



C. R.

SADLY, AND WITH HEAVY HEART WE RETURN ONCE AGAIN TO THE TALE OF

A hand-drawn comic panel. At the top, a man with a mustache is partially visible. The background is filled with large, bold, hand-drawn letters that read "A MAN CALLED NIKON". To the right of this, in smaller text, it says "OR 'BACK TO BUFFALO A WEEPIN' AND A WAILIN'". In the bottom left, a speech bubble from the man says "OH NO NO NO". In the bottom right, another speech bubble begins with "As we last met..." followed by "A SMALL".

FEATURING: HOW BIG GOVERNMENT WORKS
THE TERROR OF RECALL
DRAFT CONSULTING
HOW MY MIND WAS DEFUSED
AND MUCH, MUCH,
MORE.

OR "BACK TO BUFFALO A
WEEPIN' AND A WAILING".

AS WE'DST MEET I WAS
UNDER A SMALL CLOUD AND
NO ONE KNEW WHAT WAS NOT
HAPPENING THE WAIT WAS NOT
FOR LONG: THE STORM
BROKE... I WAS IN BIG UGLY
NYC NOW WHEN IT SUDDENLY
TIME TO APPEAL MY 2-A, FAST...
CAUSE KIDDIES, NIXON WILL GET YOU
IF YOU DONT WATCH OUT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
EVEN SO, I WAS LEGITIMATE, I KNEW
FACTS THEY WOULDN'T BELIEVE"

DATE LINE JULY, 1967

OUR HERO IS PAINTING
SIGNS FOR COCA
COLA - WILCOPIE

SUDDENLY

THE SCAFFOLD BRAKES

BACK

CRUNCH CH PAIN
ARGH

A fall of 16 feet is worth a number of fracture vertebrae & discs

AND...

I HAD HAD A SERIES OF TESTS DONE ON MY PINK BODY TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF MY ALLERGIES,,,,, SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT I CAME AWAY WITH A BACK THAT LOOKED LIKE I WAS AN 10TH CENTURY SAILOR WHO HAD VIOLATED EVERYTHING IN THE BOOK AND WAS GETTING A SERIES OF SHOTS.....

SO... ARMED WITH ALL THESE FACTS
I WENT TO THE GREENWICH VILLAGE
PEACE CENTER...

PLEASE, PLEASE
IN THE NAME
OF HUMANITY
I'M TO YOUNG...

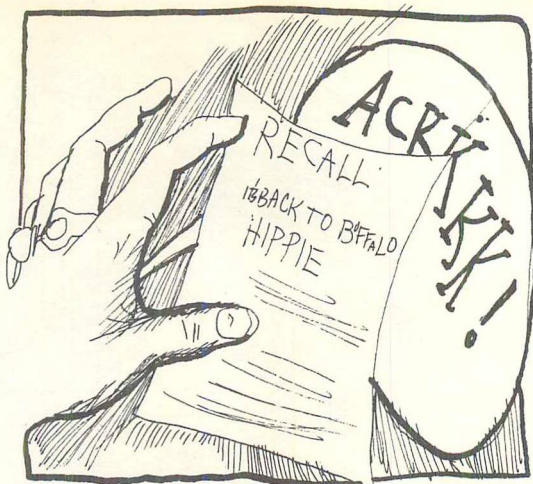
AND HERE I LEARNED OF MANY THINGS

1. YOU CAN APPEAL
2. BUT TO WHO?
3. THE DRAFT BOARD SAYS...
"YOU'VE GOT TO WRITE THE SURGEON GENERAL - ITS UP TO HIM"
A. THE SURGEON GENERAL SAYS,
"TALK TO YOUR LOCAL DRAFT BOARD, I CAN'T DO ANYTHING."
THE CATCH
B. DRAFT BOARDS MUST FOLLOW QUOTA REGARDLESS... SURGEON GENERAL UNDER PRESSURE TO DEFER MORE PHYSICALS BECAUSE OF COST TO INDUSTRY (HEMILTON RELEASE THEM. OVER 30 MILLION BASIC FEES A YEAR) (THAT'S A LOT OF SPACE PROGRAM)
C. THE SURGEON GENERAL MUST ANSWER "A REQUEST TO INCREASE VETERANS CL..."

0 DEFER MORE
COST TO INDU (GIVEN)
THEM. COVER 30 MILLION
YEAR (A NOT THAT A LOT OF SPACE)
b. BUT, THE SURGEON GENERAL MAY
REVIEW CASES IF A REQUEST TO DO SO
IS MADE BY THE APPLICANT TO CONGRESSMAN
So just guess who
did: WRI

So just guess what we
did: WRITE LETTERS
I WROTE, MY MOTHER
WROTE AND.....

BREATHE



THEN, the
5th TIME I ALLY
on how I hate this:
some chicky hands
me a bus token



and I go to ride a
bus 350 miles to Rochester

It was a REAL DOCTOR, NOT
AN ARMY LACKY OR PLUNKED
MED STUDENT. . .



YES, MY DAVIN
COURT. YOU SEE...

HISTORY
NOTE
HOW BIG
GOVERNMENT
WORKS

MY CONGRESSMAN HAD WRITTEN
THE SURGEON GENERAL AND
MY CASE WAS REOPENED, HOW
ABOUT THAT?



He Comes IN...



WHAT'S THIS?
YOU MEAN WITH
ONE OF THESE
THEY STILL WANT
YOU?

I GUESS
SO



I HAVE TO BE FRANK
WITH YOU SON, I HOPE
YOU'RE NOT ONE OF
THOSE PEOPLE WHO
WANT TO GO INTO
THE ARMY...

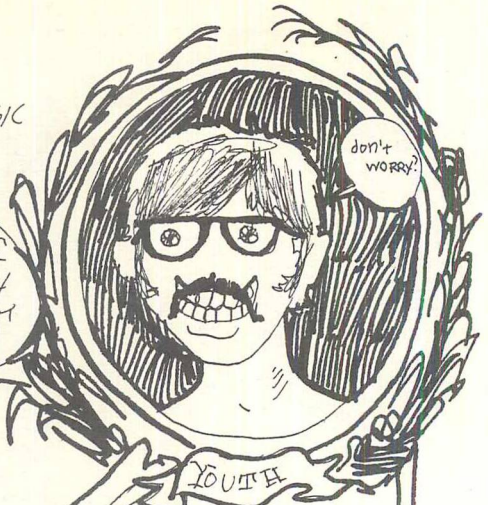


NOT REALLY

'CAUSE IF
YOU DO YOU
REALLY RACK
YOURSELF UP
BAD.....

AND THE MAGIC
WORDS

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT



they don't give 4-Fs anymore
BUT THIS WILL DO!!!!

THE MORAL ON THIS, IF ANY, IS THAT THIS JUNKET COST THE TAX PAVERS OVER 3000 TOOKIES AND I COULD USE
THE ADDED INCOME AS WELL AS COULD ANYONE MR. NIXON!!!

OUTWORLDS 3.5

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- 101 "The Foretelling" [from THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS] ----- CONNIE FADDIS
102 A Man Called Nixon [sequel to The Army Gets Physical; Ow V] -- MIKE GILBERT
106 Understandings ----- ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES
109 Citadel ----- BILL WOLFENBARGER
110 Mighty Tiny ----- RICK STOOKER
113 Off the Deep End ----- PIERS ANTHONY
126 The Silverbob Changes Feathers ----- LEON TAYLOR
133 OUTworlds' INwords ----- (Lettercolumn)
136 Inchoate ----- BILL BOWERS
138 INDEX to Series 3 -----
139 The Moon Walk ----- DAN STEFFAN
140 "The Keystone Ceremony" [from THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS] ---- CONNIE FADDIS

ARTwork; 123; 127 ----- JONH INGHAM
119; 128; 133; 136 ----- GRANT CANFIELD 125 ----- JIM McLEOD
107 ----- GREGG DAVIDSON 116 ----- JAMES SHULL
131 ----- C. LEE HEALY 109; 110; 112; 113; 132 WILLIAM ROTSLER

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ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES

UNDERSTANDINGS

In his letters department in *Amazing Stories*, Ted White has published some readers' objections to the plentiful use of Anglo-Saxon four-letter words in various stories. And Ted has replied that the purpose of such use has been not pornographic but simply a matter of honest rendition of how people really talk and think. Many people use the words "fuck" and "shit", etc., in their everyday speech. What integrity does a story dealing with such people, but which suppresses so integral a part of the way they actually talk, have?

I cannot fault that argument. But reading that exchange of opinion led me to examine my own feelings closely and to ask myself the question: "Why do I find such usages in a story distasteful?"

My own childhood background was pretty much what one, these days, would call WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant). One simply did not hear such language or usage at home or in the family environment. On the less intellectual side of the family, it was simply a matter of morals: sex was dirty except when purified by love and the acceptance of responsibility for the consequences of intercourse: babies, since contraception was also considered immoral. On the more intellectual side, there was an additional objection: the free-swinging use of such language was a symptom of ignorance and crudity.

And in my associations during childhood, of course, it was only the children from lower class and notably uneducated backgrounds (not just poor people as such, because there were poor people with high standards) who used these words frequently. (We except the pre-pubescent attempts at dirty jokes which we all laughed at because they were somehow daring and forbidden, without having much idea of what it was really all about.)

In high school, the differences were underlined. It was the not just uneducated and ignorant, but largely uneducatables who were most free with the two words. They were also the ones who looked upon learning with contempt and who took Al Capone and similar figures of the day for culture heroes. Some of them managed to graduate. Most were incorrigible trouble makers who dropped out. (Whether they all, or whether either a majority of them, took to the life of crime that some predicted for them I cannot say.)

But it was in 1934 (and later in 1936 and 1939), when I went into the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) that I got full exposure to the matter.

The majority of the fellows were those same uneducables. They were not all bad guys by any means. In fact, most of them showed promise of becoming good productive citizens within their capacities if they were only given a chance. The CCC's gave them that chance and my opinion is a very large percentage of them benefited by it. An encouraging percentage wanted to learn.

But as things went, if the two words "fuck" and "shit" had by some magic suddenly been eliminated from the language, most of the poor fellows in camp would have been rendered virtually speechless.

They had never learned the (eight?) parts of speech in English (and please don't ask me to list them; I've forgotten), but (at that time I could have told you), after a while I began to get accustomed to the speech I heard around me--and in a sneaky sort of way almost to admire the ingenuity with which they were used. There may be one of the eight parts which was not employed in rendering the two words, but damme if they didn't manage to use them in all the other seven ways, with sometimes fascinating imagination.

Sometimes I felt rather sad about it--particularly in the cases of some who I'd come to know as real good guys, education or no. Their vocabulary was extremely limited. "Fuck" and "shit" or both in combination was the only way in which they could express strong feeling. (I eliminate damn and goddam; everybody used that at times, even the officers--although the higher the education level, the better the discrimination.)

Sloppy use of language, I was taught when very young, was a symptom of sloppy thinking. A limited vocabulary limited your capacity for thinking. On the intellectual side of the family, comic books and pulp magazines were looked down upon not because they were "vulgar" so much as because they were confined to expressions (not dirty ones--the pulps in those days were excessively "clean") showing limited vocabulary and sloppy usages.

And, of course, a large percentage of pulp fiction at that time was written for people with little experience of and little discrimination in literature. The limitations in literature. The limitations required stereotyped images and expressions; cliches replaced thinking.

I remember one time in camp when I was writing a letter to someone--a fellow fan--and trying to clarify some point I was making. Suddenly over the PA comes a summons to Lowndes to report at once to the commissary. I ground my teeth and muttered "Oh shit!" At which point the guy sitting next to the table where I was typing burst into laughter. I looked at him. There were practically tears in his eyes, he was guffawing so hard. Finally he wiped his eyes and said, "I'm sorry, Doc, but it was so funny. Never heard you swear before."

Recently, I've been reading the novels and short stories of Hermann Hesse, finding him to be a true soul brother to me and (thus far) my favorite 20th century au-



thor outside of fantasy and science fiction. (His works do include some charming fantasies, by the way; the brief 1917 essay *If the War Goes On Another Two Years* is as science fictiony as 1984 and has some of the same feeling.) In the short novel *DEMIAN* (most of Hesse's novels are short) at one point a character tells the narrator not to talk shit. (Emphasis in text.) The word is startling, vivid and effective in that context. No one else in the story uses it; the person who does is an educated man.

But it would have been meaningless had the word been peppered all through the story.

And I have too great a fondness for what "fuck" ought to refer to to enjoy seeing it emptied of meaning by being used as at least seven, maybe all eight parts of speech. If, in a story, we're dealing with a person of limited vocabulary and education--one essentially in the same position as the fellows I knew back in the CCC's--then I agree with Ted White that honest rendering requires that you have the character say what such a person actually would say, and in the way that such a person would say it. My objection really is not against honest rendering; but when I read science fiction my main interest is not in reading about that type of person. Characterization in current science fiction (well, a good deal of it) seems to be largely restricted to that type of person.

Of course. It's easy. You don't have to think very hard to delineate people of small capacity. You can pick up the latest twists in their usages simply by getting out and mingling with the crowd a bit. And since they are so limited, you don't have to work very hard at constructing a credible story. Such people, their lives, are generally predictable. See the local newspaper for details, any day in the week. Also see the papers and TV news for the latest slogans, which can be adapted slightly and then projected into the future.

I don't mean to imply that good stories cannot be, have not been and are not being written along such lines. But when I feel like reading science fiction, I want something different from--oh, let's call it projective naturalism. That's my feelings on the subject.

VOICE FROM THE REAR: Feelings aren't facts!

SPEAKER: (beaming) Will you stand up, please? (amiably) Thank you very much. What is your name? Juliet Strawraan. Ah, I can see that you're not with Women's Lib. (dolce) I'm delighted that you raised that point, Juliet. (gently) Of course, it is entirely mistaken.

Feelings are indeed facts, but what many people do not realize is what feelings are facts about. My feelings are facts about me. Your feelings are facts about you. My feelings about you may coincide with facts about you--but they are essentially facts about me. If the coincidence is large enough, then my feelings about you will give me a good base for communication with you.

Well, I see our time is getting short. If you would like to continue discussing that subject with me in more comfortable surroundings...

-oOo-

I've managed to file some issues of *Outworlds'* outhouse editions (the letters of comment) in such a safe place that I cannot find them. Always doing that. Con-

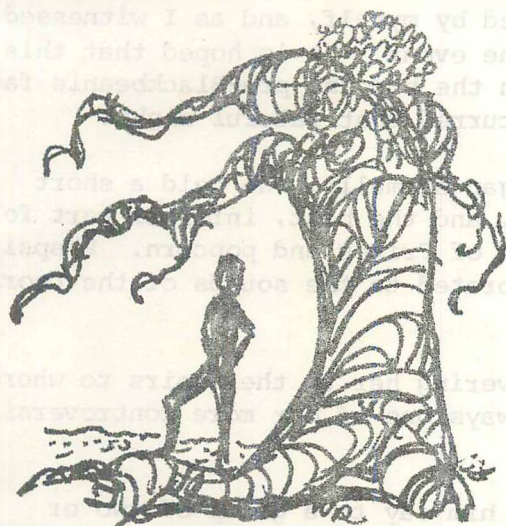
tinually forget to make a map of the new, improved filing system so that by the time I want to make use of it, it's clear gone from memory. So I cannot respond to all the comments on previous departments that I'd like to right now; worse, can't even remember who made them.

The comment that my specifications which would qualify a person to write an over-all survey of science fiction were exaggerated, and that I really knew better, is valid. Of course; it's really no more necessary to have read all (or nearly all) the contents of all science fiction magazines published since 1926, in order to write informedly on the subject, than is it needful to read all the comment on Shakespeare published since his time in order to write sensibly about Shakespeare criticism.

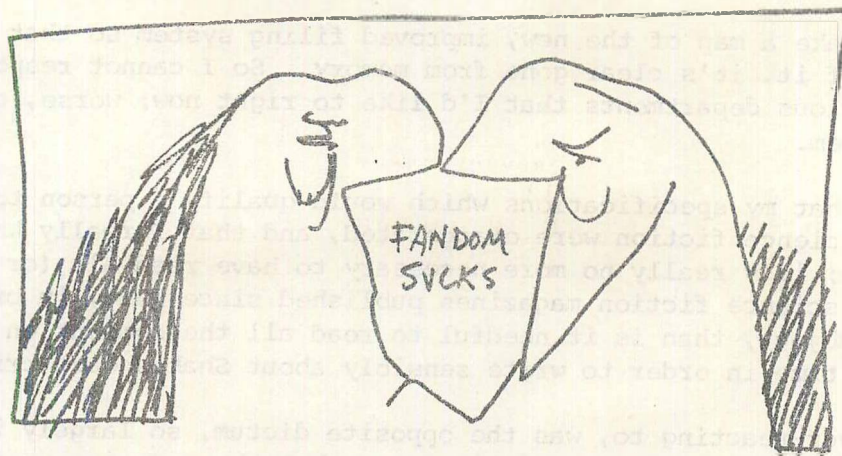
What I was over-reacting to, was the opposite dictum, so largely in effect during most of my career as a science-fictionist: that the more ignorant and contemptuous one is of the subject, the better one is qualified to write definitive criticism of it. (Incidentally, I found Sam J. Lundwall's book: SCIENCE FICTION: WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT most rewarding to read. I no more agree with everything than did Don Wollheim, but it's well done and thought out even where I disagree strongly. Two readings leave me with the interest to read it again in a year or so.)

BILL WOLFENBARGER

CITADEL



the rain has stopped from heaven
and the sun has beckoned
me to my thots
where my mind and brain have fought
the end result in any case
to send me to another place
of harlequin fancies caught
between a grinning web of rivers
where the Angel delivers
a rainbow of widening thot--
trance inspired between the trees
the body never sees
and time is spent to repent
the trace of leaves.
i see the sky as a laughing eye
with clouds unbroken and unknown
and stars beyond this grace
delivered to my face
with the word of cow and phantom
gathering space-packed reaches
between the staggering breeches
as fits the gathered Anthem
in a chorus of Sleep and Dream
to stir the quaking fountain
lost in waterfall and mountain
with empty space abandon.



RICK STOOKER

MIGHTY TINY

The Alton Science Fiction Association deeply regrets the irresponsible and unfounded rumors about the expulsion of Jeremy Blackbeanie that are currently being spread throughout fandom. Possible motives covered by the scuttlebutt range from Laney-like homosexual accusations to horse stealing; from necrophilia to Mafia connections. And even the most respected journals and newszines are publishing the latest charge and counter-charges.

Let me state first of all then that none of them are true; all are pure hogwash.

At the last meeting of ASFA it was decided by a vote of 10-9 to reveal to general fandom the true facts of why Jeremy Blackbeanie is now *persona non grata*. As the relevant incident took place at a meeting hosted by myself, and as I witnessed it from the beginning, I was chosen to chronicle the event. It is hoped that this true account will lay waste all rumors and quell in the bud the pro-Blackbeanie faction arising among fans ignorant of what really occurred that fateful night.

Our bi-weekly meeting several months ago began normally. We held a short business meeting in which nothing was accomplished, and the best, informal part followed. I broke out the refreshments: bags and bags of Fritos and popcorn. Phepsi and bheer soon flowed profusely, and the stereo vibrated to the sounds of the Doors' latest album, *La Woman*.

I had cornered a new femmefan and was maneuvering her up the stairs to where we'd have more privacy when I overheard Jeremy, always one of our more controversial members, begin the joke.

"This is the story of Mighty Tiny," I heard him say to a group of two or three neofans. "And Tiny was the littlest sperm cell of them all."

Instantly, I was intrigued. Already Mighty Tiny sounded different from your ordinary, everyday dirty joke.

"Yes," Jeremy continued. "Tiny was puny; he was a ninety-milligram weakling too ashamed to hold up his flagellum. For not only was Tiny picked on by all the bigger sperm cells, but he did not have any chance of winning the race."

"What race?" one of his listeners asked.

"I was getting to that. You see, to have status as a sperm cell and enjoy life, you must be the one to fertilize the egg cell. So every time their guy gets laid, it is a fierce race to see who can get there first."

Several more members perked up their ears and listened.

"So Tiny decided that he would become big and strong and win the fair lady, er, egg cell if you will. He sent away for a Charles Atlas muscle-building course." Here, Jeremy flexed his arm muscles like the he-men in the body-building advertisements."

"Lifted weights." Jeremy jerked his arms up and down.

"Did road work." He jogged around the room.

"And swam laps every day." He waved his arms in an imitation freestyle.

"And died of over-exhaustion," someone said, laughing. By this time, Jeremy had attracted quite a crowd.

"No," Jeremy replied. "Tiny worked and worked and he kept getting bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger. Eventually Tiny was no longer the littlest sperm cell of them all--he was the largest and most herculean. No longer did the bullies pick on him. Now he was known as MIGHTY TINY!" He shouted the last two words. "And was considered the leading contender for the next race."

"So the sperm cell community waited and waited for the next race impatiently. It's awful boring for sperm cells in between races, you know. Besides, everybody wanted to see Mighty Tiny in action; or preferably but not to be expected, beat him.

"Finally, the big day came. The sperm cells felt their man getting horny and knew they wouldn't have to wait much longer."

Now everybody in the club was listening.

"Eagerly, they gathered at the starting line, pushing and shoving to get in the front row. Sperm cells aren't very polite, you know. Anyway, the gun went off, figuratively speaking, and they all rushed forward. Suddenly they noticed that Mighty Tiny wasn't there. 'Mighty Tiny!' they said. 'Where's Mighty Tiny?'" Jeremy's voice was at its dramatic best, low and restrained.

"They kept going forward," he continued, "and first one would be in the lead, and then another; but all the time they wondered about Mighty Tiny."

"He's in the john, I bet," Jeremy's heckler said.

"No, Mighty Tiny was working out when the race began, and he'd been too absorbed to notice immediately what'd happened. But when he saw everything deserted, he rushed off to join them.

"Mighty Tiny had never run so hard in all his life. He raced to the gate, and then past that and headed for the exit. The others were almost three fourths of the way through by the time he caught sight of them. Mighty Tiny was drenched in sweat and his muscles were cramped and sore; they felt like blobs of lifeless mud. But Mighty Tiny kept running as fast as he could; he wasn't about to be stopped now.

"The other sperm cells saw him at the same time. 'Mighty Tiny is coming!' they shouted, and pushed themselves harder. But it was no use. Mighty Tiny was the Jim Ryan of sperm cells. He drew up along side them, kept the same pace for a second to rest, and then broke through their line." Jeremy ran through the crowd that had encircled him, elbowing everyone aside.

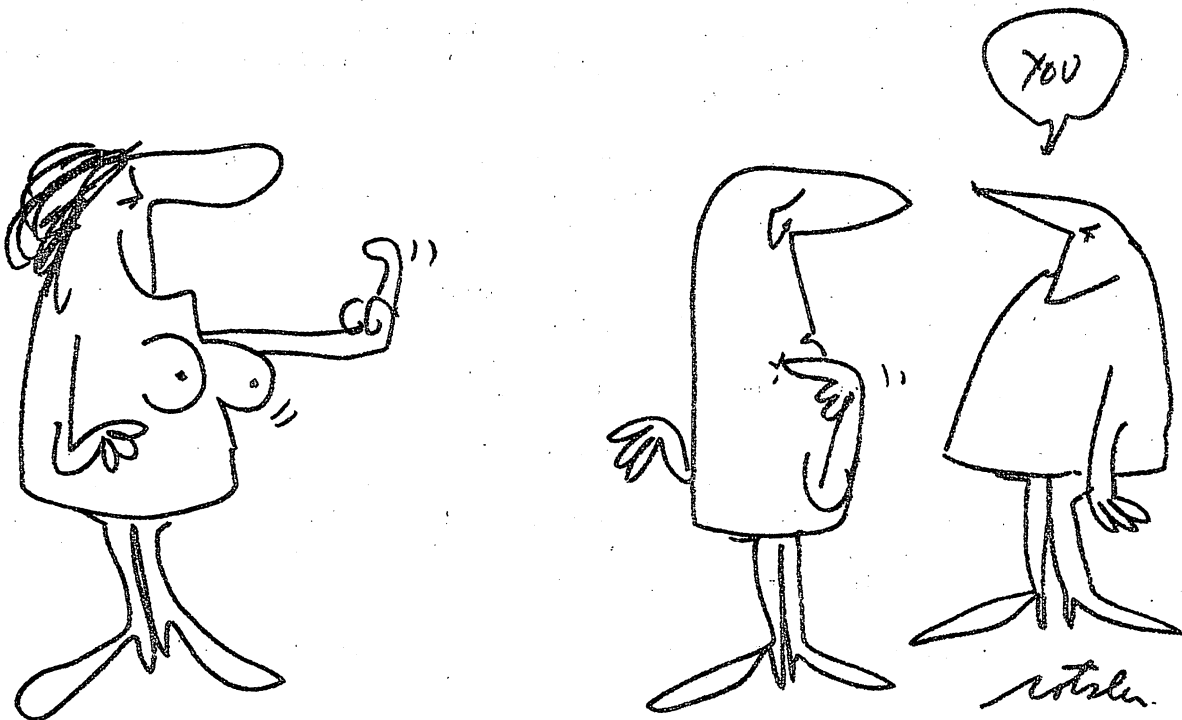
"Before the other sperm cells could even catch their breath they were watching Mighty Tiny's dust as he sped out of sight ahead."

The stereo was silent but no one moved to put on more records.

"The other sperm cells kept going, but were soon puzzled to see Mighty Tiny coming back towards them. 'What happened?' they asked."

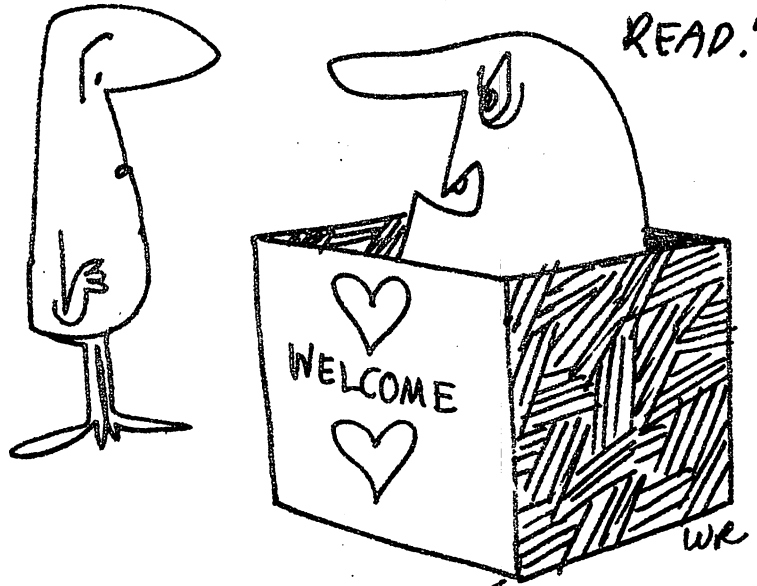
The room dimmed into darkness and Jeremy lept up on a chair. "It wasn't long before they could hear Mighty Tiny shouting:"

Jeremy cupped his mouth with his hands and cried, "RETREAT! IT'S A BLOW JOB!"



And now, I trust it is obvious why Jeremy Blackbeanie is no longer welcome at ASFA meetings.

WELL, DON'T BELIEVE
EVERYTHING YOU
READ!



PIERS
ANTHONY

OFF THE DEEP END

Small joke an instructor told in the Army school for instructors, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, 1957, illustrating the hazards of pat thinking: the Prof is explaining to future lecturers how to arrange filmed presentations. "First you preview the film you plan to show. You go down to the depot and watch the whole thing yourself. Then you use your notes to introduce it to your class. Then you show them the film, and after the class you take it back for storage." "But how can we remember all that?" a typical army man inquires dubiously. "You remember it mnemonically," the Prof says. "form the instructions into key words, put them in order, and make a masterword from their first letters--an acronym, easy to remember. For example, we have here four stages: PREVIEW, INTRODUCE, SHOW and STORE." He writes them one below the other on the board. "Now simply read the first letters down, P I S S -- ooops!" He considers, red-faced. "Well, in a case like this, we'll just have to take the last letters instead: W E W E. They, of course, make up an entirely different configuration." And the Prof is satisfied; the knotty problem has been solved without even the suggestion of anything untoward, such as urine.

Now I have on hand a fat volume of Speculative Fiction that requires some previewing, introducing, showing and storing, and I have to piss on--uh, weewee--uh, exercise my critical facilities thereon. To organize my thoughts properly--for I was indeed an army instructor (Math and Survey, if you must know) I find this mnemonic acronym entirely appropriate. Herewith:

PREVIEW:

My fannish writings are always about myself as Aggrieved Writer, and this section concerns not the volume in question so much as the problem of getting oneself represented in print with anything meaningful. I hope that an understanding of this

problem, faced by all ambitious writers, will enable the reader to appreciate the real importance of what this particular editor has done.

In late 1968 I was hard at work on my dinosaur novel, ORN, and not eager to put it aside for stories. But the original anthologies were flowering, and seemed to represent a more promising market than the hidebound magazines. I received a solicitation from Harry Harrison to contribute to NOVA 1, and he wanted provocative material up to 10,000 words, and was prepared to negotiate in case good material came longer than that. Pay was 3¢ per word against what promised to be good royalties.

Well, I *did* have several story notions that were a mite potent for the magazines. I felt I could not afford to turn this fair offer down. So I plunged into *Up Schist Crick*, concerning a guy who winds up you-know-where, literally. I knew no magazine would touch its scatological climax, but since Harry wanted this stuff...

Meanwhile I read that Harlan Ellison was buying for AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS. He hadn't asked me to contribute (he claims he did, but that is not true) but I was determined to be in that volume regardless of his sentiments. So I wrote the novellette *The Barn*, and shipped it to him. I felt it was exactly what he was asking for--but if there is one thing the average editor bounces like poison, it is what he asks for. I wish that were a joke.

Sure enough, Harry bounced *Up Schist Crick*. But he still claimed to want provocative material. So I sent him the carbon of *Barn*, explaining that Harlan had priority. But when Harlan bounced it, Harry could have it. Which shows exactly how much confidence I had in Harlan's desire for my material. Harry was the very soul of equanimity; he accepted *Barn* on that basis, provided I do some revision.

Yep. Then Harlan accepted it. He, too, desired revision--but not to expurgate the penile elements. He made suggestions to improve the basic theme and framework of the piece. I hastily complied, and soon I had 3¢ per word for *In the Barn*. Note the ease with which I placed that item; that is not typical, as you will shortly see.

I wrote to Harry to withdraw the carbon. To ease his anguish I promised to write one just as hot for him. I even told him my notion: this normal man's sexual congress with a little girl. Very little--she stood just about half again as tall as his erect penis. This mollified Harry, who really like what he termed my "mini-screw" notion. So I wrote *Minnie's Crew*. (You *do* get the pun?) Harry admitted it was everything I had promised--and he bounced it. But he didn't return the manuscript. He thought he might do another anthology, SF 69, and if he did, and if it found a publisher, then maybe he would reconsider this item. So I smiled agreement through slightly gritted teeth and retyped my ms for submission elsewhere. Editors win bonus points when they force writers to do unnecessary retyping; the usual device is spilled coffee on the ms, however.

All right--I had committed myself to deliver a satisfactory story to Harry, and I was beginning to get a notion what *not* to offer. So I wrote up a conventional notion with only oblique sexuality and no naked privates and sent it off. It was not as good as the first three I had shown him, so I titled it *Not That Good*. I wish editors appreciated my impish finesse in titling!) He replied that this was OK, but not up to my prior standard. Of course he was right: I learn slowly, but I do learn. He said he would hold it, but if I had any more real blockbusters...

So, dammit, I postponed ORN for the fifth time and wrote the most brutal novellette the SF field has yet to see, titled *On the Uses of Torture*. Very little sex or

naughty vocabulary, but extremely grim. Harlan Ellison did a comparatively mild piece about the same time, *A Boy and His Dog*, and won an award with it, if that's any indication of violence in fiction. I completed the 9,000 word crunch just a few days before Christmas, 1968, and mailed it.

And Harry bounced it on the pretext that it was too long for his volume. Instead he accepted *Not That Good*, retitling it *The Whole Truth*, and it was published a year later in NOVA 1. He had, in true editorial fashion, unerringly selected the weakest of the pieces submitted.

Two sold--three floundering. Par for the writing course. *Up Schist Crick* I showed next to--Harlan. You see, Harry told me earnestly that Harlan was having trouble filling his volume and was desperate for more material, even from those who had already sold to him. So I thought I was doing him a favor. Harlan bounced it unread, explaining delicately about his one-to-a-writer rule. Blush. Harry had his little joke at my expense. Whereupon Harlan went on to purchase two and even three stories from other writers...thus reminding me once again exactly where I stood. Well, in due course I shall remind him where he stands...

Meanwhile, *Up Schist Crick* bounced at ORBIT. That was all right; there is only one writer with a cast-iron contract to appear in every ORBIT, and I was already aware I was not that one. *Schist* was in fact my thirteenth failure there, with no successes.

Then I saw an ad in a fanzine: David Gerrold, of whom I had never heard, was looking for stories. Wot the Hel--I sent *Schist* there. David accepted it. Only one minor hitch--he had not yet found a publisher for his anthology. But the following year DELL bought his volume, so I had my money: 2¢ per word. Then DELL folded its SF line...but kept this anthology, which it would publish sometime in 1971 provided the authors all signed new contracts to allow for a longer delay in publishing. We did, and it did, and late in 1971--specifically the nineteenth month of the year--the volume appeared in print. (July 1972.)

Two to go. *Minnie's Crew*--simplified to 'S Crew on the manuscript page-tops--was bounced by *Playboy*, who told me frankly it was too much of a sex story for them. (What kind of a magazine do you think it is, anyway?) And by *Cavalier*, *F&SF*, *Knight* and *Evergreen Review*. I understand some writer burn any story that bounces half a dozen times. I, however, am of a different and inferior cut. I showed it to Richard Geis of *SF Review*--and he said that though it was against his policy to print fan fiction, he would make an exception for Minnie, even though she wasn't orally oriented.

But meanwhile I met Ejler Jakobsson of *Galaxy* when he visited this nether region, and described the story to him. He bought it and published it in *Worlds of Tomorrow* #24 under the title *The Bridge* and poor Dick Geis was jilted. In a fit of pique he folded his fanzine and...but that's another fiction. Later Tom Scortia was looking for sexy original and reprint SF for his anthology, so we shipped him a tear-sheet of *Bridge*--and of course he bounced it. And the ms was lost in the return mail. Par for the course.

That left one item to go--the strongest, therefore toughest to place. I knew it was useless to try *On the Uses of Torture* on any of the spineless funks--you may abbreviate that to "sf"--that pass for markets these days, so I held it. And watched Harlan's *Boy & Dog* show the route mine might have gone. I used to be jealous of Harlan's success; I still am.

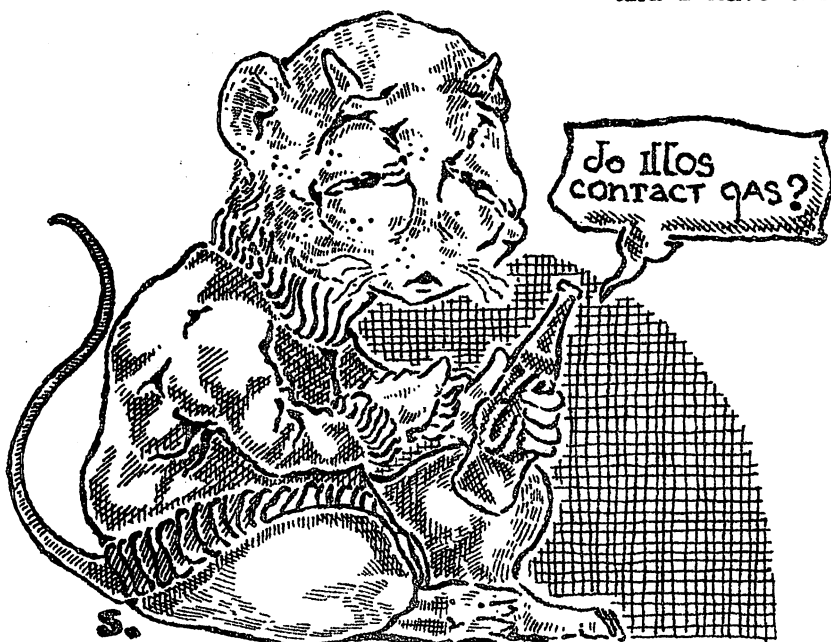
Ejler Jakobsson to the rescue again! I heard he wanted really hard-hitting

stuff, so I dropped *Torture* on him. A bell rang; Ejler's voice on the phone was white-faced: he had never seen anything like this! Yes, he wanted it, though it might get him fired. But a little revision...Editors have little self-esteem in their sinecures, so they bolster morale with revision, never mind the needs of the story! But this was not the typical editor; he, like Harlan, suggested revision that would actually *strengthen* the story. Flabbergasted, I agreed. He begged me to put a pseudonym on it, so he could run it in the same issue with *Bridge*, and to ship it airmail. So my pseudonym developed a pseudonym, "Tony Pedro"--variants of "Anthony" and "Piers" with the Spanish flavor deriving from my year in Spain, 1940--but, being a writer by profession, I couldn't afford airmail postage. In due course I saw an ad for the upcoming WOT issue with the Pedro story. Better and better; the many and distinguished fan enemies I have would not know the true author, so would vote for it for the Hugo.

Pride...fall. The issue appeared. *Bridge* was there, but not *Torture*. What had happened? I had my money--2¢ per word (theoretically I have a 3¢ guarantee from the publisher, but that only applies to hack; payment is normally inversely proportional to quality, as is reputation)--but no publication. Ejler had chickened out. As well he might; I understand the feedback from *Bridge* had him sweating, and that was a fun story. *Torture* could have finished him; even when the editor has the guts, his publisher doesn't. So don't blame the editor, this one time; he too has to survive.

Years passed. The Nixon euphoria was upon the land, and creative people everywhere had to scratch for bread. My writing income, like that of others in the field, was just about halved. *Torture*, a piece truly fitting the mood of the times, languished.

In 1972 I had a scribbled, barely-legible query from writer-sculptor Sterling Lanier: would I contribute a piece to the local avant garde poetry magazine, *Armadillo*? I knew of Lanier, who had run me a close race for honors in the *Galaxy* Pubs reader survey, and I had long been curious whether he was related to the poet Sidney Lanier whose aura suffused my novel *MACROSCOPE*. He turned out to be a fascinating fellow with a little girl the age of mine; and yes, he *is* related. An acquaintance well worth making, and I have a number of his elegant brass and copper figurines on my desk now, one of whom will appear in one of my future novels. But *Armadillo* and I operate on different wave lengths. Like AM vs FM, and to me AM means morning. I showed them half a dozen items and all washed out. Then I got mean and mentioned *Torture*...



That's right! They read the novelette and *that* was what they wanted. Of course they had to buy it back from *Galaxy* Pubs, who owned the rights. So I sent word to my agent: please take the story off the remarket. He sent word back: it was at *Argosy*

and the first editor had OK'd it. Oh, no! Was *Armadillo* to lose the novelette just because some big-name outfit was ready to pay much bigger money? What do you think I am?

Right. I opted for *Argosy*. But then came the happy ending: the main editor bounced it, and my agent returned *Torture* for the poetry magazine. They wrote a holographic missive to *Galaxy*--and my phone was ringing again. One day Judy-Lynn, next day Ejler. Had they changed their minds and elected to run *Torture* after all? No--after getting mini-screwed they knew better. Did they suspect this was a fake deal perpetrated by one of my illustrious enemies? (My friends balk at dishonesty, but my enemies have more guts.) No, not even that! The eerie, mundane truth was that THEY COULDN'T READ THE SIGNATURE, so didn't know to whom to address their release. I provided the info and plugged my novel *STEPPE* then in their slush pile (with 8 unsold novels, I can't be picky about opportunities!) and that was just about that.

Armadillo pleased with its hoist, scheduled *Torture* for its upcoming double-size winter issue, #4-5. The editors even showed it to a patron--who hit the floor. No, he wasn't canceling the deal; he liked *Torture*. (Lord, what masochists these mortals be!) In fact he insisted that it be run sooner: in issue #3, due out Nov. 1, 1972. So that is where the last item came to rest...I think. Fans who are interested can obtain the \$1.95 issue for about half price, \$1.00, by mentioning this article. Far as I know, *Torture* is the only SF in the issue, perhaps the only prose, so don't be misled. But for completists the address is: *Armadillo*, P.O.Box 392, Sarasota, FL 33578. The editors have expressed the desire to publish other provocative science fiction, and perhaps writers who missed the DANGEROUS VISIONS series will find a home there, and *Armadillo* will become famous. If that 's what it takes--

Meanwhile, my feculent blessings upon the heads of those editors who made this nightmare possible: Harry Harrison of NOVA, Harlan Ellison of AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, Dave Gerrold of GENERATION, Ejler Jakobsson of *Worlds of Tomorrow*, and Jon Moody of *Armadillo*.

INTRODUCE:

So that is the history of my five stories and how they found roosts in diverse hutches. I hope this serves as background for the basic theme of the critique I am about to do. We know that the originality and excitement of the SF field is declining. Is it because we as readers are growing old and jaded? Or because we as writers have lost that old aggressive spirit? Or because it is no longer entirely safe for editors to permit provocative material to see print? How can we judge, really--when the material in question so often never does see print? We must see the evidence before we can fix the blame.

Well, we have two points of refernce here. One is my own experience, where by dint of much struggle over the course of four years I have gotten five items into print. Now you know where they bounced; you can look them up and judge whether author or publishers were at fault. The other point: that's only me, an established dissident. What about all the other writers of the field--the ones who lick their wounds in decent silence? What might we see, if an editor said to them: I want stuff no other editor will touch--and that is all I want! First response would be disbelief, naturally; I understand Harrison had to pull stories like teeth from every writer he solicited--except me. Because they all knew better, and I hadn't learned. (I've learned now, though!) But suppose this editor proved he meant it, by actually publishing a volume containing outstanding material that couldn't be placed elsewhere? So that all those writers knew that nothing, absolutely nothing (except maybe a snot vam-

pire) would put him off? That they could now write flat-out without censorship, for good money and good publicity?

By now you know: Harlan Ellison did it with DANGEROUS VISIONS. Now we have AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, a larger volume for which I am given some credit for generating. My part in it is more apparent than real, I suspect; but certainly the volume represents the kind of display I feel is essential, and I have put my talent where my mouth is at dead center of the book, to pride or fall. And all those other writers: Harlan has won the battle of editorial taboo for them and put their ultimate into prominent view. If their condition is similar to mine, their entries here represent only one-fifth of what they could do if five such projects existed--but at least we have the chance to look at a fair sampling. Now we can judge: would the field of speculative fiction stand improved if every editor were Harlan Ellison? Would we all profit if all restrictions except those guiding basic quality and interest were scrapped?

We don't really know the answer, because the test has never been run before. But I believe it would be worthwhile to have a verdict on this, and to such a verdict I shall be addressing the remaining bulk of my effort here. My opinion is fallible, of course; and even infallible fans can disagree. But I hope other reviewers and commentators will search for a more accurate verdict. The job is worth doing; the health of our field may depend on it.

Now for the book itself, AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS. The first thing we encounter is that introduction: the editor's apprehensions and misapprehensions. But he makes the volume what it is by being whatever he is, and it is typical that when he puts his foot in his mouth he perceived it as someone else's contortion. He means well, anyway.

Oh, he tried! "I made sure," he says on page XVII, "no book club or paperback editions could be sold without my agreement..." To protect the assembled authors from getting screwed on subsidiary deals, as I gather happened the first time around. Then the SF Book Club deal came up. DOUBLEDAY's right hand made an offer to its left hand, which hand accepted without quibble. "No, no!" Harlan screamed thinly. "This fine book is worth more than that--" "Your protest is unreasonable, squirt," the Publisher informed him, rubbing his nose in the offal in the contract: "...which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld." And the deal went through. Harlan had been so naive as to think he could deal with the devil and win.

True, the entire DANGEROUS VISIONS series later retailed to NAL for \$60,000 gross; the devil sweetens the pot considerably on occasion. That should mean a little extra cash for the authors--but considering the number of publishing and editorial splits to be made first, it falls short of an adequate retirement fund.

On page XX Harlan chastises Piers Anthony. Let's not make more of this than it is: I feel that Harlan, mistaking the thrust of my quoted sally, made the further mistake of displaying it in a framework for which it was not intended--just to prove how little it affected him? He should have responded in *SF Review*, whose readers were more familiar with the situation--unless it was his desire to misrepresent with impunity. But to summarize the matter here: writers have quarrels in fannish print, and I had one with Wilson Tucker. He disparaged my writing ability, I challenged him to demonstrate his on in A,DV. He said Harlan wouldn't treat him fairly. So I made a facetious challenge to Harlan to give the timid old-timer a chance. (That's what Harlan quotes here.) It took a couple of months for SFR to print that challenge, and meanwhile Harlan reacted to that Tucker "unfair" jibe on his own, and demanded materi-

al from him. But Tucker lacked the qualities required for inclusion. I believe I made my point, as far as fanzine upsmanship goes. I'm only sorry Harlan didn't take proper stock before advertising his confusions here. But that, too, is the way Harlan is.

The fact is, Harlan had legitimate cause to lambast me--and missed it. In my comment on the first DANDEROUS VISIONS I remarked that Larry Niven appeared to have bought his way into the volume. Norman Spinrad, who I understand holds no special brief for Niven, assured me later that this was untrue. Niven's story was accepted well before the volume's financial problems developed; then he bailed it out with his own money and saved the enterprise. So I clarify this: it did look as if he had bought his way in--but the appearance was erroneous. I sent an advance copy of that review to Harlan, and he could have struck out that part before it saw print in *Niekas*. I'm sorry he didn't, and that he never clarified the matter. Niven was wronged.

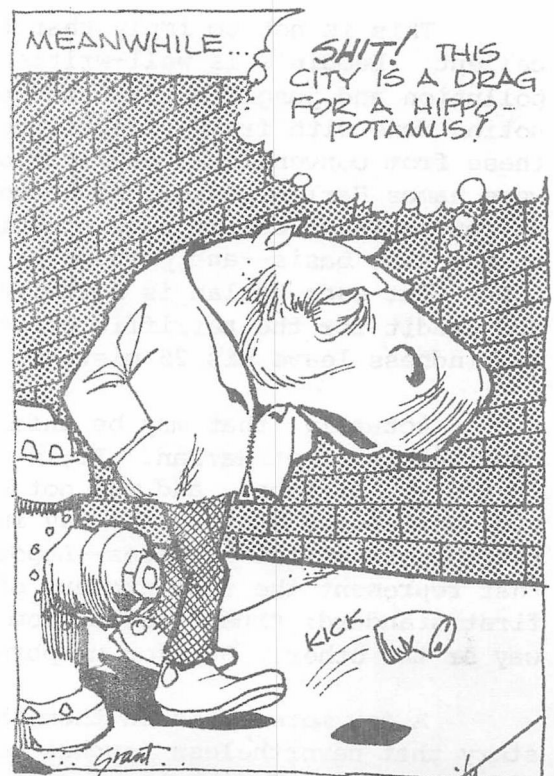
I met Larry Niven personally after my comment appeared. He shook my hand. "I've admired your work!" he said warmly. That was all. There are so many bastards in this world, it is disconcerting to meet the other kind.

SHOW:

Now the stories. One major criterion for A,DV is publishability in the conventional markets. To wit: if the story is acceptable *there*, then it is not acceptable *here*. Because this volume represents the outs, not the ins. In the ideal situation there would be no outs and ins--but for now let's stick to reality.

Accordingly, my first critical judgement is this: if the item could have appeared elsewhere prior to DANGEROUS VISIONS, it does not belong here. I say "prior" because I hope those restrictive standards are changing. But just what are the elements that make a good story unpublishable elsewhere? We need definitions here. Perhaps mine will differ from those of other readers, but at least my criteria for judgement will be displayed.

Language--It's not what you say, but how you say it. I heard a beautiful poem once on the *Four Letter Word*, showing in rhyme how you could ask your girl for a moonlight liaison and be accepted, but never if you say "Let's fuck." In each case the meaning was the same--but the language differed. I have been searching for that poem since 1957, but never encountered it again, alas. Anyway, we all know the words that hairtrigger conventional censorship: shit, fuck, cunt, cock, etc. But that's a cheap way to disqualify a story. If there are a few such words, and they can be excised without ruining the story, an editor will normally do that. He is merely responding to the bluenosed sensitivities of an uncomfortably large segment of his readership. So we must qualify this definition: the vocabulary must be integral, not just an interjection to make the item technically naughty.



Style--This is a very broad and indefinite category, subject to infinite interpretation. My definition, loosely is: Style is the way in which the material is presented. Ordinary prose, free verse, scattered impressions, coined language, special effects--these are all elements of what I mean by style, yet not the whole of it and perhaps not even the essence of it. Generally, the farther from the norm style is, the less acceptable it is in print. Each person must judge for himself what is too far out; I am not going to lean on this unduly.

Concept--Again, my working definition: the basic notion of the piece. What is it actually *saying*? Some concepts are acceptable; others not. Boy meets girl is conventional; boy eating shit is banned. (Yes, I proposed the latter notion to an editor; it bounced.) This, really, is our richest vein; some marvelous concepts repel editors, and these are the ones we seek. They are not necessarily sexual or scatological; the most pervasive editorial taboo I have encountered is that against the *ridicule of editors*. If Harlan had really wanted to prove something, he could have reprinted a fanzine article someone (Hazlett?) did on how to win Hugos by feeling up femmefans. As it is, however, he gives what sounds like a good example of a concept violation when he mentions bouncing a story about a snot vampire.

I went through the volume and marked in code the unprintables: L for Language, S for Style, C for Concept. Twenty-one of the forty-six items qualified as mundane unprintables--the overwhelming majority on the basis of concept. Two qualified on the basis of all three, L,C,S. Only two qualified without involving concept: Gahan Wilson's blob, and Tiptree's finale. So really, to my mind, it is *ideas* that frighten people. I find that significant but not really surprising.

In this section I shall dispose of the printables--that is, the entres that should not have appeared in this book, because they could have appeared elsewhere. There are 25 of them, way too many to cover in detail, so this will be mere gloss and spot shots.

This is not to imply that these rejects are inferior stories; a number are excellent. LeGuin's is well-written and hard-hitting and suggestive of the ills of pollution and jungle warfare and contemporary ethical failures. Carr's is an old notion done with fresh effectiveness. But only editorial idiocy would have banned these from conventional publication--and I doubt they were ever offered there. There were names Harlan wanted, so he solicited them, and here they are--with their usual. Harlan could as easily have accepted what Wilson Tucker or Ted White offered, I'm sure, on the same basis--and perhaps he should have, if that's what he really wanted for A,DV. But even Harlan is better at preaching than at practicing. Let's give him his due credit for the terrific effort he made, and the half-loaf he has achieved, and in kindness leave his 25 mistakes for other reviewers to praise.

Actually, that may be unfair. I have set this volume up as the haven for unpublishables, not Harlan. It is evident that he wanted the best material he could get, regardless of taboo, and was not going to reject good stuff just because it failed to violate taboos, whatever he may imply. He knows the difference; he himself freely rattles off a list of names--Lupoff, Anthony, Nelson, Vonnegut, O'Donnell, Bernott, Parra, Tiptree--that represent the real nucleus of unprintability. I don't object to the quality--first standard; true freedom from taboo means that taboo simply is not considered one way or the other. But for my purpose the non-taboo entres are irrelevant.

A few more notes on them, however: *Soundless Evening* by Lee Hoffman is a minor story that nevertheless touches me, for my own little girl is just shy of five years old--the first of mine to survive birth by more than an hour. But I think anyone who

cares about children will feel the horror of this gentle-seeming and reasonable story. *And the Sea Like Mirrors* by Gregory Benford--a close call, because editors *do* bounce downbeat stories--but not always. I believe the author's theme is correct. Other downbeats are by Filer, Koontz, Disch and M. John Harrison. *Bed Sheets Are White*, by Evelyn Lief--Harlan gives this a big buildup by describing how he tore this poor girl up at Clarion, then bought her next story for this volume. This shows the fallacy of his way of "teaching"--for this item, too, is trite and schoolgirlish, a pastiche of old Bradbury. But it leads into a discussion of the Clarion workshop that Harlan touts so highly.

Clarion--how much I have heard about it! Harlan pats his own back when he praises it, and certainly some good writers instruct there. I remain cynical; I wonder whether Clarion is not in fact a "self-fulfilling prophecy". You know--where the teacher knows at the outset who his smart students are, then grades accordingly, and stands vindicated. This is not deliberate; it is ingrained so that it seems objective. The criterion of writing success is a sale to some publisher (pass over the gross presumption that the typical publisher knows his literary colon from a hole in Parnassus--this whole volume is designed to refute that): if you sell something, *anything*, you're a success. So naturally the instructors want to prove themselves through their students; couple of those instructors have been unable to produce much on their own for years, if SF story and novel listings are indicative. So where do these early student efforts tend to find publication? In the books edited by those same instructors--including even a CLARION series of anthologies. As I said: self-fulfilling.

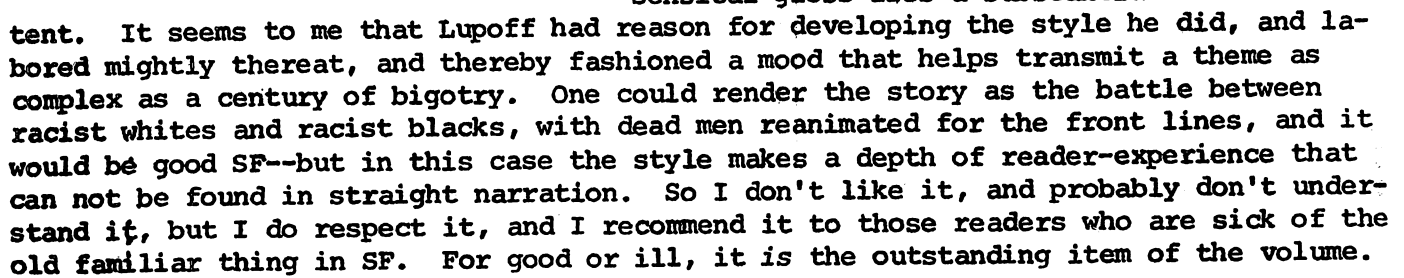
OK. I'm an ignoramus. I don't know anything about Clarion, and doubt it would want me as either student or faculty. But I have had experience in both capacities elsewhere, which is why I tend to be cynical in this case. All I can do is judge by the fiction at hand: *Bed Sheets Are White*. Perhaps some day someone will show me some other reason--other than Harlan's need for self-fulfillment--that it appears here. I deem it a commendable amateur effort, but hardly prominent literature. There are two other Clarion workshopers represented, and both of their stories qualify for the volume by my definitions, so it can be done--but one of those, Ed Bryant, has been a fan for at least a decade and probably would have made it with or without Clarion. You have to eliminate both the self-fulfillments and those who never needed help, before you can assess the true success of your program.

Perhaps someday we'll see a thorough critique of Clarion done by an objective and knowledgeable party. Maybe it really is something special. I merely point out that this has not yet been demonstrated.

STORE:

Now, roughly in order of significance--very roughly, because we are at last down to the nitty-gritty subjective impressions of merit, and I'm hardly certain of my own sentiments--the qualifying visions. I exclude my own; I have already taken up half this essay discussing my own work, and I think that suffices even for me.

With the Bentfin Boomer Boys on Little Old New Alabama by Richard Lupoff. I try to be objective, but sometimes it comes hard. All I know of the author prior to this entre is some fanzine exchange he had with Moskowitz, and all I saw of that was Lupoff's side--and that struck me as evasive and unfair. In his intro Lupoff again picks gratuitously at Moskowitz. But I am forced to conclude that Lupoff in fan-warfare is no more representative than Anthony in the same situation, for Lupoff as Writer is a heavyweight. I have the sinking feeling that at such time as I meet Lupoff I'm going to like the bastard. Certainly I sympathize with his described problems getting



Time Travel for Pedestrians by Ray Nelson. I noted in a published review -- Davidson in *F&SF*, I believe--that this was not the author's best. That faint damn may be true--but Nelson is monstrously talented, and gets bounced because of the very superiority and relevance of his writing. Seldom does he crack the magazines; but I remember *Turn Off the Sky* as about the finest story in 1963 and a leading contender as best-of-the-decade. I don't know whether it ever achieved that sort of recognition; I'm just presenting the straight scoop on its quality. I believe it was about five years getting into print, even way back then, and only the old (not the new) *F&SF* would have touched it.

Time Travel is another difficult but rewarding item whose significance extends far beyond the supposed framework. I question whether it has to be a masturbation fantasy; similar flights of imagination are common in other types of sexual engagement, including hetro. It seems to be a sharp commentary on religion and sex, hinting perhaps that the penis pierces flesh even as the spear pierced Jesus--or vice versa. But I don't know. I've never been drunk, let alone high on LSD. But I believe that Christianity--and perhaps other religions--has been intimately entwined with sexuality for

many centuries, and that this story illustrates some of that connection. It thus may be subject to all manner of vilification by people who provide only irrelevant reasons for their disgust, unable to confess the real one. We'll see.

The Bisquit Position by Bernard Wolfe. I remember him as the author of that frustrating book, LIMBO. No matter where you look in LIMBO, momentous and penetrating concepts are being lucidly explored, demonstrating the giant capacity of the author's cranium--but the book as a whole is not a novel. It is a novelette padded by about a hundred thousand words of lecture. So I approached the author's two entries here with morbid interest: had he learned more about storytelling in the intervening years? I don't care how much loot he may hoist from *Playboy* type markets; those publications are a better guide to pretension than to good SF, whatever their rates.

I am pleased to report that he has learned something. He retains his fantastic richness of concept, but now it is more properly integrated into his story. Neither of his two items here is technically science fiction, and the author is first to proclaim that truth--but I'm amenable to the editorial stretching of the definition for the sake of inclusion of a true "dangerous vision." *The Girl With Rapid Eye Movements* is closer to SF--but could have appeared elsewhere, so is excluded from my serious comment. *The Bisquit Position* concerns napalm--and such truth about napalm seldom sees print. Read it and consider; if you still approve of stimulating the economy by promoting minor wars and producing such staples as napalm (which, incidentally, is only one of the items in the civilized arsenal), then you are beyond redemption.

But Wolfe's afterword illustrates the pitfalls of egotism. He says he has not paid attention to SF for over twenty years--and proves it by expounding his ignorance for four pages. I'd like to introduce him to the work of serious contemporary SF novelists...or, failing that, to Common Cause. If he ever cares to put his action where his mouth is.

Stoned Counsel by H. H. Hollis. A beautiful notion and nice execution; only the legal climax makes this unprintable--but it is integral. I really enjoyed this one--and I wonder whether law will one day come to this?

Epiphany For Aliens by David Kerr. This is the one that touched Harlan most profoundly, he says. But he does not name the author when splicing off names in the overall introduction. An intriguing guide to the editor's character; is it that what touches him most profoundly one moment is forgotten another moment? Nevertheless, this story is a brutal, honest illustration of human and subhuman nature that despite its exaggeration probably represents fundamental truth. A Neanderthan enclave has survived to the present; what happens when it is discovered by civilization? Fucking and killing. I believe it.


The Funeral by Kate Wilhelm. I believe she has the shortest introduction in the book, half a page. (The longest, seven pages, is mine.) I urged Harlan, way back when, to seek more distaff writers, and I named Kate Wilhelm Knight specifically. Naturally that's not the sort of positive advice I get credited for--but I'm glad to see it was taken. She is a good writer. And this is a good story.

Funeral has no objectionable vocabulary or explicit sex, and there is no obscurity in the styling. It qualifies as an unpublishable because of its theme. It suggests that adults feel the need to degrade innocent children. Not merely the perverts and sadists; the solid citizens of our great society. What Wolfe does for napalm, Wilhelm does for such conformism: we remake our children into our own appalling image. Perhaps the conformism of non-DV fiction is a symptom--or worse, a tool--of this syn-

drome. I think this thesis is true; but I suspect that children, left to their own devices, would grow up to be even worse monsters. Even a bad society inculcates some necessary restraints.

The Big Space Fuck by Kurt Vonnegut. Most remarkable for its title--and a doozy it is, too! Audacity like this should not go unrewarded. We all know that Bradbury and Vonnegut are the outstanding Names of this volume, surely augmenting its salability and thus assisting the little people within it who have nothing but their talent to recommend them. These Name entries will be surveyed early. First Bradbury: good, nice safe poetry, the high school teachers will love that. Then Vonnegut: the big space fmph choke gasp help, somebody--she's fainted! I mean, to have such a promising Name heft a blivet like this at the unsuspecting mass audience--what abominable joy! The story itself is merely a humorous essay--but good, dirty fun. Sample: the name of the Space Fuck is Arthur C. Clarke. I love it.

Chuck Berry, Won't You Please Come Home by Ken McCullough. This is the other entre that makes it on all three counts. Four pages of nauseating, outrageous detail on raising a pet tick. The author has a stinking cesspool for a mind. I gnash with envy.

 by Gahan Wilson. Another remarkable title! This qualifies because the graphics are beyond the means or inclination of most publishers, yet they are integral. A fun story.

Getting Along by James Blish & wife. Harlan says by way of recommendation of the author: "He values his integrity more highly than any man I've ever met." This is an exaggeration; Blish does not appear to be completely aware of the meaning of intellectual, as opposed to literal, integrity. But he is a good man and a good writer whose impertinence of notion in this multiple parody surely makes it unacceptable for conventional editors. Yes, I took the story's nine-letter quiz, got half or more right.

Those are my top ten qualifiers, though I repeat that absolute ranking is impossible, and some of the others may be superior to these upon reconsideration. No doubt some of the unqualifiers will beat out these in the awards rankings, which also is fair enough. But I must either put down an opinion or beg the issue.

Shorter shrift to the others: Heidenry's *Counterpoint of View* is an intriguing two page essay, by no means a story. I suspect it violates the poking-fun-at-editors taboo... Offutt's *For Value Received* pokes fun at the medical profession, therefore is unpublishable though in fact commonplace. I had a similar experience with hospital overbilling in 1958, but the hospital backed down and let me have my wife back. I let them keep the baby anyway; it was stillborn. And Offutt himself is no better when assessing others: I once tried to buy accident insurance from him and he wrote a rider excluding every conceivable kind of mental disease before he would OK the policy. He really did! And I am a former accident & health insurance salesman myself. (Ghood Ghod, that must have been why!) Bryant's *The 10:00 Report is Brought To You By...* is about prostitution of the news. Sure they do it--that's why they won't admit it, making this notion unprintable. Joanna Russ's *When It Changed*--Lesbian society, taboo but hardly original. K.M. O'Donnel's *Still-Life*--well written, thoughtful, realistic; I probably should have listed it above those humorous entries in the first ten. Story of a spaceman's disillusion, told as a series of stills; yes, some real thought and talent went into this one. The exact details make it unprintable, so it is an excellent example of what you cannot see elsewhere. But so quiet one tends to underrate it... Joan Bernott's *The Test-Tube Creature Afterward*--this may be the proof of the Clarion pudding. What do you do with the test-tube creature, afterward? You make

love to it. James Sallis is the most highly touted unknown of the decade; it is nice to see him finally coming into view so that we peons can judge for ourselves. Here he has two finely-crafted efforts: *At the Fitting Shop* wherein it is a new penis being fitted, and *53rd American Dream* wherein we have the family eating the maid. Sallis actually is pretty good; normally, overtouting is a signal of uncertainty. A. Parra's *Totenbuch*--the point seems to be that it's pointless. OK--I'll accept that as an editorial taboo. But it's my taboo too. It reminds me of the defense of dull fiction: it's supposed to be dull, therefore has succeeded in producing the desired reader-response, therefore is excellent. Maybe so; the reader who swallows that deserves to be bored.

Last and least, James Tiptree's *The Milk of Paradise*. It does not qualify, but I have it here because it is so evident that Harlan thinks it qualifies. Harlan simply could not believe he had been given the chance to buy a story this stunning, and he predicts it will win the short story award. He should not have believed, for this is a decent, marginal, unoriginal effort--little more, unless I have become completely tone-blind to taboo. I suggest that if this one even makes the ballot it will be a mighty tribute to Harlan's salesmanship. Love is blind--inside this story and out of it.

But overall I have no doubt: for once the publisher's jacket blurb is correct. AGAIN, *DANGEROUS VISIONS* is indeed a better book than *DANGEROUS VISIONS*. If there are abysmal mistakes here, there are also phenomenal successes--and that makes it all worthwhile. Harlan Ellison is obviously tuned in more to his foibleistic prejudices than to the great forward edge of the genre, but he has enough perception to make an excellent overall score.

What, then, is the general verdict? Does the elimination of taboo-editing tend to improve the offerings and uplift the vitality of the field? I consider *Boomer Boys* and *Pedestrian Time Travel* and *Bisquit* and I perceive the total vigor of the volume, with Big Names doing New Things and Little Names smashing into print with such awesome authority, and I know it will be a success whose reverberations are felt worldwide, praised and damned by critics of every spot and stripe from 1972 to 1984, and I sweat a few cold drops of oily lymph and I have to say: yes.

Now comes the awful suspense: will other writers and editors and publishers and readers pay attention--or will their visions remain safe?

But as the little girl says: For this and much more, Harlan, thank you.



LEON TAYLOR

THE SILVERBOB CHANGES

"The sum of a human soul--hopes and strivings, triumphs, pains, pleasures--is nothing more than a series of magnetic impulses, some shadowed by noise, others clearly and easily accessible. The beautiful Scheffing process provided instant mechanical duplication of that web of magnetic impulses."

With a single swing of the scalpel, Silverberg chops away the joys, fears and afflictions of man's six-millennium mystic awareness. Religion and philosophy, the shining depths of his tortured *raison d'etre*, are reduced to diverting footnotes and man's creative fertility in the face of mortality is alleviated by the most noxious golden apple of them all, eternal life. Materialism becomes the sole mentor of mankind; because there is nothing to die for, there is nothing to live for except living itself. So the man-gods live, playing the weary power-struggle game of Mt. Olympus and regularly swapping the role masks of Greek drama.

Having accomplished all that, the Silverbomb then proceeds to sire to us a crackerjack tale of suspense and dispense--of incriminating clues, that is. And the Pope makes Earl Stanley Gardner look like a papal tiger.

TO LIVE AGAIN extrapolates the use of persona, not as that beep-beep razor blade but as the mechanical duplication mentioned in the quote above, injectible into another human mind after the personal/physical death of the persona's original owner. The technique is simplicity itself; while he is alive, our person makes periodic trips to his local Scheffing Institute to have his memory (which Silverberg equates with soul) recorded on magnetic tape. After he is dead, this latest tape is impressed on the mind of the chosen (living) applicant and ... voila! a persona is born!

But even the meters of eternity have to scrape up bread somehow, so the price of the Scheffing process is exorbitant in the proudest tradition of capitalism. Immortality for the very rich only, as it is.

TO LIVE AGAIN is thusly a story about power and immortality. Like the Pei'ans gods of Zelazny's ISLE OF THE DEAD, the elitist personae leap from body to body, locked in undying combat against one another. After all, when you are assigned to living forever you might as well indulge your ambitions of becoming #1. The specifics could have been lifted from Dreiser: the Kauffmans, the most aristocratic snobs in town, are challenged to their position of prestige by that smart-alecky John Roditis fella (from the other side of the tracks, yet!). Tradition vs. Democracy: and although Silverberg's sympathies should rightly lie with the latter (I assume that Bob does not steal more than \$35,000 a year?), he instead detaches himself with an expression of amusement flitting about his lips and maneuvers his mandarin chesspieces to a fisty stalemate.

Not a bad vehicle for a time-killer, all in all. But Silverberg upstages the conventions for this format's usual result of plotclot, ornamental scabs free of



FEATHERS

charge: and he does so in a) the offbeat (well, more articulate than usual, anyway) extrapolations mentioned above and b) the multi-character viewpoint. Now multi-character viewpoint writing is supposed to be impossible, particularly in sf swordplay. Not only do you have to blueprint five or six plausible characters and relate them to each other (that alone consumes more time than necessary to knock off a coupla Mack Reynolds blockbusters), but you have to puzzle out some way to subordinate all that surplus characterization to the natural action emphasis of your story. Small wonder that the normal advice to attempters is -- "Rotsa ruck, amateur".

Somehow, it all comes off for Silverberg. Nor is this the first time. In *How It Was When The Past Went Away*, he applied this same device with moderate success although in a more character-oriented story. I think he does even better in *TO LIVE AGAIN*--perhaps because the triumph over his more hostile material is more impressive, perhaps because it is a lot less similar to Hersey's *Hiroshima*. But Hersey is still the aptest analogy to explain Silverberg's triumph in *TLA*--the character is defined through his actions, and defined with a lean, fast style:

"Charles Noyes awoke slowly, reluctantly, fighting the return to the waking world ... Morning was here. Time to rise, time to toil. He fought it." (Page 31)

Not the deathless prose of *Nightwings*, certainly. But you get Silverberg's point with a reasonable minimum of effort and are quite content to read on. Mediocrity can be competent, if nothing else.

But the real clincher of Silverberg's characterization is the way he couples each character with a fitting and memorable senic background. Meet Risa Kauffman, impetuous tomboy of the ol' tycoon himself:

"A thousand feet below, traffic madly swirled and bustled. But here on the ninety-fifth floor everything was serene. The April air was cool, pure, fresh. The slanting sunlight of midmorning glanced across her body. She stretched, extended her arms, sucked breath deep. The view down to the street did not dizzy her even when she leaned far out. She wondered how some passerby would react if he stared up and saw the face and bare breasts of Risa Kauffman hovering over the edge of a terrace. But no one ever did look up, and anyway they couldn't see anything from down there. Nor was there any other building in the area tall enough so that she was visible from it. She could stand out here nude as much as she liked, in perfect privacy. She half hoped someone would see her, though. A passing copter pilot, cruising low, doing a loop-the-loop as he spied the slinky naked girl on the balcony..."

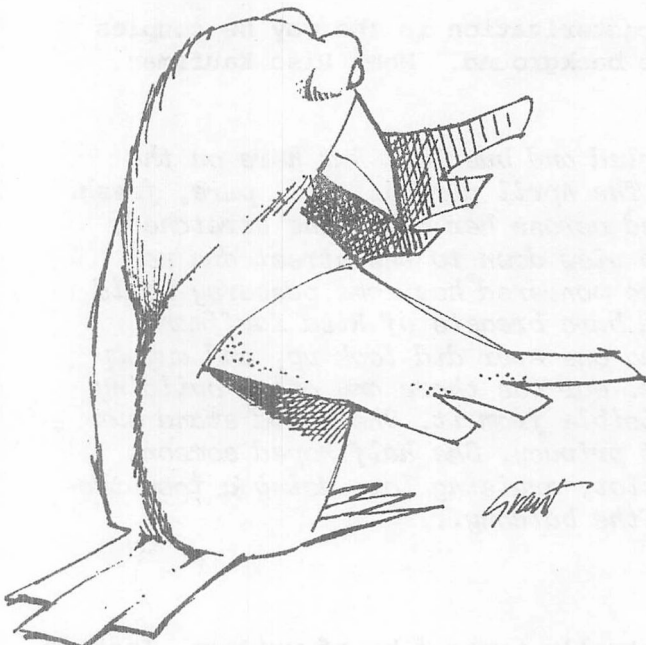
That is artistry.

This strange and fascinating device is virtually ignored by sf writers. Instead

they drape behind their characters drab and faded drops borrowed so mechanically from the traditionalia of sf that they instill stasis in their stories: what could be Experience is cancelled into ritual, and one reads their work with the sensation of being embedded in cliches. Furthermore this unfeeling consideration results in a chasm between characters and background: they are seemingly unrelated elements that just happen to be sharing the same story. And there you have a glimpse at what is wrong with sf: too many writers level off at minimal competence rather than grasping for artistry--too many robots collecting Conde-Nast checks with no anxiety over poetry, passion, or the Experience that spawns the souls of all of us. Let us name them and shame them: Jack Wodhams, WD MacFarlane, Mack Reynolds, Larry Eisenberg, Christopher Anvil, far too many more.

And now if we're through besmirching them, I should point out that Silverberg toed exactly the same line in the fifties, when there were a dozen *Analogs*. As we all know, his was a plot to Beat The Market. So Eisenberg et al may even be struggling to reach the same shore--I don't know. But I sure wish they'd send an mss in a bottle.

But if they do, it's debatable whether they will weave stories with the same cunning intricacy as Bob. Silverberg may not have done much else in his hack decade, but he really sweated out the plots: NEEDLE IN A TIMESTACK and DIMENSION THIRTEEN contain some prime examples of the pumping Silverberg, streaming out them eventful surprises and twists fast as they gather at the forefront of his mind. With the new, introspective Silverberg of the sixties came a similiar reversal of plot clogs: now all of that elaborate machinery is in characterization, where Silverberg connects every character to every other with such a dizzying series of straight lines, ellipsoids, ecliptical curves, zig zags and hyperbolas that the finished result looks like one of those optical illusions IBM is forever running on their TV commercials. Silverberg seems to be one of the few sf writers who recognizes that human relations is based on an infinity series: that is, my behavior affects yours, your subsequently revised behavior affects mine, I then readjust mine and... ad etc. Character relations cannot be extracted, cut down to size and fossilized. One must either present them in their entirety (like writing out every single word of the Encyclopedia BRITTANNICA!) or fake a reasonable facsimile thereof. Since TO LIVE AGAIN is primarily an action novel, alternative (a) is stricken out. But Silverberg puts (b) to complex use.



Consider a mere sampling of the character-relating playoffs that Silverberg sets: John Roditis, who pursues life with a Namathian lust, is contrasted against Charles Noyes who has a not-so-secret deathwish; Voluptuous, sensual Elena Volterra is compared with slim, businesslike Risa Kauffman; Masochistic Mark Kauffman, the embodiment of 'old money' prestige, vs. John Roditis from the Horatio Alger corner...

Then the fun really begins. You see, Elena is attracted to Roditis who is despised by Mark Kauffman who loves Elena who hates Risa who incestuously adores Mark who is contemptuous of Noyes who loves Elena who...

Well, nobody subplots like Silverberg. And the whole affair would come off like the epic soap opera if it weren't for a couple of factors: one, all characters and all motives revolve about the great source of power Paul Kauffman, late half-lamented tycoon whose brilliant persona everybody is faunching after. That provides a home plate for those of us who persist in getting lost. Two, Silverberg is not switching emotions on us just to get through Tuesday's show: every maneuver, every additional layer of entangled emotions has already been planned and fitted to a comprehensive Master Plan. Silverberg has reasons, other than the usual green ones. In that context, Silverberg's emotional regatta moves instead of drags: takes meaningful turns rather than wandering haplessly through the woods somewhere. Moreover, Silverberg applies that character-relations principle to motives and plot: every change in attitude results in a change in events which results in another change of attitude which results in another... Er, Silverberg does finally call a halt to matters, obviously, but they could have just as easily gone on.. under the guise of a sequel.

"Soap opera is half soap and half dirt" (Leon Taylor). And that is Silverberg you see nodding his head off.

Oh yes. Protestations to the contrary, Silverberg did not get Dick out of his system with TIME HOPPERS. If anything, it seems to have entrenched the nodding guru in him even deeper, as witness TO LIVE AGAIN. Silverberg doesn't openly assault the fabric of reality like Dick, but he does throw an occasional pencil at it. Let's see.

Let's get the obvious connections out of the way first. UBIK's half-life is analogous to persona; Gene Runciter is TO LIVE AGAIN's Paul Kauffman. From there the beaten path starts flogging the path walkers. UBIK is about a man in half-life; TLA, about a number of live men fighting half-life (or persona). In fact, Joe Chip of UBIK seems rather like the afterimage of Charles Noyes; Noyes dies in the end, you know. And where TLA is a neatly tied, pink-bow-up package mystery, UBIK runs in all different directions as a mass of indistinguishable pseudopods. But there are definite tenuous connections. I haven't read UBIK for a while, but there seems to be a worthy article for someone on the associations between these two novels.

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But if all of TLA were merely fancy dancing, it would just be another diverting time-slayer. What sets it apart is what sets science fiction apart from every other literature: the open end of a strong, healthy extrapolation.

As I said in the beginning, the technological emergence of personae represent the destruction of human foundation--religion. No longer is there any need to try to worry about a saving tidbit out of the question (no, the answer) of death: no more frantic hours spent in devising a foolproof battleplan in How To Beat The Nothingness. Man and life and eternity are now one: the urgent consciousness of man's limits is dead. Subsequently man must find a new rationale for living.

Well, that one isn't hard to answer. Even today we can see that as technology progresses (demolishing death and its watered manifestations in poverty, sickness, hunger), materialism marches on. Before personae life was evaluated in terms of quality: since a death-bound man could not possibly sample all of the world's experiences, and to scurry about in search of as many as possible would be losing Religion in the shuffle, generally he settled down into a precomputed pattern, content to milk it for what he could. But this new man, liberated from death, wants no more of that: since he has all of time, he is after quantity, relishing every available experience and devising a few originals of his own. And that gives rise to the thesis of selfishness:

for the death-bound man who must operate in a limited range of sensual experiences will eventually turn to the spiritual experiences (which, after all, is the meaning of quality; quality = depth, and probing the hidden levels of experience is certainly depth) ... altruism and Co. But as long as the liberated man can find sensual experience, he'll stay there--and mathematics tell us that the combinations of sensual experiences could be limitless. Meaning that the persona-man will be in there pitching for himself, and meaning that the code of altruism will most likely die out.

SO: in Silverberg's world of personae, the main pursuit of man is sensual delectables, and that pursuit is selfish. But there now enters a new twist here: among the worldly goals is the amassing of money. So whoever develops the persona technique will be doing it for money, and for a lot of it.

And the only people with a lot of money are rich people.

In passing, I would like to mention that, since wealth eradicates those milder forms of death that I listed (poverty, sickness, hunger), the wealthy will already be advanced along the road of sensual materialism. But the crux of immortality for the rich exclusively is critical: namely, the rich are in a minority while the majority will surely want a hunk of that eternity pie also. What to do?

Spinrad's infamous BUG JACK BARRON explores this same problem, and he correctly answers that the rich's only solution would be to take over the apparatus of the government, squelch the poor's rights until they are beyond the ability of overthrow, and use the ultimate bribe of immortality as a lever to accomplish these ends.

Hence TLA's world is essentially a pleasure palace for the immortal rich: the poor, lacking eternity, power, and the ingenuity that could possibly bring them the first two, are an extraneous, diminishing breed. The rich couch their demise with elaborate amusement parks and implied hero-worship mechanisms, but their way has no return. By being born in a family with a few less zeroes on the end of the annual account, the poor are sentenced to extinction.

So government is of the rich, by the rich, for the rich (not so alien a concept, eh what?). But there is, hang on to your hats now, another level above the rich: the rich with multiple personae. Simple arithmetic here: an ordinary man is inferior to a rich man with a persona because the latter represents two sets of experiences and intellects. Therefore, any addition beyond that keeps going higher, although there is a limit: too many personae can disrupt the control of the body's original intellect. Silverberg includes one side story of a man bedeviled by 7 personae, and a helluva tic problem. But from the original class of the rich must emerge the new rulers of rich-with-multiple-personae; these shall be led by those with the strongest wills hence able to govern the most personae. At the stage of TLA, this new class is just becoming aware of itself but hasn't done anything to stir up hurricanes--yet.

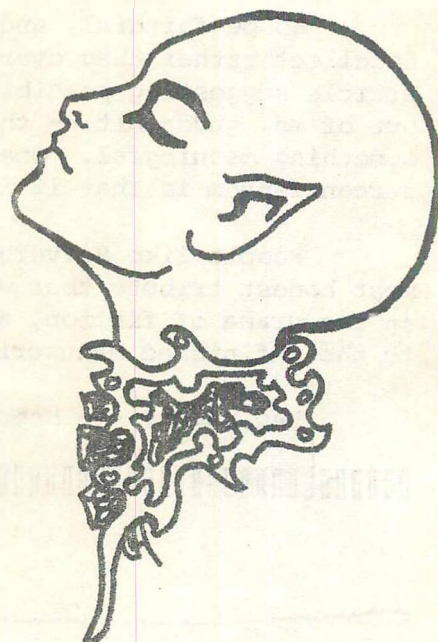
That still isn't the end. As each richman-with-a-multiple-personae dies, he will of course become a personae himself. But pity his new host!--he must cope with controlling this new, supercharged persona. Only his chances aren't very good...if a persona does upstage a host, the persona destroys the host totally (usually) and takes possession of the body as a *dybbuk*. Obviously, these potential dybbuks pose a lethal threat, and the only way they can be controlled is to destroy any multiple person with, say, over 10 personalities. So the rich won't be immortal after all.*

* However, there is a way out. Any technology capable of developing personae is surely capable of manufacturing "blank bodies". That way each persona could have

But they sure as hell live long enough.

And that longevity promises a mightily complicated social life. This is where Silverberg's head is really at: he is most content fiddling with love-hate relations gone awry, the sex that sires guilt and the guilt that destroys man. In his fiction, technology seems to do little but emphasize the wrongness, the gnarled snarls of communication, and the barbed wire that technosociety cum repression encircles man's range with. In *THE WORLD INSIDE*, it was nature that was inaccessible; in *MASKS OF TIME*, innocence; *ISHMAEL IN LOVE*, untrammelled love. Hence, *TLA*, which opens up endless pastures (though at the price of the poor), is somewhat of a departure for the new Silverberg: a study in freedom, rather than repression. As I must incessantly repeat, this novel will satisfy no one if they approach it with the assumption that this "freedom study" takes priority over the thriller story; but it's a fascinating new attitude for Silverberg, I think, and one that bears encouragement in developing.

But one element is reminiscent of the same old new Silverberg: manipulation of power on a stinging, personal level. I don't know...does Silverberg want to write about people or puppets? There is always the sense of the larger mass in his work, Fate looming large and directing shadows in a silent, ritualistic pavane. Not that the shadows don't struggle! But Silverberg seems to be moving in the direction of genuine tragedy: Greek style, where neither of the opposing humans can help the impetus that propels them. It is prepunched. Silverberg's closest effort to this ideal was *Nightwings*, and evidently Bob associates sincere tragedy only with baroque writing. So it may be a while before we see another Silverberg novel that openly dares this again, but it is still a textural if misty influence on the backstage of *TLA*, and I wanted to be sure that you were aware of it. Beware, you.



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TLA does have faults. One is the flacid style which I've already mentioned--flacid because, although it is concerned with tight action, is imprecise and stale. There must be a more challenging, sparkling way of unobtrusive writing rather than making one guiltily aware that he is reading *A Paperback*. Zelazny seems to have uncovered part of the key with his jargony, off-color verbs and snappy similes. What is needed now is something a little less highschoolish than the *Z* usual...something on the order of *LORD OF LIGHT*, perhaps, but a bit lighter.

Another is a couple of elements that Silverberg just doesn't tie in. Roditis' naivete, of which we are made Significantly Aware in the early chapters, is a potential powerhouse for later motivated actions. After mentioning it obviously, Silverberg drops it. Another is the new religion that has flourished as a result of the personae (flourished among the minority of personae-possessors, that is--the remarks that I made about the general absence of religion still hold); for although it appears at several peak passages, it never fits snugly in with the plot. Is Silverberg out-

its own body, merely switching to another fresh one out of the oven when his old one winds down.

subtleling me? Very possible.

Nevertheless, TLA is a sprightly game of tag with some provocative trappings. My favorite projection is the evolutionary one of this personae bit. Is Silverberg aware that his development would lead to a communal conscious?

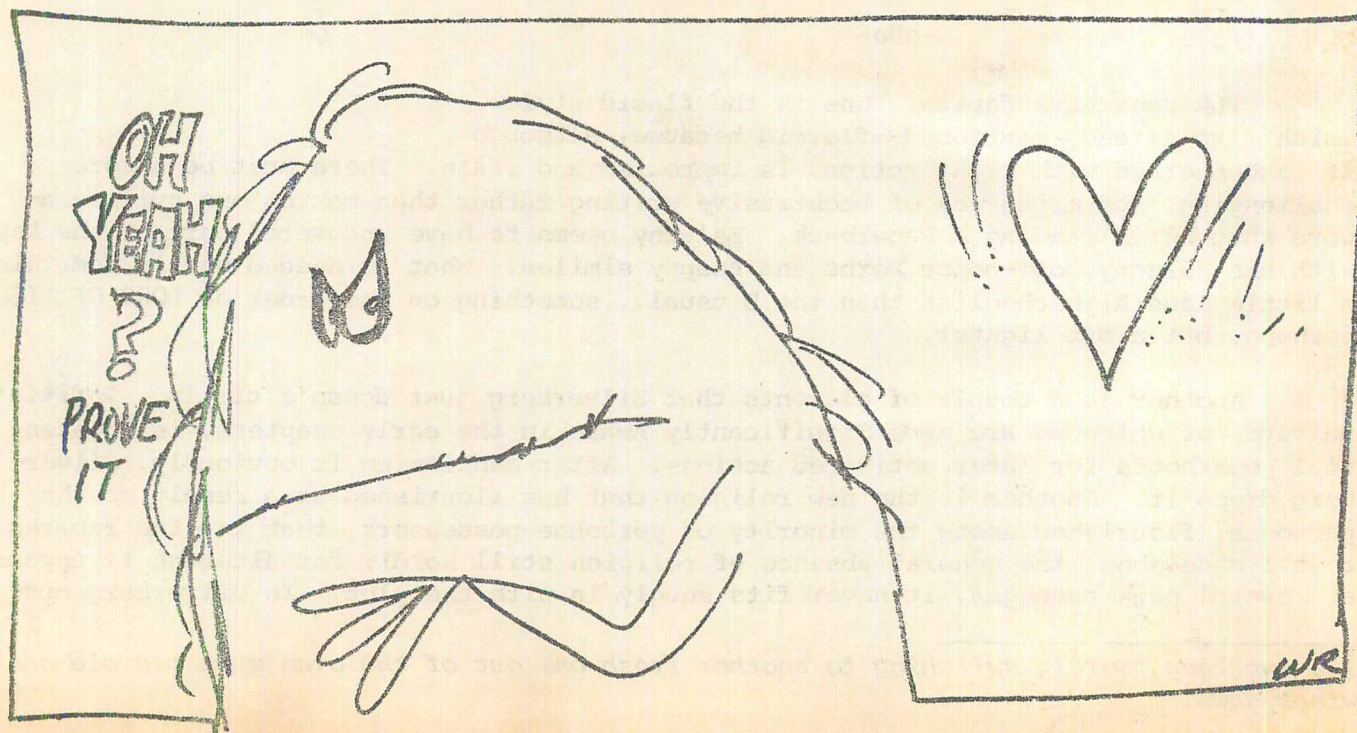
He should be. It would make a damn good novel.

We may have been obsessed -- too obsessed--with Delany and his ilk representing the poetic voice that will make us Respectable; Silverberg, closer to the imaginative heart of science fiction and a better logician with extrapolation, may be the best science fiction writer. Personally I would argue for Blish, but Silverberg does have the advantage of being prolific. One never seems to get over the impact of one novel when he slugs you with another.

So be faithful, and pay a little more attention to this man who tugs at your intellect rather than overwhelming your senses. I've squandered quite a bit of this article suggesting possible areas in Silverberg for exploration, so don't make a fool out of me, guddammit -- throw away that 145th rave of LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS and write something meaningful. One of *SF Commentary's* most stinging remarks about American sercon fandom is that it is all reviewers and no critics. Dead true.

People like Silverberg, I think, deserve better than just silver blurbs. The most honest tribute that we can offer is to recognize the reader-writer partnership in the drama of fiction, and to develop our end by lending our personalized experience to the unfinished manuscript of the published edition.

Who knows? --- Mebbe if you're good, the Pope'll grant you clememcy.





OUTWORLDS' INWORDS

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Ow 3.4 slipped in here yesterday before I woke up and was a pleasant surprise. After the big issues and pro writers in 3.2 and 3.3, 3.4 is rather relaxing. Four fans trying to be entertaining. And ably assisted by your layout. I think you've hit a fine median between 3.2's unjustified margins and 3.3's totally justified margins. The use of double columns and rag-tag margins for the nattering articles and letter column picks up the casual feeling of the prose. On the other hand, the straight margins for my review are, I suppose, appropriate to its more serious character. And the equally straight edges of *The Platypus Mythos* display a nice irony. The use of different colored paper also makes reading 3.4 easier by organizing the fanzine. What I mean to say is that Ow 3.4 is a package that does justice to all its prose & art.

As far as art goes, Rotsler's *Nightworld* is by far the best. It has a lyricism and a movement that are wonder-

ful. Susan is a kind of near-sane Ullyot. Rosemary is the center of the whirlwind she describes. Susan is pulled into hers. She tries to react rationally in a basically irrational world.

Jodie Offutt's piece is a frank record of one reader. Her reactions are one thing, but her statement that Macaulay's *Horatius* is "for war-loving men" is rather silly. It is a loving tribute to unbroken lines of tradition. Military obedience is an expression of a structured, stable society. The Victorians felt the same lack as we do today: heros and myths have left us. Where our two world wars have loaded us with a guilty knowledge of our own worst impulses, the Victorians saw the past shattered beyond recognition by the French Revolution. They were trying to pick up the pieces, trying to salvage what they could from a world shut off, trying to imagine the Parthenon new and unbroken. Oh, Macaulay's poetry is but an adjunct, a shadow of his prose, but it has the same sources. "In the brave days of old" runs the refrain of *Horatius*. In the days that

are no more: Macaulay leaves this unspoken.

Alpajpuri Box 69 Ocean Park WA 98640 It's good to get an *Out-worlds*, good to see you two are together again. Frankly I didn't find this issue of *Ow* as stimulating as most previous ones; it seems to have been neatly "thrown together" with less time than usual spent on devising innovative designs.

Of the material I most enjoyed Susan Glicksohn's amusing and well-written essay and (to my surprise) Barry Gillam's theatre review. I don't usually read things like this. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is one of my favorite Shakespearean plays, possibly because I'm so overwhelmed everytime I watch the movie version, by its humor and ethereality both. I'm sure it would be a jolt to see it performed on a bare white stage with production machinations deliberately exposed.

Jodie Offutt... Strange to see someone defending the Flag in this day and age. Not because it isn't in to be patriotic (though this seems to be the case), but because I rarely run into people who seek a sense of identity through nationalism by transforming their patriotism to the physical manifestation of a symbol of the U.S.A. Flag-burning is a crime, absurdly enough. A flag is a sheet of white cloth dyed red and blue patterns --in and of itself it has nothing to do with a nation, just as I feel a nation has very little to do with a chunk of land, a country.

As a referend for patriotic feelings a flag is peachy-keen, there's nothing wrong with that--I just think that the concept of patriotism itself is a bit childish. As long as we continue to draw lines between ourselves and other human beings on the basis of birthplace, culture, language or appearance, the world will never know peace. Peace on Earth begins in the home, in the heart. From what little I know of you, Jodie, I like you, you're Alive and a Good Person, but I think a better Way than nationalism is worldism...or solar systemism...or galaxism...or universalism.

Don't you agree?

PS: You think I understand *Kozmik Komix*? Or that if I did, I'd tell you?

Greg N. Burton Box 69 Ocean Park WA 98640 Susan's article is lovely. It's kind of funny that when there was the question of how fannish NERG would be, Susan was all for remaining somewhat serious, and here she is writing Fannishly for the Competition.

Jodie Offutt, too, has a nice article. She expresses her reactions to things very well, sort of softspoken, and I really enjoy her work.

How fine to have an article on the Brook's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. I was impressed with Barry Gillam's reportage, and would be interested in seeing Jerry Lapidus' reaction to the article and to the play, if he has seen it.

Visually, something doesn't click for me in this issue. I guess I expect more from you than from other editors, and this doesn't seem to be up to your best. Partly it's the showthrough. And also I find I must agree with Paj about the effect of white paper (in the letter-column)--it's kind of off-putting. I don't know, can't figure it out...

I assume that the "Hale fellow" mentioned in John Leavitt's letter is Robert Beverly Hale, who, my wife tells me, is a pretty good anatomy teacher and a weird old man. She wouldn't wanted to have learned just from him, but she thinks she got something from his classes.

And again, why are so many people afraid of the academics? Are they afraid that they won't be able to rebut properly, or that the mundanes shouldn't comment on sf, or what? The law of averages suggests we'll get some good out of it, and we can ignore the rest, yes?

The three farmers mentioned in Leavitt's letter (he writes letters that make one want to respond) might think alike, but I somehow doubt it--Egyptian, English and Chinese are quite different, and I don't thin we can sepearate conscious thought from language. A large portion of thought is sub-vocalized, and that is of necessity in language, and I think (hell, I know) that the speech we use conditions our reactions to the environment. Besides

religion and politics, he says. Aside from the interaction of man and the Unknown and man and his fellow man, in other words. Quite a hedge.

Last year David Hulvey was distributing the sercon fans, this year the sercon Fannish fans. What will the future bring?

Harry makes a point about authors and writer and job opportunities, but I think it works the other way. After all, most high schools have more English teachers than art teachers, and it makes as much sense for a writer to teach writing as for a painter to teach painting. In either case, you can't do it without a degree and education credits, and there are lots more teachers than jobs right now. And another fear of Academia, though Harry's is a lot more reasonable to me than most. If there is something worthwhile in sf, people will continue to enjoy it, and if you'll notice, horns and saxes are staging a big comeback in popular music. The shift away from jazz has more to do with the increasing cerebration involved than with the scholastic environment (though the two may be related) -- it didn't have a beat anymore, you couldn't dance to it. Again, Chuck Berry used to go on tour with Ella Fitzgerald.

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Ed Cagle: I agree that most contemporary art is bad from a viewpoint of "Art". However, your statement of what is contemporary

is majority preferred--this is in error. In any artistic field what the public sees is what a very small group of people decide they will see.

In publishing, it's Art Directors (with maybe .05 author who has enough swing to get an artist he wants used--in SF, i.e., Harlan Ellison); in Art Galleries, it's *The Beautiful People* and the artists in residence. And in the U.S., most illustration is governed by the commanders of the Establishment: *Society of Illustrators*, but never never is what you see what the undefinable majority wants / it all changes with who is in

power.

Steve Fabian is an individualist, yes, and more power to him, but anyone who wants to be a working artist can't, isn't allowed--the ideal artist is one who can paint like the popular so and so--cheaper.

Harry Warner has made (to me) mistaken observations of *Art Teaching*. Harry, it bothers me that you are promoting teaching as a pabulum for artists. Evidently you've never met any art teachers under the age of 30; I know many kids who were and are art teachers and universally they have said it's the most dead end experience available and kills any creative impulses one has... Hells Bells, I'm 99% qualified for teaching (all I need is a psychology course) and I can assure you after all I've heard I have no desire to get that teaching certificate --

Anyway the nation is gutted with teachers now and jobs are scarce--a friend of mine told me they had a single position for an Art teacher in her school and they had 700 applications. State schools turn out Art teachers as fast as liberal arts English majors--and no talent is needed either way...

Patronage and an apprentice system are needed...

[] There are some letters I'd be just as happy not having to publish... []

Ted Pauls ...I'm afraid I haven't written any new book reviews for a little over a year--the well has simply run dry. It isn't that I'm unwilling to keep the column going, you understand. Just unable.

Of all the book reviews that I wrote, I was proudest of some of those that went into *Est Modus in Rebus*, and the saddest thing about the end of my "reviewing period" is that I must drop that column...

[] ...no sadder than we are, Ted. The column will be missed... ## I am not looking for a replacement right now, and while I won't rule out the possibility of a review column again some time in the life of Ow. ## That's it for this time; the in-words were disappointing few this time... We will see what 3.5 brings forth... []



BILL BOWERS

INCHOATE

...this is being produced as I struggle out from under my second bout with bronchitis within the last month-and-a-half. Never having been the healthiest of individuals anyway, such things tend to wipe me out. ...which is why you've got this now...rather than a month ago when it was 90% done. So goes the 'schedule'!

I am enclosing \$2.00 for a subscription to *Outworlds*. I suppose that means I'll get *Outworlds* 3.5, IV-ONE, IV-ONE AND A HALF, and EPSILON/ALPHA... PHYRNE BACON

Well, Phyrne, would you believe...

Yes, fans of the status quo, ye olde dependable Ow is about to undergo another metamorphosis. January will mark the start of the fourth year since the revival of Ow...so it seems an appropriate time to initiate the 4th Series. I'm not about to be pinned down to specifics here, and you'll find no 'Previews' in the form of 'Things to Come'. But perhaps a word or two on where I'm at these days is not out of order...

The decision(s) was/were made before the latest *Energumen* arrived, but Mike's editorial/farewell address struck a responsive chord, and while I'm just as unhappy as Joan is to see NERG go, I think I can understand Mike's line of reasoning a bit more sympathetically than she (or, perhaps, even Susan) can. It's not entirely the fact that, with the impending departure of NERG--and, if to a lesser degree, the just-announced 'official' folding of *The Essence*--the fact that I'm beginning to feel a bit lonely in "my area" of the fanzine field (the definition of where that is, is best left to others), that prompts this piece. Nor am I about to write a paean to the NERG file I have--it, after all, is not complete yet.

The Kid--much as I hate to admit it--does have it over me, in his feeling of accomplishment. Yes, I've accomplished the basic goals I set for myself after the demise of *Double:Bill* -- and the 'run' of Ow that I keep in a loose-leaf binder is, I think, an impressive stack of paper. But, somewhere along the line, I've developed a brand-new set of goals...goals that are more flexible than fixed in concrete form on a flow-chart that defines each step along the way. And where Mike finds that he can not attach the title he has to a 'different fanzine' -- and I had a similiar feeling

when I went into this 3rd Series -- at this stage of the game, I have the feeling that I can go in most any direction I wish to with *Outworlds* and still have the basic core of my readers and contributors follow me, without having them feel that I'm leaving them just to follow a tangent. Believe me, there is a sense of progression to my madness, and that the changes in direction I abruptly make are *not* simply for the purpose of change for change's sake.

No, you'll probably never find Ow as "comfortable" as NERG, or some other fanzines. This situation is neither "Good", nor is it "Bad". But I've somehow managed to develop a basic freedom where I can publish most anything that interests me, in most any format I care to play around with...I can do this without worrying about the proverbial question of: "Does it fit?" And this basic freedom is rather important to me; it's important enough to write off such things as continuity between issues, or the feeling of a 'down home' atmosphere...although these are qualities that are by no means to be disparaged. I don't think you have both; someone will prove me wrong...

All this heavy stuff is by way of saying that Ow is going back more toward its original posture as an elaborate & semi-pretentious collection of things Bowers can con out of the talented people he knows in and around fandom. There will be no fixed schedule (though at least 4 issues a year will make it out) and no steady size/number of pages -- one issue may be 24 pages, the next 50...

If you started at the beginning, you will have noticed that the price of this thing has jumped to a new, ridiculous high. This* (unwanted) step has been taken for one reason, and *only* one reason (despite what some may think, subs rarely cover even the postage on an issue). That reason: circulation control. In order to do some of the things I want to do, in order to prevent becoming bogged down in the mechanics of fanzine production, given the antique equipment we have (the mimeo is well over 20 years old, and erratic in performance), I must out of necessity keep the circulation within definite limits--until we either go all offset, or get a new mimeo. Neither option is very likely, very soon.

The mailing list grows and changes; but basically, it grows. I, honestly, would like everyone who has the slightest interest in what I do, to be able to get Ow with a minimum of trouble/expense. But if I did so, everything would get so bulky that those who are willing to do a bit extra in terms of response/cost would be the losers when I folded. True, like the Glicksohns, by going this route, I negate any possibility of getting a Hugo (no matter how "good" Ow is/becomes), but such things are unimportant in contrast to the continued existence of the zine. To me.

A rather extensive pruning has been conducted on the mailing list this time. It hurt. But it had to be done. The 'trades' were the hardest hit: what I did was sit down and ask myself as honestly as I could: "Do I really look forward to the next issue of _____?" If the answer was "No", well, check your label. Some are going to be unhappy or mad, I imagine--but I had no choice. It's that simple.

In between developing/sweating out this whole ball of wax, something else was born. *INworlds*. O.k., so it's not a particularly brilliant title, but it indicates what it's all about. I do (surprise) have the urge to do something more relaxed than Ow -- something lighter & simpler. What *INworlds* will be is 1) small (6 to 8 pages), 2) fast (mailed first class) and 3) frequent (probably monthly). It'll be mainly yhos, things I want to get out without waiting on Ow. In large degree it will be concerned with fanzines...reviews (I'll at least list everything I get) and thoughts/raps on them--by me & by you. ...and not at all pretentious. First issue out early in January (as will be the next Ow); details on the contents page, if you're interested. BILL

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OUTWORLDS	3.1	:	January, 1972	----	24pp.	mimeo	-----	1	thru	24
OUTWORLDS	3.2	:	-----	----	24pp.	mimeo/offset	covers --	25	thru	48
OUTWORLDS	3.3	:	-----	----	24pp.	mimeo/offset	covers+ -	49	thru	72
OUTWORLDS	3.4	:	August, 1972	----	28pp.	mimeo	-----	73	thru	100
OUTWORLDS	3.5	:	November, 1972	----	40pp.	mimeo/offset	covers+	101	thru	140

*****COLUMNS*****

POUL ANDERSON : *Beer Mutterings* ---- 63
PIERS ANTHONY : *Off the Deep End* 28; 113
GREG BENFORD : *Thoughts While Typing* 57
BILL BOWERS : *Inchoate* -- 1; 43; 74; 136
JOHN BRUNNER : *Noise Level* #6/21; #7/59
STEPHEN E. FABIAN : *Papervision* -- #3/61
ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES : *Understandings*
----- 4; 69; 106
TED PAULS : *Est Modus In Rebus*
10 ---- AGENT OF CHAOS [Spinrad];
THE DAY AFTER DOOMSDAY [Vale];
CHRONOCULES [Compton]
37 THE HOUSE IN NOVEMBER [Laumer]
A TIME OF CHANGES [Silverberg]

* ...with: ROBERT E. MARGROFF;
FRANCIS T. HALL; ROBERTO FUENTES

*****PROSE & OTHER WORDS*****

BARRY GILLAM : A Spirit of No Common Rate -----	80
MICHAEL GLICKSOHN : Upsetting the Parlance of Bowers -----	16
SUSAN GLICKSOHN : The Lion and The Unicorn -----	77
JODIE OFFUTT : "Well! I'll Be a Monkey's Uncle!" -----	19
(Three Readings) -----	85
JOHN & SANDRA MIESEL : The Platypus Mythos II: Platycraticus -----	89
T. L. SHERRED : Not Bach -----	8
RICK STOOKER : Mighty Tiny -----	110
LEON TAYLOR : The Silverbob Changes Feathers -----	126

*****ART 'FEATURES'*****

ALPAJPURI : Kozmik Komik #2 ----- 56
GRANT CANFIELD : "Does This Mean You
Love Me?"-----
25fp; 27; 32; 36fp; 43; 47fp; 48fp
STEPHEN E. FABIAN : The Crystallized Man
(A Folio Tribute: Bester) ---- 51
MIKE GILBERT : A Man Called Nixon -- 102
DAN STEFFAN : The Moon Walk ----- 139

*****ARTworlds*****

GRANT CANFIELD : 21; 74; 119; 128; 133;
136
DEREK CARTER : 7
JIM CAWTHORN : 14
GREGG DAVIDSON : 107
STEPHEN E. FABIAN : 49; 50; 71; 72
CONNIE FADDIS : 22; 101fp; 140fp
FREFF : 73
DANY FROLICH : 4; 11
MIKE GILBERT : 24; 59; 68; 77
C. LEE HEALY : 131
JONH INGHAM : 75; 123; 127
TIM KIRK : 17; 78
JIM McLEOD : 1; 63; 64; 67; 80; 85; 91;
125
SANDRA MIESEL : 89; 94; 95; 97; 98; 99
WILLIAM ROTSLER : 57; 100fp; 109; 110;
112; 113; 132
JAMES SHULL : 3; 116

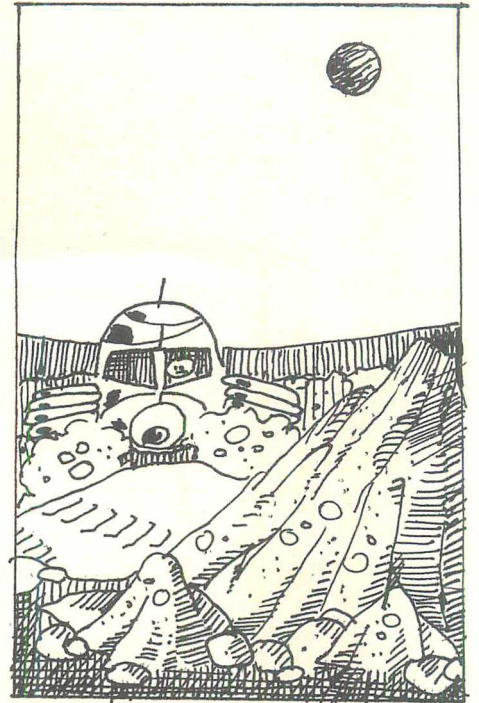
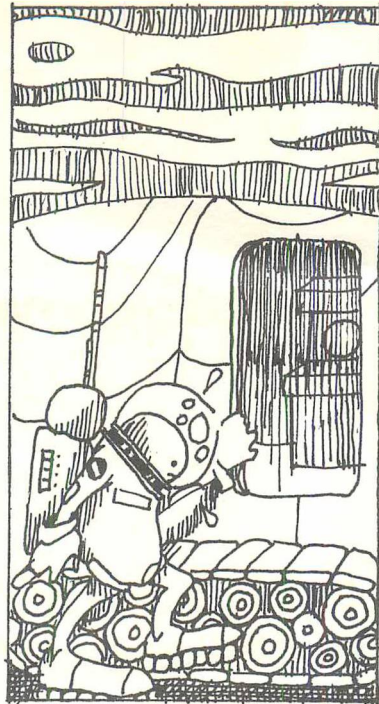
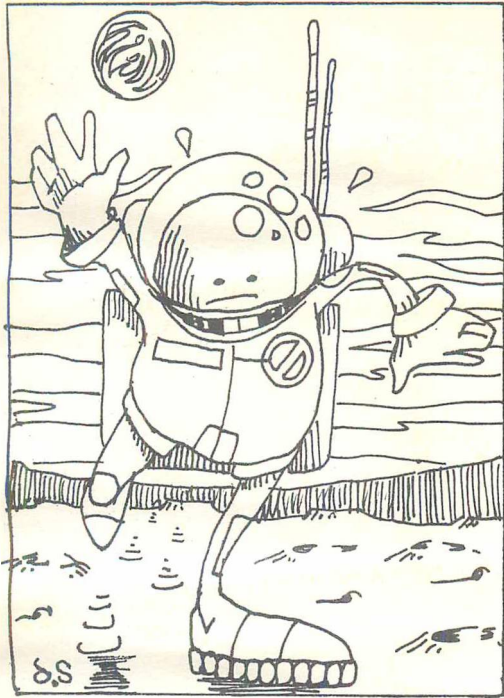
*****LETTERS*****

ALPAJPURI : 92; 134
ROGER BRYANT : 94
GREG N. BURTON : 134
ED CAGLE : 95
TERRY CARR : 46
ELI COHEN : 96
GEORGE FLYNN : 44
RICHARD GEIS : 45
MIKE GILBERT : 135
BARRY GILLAM : 133
MIKE GLICKSOHN : 46; 94
DAVE HULVEY : 96
RICHARD LABONTE : 92
JOHN LEAVITT : 45; 93
MIKE LEWIS : 46
TED PAULS : 135
DARRELL SCHWEITZER : 45; 91
NICK SHEARS : 92
ROGER WADDINGTON : 99
HARRY WARNER, JR. : 44; 98

*****POEM*****

BILL WOLFENBARGER : Citadel ----- 109

[illegible]



THE MOON WALK

BY
dan
STEFFAN
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