most of the others in the series. It also contains quite a few SF elements. Princess Ozma and Dorothy learn of an impending war between the Flatheads and the Skeezers who live in a far corner of the Gilliken Country in the land of Oz. After consulting with Glinda the Good, they decide to make a foray into this little-known outland and advise the belligerents to make nice.

On the way to the inevitable Happy Ending we are treated to giant purple spiders, Mist Maidens, the Flatheads with their canned brains, a glass-domed city which is capable of sinking below the surface of a lake, submarines, and even a mention of the then-little-heard-of-material radium.

This is one of the more lightweight offerings in this series but the artwork by John R. Neill is right up to snuff. And, after all, you should buy this last one to keep your set lucky.

mb



Specimens, Fred Saberhagen, Ace, 1981, \$2.25

I am somewhat reluctant to compare this to The Amityville Horror as I know what a lot of people think about that particular book/movie. But Specimens IS pretty much an SF treatment of that work. As such, it works much better; I always was a sucker for rational explanations for the occult.

Dan Post and family move into their new home on the outskirts of Chicago. They start experiencing various unpleasant manifestations generally associated with haunted homes: strange odors, architectural oddities, and nightmares of a strangely persistent nature. In this case there is something in the basement.

This is a problem story with all the clues cleverly hidden throughout. It's one of those deals where you end up with a concussion--self-inflicted--when you discover the punchline.

"Ma cloche est vide!," as Kurt Reichel would say if he knew any French, eh?

Though there are not many real moments of out and out excitement, Saberhagen does manage to keep up a certain level of suspense. He also pays quite a bit of attention to surface detail though this sometimes tends to slow the pace.

While no really new ground is broken in the world of SF with this book, it is certainly worth a once-through.

mb

Shuttle Down, Lee Corey, Ballantine, 1981

I guess this would be considered borderline SF extrapolating into the near future.

A shuttle launched from Vandenburg to put a Landsat into polar orbit has a malfunction in its engine and has to make an emergency landing. At that point in its trajectory the only place it can set down is the Isle de Pasqua: or Easter Island. This is the story of interaction between the Americans and a totally alien culture as strange as that in some SF set on other worlds. The novel is a gripping story of the solving of human and technical difficulties to get the shuttle off the island and back into service.

First the Russians claim in the UN that the shuttle is carrying a military satellite and try to get Chile, the colonial power in charge of Easter Island, to impound it and by doing so, damage out space program. (Notice how they complained

that the shuttle was a military vehicle during the test flight of the Columbia?) Then there is the conflict between the oligarchy which controls Chile and its way of doing things and the Americans with their way of getting things done. Also there is the tremendous cultural difference between the Latin Americans, the natives of Easter Island, and the Americans.

The facilities on Isle de Pasqua are unimaginably primitive and absolutely everything must be flown in. Other complications include a Russian agent who sabotages a C5 cargo plane and a mob of Latin American radicals who are underwritten by the Russians to attack and destroy the shuttle.

There is the mandatory female reporter who passionately hates the space program and will do anything she can to destroy it. (We last saw her in Alfred Koppel's The Dragon.) The female member of the shuttle crew has ambitions of becoming the first woman to be a full shuttle pilot. She has an affair with a male crew member during the long enforced hiatus on the island and gets pregnant. She is afraid that this will wreck her career goals but her problem is "solved" when she is wounded in an attack on the shuttle and the fetus is destroyed. The implication is that she will eventually marry the guy and not become pregnant again until she is fully accepted by NASA as a shuttle pilot.

There are other romantic entanglements and interpersonal relationships which are very well carried off. The story is very good adventure, very well extrapolated. Despite minor reservations I enjoyed this book very much. It presents and solves an interesting problem, portrays interesting people doing interesting things, and shows a fascinating contrast of cultures.

erm

Split Infinity, Piers Anthony, Ballantine, 1980, \$2.50

It is a little late in the day to announce, with an air of blithe discovery, that Piers Anthony is a good writer; if pressed, the man could probably produce a suspenseful and amusing telephone directory. The mere announcement that a new fantasy by Anthony has been published should be sufficient inducement to go out and get hold of same. I intend to review it anyway, if only to justify the munificent salary we NIEKAS reviewers are paid. (But why are all the checks drawn on the Left Bank of the Mississippi River?)

Split Infinity is actually a literary centaur, half sf and half fantasy. It

opens on the world of Proton, populated by a few thousand immensely wealthy Citizens and a vast number of serfs, who have practically no rights but who willingly remain on Proton for the large payoff they will receive at the end of their twenty years' indenture--and because of their fascination with the Game, a mixed bag of competition in everything from tiddlywinks to marathon running. Each year the best players may compete in the Tourney, in which the prize is Proton Citizenship; the catch is that losers are exiled immediately.

Stile, the hero, is not quite five feet tall and a serf. Despite these disadvantages, he is fairly well placed; he is the champion jockey of Proton (horse racing is the Citizen's favorite sport) and a master Gamesman. But his circumstances change abruptly when a laser shot from ambush cripples his knees, ending his racing career. Fearing further attacks, he goes into hiding, aided by Sheen, a beautiful humanoid robot who is in love with him, and her fellow self-willed machines. While trying to escape an ambush, he finds and passes through the "curtain" which divides Proton from Phaze, its alternate in a parallel world where magic, not science, is the order of the day, but where someone is still out to kill him. He meets a unicorn, Neysa, and after a wild and incredible ride tames and befriends her. (When he discovers that she has the power to transform herself into a beautiful girl, they become very good friends indeed.) Stile proves to be a powerful magician, indicating that he is the Proton-alternate of one of the mighty Adepts of Phaze, who must be dead (otherwise is would be impossible for Stile himself to enter Phaze). The rest of the book is divided between Stile's adventures on Phaze, where, with Neysa and a helpful werewolf, he tries to find out which Adept is dead and who killed him; and on Proton, where he is obliged to enter the Tourney and is still working out his complicated relationship with Sheen.

I liked Split Infinity even more than the Xanth books, chiefly because the characters are much more interesting. Stile is a particularly attractive hero, not only because of his remarkable physical and mental prowess but because of his qualities of insight, compassion, integrity, and humor. His sensitivity about his size plays an important part in both his faults and his virtues. (Short heroes seem to be in these days; one of the best of recent mystery stories, Lawrence Sanders' The Tenth Commandment, features the ironically named Joshua Bigg, who

has a lot in common with Stile.) Also well done are Stile's not-quite-human lovers, Sheen and Neysa, and his relationship with each. The book ends with Stile's establishing himself in the place of the murdered Adept, but the stage is set for a sequel (which cannot come to soon for me); we still do not know who the enemy is in either world, and Stile has yet to compete in the Tourney. Another question also occurs to me, though Anthony does not pose it: in view of the fact that his ability to perform magic seems to be limited only by his ability to frame spells properly in verse, can Stile, by taking thought, add one cubit unto his stature?

ajb

Neanderthal Planet, Brian Aldiss, Avon Books, 1981, 192 pp., \$2.25, (first printed in 1970)

This edition brings back into print four longish stories by Brian Aldiss, a writer whose variety of approaches to fiction is as varied as anyone I can think of. The most significant part of this particular collection is "Intangibles Inc", which I have long considered one of his very best pieces. It's an authentic modern fairy tale of sorts, one which deals with the search for true meaning in life without resorting to platitudes or overly cute moralizations. The collection is worth the admission price for this story alone.

The title story deals with a world in which humanity has passed away, similar in that respect to his recent novella, Enemies of the System. The robots who survive us attempt to interpret a surviving piece of fiction, as a result of which they conclude that they are in fact merely grotesque parodies of humanity, doomed to no value of their own unless they can somehow pass on to another kind of reality.

"Since the Assassination" is a clever amalgamation of various SF themes in a single problem story, dealing with immortality, time travel, and human mortality. It is not one of Aldiss' better stories, but it is still certainly worth reading. Less interesting is "Danger: Religion" (alternatively titled "Matrix"), a parallel universe story of no particular merit. The collection does not, for the most part, contain any of the dozen or so stories Aldiss is perhaps best noted for, but the general quality is high, higher certainly than a lot of other collections from lesser talents.

dd

They Came from Outer Space, edited by Jim Wynorski, Doubleday, 1980

What a plum this must have been to put together! The most amazing thing about this anthology is that fact that no one has put something like this together before.

Wynorski has collected "12 classic science fiction tales that became major motion pictures." Even though some of the films in question are hardly worthy of being called "major" --INVASION OF THE SAUCERMEN and DEATHRACE 2000 come to mind as being low budget and of questionable effectiveness--this does give an excellent overview not only of the genesis of popular SF through the years (1940-1975) but it is also interesting to see what filmmakers saw as worth saving (sometimes little) and worth trashing (sometimes too much) from the stories which they derived their screenplays from.

Contained within:

"Dr. Cyclops" by Henry Kuttner
filmed as DR. CYCLOPS

"Who Goes There?" by John W. Campbell
filmed as THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD

"Farewell to the Master" by Harry Bates
filmed as THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

"The Fog Horn" by Ray Bradbury
filmed as THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS

"Deadly City" by Ivar Jorgenson
filmed as TARGET EARTH

"The Alien Machine" by Raymond F. Jones
filmed as THIS ISLAND EARTH

"The Cosmic Frame" by Paul W. Fairman
filmed as INVASION OF THE SAUCERMEN

"The Fly" by Geroge Langelaan
filmed as THE FLY

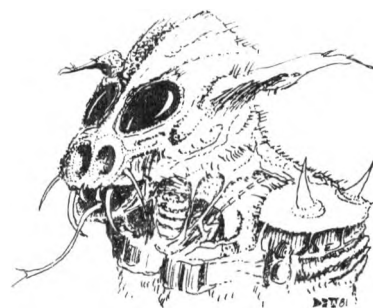
"The Seventh Victim" by Robert Sheckley
filmed as THE TENTH VICTIM

"The Sentinel" by Arthur C. Clarke
filmed as 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

"The Racer" by Ib Melchior
filmed as DEATH RACE 2000

"A Boy and His Dog" by Harlan Ellison
filmed as A BOY AND HIS DOG

Not a bad line-up, eh? In some cases it is easy to see why drastic revisions had to be made to the originals. Most stories cannot be directly translated to film if for no other reason than they take up too much subjective time (or, in the case of something like "The Sentinel", to little). However, Wynorski manages to take exception with most



of the films for not being faithful to their sources. He does admit to high entertainment value even in the case of some of the smellier efforts (INVASION OF THE SAUCERMEN gets my vote for the worst of the pack).

This is a tidy little tome. Each unit contains a preface by the editor wherein he gives his views of the book-to-film transition and sometimes provides interesting background (I'll bet you didn't know that TARGET EARTH cost \$75,000 to produce). Then comes the original story followed by the credits for the film version.

The book is illustrated with black and white clips from the films (often humorously subtitled) which help to recall the movies if you haven't caught CREATURE DOUBLE FEATURE or CHILLER THEATER lately.

Ray Bradbury did the introduction. He explains some of what he went through with his two screen efforts in SF which became IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS. Interesting enough, I guess, but I had the feeling that I had heard it all before.

(I probably had. It seems to be a recurring pattern ending with the film people doing what they damn well please over the protests of the primary creating entity.)

About half the stories I had never seen in print outside of their original pulps so this seems to be a good investment on several counts.

Try to keep the kernels out of the pages.

mb

The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet, Eleanor Cameron

One of my many manias is children's literature. I have about 2/3 as many children's books as I do big people books. Some excellent stuff has been written for young (2nd-4th grade) children of the sort that steers kids toward SF and fantasy. A favorite of mine is the Mushroom

Planet series by Eleanor Cameron.

In TWFTTMP, the first book of the series, the protagonists are David and Chuck who are about 10 years old. They build a spaceship in answer to a classified ad put in the newspaper by a mysterious man named Tyco M. Bass.

Mr. Bass puts the finishing touches on the spaceship, sealing it with "fluid resinoid silicon" and fueling it with rocket fuel containing precisely 4 drops of (I kid you not) atomic tritetramethylbenzocarbonethylene. The boys blast off at midnight and go to Basidium, a tiny planet 50,000 miles away from Earth. Basidium is only visible through a telescope equipped with one of Mr. Bass's inventions: the stroboscopic polarizing filter.

Basidium is the Mushroom Planet. It is inhabited by the Basidiomites, who are "spore people". Thousands of years ago, some spores must have blown to Earth, creating the race of mushroom people (Myceteans) on Earth. Mr. Bass is one of them.

And that ain't all. As you progress through the series (Stowaway to the Mushroom Planet, Mr. Bass's Planetoid, A Mystery for Mr. Bass, and Time and Mr. Bass), you discover some amazing things about Mr. Tyco Mycetes Bass. His great grandfather was Bard to Uther Pendragon and to Arthur. (Lots of bards floating 'round). Mr. Bass seems to be a modern, somewhat scientific Merlyn. He invents things. Impossible things happen around him. He travels by thought. And you know if he's around, everything will be all right.

Eleanor Cameron may play fast and loose with science facts here and there, but her characterizations of scientists are such that they provoke interest in science. She spins a good tale, especially for the reader who isn't old enough to enjoy some of the other so-called juvenile SF and fantasy books.

GET 'EM YOUNG!

ah

After Dark, Manly Wade Wellman, Doubleday, 1980, \$8.95

It is difficult for me to review this book objectively, as I am a devoted admirer of Wellman's stories about John the ballad singer, or Silver John as he is referred to on the dust jackets of the novels (there is an earlier one, The Old Gods Waken, also from Doubleday). I still prefer the collection of short stories, Who Fears the Devil?, but I will read anything he cares to write about John. For the benefit of those of you who have spent the

last few decades under a damp rock, John is a young man who wanders through the Southern mountains with his silver-strung guitar, collecting traditional folk songs and foiling supernatural evils. He narrates the stories in the first person; and Wellman's ear for regional dialect is matched only by his exhaustive knowledge of the folklore of the area. In After Dark, the villains are the Shonokins, a pre-human race with supernatural powers who were here before the Indians and hope to use the recent Federal court decisions on tribal land rights to get the whole county given back to them. In the meantime, they have available considerably nastier methods which they try to practice against John and his friends. Wellman's plotting is a little weak at novel length, but the fascination of style and background successfully sustain this reader's interest.

ajb

Fireflood and Other Stories, Vonda N. McIntyre, Pocket Books, 1981, 237 pp., \$2.75 (published in hardcover in 1980)

This collection of eleven short stories by one of the more interesting new writers in the genre is exceptionally well chosen. As one might expect, the popular story of a healer and her serpentine friends, "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand" is included. Almost as impressive a story is the one which gives this collection its title, a fascinating and moving tale of a genetically engineered human whose burrowing ability allows her to flee to a preserve for other, winged mutations.

Two other significant stories are "Aztecs" which features another abnormal human, this time a star pilot fated to an unhappy love affair, and "Screwtop", which takes the familiar theme of a prison colony on a jungle world and raises it to a level higher than that of a mere escape adventure story.

Human deformity as a theme recurs in "Only at Night", in which a ward full of deformed children is the setting for an odd form of human contact, and in "The Genius Freaks", in which an artificially augmented intelligence proves inadequate to provide happiness in its programmed pursuits.

There are two more stories about winged people, this time a race forced to abandon its world and seek a future elsewhere in the universe. These two stories are also among McIntyre's best, although "Wings" failed to win the Nebula it was nominated for, and "The Mountains of Sunset, the Mountains of Dawn"

seems to have sunk otherwise into obscurity.

Three remaining stories are all competent, though not as successful as those above. Fireflood is easily one of the best collections of stories by a single author to appear in the past couple of years, and fans of her work would be well advised to pick this up.

dd

The Fallible Fiend, L. Sprague de Camp, Ballantine, 1981, \$1.95

This is a fun little story to while away a couple of hours with. Nothing profound here but entertaining as all get out.

Zdim, a demon from the Twelfth Plane, is conjured into the Prime Plane wherein this highly civilized and logical entity is beleaguered by the ultimate creatures of barbarism and irrationality: humans.

He starts out his indenturement to the wizard Maldivius (talk about semantic content) on a positively incorrect foot. He is instructed by Dr. Maldivius to guard his chambers by eating anyone who enters. Zdim, surely a Vulcan in his own right, takes the wizard literally and devours the sorcerer's assistant when he returns from the village. Things promptly go from worse to worse.

De Camp writes this in an often satirical tone with more than one pointed barb being thrown in the direction of us human beans with Zdim acting as the confused Stranger in a Strange Land. A whole nation is ruled by a chamber of commerce-like organization called the Syndic which presses the perplexed demon into their service when a war breaks out which threatens their purses.

If you want a good laugh and don't have a mirror handy, try this on for size.

mb

UNREVIEWED NEW RELEASES

Ace

Key Out of Time, Andre Norton
Love Not Human, Gordon R. Dickson
The Cave Girl, Edgar Rice Burroughs
A Spade of Spacetime, Fred Saberhagen
For the Witch of the Mists, David C. Smith & Richard Tierney
Analog Yearbook II, Stanley Schmidt

The Gates of Creation, Philip
Jose Farmer
Time Travelers Strictly Cash (and
other stories), Spider Robinson

Ballantine

Protector, Larry Niven
Ringworld, "
Ringworld Engineers, "
Deadly Silents, Lee Killough
The Revolution from Rosinante,
Alexis A. Gilliland
Glinda of Oz, L. Frank Baum
Of Man and Monsters, William Tenn
The Aliens Among Us, James White
Major Operation, "
My Name Is Legion, Roger Zelazny
The Changing Land, "
The Ends of the Circle, Paul O.
Williams
Cycle of Fire, Hal Clement
The Sheep Look Up, John Brunner
The California Coven Project, Bob
Stickgold

A Structural Analysis of "Ring Around the Rosy"

by C.M. Lynch

"Ring Around the Rosy" is a poem in three parts. It is richly ironic. Its literal meaning, full of ashes and flowers, is all earthiness--with stirrings of dramatic action. Its ironic level seethes with plague and disaster.

The first part is a clever statement --an active upbeat, happy announcement, "Ring Around the Rosy." But this is quickly reversed by the second part, "A pocket full of posies." Note that the pocket is full of posies, not what one would expect or wish--coins or money. At this moment the full ironic intent of the anonymous author becomes clear.

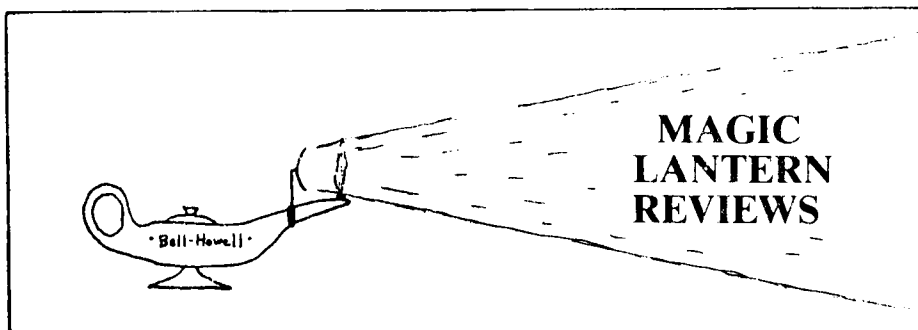
The third part, "Ashes, ashes, we all fall down" is not at first glance an ironic comment, but the discontinuity, reflected even in the grammatical structure (the nominal statement

"Ashes, ashes" contrasting with the tragic denouement of completed verbal action, "We all fall down") restates the irony we have already discerned in the previous section.

In the light of our examination of the three parts of this poem, we can return to re-examine the poem as a whole. There are now clear parallels to be drawn: between roses and ashes, beauty and death, love and disaster. The poem can now be seen as an ironic statement about the situation of university faculties. In the absence of money, having our pockets full of only posies (or beauty), we will all fall down to death or disaster. Beauty and love will not put bread on the table--or gas in the tank. It is true, and not ironic, that in the ashes of scholarly striving, we will all fall down.

**Varlak
the
Wizard**
by Jane Sibley
© 1981





THE SHINING (another look)

To discuss THE SHINING it must first be established that the book and the movie are fundamentally different works and need to be considered separately. Another way to say this is: if you loved (to be terrified by) the book--I wouldn't go in the bathroom with the lights off for two months--you'll be disappointed in the movie. A specialized remark is: if you are a fan of fantasy and were awaiting the movie to see horrible horrors and spectacular special effects, you will be resoundingly disappointed in the movie.

Let's be clear. None of the following are in the film: the fire hose; the topiary animals; the roque mallet; The Thing in The Playground; the giant bat-spirit. If you've read the book, this list will appall you. If you've only seen the movie, it will mystify you. Either reaction underscores my point. King wrote a fantasy novel full of inventive, terrifying apparitions. Kubrick swept away most of those trappings to make a psychological movie of the kernel of King's story: a father and husband going from pretty bad to A Whole Lot Worse.

The title is drawn from a King-invented word referring to the boy Danny's parapsychological talents, with which the book is much concerned, but which are minimized in the movie. A more apt title for Kubrick's version, suggested within the script, would be CABIN FEVER. (...TO THE Nth POWER, to be sure; and with plenty of apparitions left in, but not at heart and core a fantasy story any more. Classify it with REPULSION, for instance.)

Is it a scary movie? As scary as the book? I have to be subjective. I wasn't scared. Well, I did have to close my eyes during the scene in Room 237. But that was from gruesomeness, not horror. It was from something insidious that Kubrick did, but I'd have to give it away to discuss it. Nuts--I'm gonna do it anyway. Do not read the rest of this paragraph before you have seen the movie. You have been warned. Kubrick gets you--he got me--pressed up

against and sexually involved with what is then (and not until then) revealed to be a rotting corpse. After that point I was unable to look at the further footage of the corpse because, my attachment having been seduced away, to look was to be intimate and--ugh! It was a masterfully achieved effect, but fundamentally very different from King's use of the same material. In the book, The Thing in Room 237 is scary not because it is disgusting but because it comes after you. (This gets to be a full-fledged digression, now.) Things That Come After You are the ultimate terror. As an example, run this thought-experiment (but never actually do it!): you stare, blankly, at and through your child; you say in a dead voice, "I'm not your mommy." You approach with measured, dragging steps, reaching out to grasp... Will the kid become hysterical, or what? Generically: there is something horrible and dead. It becomes aware of you. It pursues you; it cannot be reasoned with or appealed to, it doesn't care that you are scared, it just comes after you. This is almost the entire substance of such disparate films as NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (probably the scariest film ever made) and JAWS. King is well aware of this effect. Kubrick fried other fish. (End digression; end "warning.")

So, again, is it a scary movie? Again, subjectively, "no." From reading the book I knew all the worst things that could happen and I kept waiting for them to. None of them did. But objectively? My two friends who had not read the book professed themselves to be terrified. A week after the viewing, I dissociate myself from my expectations, think about it, and say, "Yes. Very."

Why? Kubrick.

Did you think some footage of a lovely drive through the fall Rockies could be brought off as sinister? See Kubrick's subtle tamperings with time, shape, and color, and his choice of music. (The helicopter photography here is probably worth the price of your ticket.) That's for instance.

Why else? Jack Nicholson.

The story of the film is Jack Torrance's journey toward hell. If you ask me, Nicholson, in this role, overacts throughout. But he carries his character so far beyond reason that he begins to build a new, very frightening, sort of parareason. This may be a curious dramatic tour de force, I dunno. But it works.

Other matters:

The hook is through the engaging little boy. And Danny Lloyd, as Danny Torrance, is really very good. The character is grave, precocious, walled-up. The actor is completely unself-conscious.

Shelley Duvall plays Wendy Torrance, the wife and mother, as a dismayed rabbit, plastic woman who shows guts when she becomes desperate enough. Okay.

The treatment of the fourth character is another disappointment. Dick Hallorann, the cook, is the most likeable, strongest, most dependable person in King's novel--wise, resourceful, virile, caring. He performs great deeds and gives the reader someone comforting to lean on. In the movie, his part is reduced to providing some plot conveniences and his character is reduced to that of a man of some action but no great strength, with a streak of Uncle Tom. Moreover, King's Hallorann has a real emotional bond with Danny; he also has a real life outside the snowbound Colorado hotel. Kubrick establishes neither of these things very well, and the motivations and actions of his Hallorann seem contrived. Weakest part of the film. Competent portrayal by Scatman Crothers.

Everything has the cinematic quality you expect from the Kubrick of 2001 and CLOCKWORK ORANGE: images, timing, textures, music, sets. "Miniatures that look like real life, and real life that looks like animation," says my friend. The use of the camera is superb--and usually unobtrusive, so that when it occasionally is startling the effect is twice as great. The continuity between camera angles is edited flawlessly. (One last, picky point: to what purpose is the use of titles--"The Interview" --"October 16th"--"8 a.m."--between acts?)

Summation: Wash the book out of your mind (with regrets). See the film.

Very good film.

Very good Kubrick.

d d'asaro

FUGITIVE FROM THE EMPIRE (NBC)

This is the first in a series of sword-and-sorcery films announced for this summer (presumably all on NBC). Although not so stated, at least some may turn out to be sequels to this one, judging by its cliffhanging--or at least fencesitting--ending. These are made-for-television films, so don't expect STAR WARS quality: the special effects range from pretty good to "oh, no, not THAT again!" Costumes are straight out of Frazetta or Vallejo. The leading characters are a barbarian prince with a magic bow and a down-home country accent; a beautiful sorceress who conjures up animals and is being nagged by her mother's ghost; an evil warlord/warlock served by a band of snakemen; and the Hero's Dubious Friend, a thief and gambler with the requisite heart of gold (or at least rhodium). The dialogue is just plain awful. (Leading citizen on the depredations of an evil wizard: "All that valuable mining equipment--char-broiled!"). All the principals are Off to See the Wizard: the prince because he needs help to avenge his father's murder and to gain the kingship, the sorceress because the wizard is supposedly responsible for her mother's murder, the gambler because the wizard can turn iron into gold, and the villain in order to kill the hero. Obviously this isn't on Tolkien's level; it is more like Robert E. Howard or Lin Carter. But it is no worse, and rather more interesting, than all those sniggering sex comedies and orgies of violence that are the usual TV-move fare. If you have a sneaking fondness for even bottom-of-the-barrel S&S, you should find FUGITIVE FROM THE EMPIRE and its successors worth buttering your popcorn for; if it's quality you want, go read a book.

ajb

THE LORD OF THE RINGS - PART 2

I am going to disappoint you if you expect a play-by-play review of the conclusion of the Ralph Bakshi animated production of LotR. It ain't out yet but it's acomin'.

I had my doubts but obviously Bakshi's backers are planning this epic to be a long-range investment as the initial release's cool reception hasn't stopped them from going ahead with the sequel.

About all I can tell you is that it will be released in December of this year and I will be able to make a screening of it (Him willing) sometime before that.

For those of you who didn't like the first half, excuse me for wasting your time.

mb

ALTERED STATES

Prior to viewing ALTERED STATES, I had run across some preview-type articles in FUTURE LIFE and OMNI which detailed something of the making of the movie. After I read these, I was curious about the completed product and decided to take it when it came to the area.

After reading the previews I decided that this film could possibly have a psychedelic effect on the viewer and that it would perhaps be prudent to attend in an "unaltered state" lest the going get too heavy. As it turned out, I was wise in my ways. Even a person who has experienced the extreme edge-worlds of reality will go through changes after witnessing ALTERED STATES. To the veteran explorers the effects won't be so much those of the mind-expansion category as a sobering remembrance of all the 60-70's drug experimentation and what it resulted in.

I found myself thinking, "What if this movie were taken back in time twenty-five years or so and shown to an audience then?" I think the changes that they would go through would be something akin to what a person today would experience upon witnessing a UFO landing. We've come a long way in twenty-five years. They had RODAN and THE BLOB.

Today it's ALTERED STATES.

I hadn't read the Chayafesky novel Altered States, which the movie is based, before I went to see the film; but I plan to read it now. Considering the difficulty of the subject matter concerned, credit must be given to those responsible for the screenplay. The director's excellence showed in performances that never slipped to "second best." I read that the actors involved had a "feeling" that the film was special and that it would require all they had to give. They gave it all.

The special effects were especially important in this film. A lot of concessions to lesser effects could have been made but they weren't. They went for it and I think they made it. Had those responsible been able to project directly from their imaginations onto the screen, I don't think the results could have been much more startling.

The soundtrack was of highest quality throughout. The score is subtly bizarre without being

obtrusive. The music especially helps to heighten the intensity of the final laboratory scene when all the experimentation comes to a climax. The overall cinematography is of comparably high order. My only criticism is that the cutting during the psychedelic scenes created a loss of tension at points. Very minor, though.

The aspect of the film that impressed me the most was that, although the images created would have to be judged accurate portrayals of psychedelic visions in a general sense, it was the feelings that the images evoked that were exactly those of an experience of this type.

I think that ALTERED STATES has the power to reach within any viewer and prime him/her for some beneficial introspection on human



existence and human purpose.

The review of ALTERED STATES in the March '81 issue of FUTURE LIFE was headed: "A Cosmic Love Story."

And so it is.

When all the questions are asked and all the answers are given, what remains is human existence--man and woman. Having accepted this, all that remains is the decision whether to keep on keeping on or not.

jbg

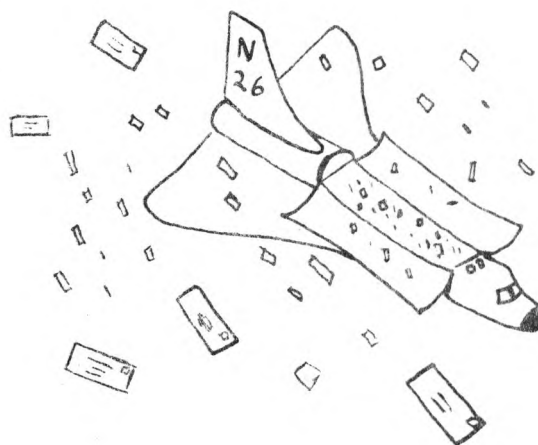
LORD OF LIGHT

There were stories on TV and in LOCUS about a plan to film Lord of Light and use the set as the nucleus of an amusement park in Colorado. This seemed rather farfetched at the time and the whole thing did prove to be some sort of swindle. I asked Roger Zelazny for the status of this project.

"...it's a very complicated story. Ed Bryant wrote it up for ETERNITY a while back. But the park business is finished, charges were dropped against the fellow who had the film option, however, and he subsequently came up with the full pickup price for movie rights. According to a note I received around Christmas, there may be some action on it this year."

erm

LAISKAI



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England YO17 9ES

...it's all I can do to stop myself dismembering it [NIEKAS 23] for framing that frontpiece. [Thank you for the booster shot to John Geisel's slightly damaged ego after all the flack he took over the bacover of NIEKAS 24. mb.]

Though in all the midst of this fascinating potpourri, there's one statement that stands out and that I can't quite believe, and that's the reaction that Mike Bastraw got on revealing his reading habits; (or, who says you can come out of the closet?). You mean to say that after those years of STAR TREK, the millions who flocked to see SUPERMAN and STAR WARS, and are now eagerly queuing for THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, still think of science fiction as 'that crazy Buck Rogers stuff' as they did in the Thirties and Forties? It's very hard to believe that it's the vox of the present populi; in fact, as a scientific sampling, I'd

suggest that it's more illustrative of Heisenberg's Law than anything else! Oh, I know the light hasn't dawned everywhere, that there are still some outposts of normality (I have them marked on a map and will send in hit squads as soon as economics permit) but to find such a group within the environs of Bastraw-land...Well, it's ultimately depressing! [It is my observation that those who go to see those movies are not necessarily SF fans and seldom are or else more written SF would be in the Million-Seller Club. mb.]

best wishes,
Roger Waddington

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London, WC1A 1EU
England

...The next to come along will be The Journey of Frodo which is a map book with some critical comments on the actual topography of the journey that are producing over here this Spring and which will be published in a large-sized paperback by Ballantine about the same time. It will fit in very well on our side with a full-scale dramatization on BBC radio of The Lord of the Rings which commences next month. Twenty-six half-hour episodes, so the book will get a very fair coverage and the first reports of the way in which it is being done are very encouraging.

Later this year, of course, we have The Letters which are already selected and being set...

Yours sincerely,
Rayner S. Unwin

320 East 22nd Street, Apt. 4M
New York City, 10010

...As to a sequel to the unsequelable---well, there are days when I think you're right. I had no intention of writing a sequel to Gateway; I said everything I had to say on the subject in that book and figured that was the end of it. Then I began thinking, and Beyond the Blue Event Horizon came out. I had no intention of writing anything beyond that, either... but I must admit some thoughts are perking around in the back of my mind.

So it's still an open question, I haven't signed any contracts or even put anything on paper... but I think it likely that some day I will go back to the Heechee. I don't know when. At the moment I'm overcommitted... but I have to admit I enjoy writing about the Heechee, and when I get out from under some of the things I've obligated myself to do I would enjoy thinking about them some more.

Bests,
Frederik Pohl

P.O. Box 6485
Cleveland, OH 44101

...In answer to the question about the Japanese The Lord of the Rings, they are in 6 small volumes by the Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc. of Tokyo and cost ¥ (yen?) 420 each. A very nice set.

NIEKAS 24...I have always loved Stephen Fabian's art. The bacover is also delightful.

The Harlan Ellison article is quite good. Harlan is 'quite' a character.

I am very glad to see Oz reprinted.



The International Wizard of Oz Club
is a very good organization and
publishes some very worthwhile
items...

Paul S. Ritz

Lyonese, Rope Wk.
Mt. Hawke TRURO
Cornwall TR4 3DW
England

[in re: N24]

I don't know if the repetition of
the Bumbejinas logo reading "Bun..."
is a subtle in-group joke, a failure
to notice, inevitable because the
perpetrators are programmed to keep
the heading unaltered for the next
seventeen issues, or what. [it's
evidently an oversight on the part
of someone other than myself. mb] I
must say though, that I had never
before realised that N's left margins
were not justified. Thanks for
pointing it out. [it's evidently an
oversight on the part of someone
other than myself. erm]

I'm left to assume that L-5 is some
sort of organised interplanetary
lobby; however, nobody anywhere I've
seen seems as yet to have explained
what the title means. Presumably it
has a meaning, and is not simply an
arbitrary alpha-numeric monstrosity.
[it is an abbreviation for one of
the Lagrange earth orbital points
and refers to one of the major space
colonization advocacy groups. ed.]

The obvious way to avoid continual
hassling and heart-searching over
definitions, winners, etc. of Hugo
Awards is to abolish said Hugo
Awards. Simple, really. I must admit
to being under the vague impression
that people like to hassle and to
heart-search over these matters,
which presumably is why the Awards
are still permitted to exist, to
take up valuable fanac time, etc.

The odd (to me) thing about Susan
Cooper's "The Dark is Rising" series
is the names of the two main families
- Drew and Stanton. This is, to me,
redolent of a certain megalithic
circle in the Mendips, just south of
Bath - at Stanton Drew. I was
originally sure that the author
would bring it in somehow before the
end of the series: she didn't, which
seems to imply either that she didn't
realise what she was up to, or that
she wanted it simply to lurk there
for the finding by those who have
heard of the thing. (It's by all
accounts one of southern England's
most notable circles, though since
it was never open on Sundays we
never got to visit it in the days
when we inhabited Bristol.)

"The Barnacle Strikes Back", after
Gilbert, is brilliant. Shame that
Anne never finished the work.

And for the third paragraph in a row:
so it was Anne whose LoC was foisted
off as part of mine a NIEKAS or two
back, was it? I didn't actually mind
all that much as it happened, because
what she said was much the sort of
thing that I myself might have said
had I been consciously aware of the
matter at the time. On the other
hand, if it had been something
controversial with which I had
happened to disagree, I might have
been distinctly (and, I think,
justifiably) annoyed, so I don't
recommend the practice. In this
connection, it occurs to me to
mention that LoCers' names are
better at the beginning than at the
end of their contribution. One can
never get full value from a LoC
without having to skip ahead to see
who's speaking.

[this gives the reader an option; this
way we can possibly trick him into
reading a letter by someone he might
skim over otherwise--not a good reason,
granted, but the best I could manage
at the moment. mb]

It's great to see Felice's name again
- though I'm prompted to wonder why
she gave up reading fantasy for ten
years?

All the very best from
Beryl and Archie [Mercer]

2713 - 2nd Ave. So. #307
Minneapolis, MN 55408

[also in re: N24]

...I really like the covers. Steve
Fabian is one of my favorite artists
(and probably the only such I've
never met). This picture reminds me
of the Prydain cycle, which I'd just
completed, though about the only
thing they have in common is the
harp. (That cycle, by the way, is
something I must thank Anne for. It
was simply entralling.)

Don't know that I would call myself
a purist, Ed, though I do look
askance at most tampering with the
"literate arts." Updating can be
done very well or very badly. The
first is a marvelous device for
relating a play (or a book) to its
audience. The second is a disaster to
be part of.

Your writings about the problems and
potentialities of the blind are
fascinating. It does strike me as
only common sense that one who guides
should be in front of one who is
guided. You, also, make a very good
point relative to fencing and yoga.
If it's fun to do, the student will
learn faster and better than if it
isn't. (This, of course, is true of
all areas of learning, and one of
the most difficult things about
teaching.)

What bothered many people (I assume)
about the latest LOCUS Hugo was that
a large number of fans at Iguacon
heard Charlie say that with the
acceptance of that year's award, he
was withdrawing LOCUS from future
consideration. The impression given
(and, yes, I was there) was that this
was a firm decision which would not
change. Two years isn't exactly a
long time for such a decision to
stand.

Fascinating, informative articles
from Anne Braude, Sherwood Frazier,
and Hal Clement. The first and last
want to make me go out and buy those
books, which is bad since I can't
afford them and the library is
closed right now. (Speaking of books,
the review section is again somewhat
overwhelming. I find your reviewers
an excellent bunch. They are concise,
complete, and enjoyable in themselves.)

[dlefuEN] .A yenraB

350 Dolores St.
San Francisco, CA 94110

[encore, in re: N24]

...It is indeed a pretty slick
production. I confess to preferring
the mimeography of yore to offset
reproduction; maybe because there is
a certain inherent modesty about
mimeo, that I find attractive.
However, so what?

[believe it or not, it is a matter of
economics: we can do it cheaper
offset. ed.]

Haven't been fans for many years now,
and don't think in terms of
conventional fantasies very much,
but it is possible something
sufficiently nasty will bob to the
surface. Which reminds me of my
senryu - Cynthia tells me they are
like haiku, except not treating an
aspect of nature - which goes:

One turd bobbing up,
Though I flush the toilet repeatedly
.... Nixon.

We just seem to find nothing
interesting in this field anymore;
it is all so conventional and dull
and narrow-minded. I should say that
the last two science-fiction type
books I read, seemed like the best,
qualitatively, I'd ever read (Patrick
Tilley's Fadeout and Ian Watson's
The Embedding) and I think they are
actually far superior to anything
science-fiction specialists have
authored. Still, it's all rather
trivial, slick escapism as opposed
to less sophisticated escapism.

Very best wishes,
Lou Goldstone

(Sherwood, fill this space w/ something
NIEK

Tarleton State University
Stephenville, TX 76402

The cover [of N25] was impressive, whatever John Geisel's "Seven" were up to. And there were the usual typos to enjoy. I don't mind the rhyme word in the next to last line of my "Simulating Social Problems on a Computer" becoming truth instead of ruth, but really, Holey for Holy in the zine's subtitle! [Happily you have mastered the perfect reply to bad puns: the ignoring of same. mb]

By the way, I thought Gary Symington's illustration for my "Deep Space Trilogy" was better than the verse.

Who did the version of the Lord's Prayer at the bottom of that page (p. 35)?

[Anthony Boucher from "The Star Dummies"--uncredited unintentionally. ed.]

Is Anne Braude any relation to Nan Braude who used to write for YANDRO and other magazines (and who went off to get a doctorate with a dissertation on Spenser, the last I heard of her)? Anne is certainly producing the goods at the moment, isn't she? Ah well, people burn out--most of them. May she gutter for a long time! (No, that doesn't mean what you think it does.) In her letter on p. 66, col. 1, there seems to be an omission in her paragraph on G.K. Chesterton; I thought Dorothy L. Sayers said it, but it may have been Chesterton--anyway, a line seems to have been omitted.

Best regards,
Joe R. Christpher

[I am tempted to say that Nan Braude and Anne Braude are related, but not to each other. But I won't. They are in fact one in/and the same. mb]

4 Commercial Street
Norton, Malton,
North Yorkshire,
YO17 9ES: England

...Well, I've long considered that what helps to fill a fanzine is more important than how it's printed, and the faintest hectograph will find me reading as avidly as the clearest resolution of offset, if it's good writing; though I must admit that this three-column format does give it a greater ease. But...the way I remember that earlier NIEKAS was dipping into it here, reading a bit there, and a piece further on, which was how it could last all of a train journey from York to London, and a tribute to the carefree, haphazard way it seemed to be put together. Now it reads straight through like a HST (or High Speed Train, according

to the dreams of British Rail) and the time that I can spend with NIEKAS is much less by comparison. Bring back that sense of discovery, of dipping into odd corners! Though the stiff covers will mean that my issues will last my thumbing that much longer...

And Feghoot Resurgens...Not only in the pages of fanzines; in a recent daily paper, there was a report of how Prince Charles took a tumble while riding as a jockey, and it was labelled (horrendously) as 'The Fall Off the Horse of Windsor'...

best wishes,
Roger Waddington

[well, in re: bringing back that ole "haphazard" look, I suppose we could collate the pages out of sequence. ed.]

Box 87 MIT Branch P.O
Cambridge, MA 02139

...Needless to say, I'm very impressed with the graphics layout, and art in NIEKAS [25]. (The griffin on page 66 was my personal favorite in this issue.) The three-column format works quite well; I find it easier to decipher reduced print when the lines are shorter. The cover is colorful, striking, and attractive--kudos to Geisel and Jordan.

I'd like to put in my two cents worth on COSMOS. Although I watched almost every episode, I could not truly recommend it to anyone. The special effects were overproduced for TV, and the innumerable shots of Sagan staring off-set were often annoying. The series came alive

during the historical recreations, and some of the larger visual "props," as in the sequence comparing the information in a brain to the books in a library, were very effective. But I'm almost certain Sagan failed in his purpose. Someone who was interested enough to tune in probably knew most of what he had to tell, so that the show dragged. Those to whom it would have all been new probably never even thought of watching the show. Considering how well the historical scenes came off, maybe a multipart "Lives of the Astronomers" series, narrated and introduced by Sagan, would attract a wider audience. It's certainly something PBS could do well, and for less money. (Please don't interpret this as a condemnation of Sagan. I agree completely with his objectives; I simply think he failed in his execution.)

Best,
Kathy Godfrey

682 S. Lakemont
Winter Park, FL 32789

[In re:] Forerunner Foray--one of the books allied to two different series loosely--to the Dipple Tales and to the Warlock ones. I have not written any more about the characters in that one. It was really an outgrowth of the study I made of psychometry which I had seen in action and which is now actually being used in archaeology with some amazing results--even as I happened to predict in that book.

Sincerely,
Andre Norton

WAHFites

Carol Kendall
Lee Poleske,
Dan Harkins
Dr. Kenneth Jernigan
Richard West
Lyle Gaulding
W.W. Light
Esther Leyser
Tom Purdom
Dainis Bisenieks
Jane C. Raymer
Elizabeth Woods
Charles Platt
Louise Andre
Rick M. Sneary
Lola Andrew
Terry Jeeves
Joel Hagen
Steve Fox



234 E. 19 St.
Brooklyn, NY 11226

Your item in Bumbejimas in NIEKAS 24 about training animals other than dogs as guides...now I have seen the thing about training a macaw as a guide. According to the picture, the man has to keep both hands on the ends of a large wicker work frame. The bird sits below and in front of him. This means of course that you need both hands to tote the frame around and that means you do not have one free which could be an inconvenience.

Furthermore, the intelligence of birds is much less than that of mammals as a general rule. Birds operate on instinct and reflex to a much greater extent than do mammals and have much less learning capacity. So while the parrots are much longer lived, longer in some cases than humans, almost the only advantage they would have over dog is that longevity.

John Boardman

Box 19 SharWinn Ests.
Redfield, SD 57469

...Loved the art--David Heath is very good, he will do a regular column reviewing fanzines for SFN and has agreed to do the back cover art for SFN III. I liked the filk song, but couldn't remember the tune --is that the Boy Scout's "Be Prepared?"

Do the "funny names" of the columns have a particular significance? i.e. foreign words? I liked them, mind you, just couldn't pronounce 'em.

[they are bona fied funny fied Lithuanian words: bumbejimas-confused mutterings, laikai-letters, niekas-nothing. pronounciations next issue. ed.]

Kathleen Taylor

2432 Tenth Avenue
Oakland, CA 94606

I was interested, Mike, that you saw and reviewed BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS. You were a good deal more charitable about it than I was..What I like is a really bad bad movie, one that becomes a classic. Such as United Artists' INVASION FROM MARS. All of UA's early sf movies were pretty terrible potboilers, but INVASION... is a beaut. It was on TV the other day, so watch for it; I won't spoil it for you. Just keep an eye out for those money-saving ways to use the same shot more than once...

Ed, don't knock the post office employees' union. Even with a union,



they don't make all that much. And you don't generally have a union unless you have some pretty blatant employer abuses. I know; I've been getting a union started at the typesetters where I work. We are filing for election this week, and by the time the next NIEKAS comes out we will probably have won. It's not that my employer is mean and evil, it's just that he's so damn dumb.

[I've seen INVADERS and can intellectually agree with you. however, it sure scared the stuffing out of me when I saw it as a young tad. mb]

so long,
Felice Rolfe Maxam



P.O Box 4175
New York, NY 10017

I just got the new NIEKAS--a very handsome issue--but want to reply right now to the mention of the Fanoclasts meeting where you [Ed] were turned away, or rather thought you'd be refused entrance.

The meeting in question was announced at the meeting beforehand as a "members only" meeting, to discuss the future of the club and some problems with uninvited, unknown fans showing up. I am told when John Boardman called up and asked whether he could bring a guest, he was told no, not for that meeting. He never mentioned that you were the guest involved. If that had been known, you would have certainly been invited. But Boardman never bothered to say who he was bringing to the meeting. Argh!!!

So that's what happened, John has now stopped coming to meetings; out-of-towners continue to be welcome at all meetings, and the club continues to meet on the same basis as ever.

Best,
Andy Porter

[It was an unfortunate misunderstanding I guess, but John HAD mentioned my name. I know this because Perdita told me that she later got a call from Moshe Feder saying I could come but it was too late to reach John and I. I gather that as a consequence of this misunderstanding the Fanoclasts never did hold a meeting to resolve the definition of membership...erm]

Inverness, FL

And your comment on those organizations that seem more interested in professional credentials than in good work: I encountered that attitude in social work too. I interviewed for a job in that field almost twenty years ago; I told the man about my interest in helping people, and he told me how all their employees were going for their PhD degrees. I got the message: I had no PhD and no job there. Too many people put more credence in credentials than in performance, as with your example; it's a variant of the Publish or Perish Syndrome in higher education.

Piers Anthony Jacob

709 Two State Ave.
W. Suffield, CT 06093

Really enjoyed #24, how about a word of mention in your next one re: your hockey coach friend in Conn. The high school team I coached--East Catholic--ended up with a 12-7 record for the 80-81 campaign and qualified for a state tourney berth. Didn't fare to well there as we dropped a 3-2 decision to Windsor, Conn. in the 1st round.

Bill Mannix

[at first glance this letter might seem to be out of place in a zine such as NIEKAS. but it is really most appropriate as Mr. Mannix is an extraterrestrial I went to school with at St. Anselm's College. he was on an exchange program of course. mb]

c/o Crimson Travel Service
39 Boylston St.
Harvard Square
Cambridge, MA 02138

Have just finished a thoroughly enjoyable perusal of NIEKAS 25. I found the entire issue delightful and plan to send in a sub as soon as I move to my new apartments in Cambridge. I was especially intrigued by the various articles concerning religion and SF. I usually shy away from such discussions as I am a deep lover of story and abhor it when a perfectly good plot is overlooked in search for a religious or philosophical message. Some perfectly fine writers have (in my own opinion) become so bogged down in their own particular dogmatism that their works suffer (Perelandra by C.S. Lewis and the third book in the Lavransdatter trilogy seem to me to be trying to submerge a story in theology by Undset immediately come to mind). However, most of your articles did not seem to me to be trying to submerge a story in theology and for that I am grateful.

In reference to Mr. Meskys' comment on maintaining a balance between affection and discipline with ones guide dog, I have recently been thinking of purchasing a beautiful animal, currently being trained as a "guard dog". I have been having second thoughts however as I have since learned that unless a proper regime is maintained with these dogs it is not uncommon for them to "turn" on their owner. In fact, one gentleman informed me that I would not be doing myself or my dog a favor if I were an affectionate and lax owner. He stressed that a guard dog (and I would assume the same would apply to a guide dog) is not a cute pet or cuddly animal, that it is trained with a job and while i can be friendly or responsive to careing, it is easy for it's training to be broken. I have always been lenient with my pets as I have had them and suppose I am better off investing in a cat, which may not be a reliable means of protection but may be a deterrent of sorts. In case you are wondering why I feel the need for protection, I often work till 11 or 12 in the evening and then proceed to walk or take the "T" home--lately there has been a rash of people being mugged (or worse) and when a girl I work with was mugged and assaulted at noon outside a bank here, I decided I should look into some means of protecting myself on those days when I might be walking home at night alone.

I read the review of Leguin's The Beginning Place with great interest and am now eagerly waiting

to leave work and return home so I can finish it. I started it over a week ago but got bogged down in Dick's Vardis and a non-fiction journal JUPITER'S TRAVELS. I intend to remedy the situation this evening.

I am wondering if there is anyone who would have a list of good SF for children to read, as I have a few in mind who with such an impetus would be more inclined to spend some time away from their television ("young" meaning under 10 or 12)? [write to Anne Braude. ed.]

sincerely,
Amy Chase

323 Dodge Street
East Providence, RI 02914

Having just recovered from Boskone and attendant duties, I sat down this evening and read NIEKAS 25 in its entirety. It is probably the best issue I've seen, certainly the best of its recent incarnation. I enjoyed very much the Lerner piece on religious response to SF, as well as McNelly's on SF and religion. Back in the mid-1960's I wrote a piece or two on the same subject, and we picked pretty much the same titles, although I think Lester Del Rey's "For I Am a Jealous People" is a significant title that was overlooked.

I'm not sure I entirely buy Mike's attempt to differentiate between the movie and the book, The Shining. If Kubrick was not rying to film the novel, why use any of it? Write his own story. King is reticent on the subject, but apparently plans to film any future books himself (I believe I read that he is doing The Stand with George Romero). [King has advised that he has a screenplay in the works for The Stand. as a matter of fact he has enough screenplay for two movies which is the way he would like to go with the project. he and Romero seem to share common views of visual horror and respect each others work. I expect that any collaboration should indicate this if the corporate backing is right. bring on the gelt...mb]

Don D'Amassa

428 Sagamore Avenue
Teaneck, NJ 07666

...I found the Unwin letter of interest. Also I assure Nan Scott that I and Roland Biandi are enjoying --slowly--The Unfinished Tales. Isn't it nice how the success of this book (months on the bestseller list!) has confounded the critics who try to lump JRRT with disco. Well, I

will not regret the loss of the latter, but readers will continue to love Tolkien...

All best wishes!
Ben Indick

409 East 88 St. 5A
New York, NY 10028

...Fred Lerner's essay on the Death of Megalopolis intrigued me. Ever since I moved to Ithaca four years ago and moved gratefully out to Manhattan this past summer, I have noticed just how gleefully people who live in the country predict the deaths of the cities. They take positive relish in it, or they wouldn't spend so much time retelling what are, in fact, fairly minor horror stories. No one likes bag people, derelicts, subway scribbles, and filthy restrooms. But Manhattan--thank God!--is not Vermont.

My suggestion to all the belligerent pro-ruralists is that they avoid the cities, despite the temptations offered by schools, museums, ballets, concerts, plays, stores, fan-groups, bookstores, publishers, writers, famous sights (I think I can stop this list), because there may indeed come a day when some nut, incensed by the rudeness of a cabbie, a bag lady, or a librarian, goes on a rampage. My own guess is that it'll be an out-of-towner. When that day comes, I'm sure the ruralists can revel in their clean air and shout "I told you so" at the ruins from a safe distance. I shall not be around to hear it.

As Mr. Lerner suggests, courtesy is one of the only solutions to the problems faced when people live together. I suggest--in call courtesy--that he stop predicting death for New York before the City dies. We're trying in here to make a go of it; his defeatism makes it only that much harder. Insofar as it makes it harder for people to go about their lives, it too is discourteous.

Enjoy Vermont. It's beautiful up there, and there's nothing better than renting--or otherwise promoting a car and going there for a day or a weekend. You can expect me; I'm the tourist admiring the covered bridges, buying all that maple sugar that people whomp up for tourists, and collecting leaves. I'll stop at the inns and eat at the restaurants, and then I'll go back home, refreshed and much poorer. Or I'll stop at your place for a visit, trade stories for stories, and then go back home. It seems such a shame to stamp out such a nice interaction.

All the best,
Susan Schwartz

I don't particularly want to stamp out interaction between New Yorkers and Vermonters, or even to eliminate New Yorkers. What I would like to stamp out is the notion that a terminal illness is really a manifestation of good health, and that anyone who is healthy is in fact not alive at all.

One reason for belligerent pro-ruralism is impatience with urban dwellers who maintain that the country is no fit place to live because it doesn't share the problems of the city. If a city achieves greatness, it does so in spite of its problems, not because of them. I would be delighted to see our large cities become pleasant and beautiful places in which to live. But I don't think it will happen--not because of any moral inferiority of city folk, but because of human nature under adverse circumstances.

The feasibility of human survival in large cities is surely a fit subject for speculation--as is any aspect of the human response to technology. I'd love to see a rebuttal to my essay, or a discussion of ways of solving the problems inherent to large-scale urban settlements. Or if time doesn't permit that, perhaps at some convention we can devote a bit of interaction to the topic; I'll buy the first round of drinks.

--Fred Lerner

Inverness, FL

...I am just now reading McKillip's Riddlemaster trilogy, so Anne Braude's review is timely for me. I like the first book, was disappointed in the second, and think the third, as of page 55, is improved--which seems to correlate with Anne's verdict. Actually I do not read such things for pleasure, but to keep up with the competition; as nearly as I can tell, McKillip's series has a slice of the same market as my Xanth series, with very similar sales, so I read her to see how similar the material is. Not very, I tentatively conclude.

In your articles on religion in SF you cover just about everything except my favorites, which are Boucher's The Quest for St. Acquin and my own Tarot and the relevant works of Farmer. Your columnists need to catch up with the past decade, I think.

Other items: your silk screen cover is nice. [see Gincas for the rest.]

I see there are a couple of references to me [in the letter column]. I think Terry Jeeves is

commenting on my Cluster series, not my Tarot, as it is the former that has the anthropomorphic aliens with sex. I had fun writing what would have been termed pornography, had it been in human guise. In Tarot even that mask is off, with even Jesus Christ having an erection. I am mystified by Anne Braude's response to my humorous answer to her query about my unread books. Surely she realizes that Swift's modest proposal was for the cooking and eating of surplus Irish babies, to relieve both hunger and populations pressure. Then she suggests an article on how I do my sins would be interesting. In that context, this could be pretty serious. I plead not-guilty to baby-eating, as I am a vegetarian. If she wants me to do an expose on my sins, she'll have to be more specific what sins she means.

Piers Anthony Jacob

250 Coligni Ave.
New Rochelle, NY 10801

Ed's statement that the New York University Science Fiction Society has a few outside members is almost precisely backwards. Actually, there is a small minority of us who are NYU students. Unfortunately, NYU noticed this state of affairs 2 years ago and threw us out. The club survives, meeting in Washington Square Park when the weather is acceptable. I'm not quite sure where we're meeting when the weather is nasty, as we have just suffered the ultimate indignity of being thrown out of MacDonald's. This expulsion was caused less by our behavior than by the fact that most of us had enough regard for our digestive systems to sit around under the sign of the Fallen Arches for a couple of hours and then go out someplace to eat.

I've heard of a version of "Nuke the Whales" sung to the tune of "Duke of Earl," but all I know of it is the repetitious chorus. Incidentally, Buzz Dixon has decided that slogan is insufficiently offensive, and has expanded it to "Nuke the Gay Whales."

Hail Eris,
Arthur D. Hlavaty

Santa Ana, CA

I loved NIEKAS (25). It is probably the only magazine devoted to a study of God & Gilbert & Sullivan in existence.

There are some cats living here in this conapt with me, but I haven't caught their names. I won this condo/conapt outright, having paid cash. Huge sums of money float

majestically down from Hollywood to me, these days, especially from Ridley Scott for his use of my novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? which is the basis for his new 20 million dollar film BLADE RUNNER which goes into production tomorrow early in the morning (I'll still be sleeping). (I miss out on everything.)

The highpoint of my life since I last saw you [Ed] was my trip to France in 1977 where I found myself to be famous, resulting in my meeting the prettiest French girl who ever lived. I'd go back there tomorrow, but, well, there is this work I've taken on, called writing novels & stories; I am into my writing to an obsessive extent & in an obsessive manner...but it does pay off.

In 1974 I had a religious experience that much amuses all my friends and is now amusing readers as well, since it is the basis of my new novel Valis. Gilbert & Sullivan were not discussed. I consider myself a Gottesfreund now, a friend of God. Make of that what you will. Ursula Le Guin thinks I'm slowly going crazy. I wonder. She is very nice about it, however; very civil and polite. I get the impression that she holds Southern California responsible (the Los Angeles area, like masturbation, makes you go mad; I should have moved to Cleveland when I left the Bay Area & not down here).

There is more substance to NIEKAS (25) than I find in virtually all the bigtime magazines I subscribe to. My favorite among the articles: Anne Braude's "Drawing Forth Leviathan"--although the others are also excellent.

with affection,
Phil Dick

6721 E. McDowell, #309-A
Scottsdale, AZ 85257

NIEKAS 25 is certainly a handsome piece of production, and the contents are for the most part equally distinguished. I don't usually comment on art, since I don't consider myself a competent judge (BUT I KNOW WHAT I LIKE); there does, however, seem to be an unusually amount of really good stuff here. I think my favorite (apart from the illos to "Leviathan") has to be the Eddie Jones drawing on p. 44, which I keep wanting to title "Afghanistan 1980," although I realize that the level of technology is too high on the one hand and too low on the other.

As a sidenote to your comments on sticks, dogs, etc., I recently heard that a deaf person can get a trained cat to notify him of

significant sounds like doorbells (I'm not sure how; presumably--if it is anything like cats I have known--by ramming all its claws into his leg). The cost of a hearing-ear cat is deductible on one's tax return as a medical expense. [does that include Band-Aids? mike]

You pretty well summarized my remarks on the parallels between feminism and the Blind Panthers; all I would add is that discrimination against the handicapped, as against women, traditionally takes the form of killing-with-kindness paternalism--"let us look after poor little you." One example: many states have so-called protective labor legislation which forbids employers to ask women to lift heavy weights--but the limit is usually less than the weight of a four-year-old child, which many mothers lift routinely. And the lifting of heavier weights is often a job requirement for the higher-paying positions, so that women are effectively cut off from advancement in blue-collar jobs. Discrimination against blacks and gays, on the other hand, is usually expressed with hostility and contempt, not even making a pretense of benevolence. Of course, when women get uppity and start demonstrating and demanding equal treatment, a full measure of that same hostility and contempt is usually evoked. I can't say that the handicapped have ever drawn that reaction, unless one wants to include the treatment of the mentally ill for most of recorded history.

Diana's column is really splendid, and I shall probably find myself quoting it frequently in all sorts of contexts. I can't exactly comment on it, though--there's nothing left to say!

I guess my poem stands as proof positive that the typos in NIEKAS are getting verse. (I gave Bastraw every opportunity to make that pun; he must be slipping.) [rapier sharp riposte: "Oh, yea?"]

I wish I could disagree with Mike's comments on the dubious prospects for the survival of our species. I find Konrad Lorenz's thesis persuasive: that it is a built-in biological problem. In his Nobel-winning studies in ethology (the science of social relations among members of a species), he has concentrated on aggression, which he regards as a fundamental instinct like hunger and the sex drive. He finds that most species have managed to limit their conflicts over territory and dominance, etc., by evolving forms of threat and display that resolve said conflicts

short of actual combat--e.g., an animal defending its own territory is always more confident than an intruder. The problem is more acute among social animals than among those which lead mostly solitary lives. Lorenz points out that the really formidably-weaponed social animals have developed strong inhibitions against violence. For example, if two wolves are facing off against one another, snarling and even attacking, one wolf may decide to submit to the other's dominance in the middle of the fight. It does so by making the species' submission gesture--lowering its head to expose the vulnerable spinal cord to the other's jaws. When this happens, the victorious wolf literally cannot take that bite, no matter how angry it is: Lorenz has seen wolves in this position actually howling with frustration. Since our species evolved from a form of ape, which did not have natural weapons which could kill easily and which tended to resolve conflict situations by flight rather than fight, we never acquired natural, inbred inhibitions against aggression, or techniques of displacing it successfully. All those heavy-weapon displays in May Day parades in Moscow and in NATO and Warsaw Pact military maneuvers are really just threat-displays, designed to make the other side back down, or at least back off; unfortunately, our biological makeup doesn't tell us when to call it quits. (See Lorenz, On Aggression and King Solomon's Ring.)

[I now have cause for hope, Anne. I have seen the future in an unlikely place: a movie called ROLLERBALL. In it, Bigbusiness decided that nuclear warfare would jeopardize all their holdings. They formed Corporations and gave da pipple bread, circuses, and national, excuse me, corporational mayhem to satisfy unchanneled aggression. And they called it Rollerball. mike]

Mike and Donna Core have outsmarted themselves: they argue so convincingly that Santa Claus is an extraterrestrial that one can no longer think of him as a human with saintly powers, thereby disqualifying him for consideration as a patron saint of sf. About the "Santa" bit: Clement Clarke Moore was at the time (1823) Professor of Oriental and Greek Literature at the Episcopal General Theological Seminary in NYC. At the time there was a lot of ethnic consciousness going around, and one of Moore's colleagues on the faculty was very much into the Dutch influence on New York's cultural heritage. It was he who suggested the topic to Moore. Now the Dutch name for St. Nicholas is

"Sinterklaas," which got Englished as "Santa Claus."

While I am in Dutch so to speak, I can tell you that the mermaid story you mention in your review of the Yolen book is indeed a real Dutch folktale--from Edam, according to Tales Told in Holland, where I found it.

Anne Braude

Replies from Anne Braude that should have gone elsewhere if the paste-up person had been on the ball.

To Arthur Hlavaty on page 40:

[I tried to distinguish between my review of Inferno, in which I judged it as a literary work, and my theological evaluation of it, in which I compared its ideas to Christian orthodoxy. The grey city in The Great Divorce is Hell only for those ghosts who choose to remain in it; for those who choose to stay in Heaven and travel toward the mountains, it becomes retroactively a purgatorial experience.

Lewis has elsewhere, particularly in The Pilgrim's Regress, compared Hell to a tourniquet. The idea is that neither salvation nor damnation is static: the saved continue to grow in grace; and without Hell, the God-rejecting damned would progressively deteriorate even further. The end point of such a degeneration would presumably be non-existence, since existence itself is the most fundamental good, and therefore the last to go. One might argue that a merciful God would permit the suffering soul to cease to exist; but that might be a metaphysical impossibility, like reaching the speed of light, in which case arresting the process would be a mercy. I am unfamiliar with the theological doctrine (if any) on this point. The essential thing to remember is that Christians believe that damnation is not something God does to those He designates as sinners, but the end result of sin itself and therefore something that we do to ourselves. anne.]

To Piers Anthony on page 57:

[I had thought it self-evident that my use of the term "modest proposal" was facetious and not meant to invoke a serious comparison with Swift's, as I suggested that your sins would be in the RUDDIGORE tradition. I had in mind not cannibalism but something more of the order of magnitude of mailing letters with insufficient postage. anne.]

superstition. I also thought of it as the trough between the Ancient World and the Renaissance.

Lynne Holdom

Shortly after my conversion to Christianity some years ago, I was visiting one evening at the home of my best friend. We were like brothers. It was late, perhaps about two o'clock in the morning. We had just finished watching the late movie and were sipping very dry martinis. Why martinis and not something more appropriate for that rich hour, like Napoleon brandy or 25-year-old scotch, I do not know. Both were there in the cabinet beside the fifth of Bombay gin we'd cracked earlier. Looking back on it all now I can simply say we probably didn't know any better.

"God?" my friend said, staring at me with upturned brow, "You say you've found God?" There was then much chuckling and horse laughter emanating from my good friend which lasted some minutes.

"There's no God. Oh, wait a minute, yes there is. You want to know what my concept of God is? You can find him in Deep Space, on an alien planet inhabited by a super race of androids. They keep him in a kind of intergalactic zoo there along with every kind of strange creature imaginable, from every part of the universe. Yup. God's there alright, sitting in the third cage on the left as you enter through the front. All he does is sit there by himself all day long making little worlds. Travellers come from all over the galaxy to watch. Neat."

Well, instead of ending abruptly, our friendship continued to grow. We were close friends, and still are, and besides this wasn't the only thing we didn't agree on. He liked Cordwainer Smith and I liked F. Scott Fitzgerald. He brought his women flowers and took them to the planetarium. I'd take mine to dinner and then to a road house with a live band.

As the years have gone by, my interest in science fiction has remained at an embarrassingly plebeian level. Yet my faith in Christ has grown and deepened and become stronger. It was with great curiosity, therefore, that I read the last issue of NIEKAS, which was almost entirely devoted to the theme of "Religion and Science Fiction."

I was delighted and surprised in a number of ways. First, the high caliber of writing and art. There is something terribly exciting going on here journalistically. The style is casual and friendly, often

disarmingly personal, especially among the regular columnists, but there is obviously also every intention of doing serious business when it comes to communicating interesting ideas and criticism.

I was especially charmed by Anne Braude. Her style is smooth and flowing and has that fine freshness about it. There's depth here in the way she thinks. And, once more, she's able to effectively bring that forth as a writer. The Leviathan piece is

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a case in point. "Are we indeed the only species on this planet to which God has vouchsafed a divine revelation?" she asks at the conclusion of the article.

One is reminded of the story of Jonah. "And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah." (Jonah I vs. 17).

Then there is Psalm 104: "...The high mountains are for the wild goats; the cliffs are a refuge for the rock badgers...Thou dost appoint darkness and it becomes night, in which all the beasts of the forests prowl about. The young lions roar after their prey, And seek their food from God...There is the sea, great and broad, In which are swarms without number, Animals both small and great. There the ships move along, and Leviathan, which Thou hast formed to sport in it... The all wait for Thee...".

Anne's Saint Brendan notes and the commentary in Mathoms were equally stimulating and polished. I was indeed surprised to learn that Anne is not a "professional" writer.

The other things happening in NIEKAS, though, had a similar impact. The screenprinted cover, the reviews by Mike and Ed, the careful layout and placement of graphics, all of

it made this issue, for me, the uninitiated, very meaty reading. Fred Lerner's contribution on Religion and Science Fiction is something I want to keep for my files. Sherwood's column brought a sense of balance to the issue, keeping in focus what's happening now technologically. In fact, "balance" is an excellent word to describe this whole production editorially.

Dean Dexter

Well it seems we have a little space left over so I get to put my three cents (inflation, you know) in after all.

First of for those who felt that our selection of religions was not (if you will pardon the expression) catholic enough, I'm sorry. We certainly did not intentionally show any favoritism. We did what we did with the material we were able to come up with. I mean, how many zines do you know of that run feature articles on the Urantia Society?

Gincas, for those of you not in the know, will be a regular discussion section which will show up towards the end of each issue of NIEKAS. We take excerpts from letters which deal with one or two topics which seem to interest a number of people and display them as an informal type forum.

Roger Waddington gets credit for sending us the piece on the Holland/Giddings masterpiece (sic). My feelings on the book pretty much echo many expressed in Gincas. Maybe some of it is true but SO WHAT?

Mike Bastraw

THE LAST WORD



Coming Up

FRED LERNER look at books that look at ROBERT HEINLEIN/"Michaelmas and Me" by ALGIS BUDRYS/"Instruments of Darkness - An Essay on Witchcraft" by ANNE BRAUDE/debut columns by DON D'AMASSA and HARRY ANDRUSCHAK/TERRY JEEVES and Hugo-winning semantics/MARGARET SHEPARD on AYN RAND/more unlikely verse from ROD WALKER (illos by KURT REICHEL, eh?)/and the usual snappy patter by the usual snappy patterers.

Due Dates

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June 15, 1981 - columns
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July 15, 1981 - LoCs
August 15, 1981 - NIEKAS 27 mailed

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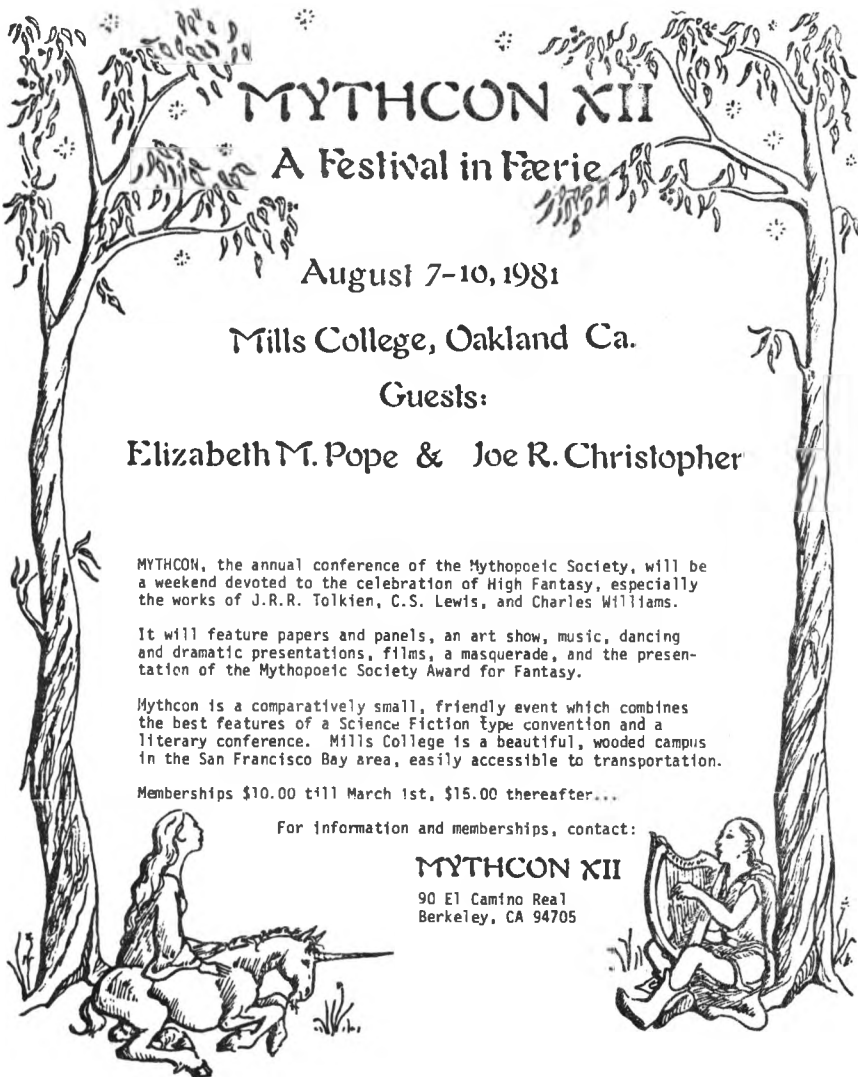
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