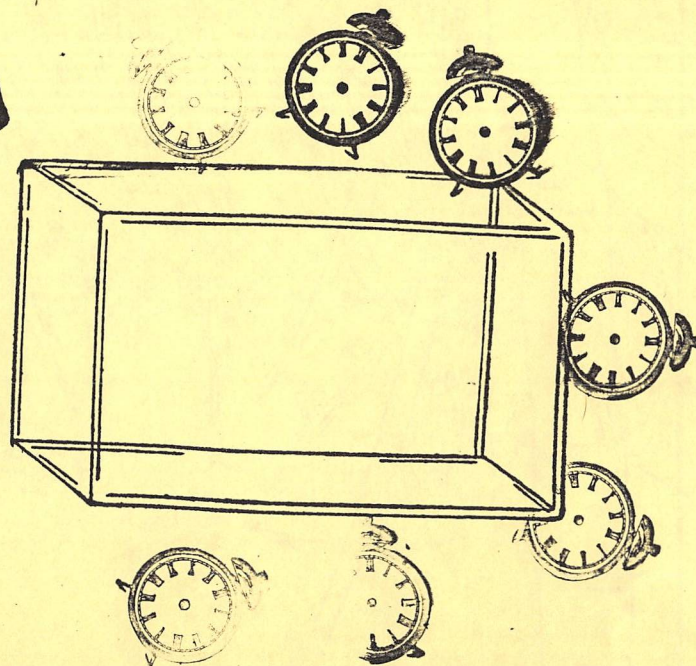
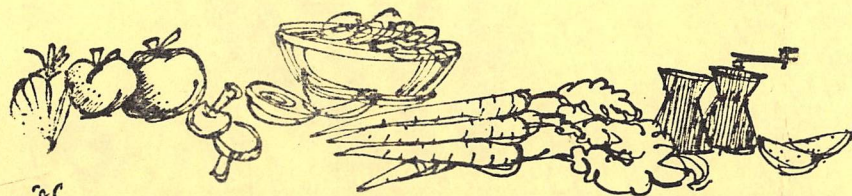
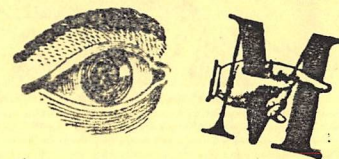
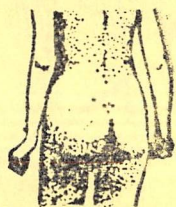
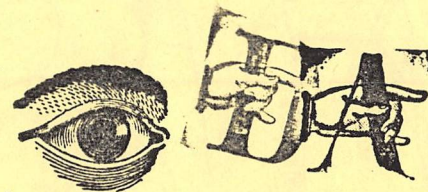
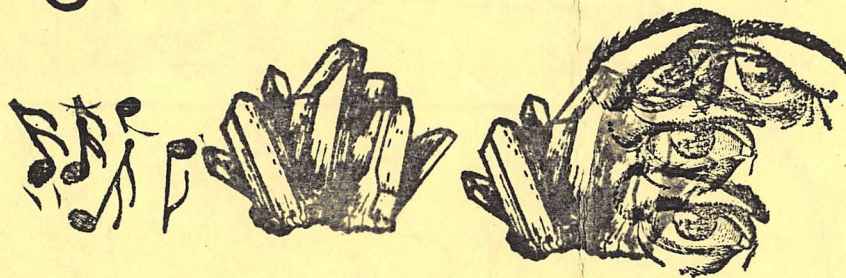
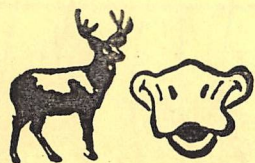




REVENGE  
REBUS  
ENCLOSED

JEANNE BOWMAN  
1260 HILL ROAD  
GLEN ELLEN  
CA 95442

JUNE 29  
SEE WHAT HAPPENS  
WHEN I WAIT A  
DAY I LET MY SUBCONSCIOUS  
TO WORK? IT HELPED THAT  
DONNA SET UP HER RUBBER STAMPS—  
GOOD LUCK



DEAR BILL —  
REVENGE, ALRIGHT, TORTURE, NO. HERE'S  
A TRANSLATION OF THE REBUS (I KNOW  
YOU DON'T NEED IT, OF COURSE... BUT  
WHEN YOU SEND IT ON TO YOUR XWORD  
GUY, YOU CAN FEEL SMUG)  
JULY 7, '81  
"DEAR BILL  
—NEXT TIME!  
Bill





After the transfer of material to Liverpool University was made two suitcases were found containing the massive correspondence between Stapledon and Miller. The letters very comprehensively fills in the nature of Stapledon's life during the war years and there are enlightening annotations by Crossley to a number of the letters. The book has a number of extremely relevant photographs and the final one showing a wedding portrait of the newly married couple and their parents and friends, brings a lump to the throat as one views the youthful faces of the letter-writing pair about to embark on "life's great adventure" and the realization that no one in that photograph is any longer alive.

I found it especially poignant because I had visited Agnes Stapledon at her home in suburban Liverpool and remember the bustling and vigorous old woman in her eighties who was still driving her own car and was ready to pick me up herself if I had no transportation. I spent the night as her guest and interviewed her about the life of her husband and herself. She was an incredibly warm and trusting person and it was a source of utter bafflement to me that many leading authors and scholars in England had never bothered to visit or interview her and it rested on me, an American, to travel 3,000 miles and obtain a "scoop" and provide the only such information that would ever exist to various aspects of her husband's career, personal life and writings. Further, three Americans had to travel overseas to organize his literary effects, compile his bibliography and arrange to publish his letters.

While the material in the volume is narrow in focus, it should prove of considerable interest to those who have been intrigued or influenced by Stapledon's work. It transforms the man that most know simply as a possessor of an extraordinary intellectual imagination into a warm human being.

It is fortuitous that within the same period Jeremy Tarcher happened to read several of Stapledon's books, went quietly mad about them and without bothering to do any market research felt compelled to reissue them completely reset in large readable type and with new introductions in a quality paperback format. The first two (and there seems little doubt in my mind that there will eventually be others) are the two titanic works of imagination on which his reputation rests, in the order in which Tarcher published them: STAR MAKER and LAST AND FIRST MEN. The STAR MAKER was characterized as the "50th Anniversary Edition" since it first appeared in 1937 and Brian Aldiss does a sound, sincere and appropriately enthusiastic introduction to it. Gregory Benford also does knowledgeable justice in his forward to LAST AND FIRST MEN but the afterward by Doris Lessing is especially germane since she reveals she was impacted by the book when a young girl living in Rhodesia and it helps to explain the scope of her five-volume set of intergalactic novels that she felt compelled to write in recent years. All three volumes help to sustain the reputation of Olaf Stapledon in a dignified and creditable manner.

Especially fascinating in TALKING ACROSS THE WORLD is Agnes' letter to her mother clarifying her inexplicable delay in marrying Olaf after sailing to England from Australia for that set purpose. While on the ship she came close to falling in love with a Captain Hutchinson who had boarded at Bombay. When the ship docked she told Olaf about it and didn't think it would be fair to marry him under the circumstances. With considerable maturity he suggested that she delay the marriage for awhile and get to know him better in other than correspondence. She came around after some weeks and they had a very fine marriage for some 34 years.

--- SAM MOSKOWITZ





# THIS BUG'S FOR YOU!

by

Jodie Offutt

Since I know that OUTWORLDS readers are totally absorbed in computers and every bit of information pertaining to them, and that we all hang on every line that Beloved Bill our Editor writes on the subject, I want to be the first to bring solid, factual information to you concerning the current viral epidemic. I'll include some rational advice on how to cope, should your computer catch this virus.

First, some background information. Evidence indicates that this computer virus is rampant in Israel, originating on a college campus and spreading so fast that desktop computers, slowing down, became lethargic, as if a hidden organism were sapping their strength. The virus, entering computers deep within the instructions of large programs, multiplies and invades other software that is used in the computer.

The virus, AIDS (Active Interface Disabling System) was introduced into the United States from Canada. Infected software was left on the computers in the offices of MacMag, a Canadian computer magazine. Whoever copied software from these machines got the virus. Apple's machines are infected, as well as those at Aldus, a Seattle software company.

My first advice -- and this is also the very first thing you'll hear should you call the AIDS Hot Line at the CDC (Center for Disabled Computers) in Atlanta (1-8-AID-BUGS): Don't Panic! You are in absolutely no personal danger of catching AIDS through ordinary, everyday contact with your machine. Go right ahead and use the keyboard as usual, even resting your fingers and palms on it when you pause to think while working. The disease cannot be passed by casual contact between your skin and your computer's keyboard. Nor is there any need to avert your eyes from the screen; nothing will jump out at you from it. Go ahead and handle your mouse, mousepad and joy stick as usual. They pose no threat to you. No present evidence suggests that this virus can be transmitted to humans. As a precautionary measure, however,

you may choose to wear surgical gloves and dark glasses while working that your computer. You will find the gloves at surgical supply houses; they will be available soon at your computer supply store.

Don't hesitate to turn your computer off and on. Contrary to what you may have heard from uninformed, ignorant hackers, it is impossible for you to catch this virus by turning on your computer. In other words, by pressing the toggle switch on your computer, you give it juice. There is no way that it can give you anything in return. This is the sort of irrational conclusion that is spread through user groups and bulletin board networks where idle speculation becomes hard fact as it passes from one irresponsible person to the next.

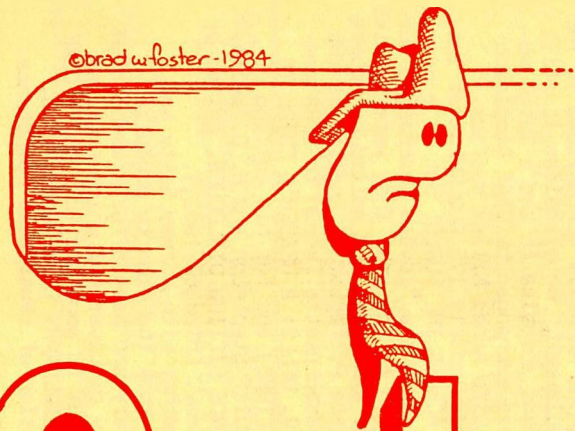
So far the virus has been confined to IBM and Macintosh computers, but it is only a matter of time, according to CDC official Ms Dos, until the main frame computers are infected and it becomes a global epidemic.

It is important to remember that your computer can pick up the AIDS virus in three ways: first, by sharing software with other computers; second, from interfacing with other computers; and third, by introducing infected freeware and shareware into your computer.

A few simple precautions are necessary to insure an AIDS-free computer. Software that has been used by a number of computers is very likely to be infected with the AIDS virus. This is particularly true in office situations and on college campuses where you have a multiple owner source to direct systemry. Common sense should tell you not to insert a disc into your computer's disc drive when you have no idea how many other drives have shared that same disc. You should not insert your computer's external drive, mouse, joy stick, or keyboard cables into the ports of another computer if you suspect it of having shared its ports with other computers, or if it has entered the United States from Canada or Israel within the last six months. You just don't know where these accessories have



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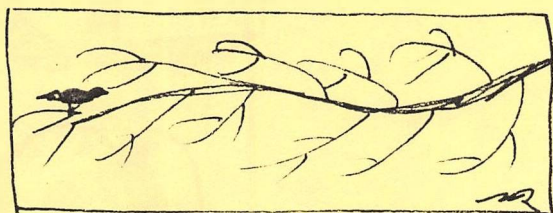


# Outworlds 57



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# love and olaf stapledon



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## sam moskowitz

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**TALKING ACROSS THE WORLDS:** The Love Letters of Olaf Stapledon and Agnes Miller, 1913-1919. Edited by Robert Crossley. University Press of New England, Hanover, N.H. 382 pages. \$27.95. 1987.

**LAST AND FIRST MEN** by Olaf Stapledon, with Foreword by Gregory Benford and Afterword by Doris Lessing. Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., Los Angeles (Distributed by St. Martin's Press). 313 pages paper bound. \$10.95. 1988.

**STAR MAKER** by Olaf Stapledon, with Foreword by Brian Aldiss. Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., Los Angeles. 272 pages. \$8.95. 1987.

Thirty years ago book lovers were convinced that the issuing of volumes of letters by those in and out of the literary world was an aspect of publishing that was peculiar to the 19th century and infrequent and unpopular in this one. The appearance within recent decades of successful massive volumes of letters by Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck, Raymond Chandler, Jack London and a variety of others indicate that they can have appeal. In the field of fantasy-related authors, volumes of letters by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, M.R. James and H.P. Lovecraft have appeared, and including a large segment of letters in my own *A. MERRITT: REFLECTIONS IN THE MOON POOL* was applauded. Nevertheless it still comes as a pleasant surprise to see a large selection of letters exchanged by Olaf Stapledon with his future wife Agnes Miller surface.

There are approximately 175,000 words of letters in *TALKING ACROSS THE WORLD*, out of a possible two million words the "lovers" exchanged during the period 1913 to the year they were married --1919, selected, extracted and edited by Robert Crossley, Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts (known to SFRA members for his *H. G. WELLS: A READER'S GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION* [1986] and for his editing of "The Letters of Olaf Stapledon and H. G. Wells, 1931-1942" [*SCIENCE FICTION DIALOGUES*, edited by Gary Wolfe, Academy, Chicago, 1982]).

Crossley, together with Harvey Satty and Curtis C. Smith, took the time to organize Stapledon's library and papers for presentation to the University of Liverpool which exercise Satty and Smith put to good use to prepare *OLAF STAPLEDON: A BIBLIOGRAPHY* (Greenwood Press, 1984), a compilation of remarkable competence.



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been. The safest course is to limit your computer's linkups to computers within your family or company -- and see that these units are faithful to each other.

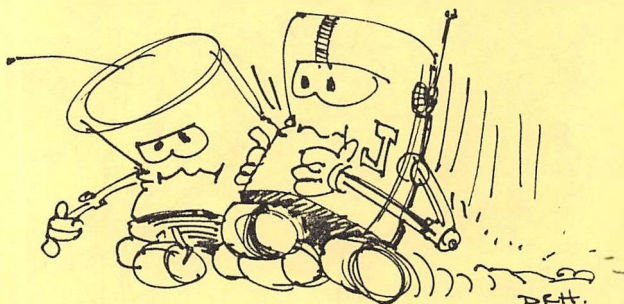
Keep your computer away from any freeware that may be found in public places such as computer stores or university libraries. Such shareware is at high risk of infection.

What are the authorities doing to combat this spreading computer virus? CDC officials are urging computer owners to invest in vaccine programs, marketed by several companies. These programs offer some protection against the invaders, but are not foolproof. The CDC is also considering mandatory testing for all new software before being introduced into clean systems. Experiments with protective sheaths for disks are also being conducted, but final results are not expected for months. CDC spokesmen aren't very enthusiastic about protective sheaths as a practical solution to the problem, since they will be expensive and early reaction of users is that sheaths "just don't feel right" and interfere with satisfactory processing and output.

In the meantime, CDC officials urge all computer users to practice safe computing.

---JODIE OFFUTT [May, 1988]

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## OUTWORLDS 57

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Edited & Published by: BILL BOWERS  
1874 Sunset Ave., #56, Cincinnati OH 45238-3142

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## ARTWORLDS

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Cover: TARAL § Bacover: ALAN HUNTER

WM. BREIDING: [photo] 1871  
JACKIE CAUSGROVE: 1848  
BRAD W. FOSTER: 1845  
DAVID R. HAUGH: 1849; 1862; 1867  
ALAN HUNTER: 1847  
TERRY JEEVES: 1868  
WILLIAM ROTSLER: 1846  
STU SHIFFMAN: 1869\*  
TARAL: 1850  
DAVID THAYER: 1866

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\* Stu Shiffman not-a-ferret, courtesy of the Wm. Breiding/STARFIRE Collection.

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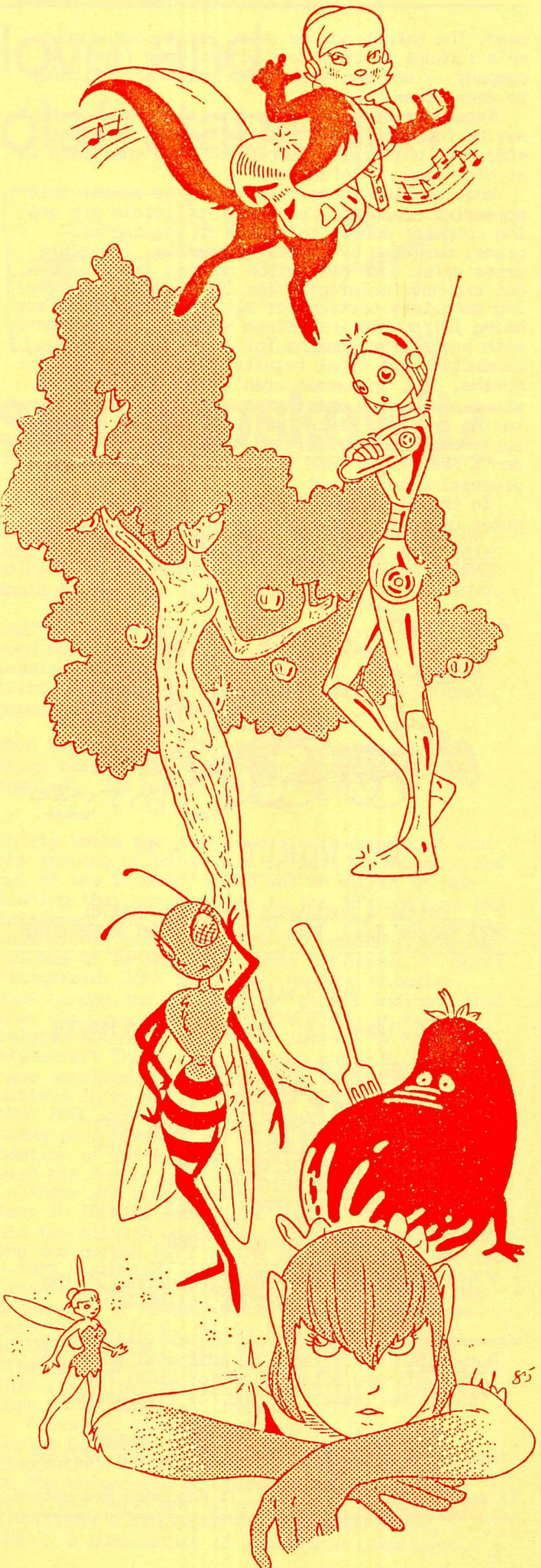
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\$2.50 per issue § \$10.00 for five issues.

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This is My Publication #160 § Dated: 7/22/88

If a Dot marks the spot [ ]: Response Requested!

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By 1934, there were many science-fictionists who had been part-time scholars in the subject for a number of years and had become experts on the subject. They were well acquainted not only with stories in the regular magazines (since 1926) but had researched into science fiction that appeared in the pulps from the end of the 19th century, particularly the treasure trove in the Munsey magazines.

They did it out of love, for there was little opportunity for egoboo. Some might be members of a small "science" club founded by science-fictionists; some were in correspondence with fellow part-time scholars. But there was no opportunity for large-scale recognition of their efforts.

Thus it was that SFL member Alvin Earl Perry wrote to League headquarters suggesting that the SFL award "degrees" to members who established themselves as particularly knowledgeable by passing tests that would be drawn up by League headquarters. Other members wrote in suggesting what kind of tests there would be and how a member might qualify for a degree.

Headquarters was friendly to the idea, and in the January 1935 issue of WONDER STORIES, we saw the following announcement:

### SCIENCE FICTION DEGREES

Working upon the original suggestion of Alvin Earl Perry, an Ace Member of the LEAGUE, we have prepared a test to be taken by members who wish scientifiiction degrees. The test follows this announcement. Here are the distinctions available for members of the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE.

**ACE MEMBER**—one who accomplishes placing an editorial or letter boosting science-fiction in general, or the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE in particular, in a newspaper, or that does anything else of equal value to the LEAGUE upon the decision of the Secretaries. This gives the member permission to call himself an Ace Member in his correspondence with others. To secure this permission, the applicant must write to Headquarters asking for a written statement that he is considered an Ace Member and may use the letter as proof that permission has been granted. Members calling themselves Ace Members without the proper authority will be expelled from the LEAGUE.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENTIFICTION (B. Stf.)**—member must pass the test given below with a grade of at least 70%; he must also offer to join some local Chapter. If there is not a Chapter in the member's neighborhood, he can apply to start one, which also makes him eligible for the M. Stf. degree.

**MASTER OF SCIENTIFICTION (M. Stf.)**—member must have a B. Stf., and submit to Headquarters a theme of not less than 5,000 words based on the educational values of scientifiiction and its

## The SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE

—a department of the International Science Fiction League, to be organized to distribute any item of interest that will be of value to the organization.

## TESTS

help to society and the improvement of civilization. He also has the choice of one of the following: (1) at least one science-fiction story published in a newsstand magazine; (2) an editorial capacity on any magazine devoted to the furtherance of science-fiction ("fan" magazines); (3) be the Director of some local chapter of the LEAGUE; or (4) be on the Executive Board of the LEAGUE or an Honorary Member.

**DOCTOR OF SCIENTIFICTION (D. Stf.)**—member must have a M. Stf. and have at least five science-fiction stories published in newsstand magazines.

Following is the test that all members must take before they can secure degrees. Papers must be typewritten or in legible handwriting or printing and must contain the question as well as the answer to each. All papers submitted after December 21, 1934, will be invalid. This test will not be repeated in future issues. A new test will be printed every six months for new members. All problems should be answered from memory and we depend upon the honesty of members not to do any research or consult other members while taking the test. Each test must be done independently. Send all papers to The Science Fiction Test Judges, c/o The SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE, 99 Hudson St., New York City, N. Y. Members in foreign countries, not on the North American Continent, are given until January 21, 1935, to complete the test. If you are not a member, but would like the B. Stf. degree, send your application to us with the test. The application for the B. Stf. degree must be sent with each test also.

That certainly looked impressive to me, and it spurred me on to immediate action. I took the test and sent it along with my application as soon as possible. (The January issue had appeared on sale around the first of the month; I was unemployed, so had ample time to work on the test. I don't remember now whether a typewriter was handy to me at the time. If it wasn't, then I did it all in longhand, writing as neatly as I could.)

Only one thing bothered me. It did seem unfair that I could not consult my file of the magazines to check up on my memory; but honor prevailed, and I sent off my test. Here are the questions.

### THE FIRST SCIENCE FICTION TEST

To be taken by members of the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE who wish to secure the Bachelor of Scientifiiction degree. Seventy per cent is passing.

PART ONE: General Quiz on Science Fiction—25 at $\frac{1}{4}\%$ .....	12 $\frac{1}{2}\%$
PART TWO: Multiplechoice—25 at $\frac{1}{4}\%$ .....	12 $\frac{1}{2}\%$
PART THREE: Completion—25 at $\frac{1}{4}\%$ .....	12 $\frac{1}{2}\%$
PART FOUR: True and False—25 at $\frac{1}{2}\%$ .....	12 $\frac{1}{2}\%$
PART FIVE: Essays on Science Fiction—2 at 5% .....	10%
PART SIX: Personal Opinions—4 at 2 $\frac{1}{2}\%$ .....	10%
PART SEVEN: General Science—30 at 1% .....	30%
	<hr/> 100%



## PART ONE

## General Quiz on Science Fiction

1. What was Dr. David H. Keller's first science-fiction story and where was it published?
2. Who wrote "The Hidden World"?
3. What author has written the greatest number of science-fiction stories?
4. Who wrote the Dr. Bird series of stories?
5. Name two authors who use pen-names, giving the pseudonyms.
6. Why is Edward Elmer Smith, Ph.D., sometimes designated as "Skylark" Smith?
7. Name three men, all of whom have been called "the father of science-fiction."
8. In what magazine was the series of "Dr. Hackensaw's Secrets" first published?
9. Name Hugo Gernsback's first great science-fiction novel.
10. What stories does the date 20,000 A.D. bring to mind? Clue: the date appeared in the titles of the stories, one of which was a sequel to the other, written by two authors in collaboration.
11. Name five science-fiction stories containing the word "Death" in the titles.
12. Do the same as the above with the word "Terror."
13. Name the two authors generally considered the greatest writers of interstellar travel novels.
14. What story by Stanton A. Coblentz appeared in the first issue of what magazine?
15. Name five artists who have illustrated science-fiction stories.
16. Name three popular female authors of science-fiction.
17. Name two stories which had the same title and the author of each.
18. What science-fiction magazine was published by the Experimenter Publishing Co.?
19. What magazine uses for its motto: "The Best in Science-Fiction"?
20. How has Harry Bates distinguished himself in the realm of science-fiction?
21. What is Wesso's full name?
22. Is "Paul" the first or last name of the artist?
23. Name the two most active science-fiction fans in the country.
24. How many quarterly magazines of science-fiction have appeared?
25. What does the name "Tumithak" remind you of?

## PART TWO

## Multiplechoice

1. Taine is: (1) an author (2) an artist (3) a character (4) a publisher.
2. Juve's first name is: (1) Dominik (2) Henrik (3) Epaminondas (4) Dahl.
3. Dr. Keller wrote: (1) "The End of Time" (2) "Skylark Three" (3) "The Conquerors" (4) "Airlords of Han."
4. One pseudonym used is: (1) Edmond Hamilton (2) Jack Barnette (3) H. G. Wells (4) Anthony Gilmore.
5. Sff. is the abbreviation for: (1) science-fiction (2) scientification (3) science (4) scientific fiction.
6. An editor of a science-fiction magazine is: (1) R. F. Starzl (2) Arthur L. Zagat (3) Desmond Hall (4) Lumen Winter.
7. An author who writes mostly of Central and South American Indians is: (1) A. Hyatt Verrill (2) L. Taylor Hansen (3) Raymond A. Palmer (4) Nathan Schachner.
8. An active fan in San Francisco is: (1) Jack Darrow (2) Mortimer Weisinger (3) Forrest J. Ackerman (4) Milton A. Rothman.
9. The author often denoted as "World-Saver" is: (1) John Russell Fearn (2) Edmond Hamilton (3) Miles J. Breuer, M.D. (4) John Beynon Harris.
10. Eric Temple Bell writes under the name of: (1) Epaminondas T. Snooks, D.T.G. (2) Anthony Pelcher (3) Marius (4) John Taine.
11. "What I Have Done to Spread Science Fiction" was: (1) an article (2) a contest (3) an editorial (4) a speech.
12. Charles de Richter is a: (1) German (2) Irish (3) Russian (4) French, science-fiction author.

13. Most of the foreign novels printed in American science-fiction magazines are translated by: (1) Fletcher Pratt (2) Paul Ernst (3) Otfried von Hanstein (4) Edgar Allan Poe.
14. A science-fiction magazine publishing only eleven issues dealt particularly with: (1) biology (2) the air (3) the sea (4) insects.
15. The phrase "even edges" appears mostly in: (1) the blurbs for the stories (2) the editorials (3) the readers' departments (4) the science questions.
16. The title of the first famous science-fiction story is: (1) "Ralph 124c 41 plus" (2) "Skylark of Space" (3) "The Moon Pool" (4) "Frankenstein."
17. In "The Blue Barbarians" by Stanton A. Coblentz, "gulgul," the medium of exchange among the Venusians, was: (1) sea-shells (2) a peculiar root (3) green glass (4) a small coin.
18. A planet named Aryl, closer to the sun than Mercury, was the locale of a story by: (1) Raymond Knight (2) R. F. Starzl (3) Lilith Lorraine (4) Jules Verne.
19. The above-mentioned story was in the following series: (1) Hawk Carse (2) Detective Taine (3) I. F. P. (4) Lem Gulliver.
20. "The Man Who Could Vanish" was written by: (1) H. G. Wells (2) A. Hyatt Verrill (3) Edmond Hamilton (4) Edwin Balmer.
21. The word "scientification" was coined by: (1) Conrad H. Ruppert (2) L. A. Eshbach (3) Milton Kaletsky (4) Hugo Gernsback.
22. Morrison Colladay wrote two stories about: (1) giant caterpillars (2) a cosmic gun (3) the planet Mars (4) the end of the world.
23. The science in science-fiction should be: (1) dominant (2) technical (3) subordinate (4) practically absent.
24. People who read science-fiction must have: (1) a lot of money (2) common sense (3) imagination (4) a scientific education.
25. The author whose first story was "The Metal Man" is: (1) Jack Williamson (2) Edmond Hamilton (3) A. Merritt (4) Murray Leinster.

## PART THREE

## Completion

1. "The Moon Pool" by A. Merritt was first printed in —.
2. Winger is the middle name of —.
3. The scene on the cover of a January, 1929, science-fiction magazine, showing the destruction of New York City, was taken from the story —.
4. Inca-land revolted in — by Wood Peters.
5. D.T.G. appears at the end of the author's name —.
6. The character — in Dr. Keller's stories declares constantly that smoking destroys the enamel of the teeth.
7. "Through the Veil" by Leslie F. Stone was a story about —.
8. An author whose best novels have been satirical is —.
9. B. Lue Pencill, an editor, appeared in two burlesques by —.
10. — was a story about Atlantis.
11. Giant termites appeared in the story —.
12. The Space-Guard stories were written by —.
13. Lem Gulliver was the leading character in — published stories.
14. "The Ark of the Covenant" was reprinted in — Magazine.
15. The story, —, appeared in fantastic magazines at least three times.
16. Colonel Marsh was created in the stories of —.
17. A fan in Hungary who makes science-fiction movies is —.
18. Morey draws illustrations steadily for — Magazine.
19. — illustrated "The Man With X-Ray Eyes" by Edmond Hamilton.
20. Knute Savory was the hero in a novel by —.
21. A science-fiction magazine which published only two numbers was —.
22. — by Jules Verne appeared in the first issues of the first science-fiction magazine.
23. The only science-fiction magazine without a monthly scientific editorial is —.
24. "Suggestions to Authors" have been prepared for the aspiring authors of — Magazine.
25. Ray Cummings' best novels concerned visits to —.



## PART FOUR

### True and False

1. All the science-fiction magazines are edited in New York City.
2. Leslie F. Stone is a woman.
3. Anthony Gilmore wrote the D. Bird stories.
4. A. Merritt composed "The Blind Spot."
5. Astonishing Stories printed seven issues.
6. Fletcher Pratt has never written a story without collaboration.
7. Nathan Schachner wrote "The Man Who Awoke" stories.
8. Very few stories have appeared in which mad scientists have conquered the world.
9. Time-travel is no longer being used as a theme for science-fiction stories.
10. Pluto is the only planet which has not been used for the locale of a story.
11. "The Man from Tomorrow" by Stanton A. Coblenz was a satirical serial.
12. "Deluge" was written by Garrett P. Serviss.
13. Clark Ashton Smith has not written a story in two years.
14. Arthur Leo Zagat once collaborated with Nathan Schachner.
15. "Manape the Mighty" was written by Murray Leinster.
16. The same authors write for all the science-fiction magazines.
17. Science-fiction stories appear in other magazines besides those devoted to it.
18. "When Worlds Collide" was written by Edwin Balmer and William MacHarg.
19. Washington is the only large city in the country that has not been destroyed in science-fiction stories.
20. "Dracula" is an old science-fiction novel.
21. Ellis Parker Butler has written science-fiction.
22. Some of H. G. Wells' best novels were recently reprinted in book form.
23. Nearly one-quarter of the people in the country are rabid science-fiction fans.
24. At one time there were six science-fiction magazines on the newsstand.
25. Only one science-fiction annual magazine has been published so far.

## PART FIVE

### Essays on Science Fiction

1. In at least 250 words, tell why you read science-fiction.
2. Give the plot of your favorite science-fiction story in no less than 250 words.

## PART SIX

### Personal Opinions

NOTE: All answers in this part must contain at least 100 words each.

1. Who is your favorite science-fiction author and why?
2. What is your favorite science-fiction story and why?
3. What is your favorite science-fiction magazine and why?
4. Do you think science-fiction has a promising future?

## PART SEVEN

### General Science

1. How many planets are in the solar system?
2. What is the approximate speed of light?
3. Is the surface of Venus mountainous?
4. What word does the word "crater" remind you of?
5. Whose theory explains the curved universe?
6. What is Lorentz-Fitzgerald associated with?
7. Name three insects with good social systems.
8. Why could men not live on the moon?
9. Which is the "red planet"?
10. Which is the largest planet in the solar system?
11. What elements are radio-active?
12. How many elements are there in existence?
13. Which planet is the last discovered?
14. What are the asteroids?
15. What does evolution teach?
16. Are the orbits of the planets perfect circles?
17. Are "termites" and "ant" synonymous terms?
18. Where is the north magnetic pole?

19. What speed is necessary for a rocket to leave the gravitational field of the earth?
20. What is the air-pressure at sea-level?
21. Has the atom ever been split?
22. What is heavy water?
23. Roughly, what is the diameter of the earth?
24. What are sun-spots?
25. How many moons has Venus?
26. What is the nearest planet to the sun?
27. What is an amoeba?
28. About what is the distance from the earth to the sun?
29. What keeps dirigibles in the air?
30. With what science is Sir James Jeans associated?

Don't forget to include your "Application for B. Stf. Degree" coupon with your answer to the test. Coupon in this department.

Note question 16 in part one: "Name three popular female authors of science fiction." At the end of 1934, Stanley G. Weinbaum was already a popular author, although only two of his stories had been published. Therefore, we'll consider as "popular" any female author who had had two or more well-received stories in the science-fiction magazines.

There are four female authors who qualify: Leslie F. Stone (11); Clare Winger Harris (9) --one of them in collaboration with Dr. Miles J. Breuer; Sophie Wenzel Ellis (3); and Amelia Reynolds Long (2 -- 3 if we count the Gernsback Science Fiction Series).

We had also seen one-time appearances from M. F. Rupert, Hazel Heald, and C. L. Moore (who already had a high reputation in WEIRD TALES); and Pansy Black also had an appearance in the Science Fiction series.

All but two of the eight had appeared in Gernsback publications; so much for the canard that Hugo Gernsback was a sexist who believed that women were incapable of writing science fiction.

Note question 8 in part four (true or false): "Very few stories have appeared in which mad scientists have conquered the world." That struck me as ambiguous. There were many stories dealing with mad scientists' attempts to conquer (or destroy) the world, but very few wherein they succeeded. I don't remember now how I answered that question.

And I must confess that I couldn't answer all the questions in part seven now, without looking them up. I doubt that I did very well on that section.

At any rate, I sent in my answers and applications in ample time, then sat back to await the verdict as to whether or not I would be dubbed "Bachelor of Scientifiction".

Alas, I didn't have to wait long. At the end of January, out came the February issue of WONDER STORIES, with the following paragraph on the first page of the SFL department:

We have decided that those who have successfully passed the First Science Fiction Test, published in our last issue will be designated First Class Members, instead of Bachelors of Scientifiction. In place of Masters of Scientifiction, we shall have Ace Members. There will be no Doctor of Scientifiction degree. Those who have answered our questionnaire unsuccessfully will be added to our list of Active Members for their efforts. This organization will award no degrees.

What a disappointment! I wonder if I would have gone to the labor of taking the first test if I'd been able to see an advance copy of the February issue before I did so. I wonder how many others were as disappointed as I was. At any rate, I made no further efforts to win "non-degrees" in scientifiction. Nonetheless there was a bit of pleasure in seeing how I made out.



Neither Hugo Gernsback nor anyone else ever explained why the decision to cancel the degrees was made.

In the April, May, and June 1935 issues, WONDER STORIES presented the results of the test. The following appeared in the April issue:

## FIRST TEST RESULTS

Following is a list of the members of the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE who took our First Science Fiction Test, published in our January, 1935, issue, and passed, with the marks they received. The list is chronological, according to the dates that tests were received by Headquarters. The forty-one names in the list were awarded First Class Membership. Forty-four tests were received, three of which were marked less than 70%, the passing grade. Those that failed the test will not be mentioned in these columns, although they have been awarded Active Membership for their efforts. The First Class Members are (member number follows name):

David A. Kyle (359) .....	92%
Morris Miller (274) .....	79%
G. L. Bedford (160) .....	80%
Milton A. Rothman (34) .....	95%
Julius Schwartz (44) .....	95%
Robert H. Anglin (538) .....	71%
Robert W. Lowndes (630) .....	94%
Philip W. Faden (486) .....	87%
Vernon H. Jones (364) .....	90%
Forrest J. Ackerman (Hon. 1) .....	97%
Lewis F. Torrance (165) .....	97%
A. L. Selikowitz (53) .....	99%
L. M. Jensen (640) .....	83%
Harold W. Kirshenblit (642) .....	87%
Clarence J. Wilhelm (641) .....	96%
Dwight Edwards (131) .....	86%
Stuart Ayers (60) .....	88%
Arthur L. Widner, Jr. (479) .....	76%
Lionel Dilbeck (447) .....	92%
Thos. S. Gardner (357) .....	93%
Arch J. Kinzel (136) .....	82%
Hilton R. Bowman (652) .....	96%
Arthur B. Gnaedinger (598) .....	83%
William H. Dellenback (5) .....	97%
Raymond A. Palmer (553) .....	88%
Day Gee (560) .....	84%
John S. Shouder (115) .....	75%
Harry Boosel (10) .....	96%
Donald A. Wollheim (24) .....	93%
D. R. Welch (434) .....	74%
George Gordon Clark (1) .....	98%
Philip Silverman (312) .....	95%
D. H. Green (96) .....	76%
Robert Reddy (310) .....	89%
Richard G. Kerlin (402) .....	94%
Alvin Earl Perry (265) .....	89%
P. H. Thomson (574) .....	94%
Joseph Hatch (71) .....	87%
Paul Freehafer (294) .....	91%
Kenneth Sterling (4) .....	89%
William Frankel (331) .....	93%

You will notice that Forrest J. Ackerman, Lewis F. Torrance, and William H. Dellenback tied for the highest score, 97%, while runners-up include Milton A. Rothman, Julius Schwartz, Clarence J. Wilhelm, Hilton R. Bowman, Harry Boosel, and Philip Silverman, with the next highest mark, 96%. A similar test to this will be published in every January and July issue of WONDER STORIES to enable new members, those who failed earlier tests, and others who did not enter previously, to earn their First Class Memberships. All those whose names appear in the above list can become Ace Members, the highest honor a member can attain, by writing to Headquarters for details or referring to the information in our January, 1935 issue.

We have tabulated the personal opinions that the test-takers were required to give in Part Six of the test, and find the results as follows:

Of the forty-four entries, one omitted Part Six completely. Dr. David H. Keller wins the honors as favorite author with twelve votes. A. Merritt is the runner-up with nine, John W. Campbell, Jr. received seven, and Stanton A. Coblentz, two. The following

authors were awarded one vote each: Otfried von Hanstein, Eando Binder, Nathan Schachner, Clark Ashton Smith, E. E. Smith, Ph.D., P. Schuyler Miller, Edgar Rice Burroughs, H. G. Wells, John Taine, and Jack Williamson. Three members have no favorite.

"The Moon Pool" wins as the favorite science-fiction story of our First Class Members with seven votes. E. E. Smith's "Skylark" tales and "Exile of the Skies" tied with four, while "The Human Termites," "The Second Deluge," and "The Final War" tied with two votes each. Other favorite stories, each receiving one vote, were: "The Alien Intelligence," "The Wreck of the Asteroid," "Exiles of Space," "Invaders from the Infinite," "Dr. Lu Mic," "The Man Who Awoke," "After Worlds Collide," "The Man from Tomorrow," "The Face in the Abyss," "Rebirth," "Torrano the Conqueror," "Cosmos," "The Time Machine," "The Sunken World," "The Moon Conquerors," and "The Voyage of the Asteroid." Four members have no favorites and two gave a description of their favorite type of story, instead of naming any particular one. A. Merritt, while giving way to Keller as favorite author, wins the honors as the author of the favorite story.

In the third question of Part Six, we asked the test-takers to tell us their honest choice as their favorite science-fiction magazine. The results show that twenty-four like WONDER STORIES the best, while all three other magazines together total eighteen votes. One member has no favorite.

A huge majority, forty, really believe that science-fiction has a very promising future, two doubt that it will, and one thinks that it is questionable. Many of those who voted "yes" claimed that their answer would be "no," were it not for the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE, which is awakening the country to the existence and value of science-fiction.

After the tests were graded, sheets were sent to each one who took the test, individually listing the correct answers to those questions missed by the particular member, so that each could know where he was in error. This we have found more advisable than giving all the correct answers in these columns. The latter procedure would not only take up a lot of valuable space in the magazine, but would provide a great amount of diversified information which would not be fair to those who take future tests—it would make it too easy for them.

However, we will give a summary here of results on the outstanding questions:

There were many "catch" questions in the test, such as the true-and-false statement that Astonishing Stories printed seven issues. There has never been a magazine by that name, although many members answered "True" to that question. There were many others throughout the test.

Only one answered that "Paul" was the artist's first name, while all the others remembered that he is Frank R. Paul. In answer to "Who are the two most active fans in the country," Forrest J. Ackerman answered "Remember our modesty!" We marked it correct. We allowed for either "thirty-six" or "two" as the correct answer to the number of quarterly magazines of science-fiction published. There were 36 issues published, and two brands, or three, if a differentiation is made between SCIENCE WONDER QUARTERLY and WONDER STORIES QUARTERLY. Only three numbers of the former were published.

In number one of Part Two, Taine could be marked either as an author or a character or both. We allowed that the science in science-fiction could be either dominant or subordinate, as it is all a matter of opinion, but marked the answer incorrect if it stated either technical or practically absent. Any of three answers were accepted for "Inca-land revolted in . . . . by Wood Peters," the name of the story, the issue of the magazine in which it appeared, or the year in which the fictional revolt took place.

Many questions in the completion part were optional, and others throughout the test. Several readers, in the True-and-False section, stated that it was false that many stories have appeared in which mad scientists had conquered the world. This was marked incorrect, even though many explained that the scientists were usually stopped before they had gone too far—for, though we realize this is true, there have still been many stories in which the scientists had succeeded in their efforts. Arthur Leo Zagat, it was stated in another of this group, once collaborated with Nathan Schachner. This question was poorly worded. It should have read, at one time



instead of once, because some misunderstood it to mean on only one story.

All of the essay and opinion questions were given full credit unless they were either omitted entirely or contained much less than the required wordage. In one other case, credit was marked off. Though the particular member had enough words, he broke off in the middle of a plot-outline because "of lack of time." Those readers who had no favorite story outlined, in question two of Part Five, the plot of a story that they liked very much—except one.

In the scientific questions, "crater" could be put down as reminding the member of either the moon or a volcano—both were correct. In the radioactive elements, any number could be mentioned, but radium and uranium were required, and we were very lenient in marking the answer to the location of the North Magnetic Pole, but were we surprised when one person stated that Venus had nine moons!

In our next two issues we will print a few of the best essays submitted in the results of this test. Many are of real value and will be appreciated by other members.

Of the 41 applicants, who passed the first test, six were already known beyond their neighborhoods, four of them as published authors: Thomas S. Gardner, Donald A. Wollheim, Raymond A. Palmer, and Kenneth Sterling; all had appeared in WONDER STORIES. Julius Schwartz and Forrest J Ackerman were well known for their connections with the leading fan magazine of the day: FANTASY MAGAZINE; and Schwartz was an author's agent. He sold stories by Weinbaum to F. Orlin Tremaine, editor of ASTOUNDING STORIES.

Four more became well known as fans or fanzine publishers: David H. Kyle, Milton A. Rothman, Paul Freehafer, and I; and of the four only Freehafer did not become known in the professional science-fiction world. (Perhaps he might have had he lived longer.)

That makes nearly 25% of the first-test takers -- not a bad show at all.

By the time the April WONDER STORIES arrived, I had overcome my bitterness about not having the degree I had earned, and was fascinated to see my work among the excerpts on the first test, which you will see below, from the May issue.

## THE SCIENCE FICTION TEST

Forrest J. Ackerman, an Executive Director of the LEAGUE, has submitted to us thirty items suggested for use in the Second Science Fiction Test to be published in our July issue. Several of these questions will be used in compiling the test, and we want to thank Mr. Ackerman for his co-operation.

In January we received a completed test from Member 738, Maurice K. Hanson of Leicestershire, England, which merited a grade of 89%. He is now a First Class Member. Because of the delay in shipping magazines to other countries, we have allowed an extra month for our foreign readers to complete the test. Mr. Hanson's favorites are: Author: Nathan Schachner—Story: "The Man Who Awoke"—Magazine: WONDER STORIES. He believes that science-fiction has a very promising future.

On the First Science Fiction Test, David A. Kyle's answer to the first section of Part Five, "Why Do You Read Science Fiction?", reads as follows:

"The common people of the world have been noted for their obsolete views concerning the advancement of science; despite persuasion, they will not swallow anything that is beyond their infinitesimal brains. But science-fiction changes that—the sheer power of magnificence that will leave the reader vainly wondering what he is on this wee tiny Earth. The force of science-fiction can never be equaled by any other type of story. When I finish a science-fiction yarn, I feel overwhelmed with thoughts that surge in my brain. Can it ever be true? Will such things ever come to pass? The glorious heights that the reader soars to make one realize why there are such active fans. Science-fiction makes one think—to ponder on the whole universe. Is it a wonder that science-fiction is an opiate?—to feel that exuberant thrill course through your body; to feel your senses rise and your pulse beat stronger. Ah, deep is the love . . . Science is stupendous. The huge thoughts that we minute humans try to understand, to analyze

are great. Science-fiction has the ability to grasp me and to whirl me up—up—up into the realms that dominate the cosmos. A fiction that gives fact, food for thought, and yet contains exciting adventure, is indeed a marvelous fiction. It is a fiction that is intelligent and that educates, not toward the bad or immoral things, but for the future advancement of the people of the world. Why do I read science-fiction? Ah! Feeble are the words to express such a great subject!"

Julius Schwartz, famous science-fiction fan, gives his reasons why David H. Keller, M. D. is his favorite author, in the first section of Part Six:

"David H. Keller, M. D., is my favorite science-fiction author. It is true that Dr. Keller was my favorite author even before I had the pleasure of meeting him, but after meeting and talking with him, I find that I have learned to appreciate him even more. Dr. Keller writes of common ordinary things, that are close to the heart of every living being—babies, improvements for bridge tables, nagging wives, etc. And with the soul of the true psychologist, he offers his solution and explanation, a solution that one can't help but feel is the logical one. Dr. Keller may not have the largest vocabulary in the world, but he writes simply and beautifully. His stories contain a great deal of human interest. You 'live' his stories."

The favorite science-fiction story of Robert W. Lowndes, as shown by his answer to the second section of Part Six, is "The Human Termites," by David H. Keller, M. D., and here's why:

"Since 1930, I have had the good fortune to read many fine pieces of scientific fiction, but none has ever displaced 'The Human Termites' in my affection. It gives such an interesting insight into the life of the termites, and the many similarities between them and us. Sometimes I cannot help but think that Dr. Keller hit upon the truth in his comparison between the termites and humans. Certainly, the idea of a central intelligence would clear up many unsolved problems. Nor does it contradict any known facts. 'The Human Termites' provided me not only with food for thought, information which I would be more or less unlikely to meet elsewhere, but provided me with much entertainment as well."

WONDER STORIES is the favorite science-fiction magazine of Jack Schaller, Director of the ERIC SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE, as shown in his answer to section three of Part Six:

"WONDER STORIES is my favorite magazine mainly because it gives me more enjoyment per story than

any other magazine. But besides the enjoyment, part, I get more for the investment I make. The stories are longer, thereby giving me longer hours of entertainment. And besides the longer stories, the magazine is illustrated by the famous Paul, which would be a boast for any magazine. Then again, it is the magazine that contains the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE as a department, and that alone is worth giving up the stories for. All in all, a better magazine cannot be found on the market."

Finally, we give you here what we consider the best answer received for the fourth section of Part Six, written by Raymond A. Palmer, concerning the future of science-fiction:

"Not only do I think science-fiction has a promising future, but I think it is the fiction of the future. Western stories were unknown before the days of the west, naturally, and air stories did not come until the airplane was invented, but contrary to what has happened in the field of literature to date, science-fiction comes ahead of what it concerns. Therefore, I say, it has a start that no other fiction ever had, and is bound to eclipse the success of any other type. The people of the future will be more concerned with the future than with entertainment, and will couple both."

We intend to print a few more of these essays in our next issue.

That brief comment on "The Human Termites" was my first attempt at writing about science fiction, aside from letters to the readers' departments. It gave me confidence to see if I could contribute to any of the fan magazines. Now for the final excerpts, as they appeared in the June issue.



## THE SCIENCE FICTION TEST

We give you here five more essays taken from the answers to the First Science Fiction Test which was offered in our number for last January. We presented five in the last issue from the papers of David A. Kyle, Julius Schwartz, Robert W. Lowndes, Jack Schaller, and Raymond A. Palmer, and in the next issue you will find the Second Science Fiction Test for other members who would like to be awarded their First Class Membership.

Part Five, Section One, ("Why I Read Science Fiction") by Morris Miller:

"The romantic and fascinating have always appealed to me. Even years before I was introduced to science-fiction by one already well versed in it, perhaps five years ago, I used to gather a handful of interested boys on the block after supper time, and after we would consort ourselves somewhere, either in a poorly lit hall, or on the curb next to a very familiar pole, or in some secluded nook, I would half-whisper almost uninterruptedly an imaginative tale which kept them intensely engrossed throughout, and which produced at least one ghoulisn nightmare in the boys. First I had them select the type of story they would like to hear, such as a ghost story, or a scientific adventure, or a murder mystery, and then, without having had any forethought of what to relate, wove the plot as I went along. And usually the boys would stand up at the end of the story, stretch their young limbs and say that it was 'even better than the others.'"

"Science, most of it, is fascinating, especially astronomy; combined with romantic adventures far-reaching in scope, what more can a soul crave?"

"Little of the science of the first stories I read did I understand, but with my two-fold craving, science and romance, I found science-fiction a most highly valued source of knowledge and entertainment."

"Again there is variety. How much of it I crave only God above know! And as for a source of variety in fiction, science-fiction holds the title without the shadow of a doubt!"

Part Six, Section One, ("My Favorite Science Fiction Author") by G. L. Bedford, Jr.:

"My favorite science-fiction author is without a doubt Clark Ashton Smith. Although of late he has been writing weird stories and the fact that he has written more weird stories than he has science-fiction

does not deter me from saying that he is one of the best science-fiction authors alive today. He told me that he liked to write weird stories better, so you can see that if he ever devoted his entire energy to the writing of science-fiction stories he would be far ahead of the so-called leaders of science-fiction today. Clark Ashton Smith has a wonderful vocabulary and knows how to use it. It is always worth the price of the magazine to read one of his rich, fascinating stories."

Part Six, Section Two, ("My Favorite Science Fiction Story") by Milton A. Rothman:

"My favorite story is 'Invaders from the Infinite,' mostly because of the same reasons that cause John W. Campbell, Jr. to be my favorite author. The science is logically thought out, every little detail is included, the style is brilliant, nothing is considered impossible to the characters, and best of all, the story haunts none of the scientific theories which are considered to be true today. What other story has such novel and powerful methods of propulsion, such titanic weapons, such boundless floods and control of energy? There are none, of course, and that is what makes 'Invaders from the Infinite' my favorite science-fiction story."

Part Six, Section Three, ("My Favorite Science Fiction Magazine") by Robert H. Anglin:

"Every month I buy 'all three' of the science-fiction magazines. I read everything, from the editorials to the readers' departments."

"I am a practical person, and all my money is hard-earned. I know the value of my money and how much I get from each of the science-fiction magazines I buy. If I had only the price of one science-fiction magazine each month, I would pick **WONDER STORIES**."

"Why?"

"In the first place, only the best stories by the best science-fiction authors are printed. This is easily seen by watching the names and comparing the stories."

"The editorial staff is a guarantee that we will have accurate science. Science in science-fiction should be subordinate, but it should be accurate. We get accurate science in **WONDER STORIES**."

"Last, we, the readers, are given a far greater chance of expression than in any other magazine. **WONDER STORIES** has taken the initiative and has given us the **SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE** which I believe is destined to become a power in the realm of science-fiction."

"What other magazine gives us that much for our money?"

Part Six, Section Four, ("The Future of Science Fiction") by Philip W. Faden:

"Science-fiction has a very promising future. Most of its readers are eager to spread the news of its unusual stories. The best thing of science-fiction is that it gives science in an easy form for everyone to get. More people will want to know about new things discovered in science and the younger generation especially. In science-fiction they will find science and its newest discoveries in an easy way. In the small part of Boston where I live, I have been surprised at the number of people who either had read science-fiction once or were reading it now. I can see a brilliant future ahead for science-fiction."

Dear me! Neither Milt Rothman nor Charlie Hornig, or even the great Hugo himself, noted how funny one clause in one of Milt's sentences is: "...and best of all, the story flaunts none of the scientific theories which are considered to be true today." Rothman meant "flouts", of course.

You could easily assume from the comments by Morris Miller, G. L. Bedford, Jr., Robert H. Anglin, and Philip W. Faden that all were more-or-less known fans. Well, Miller's letters had appeared in "The Reader Speaks", and I might have seen a letter from one of the other three--or later, if not before--but they all dropped out of sight, not long after.

The second science fiction test appeared in the July 1933 issue of **WONDER STORIES**. We see in the first paragraph on the page where the test starts that SFL enrollment "... is nearing one thousand members in all parts of the world. There are eighteen organized chapters with dozens of others in the making. ..."

Some of the questions in the second test are essentially repeats of first-test questions, worded somewhat differently. The introduction to the test, outlining the rules, is the same as before, as is the preliminary breakdown of the parts. We shall not repeat them here, but go directly to the questions.

### PART ONE

#### General Quiz on Science Fiction

1. Who is known as the "cover-copper"?
2. "Armageddon—2419 A.D." introduced what character, now famous?
3. Who wrote the "Posi and Nega" series of stories?
4. On what famous novel did Lee Hawkins Garby collaborate?
5. "Island of Lost Souls" was the scientific title for what story by H. G. Wells?
6. Name three science-fiction cartoons now appearing in newspapers.
7. What was the title of Jack Williamson's first published science-fiction story?
8. Is imagination necessary for a person to enjoy science-fiction?
9. Why shouldn't the science in science-fiction be very technical?
10. Name two stories by Morrison Colladay about a cosmic gun.
11. Who coined the word "scientifiction"?
12. Who wrote stories about the Interplanetary Flying Police?
13. "The Blue Barbarians" was written by what famous master of satire?
14. What well-known science-fiction story was written by Mary Shelley?
15. Name three things science-fiction fans are clamoring for.
16. During what years was Air Wonder Stories published?
17. What are the aims of the Science Fiction League?



18. When was the above-mentioned society organized?
19. Who does a lot of science-fiction translating from the German and French?
20. What nationality is Charles de Richter?
21. What is John Taine's real name?
22. What continent is the locale of most of A. Hyatt Verrill's stories?
23. What is the correct method of abbreviating the word "scientifiction"?
24. Who wrote "The Conquerors," a favorite novel of five years ago?
25. In whose work is Detective Taine a famous figure?

## PART TWO

### Multiplechoice

1. John Carter is: (1) author (2) character (3) fan (4) artist.
2. "Metropolis" was a scientifiilm about: (1) Atlantis (2) the stratosphere (3) the future (4) the moon.
3. Barsoom is the name for Mars used by: (1) Hugo Gernsback (2) Otis Adelbert Kline (3) Carl H. Claudy (4) Edgar Rice Burroughs.
4. Bob Olsen is noted for his: (1) space stories (2) treatment of the fourth dimension (3) theories on time-travelling (4) Norwegian atmosphere.
5. Northwest Smith is an interplanetary outlaw in the stories of: (1) Ralph Milne Farley (2) C. L. Moore (3) Leslie F. Stone (4) Otto Willi Gail.
6. The "Tumithak" stories were written by: (1) P. Schuyler Miller (2) Charles R. Tanner (3) George Bernard Shaw (4) H. G. Wells.
7. The first quarterly magazine appeared in: (1) 1927 (2) 1928 (3) 1929 (4) 1930.
8. The first Chapter of the Science Fiction League is located in: (1) Chicago (2) Boston (3) Brooklyn (4) New Orleans.
9. An artist no longer illustrating science-fiction stories is: (1) H. W. Wesso (2) Frank R. Paul (3) Leo Morey (4) Lumen Winter.
10. The Clayton corporation used to publish: (1) Wonder Stories (2) Astounding Stories (3) Amazing Stories (4) Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories.
11. The "Skylark" novels were about: (1) time-travel (2) giant termites (3) space-flying (4) the next war.
12. A popular female author of science-fiction is: (1) H. G. Winter (2) D. D. Sharp (3) A. L. Burkholder (4) L. F. Stone.
13. Stanton A. Coblenz is noted for his: (1) satire (2) burlesque (3) mysteries (4) short-stories.
14. Hugo Gernsback's first great science-fiction novel was: (1) The Conquerors (2) Ralph 124c-41 plus (3) Baron Munchhausen (4) Frankenstein.
15. Dr. Hackensaw's Secrets appeared in: (1) Science and Invention (2) Practical Electrics (3) Electrical Experimenter (4) Modern Electrics.
16. One author who uses a pen-name is: (1) A. Merritt (2) Eric Temple Bell (3) Arthur J. Burks (4) Laurence Manning.
17. The Dr. Bird stories were written by: (1) Murray Leinster (2) John Edwards (3) Epaminondas T. Snooks, D. T. G. (4) Capt. S. P. Meek, U. S. A.
18. The author with the greatest amount of stories to his credit is: (1) Philip J. Bartel (2) David H. Keller, M. D. (3) R. F. Starzl (4) Jack Williamson.
19. Edmond Hamilton wrote: (1) The Time Stream (2) Off on a Comet (3) Dawn to Dusk (4) The Hidden World.
20. "The Revolt of the Pedestrians" was the first published story of: (1) David H. Keller (2) Clare Winger Harris (3) Festus Pragnell (4) John Russell Fearn.
21. Most science-fiction is published in: (1) London (2) New York City (3) Chicago (4) Los Angeles.
22. Frankenstein's monster on the screen was played by: (1) Boris Karloff (2) Bela Lugosi (3) Lon Chaney (4) Will Rogers.
23. The best science-fiction is based on: (1) vampires and ghosts (2) scientific fact and theory (3) the horrors of war (4) love in the future.
24. Science-fiction's first magazine came out in: (1) 1925 (2) 1926 (3) 1927 (4) 1928.
25. A science-fiction author who was also a great astronomer was: (1) Garrett P. Serviss (2) Jules Verne (3) Edgar Allen Poe (4) Nathaniel Hawthorne.

## PART THREE

### Completion

1. "Anachronism" was a sequel to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I.N-18 was the name of the heroine of the scientific film entitled \_\_\_\_\_.
3. "\_\_\_\_\_ the Conqueror" is a famous story by Ray Cummings.
4. "F. P. 1" stands for \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ annual science-fiction magazine (s) has (have) been published.
6. There were as many as \_\_\_\_\_ different science-fiction magazines on the newsstand at one time.
7. A book has recently been published containing \_\_\_\_\_ of H. G. Wells' novels.
8. The first great science-fiction novel is named \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Edwin Balmer and \_\_\_\_\_ wrote "When Worlds Collide" and its sequel.
10. Laurence Manning writes science-fiction only for \_\_\_\_\_ magazine.
11. "Manape the Mighty" was written by \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Arthur Leo Zagat once collaborated with \_\_\_\_\_ on many stories.
13. The motion picture "Deluge" was taken from the story by \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Pluto was the locale of Stanton A. Coblenz's novel named \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The first popular time-travel story was \_\_\_\_\_ by H. G. Wells.
16. Many stories have concerned mad \_\_\_\_\_ conquering the world.
17. Laurence Manning's most famous series of stories are \_\_\_\_\_.
18. A. Merritt's best novels appear in \_\_\_\_\_ magazine.
19. "Men With Wings" was written by a woman named \_\_\_\_\_.
20. All the professional science-fiction magazines are edited in \_\_\_\_\_.
21. \_\_\_\_\_ is the author of "Dawn to Dusk."
22. The editorial offices of \_\_\_\_\_ are at 99 Hudson St., New York City.
23. One editor of a science-fiction magazine is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_.
24. There are \_\_\_\_\_ major science-fiction magazines being published now.
25. The team of Arcot, Morey, Wade, and Fuller appeared in novels by \_\_\_\_\_.

## PART FOUR

### True and False

1. H. G. Wells' first name is Hubert.
2. Hugo Gernsback's Science Fiction Series contains reprints.
3. Garret Smith wrote "A Columbus of Space."
4. Brown draws the covers for Amazing Stories.
5. Ray Cummings' best novels concerned visits to Pluto.
6. "Suggestions to Authors" have been prepared for the authors of Wonder Stories.
7. Astounding Stories contained a monthly scientific editorial.
8. "Off on a Comet" appeared in the first Wonder Stories.
9. Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories published only two issues.
10. Knute Savory was the hero in a famous novel by Richard Vaughan.
11. Morey draws steadily for Argosy magazine.
12. Andrew Lenard, a science-fiction movie producer, lives in Budapest.
13. Colonel Marsh is a character in the stories of Laurence Manning.
14. "The Diamond Lens" by Fitz-James O'Brien first appeared in 1912.
15. Lem Gulliver was the leading character in four published stories.
16. J. Harvey Haggard wrote the Space-Guard stories.
17. Dr. Keller's first story was about giant termites.
18. Kenneth Sterling wrote a burlesque published during 1934.
19. "When Reptiles Ruled" was a story about the distant past.
20. Dold had some illustrations in Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories.
21. Fantasy Magazine is a publication for science-fiction fans.



22. "Scoops" was a science-fiction magazine published in England.
23. The Science Fiction League was organized in 1933.
24. The readers' departments are always in the rear of the magazine.
25. "What is Your Science Knowledge" is a monthly department in Amazing Stories.

#### PART FIVE

##### Essays on Science Fiction

1. In at least 250 words, tell how you came to read science-fiction.
2. Give your friends' reactions to science-fiction in no less than 250 words.

#### PART SIX

##### Personal Opinions

1. Who is your favorite science-fiction author and why?
  2. What is your favorite science-fiction character and why?
  3. What is your favorite science-fiction story, and why?
  4. Do you think that science-fiction has a promising future, and why?
- NOTE: All answers in this part must contain at least 100 words each.

#### PART SEVEN

##### General Science

1. What is the common name for sodium chloride?
2. What was the pterodactyl?
3. How does the gravity of the moon compare with that of the earth?
4. What is a gyroscope used for in large ships?
5. What is the chemical symbol for carbon monoxide?
6. What is Esperanto?
7. About what subject is the book entitled "The Expanding Universe"?
8. Name two gases used to keep dirigibles in the air.
9. About how far apart are the earth and the sun?
10. What is a protozoa?
11. Has Venus got many satellites?
12. Approximately, what is the circumference of the earth (in miles)?
13. How long is the sun-spot cycle?
14. For what new substance is D<sub>2</sub>O the symbol, and what does the "D" mean?
15. Has atomic power ever been tapped?
16. When was the first passenger rocket service started?
17. Where is the Boothia-Felix Peninsula?
18. Where are the asteroids located?
19. Does the Bible agree with the theory of evolution?
20. When can the corona of the sun be seen?
21. What is the popular nickname for Mars?
22. Which is the smallest planet in the solar system?
23. Is uranium higher in the atomic scale than radium?
24. Is there enough air on the moon to support human life?
25. Who is associated with the contraction at light speed theory?
26. In feet, give the approximate speed of sound.
27. What are the units noted for?
28. In what year was the planet Pluto discovered?
29. Where is air pressure greatest?
30. Which state in the United States has the shortest surveyed boundary?

NOTE: Twenty-five of the questions used in this Second Science Fiction Test were contributed by Forrest J. Ackerman, an Executive Director of the association.

While many of the questions seem trivial to us today (and some struck me as pretty trivial at the time), nonetheless they all served a purpose: to determine if the applicant really knew his science fiction magazines and had some knowledge of science fiction (and fandom) outside of the regular magazines. The science questions were of less importance, really; but, after all, this was a Gernsback magazine and why shouldn't the publisher want to find out whether his eager readers had received any scientific instruction from reading science fiction? Just about all of the answers to the science questions had appeared somewhere in the Gernsback titles, either in stories, science news of the month, or the regular "Science Questions and Answers" department.

Further results of the test were spread over two issues this time, instead of three. That was probably because the magazine shifted its schedule to bi-monthly. The October 1935 issue, on sale September, was the last issue of WONDER STORIES as a monthly; the next issue did go on sale a month later (month of October) but was dated December. [I have deleted some repetitive material.]

## SECOND TEST RESULTS

Following is a list of the members of the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE who passed our Second Science Fiction Test, published in our July, 1935, issue, with the marks they received. The list is chronological, according to the dates the tests were received at Headquarters. The twenty-eight names in the list were awarded First Class Membership. Twenty-nine tests were received—which is not to be considered bad in view of the fact that the First Test was published just six months before the Second—one of which failed to make the passing grade of seventy per cent. This member will not be mentioned in this department, though he has been awarded Active Membership for his efforts in this matter. The new list of First Class Members, to be added to the forty-one who passed the First Test last winter, are (member number follows name):

Clay Ferguson, Jr. (929)	88%
Howard Copeland (493)	75%
Donald V. Allgeier (400)	90%
Howard Rount, Jr. (938)	89%
Jim Blish (820)	72%
Edgar A. Hirdler (883)	77%
Robert E. Booth (691)	86%
Herbert E. Goudket (684)	94%
Jos. Enloe (943)	78%
Florence Reider (616)	74%
George W. Greene (880)	86%
LeRoy Christian Bashore (567)	95%
Charles Nafziger, Jr. (946)	87%
William S. Christoff (472)	94%
Raymond M. Hood, Jr. (900)	78%
Raymond P. Mariella (18)	97%
Ammon Young (675)	88%
Robert J. Binder (662)	74%
William H. Stanbery (902)	93%
Oswald Train (861)	92%
Allen R. Charpentier (639)	80%
Milton J. Latzer (728)	90%
Henry Lewis, Jr. (682)	81%
Robert A. Madle (955)	86%
J. C. Starr (956)	78%
Philip S. Hetherington (785)	95%
Olon F. Wiggins (140)	94%
Jack Schaller (81)	80%

You will notice that Raymond P. Mariella received the highest grade, 97%, followed close behind by LeRoy Christian Bashore and Philip S. Hetherington each with 95%—the latter of these two, by the way, submitting the only test from a foreign country, England—and Donald V. Allgeier, Herbert E. Goudket, William S. Christoff, William H. Stanbery, Oswald Train, Milton J. Latzer, and Olon F. Wiggins follow up with marks between 90% and 94%.

We have tabulated the personal opinions that the test-takers were requested to give in Part Six of the test, and find the results as follows:



Of the twenty-nine entries, Dr. David H. Keller once again wins the honors as favorite author with six votes. Dr. Edward E. Smith comes second with five votes, John W. Campbell next with four, and Edgar Rice Burroughs follows fourth with three in his favor. Three authors tie with two votes each—Laurence Manning, Richard Vaughan, and Stanley G. Weinbaum. A. Merritt, John Russell Fearn, Jack Williamson, and Stanton A. Coblentz have one vote each, and one member has no favorite author.

John Carter wins by far as the favorite character, with six votes, the second favorite, Richard Seaton, tagging behind with three. Knute Savory, Hawk Carse, Taine of San Francisco, and Professor Jameson tie with two each. Characters who received one vote each were Tony Drake, George Gower, "Ham" Hammond, Tweel, Colonel Marsh, Norman Winters, Old Faithful, and Tumithak. Four test-takers had no favorite characters.

Outside of the fact that four members put down "The Exile of the Skies" as their favorite story and "The Skylark of Space" and "The Man Who Awoke" each received two votes, members could not agree on their favorites. Sixteen stories received just one vote each. They are: "Brigands of the Moon," "The Master Mind of Mars," "The Voyage of the Asteroid," "Twilight," "The Monster Men," "Old Faithful," "Robur, the Conqueror," "Skylark Three," "Invaders from the Infinite," "The Treasures of Atlantis," "The Ship of Ishtar," "Beyond Pluto," "The Brain-Eaters of Pluto," "Paradise and Iron," "The Skylark of Valeron," and "The Wreck of the Asteroid." Five have no favorite stories.

Only two members are undecided as to whether science-fiction has a promising future or not. The other twenty-seven who took this Second Test are confident that it has.

While Dr. Keller won as the favorite author, Edgar Rice Burroughs is the author of the favorite character, and Richard Vaughan the writer of the best-liked story.

There were many "catch" questions in the test that members had to be on their toes to answer correctly. One of these appeared in the Seventh Part. We asked "When was the first passenger rocket service started?" The answer, of course, is that it hasn't been. The last one in this section asked which state in the union has the shortest surveyed boundary. Without giving it much thought, most of the entries listed Rhode Island, and only one had the correct answer—New Jersey.

The twenty-first question in the Second Part was poorly worded, we regret. We stated that most science-fiction is published in "blank," leaving a choice between London, New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Though the correct answer is New York, we should have said the science-fiction was edited there. As a matter of fact, most science-fiction is published outside of New York, and members who remarked on this fact were given full credit, along with others who answered New York City. Similarly, in the true and false section, we mentioned that J. Harvey Haggard wrote the "Space-Guard" stories, when it should have been "Earth-Guard." Likewise, a couple of test-takers corrected us on number ten of Part Seven. We asked "What is a protozoa?" when it should have been "What is a protozoan?" Protozoa is plural.

"How many satellites has Venus?" was another catch question (Part Seven, Question 11). Venus, of course, has no known satellites. Many members answered that the earth has a circumference of 8,000 miles, in the next question—mistaking the word "circumference" for "diameter." The one requesting the popular nick-name for Mars referred to the planet and not the War-God. This was in the science section and should refer to science.

We'd like to let you read some of the essays submitted in Parts Five and Six.

In answer to the first section of Part Five, Clay Ferguson, Jr., up-and-coming young science-fiction artist, tells how he came to read science-fiction:

"Ever since I can remember, I have been an imaginative sort of chap. Even in my early youth, as I look back on it, I was always dissatisfied with 'things as they are'—or were, if you will. I have always wanted to improve things around me, therefore my thoughts often turned to the future with the accompanying speculations as to what was in store for man.

"Consequently, when a school pal of mine loaned me a copy of one of his 'science-fiction' magazines,

I was immediately lost head over heels in it. Not having any financial income at the time, I couldn't buy my own, so I used to practically beg him to bring me more of them. I carried on this borrowing practice through junior-high school and high school.

"As I remember it, I got my first glimpse of a science-fiction magazine in about 1929. The earliest stories I can remember are 'The City of the Living Dead' and 'The Universe Wreckers.' I don't have a copy of the former story, but I was extremely happy to run across the same city in Laurence Manning's 'Man Who Awoke' series recently. After I had borrowed and returned a few copies of my friend's magazines he began to lose interest in science-fiction and began to buy the magazines less frequently. But when he did buy them, he read them, then GAVE them to me. You can imagine my delight in beginning a science-fiction library. After we reached high school he stopped buying them altogether so I just HAD to buy my own. Ever since then I have always managed to scrape up enough money to buy 'all three' every month. I remember the first magazines I ever bought. They were Amazing Stories for June, 1931, with that 'powerful' story, 'The Power Planet,' by Murray Leinster, and Wonder Stories for June, 1931, with that most excellent story by Charles Cloukey, 'In the Spacosphere.' Those were the days of REAL SCIENCE FICTION."

"I have had little trouble in getting my friends interested in science-fiction," writes Donald V. Allgeier in answer to the second section of this part, calling for his friends' reactions to science-fiction. "My trouble lies in remembering who I loaned the magazine to so that I can get it back. Seven or eight of my friends have read my collection of science-fiction books and have cried for more. I took 'Ralph 124C-41 Plus' to high school and had to spend most of my time putting off prospective buyers and borrowers. I refused to take chances with it and loaned it only to a favored few, who were very enthusiastic about it.

"My magazines make wider rounds. My younger brother is almost as rabid a fan as I. When I run across a really good story, I like to share it with someone and so I let him read it. Our opinions often differ, but in the main we agree. He picks up a magazine and reads it through. I read first the stories which appear to be the most interesting. Some of my friends of the other sex also borrow from me and enjoy good science-fiction.

"My next door neighbor is a frequent borrower. A boy younger than myself and one a little older are, however, my most successful converts. They have read all my science-fiction and have got some for themselves. To them, science-fiction is always new and always engrossing. And so it is to me.

"I have loaned many copies to another friend in return for Argosies. He prefers those stories which are carefully worked out and contain tenable theories. To the best of my knowledge, only one close friend of mine doesn't care for science-fiction. He enjoys an occasional movie of that type, even reads a story or book once in a while, but much prefers other literature. My parents do not read it. But my circle of friends is largely composed of science-fiction enthusiasts."

The favorite science-fiction author of Howard Round, Jr., as shown by his essay in the first section of Part Six, is Laurence Manning. He says this about him:

"I believe that he hasn't received the amount of praise he deserves. Mr. Manning is not limited to wild, adventurous interstellar voyages as are Campbell and Smith, nor to the bizarre as is C. A. Smith, nor to the short-short as is Nevins. He can do every type of work with just as much excellence. Furthermore, every field he enters he does the topmost work in. For example, no interplanetary stories can compare with his 'Asteroid' tales and no time-travel story can compare with 'The Man Who Awoke.' He has the ability to construct a lively, human tale and can conceive many most original plots. Campbell couldn't have equalled his 'The Elixir' or his 'The Living Galaxy.' C. A. Smith couldn't have written a tale better than 'Caverns of Horror' despite his large vocabulary. Manning can do such things and I hope he will continue to do so."

Jim Blish tells us who his favorite science-fiction character is in the second section of Part Six:

"My favorite character was, and still is, although he no longer appears in science-fiction, Anthony



Gilmore's steely-eyed, two-fisted adventurer, Hawk Carse. I suppose his cowboyish cast affects my childish mind, although I pride myself on having higher intelligence, but his lightning draw, his flashing attack, his ever-ready ray-guns, all contributed to the 'terrific kick,' as my favorite author so aptly puts it, which the colossal, soul-stirring, flaming tales of Elliot Leithgow, Ku Sui, and my hero which flowed so remarkably from Mr. Gilmore's pen, gave me. His plots, while a little 'wild-westernish,' were scientific and had such a great effect upon me that I was drawing diving space-ships with blue and orange pencils in school for days after reading one of his stories. Hawk Carse!"

Herbert E. Goudket, prominent member of the SFL, lets us know which story is his favorite in his essay for the third section of Part Six:

"My favorite story of science-fiction is the original peak of space stories, or to enlighten those who have other ideas, 'The Skylark of Space.' In this masterpiece of space-traveling, a plausible beginning is to be had. Step by step the plot is built up. Everything is done in a manner possible for anyone to understand. When the point of space-traveling is reached, it is done in a manner quite possible, not, mind you, the way others do it. There is no impossible traveling at so many thousand light years per second; there is no improbable traveling via the fourth, fifth, and even sixth dimension. The goal of space-traveling is reached, and after an interesting and comprehensive trip, the travelers return to Mother Earth. I am sorry to state that whereas some of the present stories are as well-written and perhaps better explained, the authors both the job by allowing the characters to do impossibilities. No thing is impossible to their characters. They travel faster than even human thought can conceive, they use other dimensions (of which little is known), they take a piece of wire, some iron, and fashion rays and disintegrators; they use machines of sixth and millionth orders (by the way, what do they mean by orders?—commands?). None of this or any other absurdities are contained in 'The Skylark of Space,' which, to my mind, at least, is the best and my favorite science-fiction story."

Has science-fiction a bright future? Jos. Enloe leaves no doubt in his essay to cover the last section of Part Six:

"Listen!—If we fans thought that the publishing houses of science-fiction were going to close, the editors would receive enough mail to provide confetti for King George's Jubilee! Who knows, we might even start a march to New York to demand that we get our monthlies and other novels. Hear my movie producers—barken to this warning and give us some science-fiction films lest you find yourselves besieged by a bunch of us carrying death ray guns, or something."

"Seriously, it has a bright future because people are interested in the future of science, and even though the stories themselves are speculation, there seems to be much truth in them."

"Then there is the other side, the one of people tired of reading other kinds of fiction who can turn to these stories and they will taste like dessert after such."

"I am for more science-fiction movies, and more books on science-fiction in the public libraries. Incidentally, I'm for another quarterly (I can't get them here and I heard that you stopped printing them—'stoo bad!").

"As long as there are three or more science-fiction magazines published, I feel sure that the competition will be strong enough so that we will get the best along that line."

"Also orchids to WONDER STORIES for the founding of the S.F.L., which is one of the biggest steps in the progress of science-fiction since the birth of H. G. Wells."

"Long may science-fiction live!"

In our next issue we will print a few more of the best essays submitted in the results of this test.

## MORE SECOND TEST RESULTS

In the last issue we listed the names of the twenty-eight members who had passed the Second Science Fiction Test, published in our July, 1935 department, and won their First Class Memberships—with marks and details, also a few of the answers to the essay questions. The contest having remained open longer for foreign members, three more tests have been re-

colved and corrected, and three more members have been awarded their First Class Memberships. Two of the tests were from England and one all the way from Australia. This raises the number of members in this class, resulting from both tests so far, to seventy-two. These three new ones are as follows, with their member numbers and marks following the names:

Charles A. Fielder (757) ..... 82%  
Thomas Mark Mallett (884) ..... 70%  
Dennis Arthur Jacques (787) ..... 80%

We have tabulated the personal opinions that the test-takers were requested to give in Part Six of the test, and find the results as follows:

Richard Vaughan and Laurence Manning got one vote each as favorite author for these three late tests—the third one having no favorite. Blenkins and Knute Savory win as favorite characters, and the other one still has none he likes better than the rest. One vote each for favorite stories goes to "The Exile of the Skies" and "Voice of Atlantis," with number three still undecided. However, all agree that science-fiction has a very brilliant future, in the last of the four sections of Part Five.

In answer to the first section of Part Five, Florence Reider tells how she came to read science-fiction:

"One day about five years ago, I was wandering around in a small second-hand book store. As my sister wanted to look up a book, I went along rather unwillingly. I happened to see some back number magazines. Walking over to the table, I saw an interesting picture on the cover of a magazine called 'Science Wonder Stories.'"

"I can't exactly describe it, but it had a drawing of a rectangular space-ship poised over some city. Me being naturally curious, I picked it up and opened it. I cautiously read a few paragraphs—grew intensely interested, and read several pages, standing there quite oblivious to anything; my sister came over and interrupted me while I was right in the midst of a great space-flight."

"Bringing me out of an alluring imaginary land of fantastic adventuring, excitement, and wonder; back to the small, musty, book-lined walls of the second-hand book-shop. I couldn't stop reading that story; and clutching that magazine tightly in one hand, I approached the bookseller, and in a few minutes walked out of the store the proud possessor of my first copy of WONDER STORIES."

"I took that magazine home and sat right down and read every word of it—in fact, I read every word of it several times. The next week, I went back to the same shop and bought some more copies, and since then, that day, five years ago, I've been a very enthusiastic science-fiction fan."

"For a couple of years, I lost contact with science-fiction. About two years ago, I started to read science-fiction again, and I don't think I'll ever stop reading my science-fiction stories."

"My personal friends, if indeed I may be said to have any personal friends," writes George W. Greene in answer to the second section of this part, calling for his friends' reactions to science-fiction, "being, as I am, of a decidedly introverted nature, and being burdened with an excessive social inferiority complex, are all people of limited means and poor education. Generally speaking, they lack both the knowledge and the imagination necessary to an appreciation of the esthetic and educational values of science-fiction. I have tried earnestly, zealously, almost fanatically to arouse an interest among my friends in this, to me, most exciting, most beneficial, and most pleasurable form of literature in existence. I have not succeeded in forming a single new fan. I have succeeded, more than anything else, in getting myself laughed at. 'Nuts' and crazy are among the milder appellations applied to me by those whom I have tried to convert. They find no fault with a 'Wild West' story in which the hero does all sorts of impossible things, such as killing twenty desperate and quick-shooting cattle-rustlers without receiving a scratch, and without reloading his guns. Such stories as this they label 'fine,' 'keen,' and 'dandy'; but, to their infinitesimal intelligences, a story such as Weinbaum's 'Martian Odyssey' is 'crazy' and 'impossible.' Friends, indeed! Such people are no friends of mine."

"I have another class of friends, chosen because they were already science-fiction fans, whom I know only through the medium of correspondence; but I don't suppose an account of their reactions belongs here. Apart from these friends of correspondence, the reactions of my friends toward science-fiction, from



my point of view at least, may be adequately expressed in a single word—unsatisfactory."

The favorite science-fiction author of LeRoy Christian Bashore, as shown by his essay in the first section of Part Six, is David H. Keller, M. D. He says this about him:

"His talent as a writer is backed up by his long experience as a physician and psychologist. Dr. Keller's stories are always well-written, interesting, and educational. Most of his stories I consider to be masterpieces. Many of Dr. Keller's stories have appeared in *Wonder Stories* as well as in other science-fiction magazines. Dr. Keller very seldom disappoints his science-fiction fans, and that's why he is my favorite author.

"I prefer literature that not only entertains, but also informs and makes me think. Dr. Keller does this for me. Dr. Keller's stories are well 'seasoned'; they contain just the right amount of 'salt,' and they 'digest' excellently. I think that I need not say anything further as to why David H. Keller, M. D., is my favorite author. Dr. Keller is a self-made man. So are his stories."

Charles Nafziger, Jr., tells us who his favorite science-fiction character is in the second section of Part Six:

"My favorite character is one John Carter of Barsoom, formerly of Virginia, U. S. A., but now ruler of all Mars (according to Edgar Rice Burroughs, his creator). I have always liked John Carter since I first read about him; he is the typical science-fiction hero, large, manly, and very, very brave. What hero isn't? I have read every story he ever appeared in and liked him very much. I think there is a touch of humor in him that is indescribable. Of course, a character is only what the author makes him, but for some reason, John Carter is different. I have always liked the Tarzan type of hero and so that is the reason that I think John Carter is one of the most outstanding figures in the science-fiction field.

"Speaking of Tarzan, I have often wondered what would happen if Edgar Rice Burroughs should let the two men meet, Tarzan and John Carter. Take the hint, Mr. Burroughs!"

Raymond Peel Mariella, prominent fan, lets us know which story is his favorite in his essay for the third section of Part Six:

"After reading science-fiction for many years, it is a hard task to pick out one specific story. Printed between the covers of one *Amazing Quarterly* is 'Invaders from the Infinite,' which seemed to me to be the most thrilling and powerful story I have ever read.

"The plot is gigantic in its scope, and is the climax to a series of stories featuring Arcot, Morey, Wade, and Fuller. When Arcot perfects his mind-over-matter machine (head gear) it seemed to me the most auspicious moment in the history of science-fiction. The thought overwhelmed me.

"Creating hollow balls with which to encase entire planets was only a matter of thinking! No wonder the opposition failed!"

Has science-fiction a bright future? Ammon Young sincerely believes so in his essay to cover the last section of Part Six:

"It is an absolute fact that science-fiction has a

very bright and promising future. Contrary to the belief of many people, the surface of material for science-fiction stories has been merely scratched. There are so many new scientific discoveries being made and so many new theories being advanced, that there is absolutely no need for the back-work demanded by some of the other types of stories. This fact in itself will provide many stories which will be interesting because of their originality. The fact that science-fiction stories do not serve as many readers as some of the other types of stories does not forecast a gloomy future. Instead, it provides an excellent field into which this new, refreshing, and educational type of literature may advance. Last, but not least, the educational value of science-fiction cannot be overlooked."

As we see, considerably fewer members took the second test, and of those who did, fewer were either well known then or became well known later, either as fans, professionals, or both.

Clay Ferguson, Jr., had been doing artwork for *FANTASY MAGAZINE* and was well liked; but he didn't go on to become a professional artist in the field. Jim Blish made his name later as fan, fan publisher, and professional; Raymond Peel Mariella was a steady letter-writer for some time, and Oswald Train became a fan and later a professional publisher, as well as a book dealer. He submitted a number of questions for the third science fiction test. Robert A. Madle remained a well-known fan and fan publisher, tried his hand at book publishing, and is now a prominent dealer in fantasy and science fiction books and magazines. Olon F. Wiggins published a well-known fan magazine for a number of years, and was Chairman of the 1941 World Convention in Denver.

Because *WONDER STORIES* had become a bi-monthly, the third test appeared in the February 1936 issue. It followed the same general format as the first two, with slight differences. In part five, applicants were asked to write essays on (1) "...why you think time travel is either possible or impossible" and (2) "...what you would do if it had been proven to you that the world would come to an end one year from today." In part six, the questions for personal opinions were: (1) When do you think man will reach the moon, if at all, and why? (2) If you were asked to be a passenger in the first rocket trip to the moon, after being convinced that it was possible, would you accept? (3) What do you think about the feasibility of a universal language? (4) How long do you think man will survive on this planet, and why?

Those would have been interesting to read! Alas, we never had the opportunity, for *WONDER STORIES*'s April 1936 issue was the final one under Hugo Gernsback's editorship. The new publishers continued the Science Fiction League, but did not report upon the third test; no further tests were published.

---ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES [6/21/88]

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14. The Differences That Knowing Him Made; A Sprawling, Subjective Reminiscence of James Blish	OW 27, 1st Qtr 1976	[pp. 1030-1036]
15. The Health-Knowledge Years	OW 28/29, 10/13/76	[pp. 1125-1132]
16. [..."the Gernsback era"]	OW 43, 1/24/85	[pp. 1476-1479]
17. Hugo Gernsback's Science Fiction League	OW 49, 4/2/87	[pp. 1621-1634]
18. Once More Into the Breach?	OW 52, 9/25/87	[pp. 1709-1717]





7/10/88: ...well, you see it's this way: The little 'plan sheet' I have in front of me says that this should be the bacover of this issue. I have carefully determined that 9 sheets of 20# paper, plus envelope, are the maximum that can be mailed for the 2 ounce rate. But, despite my shoeorning, Doc's column ran a bit longer than I'd 'figured'. And then, two days ago I saw an ad stating that one of the local copy centers is having a half price sale, from the 11th thru the 17th. I was intending on "doing" thish myself, on the baby Canon--but I can't pass up a Deal like this! So, for the second issue in a row, you'll get an issue 10 or 12 pages 'larger' than you might otherwise have; lucky you! Ah, well; perhaps the Ditto issue will be small and home-made. ...or perhaps not.

In the meantime, I do just happen to have some letters to catch up on:

### SAM MOSKOWITZ

I have received the back numbers of OUTWORLDS and read them through with considerable interest. I was amazed to see that you were the repository of so many famous and veteran fans.

Lowndes in particular, has done quite a job for you. He has quite an outstanding memory for the details of the thirties when he began his heaviest reading, as did I. This stems, in part, from the fact that science fiction was uncommon and we carefully read every word involving the subject that we could come across and during "dry" periods carefully reread and reviewed it again. A favorite game of old-time fans of 50, 40, 30, years ago was to bounce what today would be trivia questions off one another, but we did not consider them trivia!

[6/9/88]

...I was going to say this is true even of fans of my generation; then I realized that even though I didn't "enter fandom" until 1961...I was reading sf thirty years ago... \*sigh\* But it is true that I recall a lot of "trivial" things from the lean years ...well, I certainly have more vivid memories of the first prozine I ever received [the February 1960 F&SF] and its Emsh cover ... than I do of the most recent issue--which I would have to get up and walk into the other room to see who'd done the cover.

I had thoughts of using Sam's second paragraph as an "introduction" to Doc's column thish -- but its placement here, as well as the appearance of the "Index" that finishes-up the current "Understandings" -- are not all that accidental:

All this talk the past few issues, of getting Doc Lowndes to do his "Memoirs", combined with some half-buried ambitions of my own, led me to make a suggestion to Doc: That I issue a collection of previous installments of "Understandings"--the majority of which were in the 70s issues of this fanzine...so a lot of you won't have read them (and those who did probably haven't kept those issues as readily available as I have!). Doc agreed that it would be nice to have all this material in one place, and while he will be annotating the material, it will prove a lot less work for him than starting from scratch.

After I made the suggestion, I went back and skimmed over the columns. I was quite surprised by a) the fact that there were more than I'd remembered, and by b) the range of topics covered.

It's still very early in the process, but I might note that I would not even attempt what will be a rather substantial volume without the computer, and that I'm deliberately not referring to it as a book.



My theory is that I have neither the financing nor the fortitude to attempt something such as a trade paperback, not to mention a hardcover, but.... Once I have a set of "masters", given copier-technology, I can "print" (or have printed) copies as the demand warrants, rather than trying to squeeze another box or two back there with the coloring books. By keeping it 8 1/2 x 11 side-stapled, it will be affordable for me...and for you.

The volume will contain a majority of the first eighteen installments, a related article, and an original article--all by Doc. I think it will prove to be something of both worth and interest, and I'm pleased that Doc responded favorably to my off-the-wall query. My very tentative "goal" is to have it ready for SERCON 3 (Feb. 1989; Louisville). ...we'll see: I have a lot of typing to do!

...you will, of course, be kept up-to-date ...in future issues.

Doing a fanzine, issue by issue, gives a faded sense of "history", but inevitably, no matter how introspective one is, older issues tend to fade to memories.... (As I discovered anew, when "researching" the "Understandings" Index!) Doing a fanzine with any substantial "history" behind it also leads to a continually changing "mailing list"; some recipients drop away ~~of their own accord~~ and new blood discovers your fanzine, or is discovered by you. Some of the newcomers are enthused enough to do what it takes ~~like sending me money!~~ ~~for a substantial~~ ~~run of FANTASY COMMENTATOR!~~ to have me send off a pile of back issues. I run some letters on long ago issues, mainly through my own procrastination. But I am always fascinated by the reactions of someone reading back-to-back a pile of paper that it took me a year, or more, to generate:

## A. LANGLEY SEARLES

I can't match Art Widner's record of 34 years between issues of YHOS (OUTWORLDS pp. 1670 and 1793) with FANTASY COMMENTATOR, which had only a 26-year gap, but I could with DEVIL TAKES THE HINDMOST. The last issue of the latter was #4, Spring 1947; by getting out another number I'd be over 40. But other fans could do far better than this. For example, I don't think Sam Moskowitz has put out an issue of his HELIOS since 1938 or 1939; he could claim a half-century gap. I doubt if this sort of one-upping is worth the effort, though. Nevertheless, we all have a certain liking for interesting trivia, so I'll make this suggestion: why not compile a Guinness-like book of records for fandom?

I was particularly grateful to receive from you OUTWORLDS 49, and read Doc Lowndes' installment of "Understandings". Since this has already been commented on by earlier readers, I shan't need to repeat what they have said, but will concentrate on what hasn't been. I must preface my feelings, however, by reiterating how useful, interesting and historically the piece was, and compliment you on printing it.

Its thrust is a bit different from the installment in OUTWORLDS 52, in that it is less pure reminiscence than factual survey. (I note this purely descriptively--it's no worse for that.) Here the reminiscences "soften" what might, if given straight, be more didactic than absorbing. I have to keep in mind, too, that much of what Doc describes may be newer to younger fans than it is to me. His thumbnail sketches of the principals involved seem fair and accurate; though I might have added a bit to his account of Edmond Hamilton. In the late 1930's and early 1940's Hamilton was considered a routine hack, so low had his reputation

fallen; but he wrote some very good stuff in the 1950's and 1960's, and I at least ended up by regarding him as an underrated craftsman who evolved throughout his entire career. Overall, I might even class him above Asimov, and he certainly evolved better than other s-f writers with long careers, Murray Leinster for instance.

I think I'd enjoy much of the slower-paced fiction in WONDER STORIES more now than I did in 1935-36, when I much preferred the faster fare Tremaine was offering. To me the 1934-36 and 1937-42 Tremaine/Campbell years together represent the Golden Age of s-f -- which is really no fixed period in historic time, but a flexible and elastic term probably reflecting one's own characteristics as much as what one reads. As to the "favorite story" winners Doc quotes: I never did like THE MOON POOL (which I read in 1938), loved E. E. Smith's novels then but couldn't read them now because of their one-dimensional characterization, and may not have been mature enough to appreciate Spohr's "The Final War" (though its predictive value has proved zilch). Some time I must reread Vaughan's "Exile of the Skies", though, which I recall enjoying very much. I've a feeling it might be in the same category as the stories of Laurence Manning, particularly his "Man Who Awoke" series, which have stood up to time very well.

It's hard to say how much scientific knowledge I absorbed almost unconsciously while reading s-f; probably a good bit. I recall one instance of its having been of practical use to me: In Jack London's story of invisibility, "The Shadow and the Flash" he posits a perfectly light-absorbing paint--black--as making objects disappear. When constructing bookshelves for the homes I have lived in I always painted them and the wall behind them a flat black; and they really do disappear. I've since seen ceiling areas in industrial areas painted this way to make pipes, electrical wiring, fans, sprinkler heads, etc. less noticeable, and the process works well. Interior decorators probably know the principle, but there weren't many of these around when London wrote his story (around 1900, I'd guess), so he may have hit on the notion through personal observation.

Doc might also have mentioned that AMAZING's editor Sloane once expressed the personal belief that interplanetary flight was an impossible fantasy.

Of the few typos in "Understandings" the only important ones to cite are those of names: Philip Nowlan's last name doesn't begin with a "k" (1622), and Poe's middle name is spelt with two "a"s.

Regarding the Science Fiction League itself, Doc's concept of it as a fanzine within a regular magazine is fascinating (1626). I'm not sure I agree, though; mightn't we call all reader's columns of letters fanzines if our definition is this broad? And he missed one delightful facet of history in reporting (1633) that the Newark chapter included Sam Moskowitz and Robert Bahr: Bahr is one of Sam's pseudonyms. I suspect Sam needed three members to charter the chapter and had only one other besides himself. If it was his first excursion into print, it was a double one!

Finally, I hope Doc Lowndes will write an "Understandings" installment on his experiences in the CCC in 1934 -- why he entered, how he found things there, the extent of its influence (if any) on his life and thinking. Perhaps there'd be little s-f in this except "pure" reminiscences of Doc himself; but it'd be no worse for that!

I've a question for Doc, too: Somewhere buried in the SFL reports (or maybe it's a letter in the Readers' Column) there's a very interesting ac-



count by P. Schuyler Miller. He tells of a fan he encountered who had done more to proselytize fantasy than anyone he knew. The man operated a lending library, made a point of buying as many fantasy books as possible, and recommended them to customers at every opportunity. Of course he also read them himself, and could make explicit comments about their good points. I don't know if Miller named this particular fan, but if he didn't I can reveal his identity: it was Thyril L. Ladd, who wrote for FANTASY COMMENTATOR for many years. Ladd never somehow got into the main stream of fandom until I persuaded him to write for FC; I think he was put off by the squabbling and feuding he encountered there. His sole interest was reading and enjoying fantasy, and in communicating his enthusiasm for it to others. Up to the end of his life he never lost this genuine love for a good fantasy story, his favorite theme being the "lost race" one. (In fact, he may have been the one who publicized the latter, and actually created the category, now everywhere recognized.) Anyway, I hope some day to put together some of my correspondence with Thyril, and if Doc can guide me to this bit on him by Miller I'd be grateful indeed.

I'll also add, for Harry Warner's benefit (OUTWORLDS #53, p. 1745) that Thyril was the last of my correspondents to put commas at the end of each line in the address on a letter. (In fact, he used even to add a comma after the street number!) Tom Cockcroft used to, too, I believe, but reformed some time in the 1970's; and I did myself forty years ago, having been taught it was the proper tradition in school.

I enjoyed the other issues of OUTWORLDS, and resist the temptation to comment on locs therein, in particular Doc's own, because I've already written beyond any reader's normal interest span. Keep them coming! [4/22/88]

...not mine! As I believe I mentioned to you, I'd intended to abridge your LoC; but I just kept typing away, and...! (And, if you do put together that piece on Ladd ...and just happen not to have enough room in FC....?)

I like your concept of "Guinness" Book of Fannish Records. I (as every fan does, I'm sure) believe I've achieved a few "Firsts" ~~if not necessarily~~ ~~possibly~~! Such as "preprinting" the major speeches of a convention [Genuine ConFusion] before they were presented [OUTWORLDS 37; Jan. '84]; such as "having given the best Worldcon fan guest of honor speech made by a tall person in a caftan" [(c) 1979 by Ro Lutz-Nagey; emphasis mine]; sometimes I am slightly aghast at my younger self...but not often!; ...such as being the first fanned to "publish" a single fanzine issue in four different media: "Live"; printed; video; audio cassette. ...well, that last "entry" is only three quarters complete, but by Ditto...really!

...I like your concept, Langley. I'd like somebody other than I to do it though!

I doubt if I learned the concept through science fiction, but in 1966 I painted the walls of a barracks room with black enamel paint...to go with the orange ceiling, and the orange rug. Of course I was already on less than favorable terms with the First Sergeant, in that my roommate and I were the only ones in the squadron with the gall to wear a mustache. Sometimes I am slightly aghast at the actions of my younger self. ...perhaps more often than I'd really like to admit at this stage of my life!

...and, as I've said before: People come and People go...and OW readers are no exception....

Here, then, are some comments on OW55:

## BARNABY RAPOPORT

Though this is the first time I've written to you, I used to be a subscriber to OW back in the mid-seventies...and I hadn't quite realized how long ago that was until, reading OW55, I came upon Billy Wolfenbarger's column. That familiar magic prose really struck a chord of memory. Suddenly, this really was the same fanzine I used to read all those years ago.

In the same way, it was a bit of a time warp to see Skel, Brad Foster and Taral in OW...but that's just me; it's been so long since I've seen an ish.

Flipping through OW55, I was struck by the consistency of the artwork. This wasn't a matter of technical quality, though certainly some of the art was technically expert. The back cover was especially fine; I'd read that Taral was a good parodist, but this was the first example I'd seen. No, it was more the feel than the technique. Each piece sustained some elusive quality of warmth or charm. In fact, that's true of the written contents of OW as well. Maybe I'm just trying to describe the exact flavor of fannishness. In its unobtrusive way, this is one of the most edited fanzines I've ever seen. And OW is contagious...look at all these ellipses I'm using.

I was boggled by the length of your film lists, since there's never been a trace of film stuff in OW...but the statistic that really got to me was the imminence of your 157th convention. I just attended my first two, Boskone and Lunacon, and I'll probably go to number three, Readercon, this fall. If you quit now, I might catch up to you in about seventy years.

At Lunacon I did get to see Bob Tucker in the flesh. He almost told the Rosebud story at a panel on fannish humor. However, he displayed no such reticence when he demonstrated smoothing.

I've never read "The Princess of Detroit", but I will if I come across a run of FUTURE in an attic somewhere. I've run across similar stories in the Ultimate reprint magazines and the occasional Moskowitz anthology, and I usually enjoy them. The crazier they are, the better. There's a quality of fun, wishful imagination that went out of SF, with rare exceptions, as the level of scientific accuracy increased. I'd hate to consider the laws of motion implied by Richard Shaver's stories, but they were undeniably more exciting than Newton's.

I've just read a Captain Future novel that I found in a used bookstore, QUEST BEYOND THE STARS. There's nothing like that in today's SF. It features Captain Future's discovery of the Birthplace of Matter, which is Edmond Hamilton's theory of continuous creation. This was a gigantic turning spiral of radiant energy. Atomic particles are really bubbles of energy, and the ceaseless turning of the Birthplace produces them the way a whirlpool produces air bubbles. As Hamilton described it, it was actually a very exalted image, more so than any Big Bang.

Nowadays, it seems like you need three or four advanced degrees to write an SF story. The Tucker and Jodie Offutt columns could have been paired under the title, SF...Yesterday and Today; the jargon Jodie describes could have been from the latest Best SF of the Year anthology.

I have to say that Skel's piece seemed to ramble on for too long, even as it innocently built up to one of his twisted epiphanies, the mad--but instantly believable--excuses for not repairing the frog-and-celery typewriters. I know his method is how his ruminations imperceptibly drift into the ridiculous, but this time the build-up was just too gradual for me.

Now...what's all this about ferrets? [6/20/88]



## SKEL

Wipeout! What a delightful little scene--the head of Joe Christopher's English department saying "There goes three-fourths of your colleagues!" Then again maybe he was exaggerating. Maybe it would only have been one-second of them. Ha! 'Three-fourths' indeed. Or is this part of the New Mathematics? If it catches on there'll have to be some translations in literature as well-- "He was taken by surprise when the attack came from an unexpected fourth." "He begged for mercy, but I gave him no fourth." "The winds four fourths." "I'm late, it's a fourth past three." "They were fourthing the search area." After all, we don't want to discourage reading by having all the books use archaic language, do we?

The head of the English department... The sense that would be conveyed by the missing words covered by the ellipsis (or ellipse, if you prefer) back there is basically "Well, bugger me with a bent banana." Incidentally, I wasn't sure whether it was 'ellipse' or 'ellipsis' back there so I checked in my dictionary and discovered it was both. As usual, checking in the dictionary is not recommended. I now know for instance that 'elytron' is both the "outer hard wing-case of a coleopterous insect", and a "vagina". I don't know the name of the guy who compiled this dictionary, but I reckon he must have had a piss-awful sex life.

Then again, "I can't get no SATISFACTION", was nearly my song too. Sometimes when I write a piece it is to stimulate a reaction, and in those instances the satisfaction I get is very much dependent upon that reaction. It's a bloody good job

that "Add Vance..." wasn't such a piece. It is fortunate that I got all the satisfaction I needed from writing that piece, and from sharing it with you, because no other piece of mine has ever been quite so roundly ignored. Do you think, oh I know it's silly to suggest this but perhaps it wasn't quite as spiffy a piece as I thought? Maybe it's a good job I'm not doing as much writing lately.

It's this last state of affairs that will prevent me ever getting a word-processor. Oh, I'd love to replace this typewriter with a word-processor. Love to. Unfortunately I just can't justify it. Not 'frittering away' such a large proportion of our disposable income on something I'd no longer make adequate use of. In fact if this typewriter gives up the ghost I don't think I could spend the money to replace it with a clear conscience. The amount of writing I'm doing these days wouldn't even justify the outlay on a new biro.

On the other hand--I want one. On which possible outcome would you put your money? I dunno what kids want shoes for anyway. They only wear the buggers out.

Mind you, I am a bit of a Luddite. Words and such on a screen don't give me near as much satisfaction as words on a piece of paper. If writing or modifying a program and have to debug a logic error I invariably print out a hard copy and work on that. It's what you feel comfortable with, I guess. I blame it all on my upbringing, and my mother. As a kid, when I was bored and moping about the house, getting up my mother's nose, she'd always suggest I go away and read a book or magazine. She never said "Go away and read the television." [4/13/88]

## ROGER

## WEDDALL

DEAR BILL, I THOUGHT I'D WRITE TO SAY HI, AND COMMENT ON A FEW DIFFERENT TOPICS (FOLLOWING THE PRISTINE, CLEAR PRINT OF 'OUTWORLDS' NOS 54+55, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE THE LEAST I COULD DO TO MAKE MY LETTER IN RESPONSE AS LEGIBLE AS POSSIBLE - AT LEAST YOU'LL NOW BE ABLE TO READ WHAT I'M SAYING WITHOUT GIVING YOURSELF EYE STRAIN). FIRST UP, I ENJOYED RECENT ISSUES... I WOULD COMMENT ON #55 IN DETAIL BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO WHILE I WAS OUT MY DELIGHTFULLY CUTE CAT ('TYPO') WAS SICK ON TOP OF IT, RENDERING IT ALMOST COMPLETELY ILLEGIBLE... I GUESS THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE PUTS THE BEST FANZINES AT THE TOP OF THE PILE TO BE READ/LOCCED. THANKFULLY, ALTHOUGH #54 WAS DIRECTLY UNDER IT, IT WAS SPARED THE SPIN. "MY, YOU DO PRODUCE A HANDSOME FANZINE" IS MY FIRST THOUGHT. EVEN SOMEONE WITH NO UNDERSTANDING OF ENGLISH WOULD COME AWAY FROM LOOKING AT A COPY OF 'OUTWORLDS' AND BE MIGHTILY IMPRESSED. IT SEEMS THAT, PAGE AFTER PAGE, YOU ARE CONSTANTLY THROWING UP NEW IDEAS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF NETWORK. BLESSED ARE CONTRIBUTORS TO 'OUTWORLDS', SAFE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR WORDS WILL BE GRACED BY THOUGHTFULLY CHOSEN NETWORK, AND NICELY Laid OUT, TO BOOT. I WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY WHAT YOU DID WITH DAVE YODER'S ARTICLE RE BIRDS + BIRD FEEDERS. YOU HELPED TURN WHAT I THOUGHT A FAIRLY MINOR PIECE INTO A FEATURE ARTICLE. BUT OF ALL #54 MY FAVORITE PIECE WAS STEPHEN LEIGH'S ARTICLE ON AMDD AND PAINTING. DID RE YOUR COMMENTS AND MY COMMENTS IN 'MIMOSA', I DIDN'T SAY I THOUGHT THAT 'OUTWORLDS' WAS TOO "IN-GROUPISH", DID I? I DIDN'T MEAN TO. THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FANZINE BEING RELATIVELY UNACCESSIBLE AND IT BEING IN-GROUPISH, WHICH WORD I ASSOCIATE WITH NOT ANYONE ELSE TO BECOME INVOLVED EXCEPT THE SMALL THROTTLED GROUP. I MUST APOLOGISE IF YOU THOUGHT I WAS SAYING I FELT THAT YOU WERE TRYING TO DO THAT. THE REASON I MENTIONED 'OUTWORLDS' IN PARTICULAR WAS BECAUSE IT WAS AND IS CLEARLY A SUPERIOR FANZINE AND YET, FOR ME, SOMEHOW INACCESSIBLE. AS I'M SURE I SAID IN 'MIMOSA', THAT'S CLEARLY MY PROBLEM, NOT YOURS, AND I DON'T FEEL I'M BEING HARD DONE BY. ON THE OTHER HAND, I WOULD FEEL

HARD DONE BY IF YOU STOPPED SENDING ME COMES... NOT, I'M STARTING TO GET TO KNOW YOU AND YOUR OTHER READERS. GIVE THE FANZINEGIST! UNTIL WHENEVER, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK - AND MAY MY NETWORK'S CAT CURSE EVERY MAN ON ONE OF YOUR

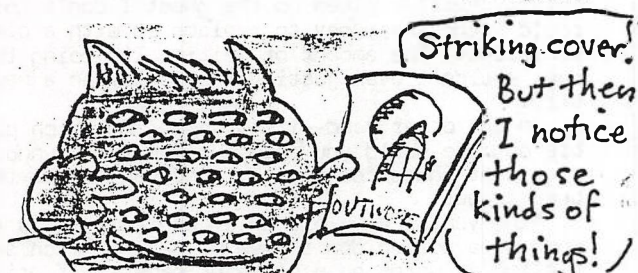
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7/16/88: ...yes, the copy center s\*a\*l\*e ends tomorrow; the fifteen pages preceding this are mastered and ready to go. However, in that yesterday was the last day of my current employment 'assignment', and I've nothing lined-up to replace it as an income generator...it becomes even more advantageous for me to get as much of this issue done as I can in the next 24 hours. Let's see how I do...as we move on to the initial feedback on OUTWORLDS 56:

DAVID THAYER



MILT STEVENS

I see you're still trying to publish The Perfect Fanzine. As I recall, you were also trying to do that fifteen years ago. I suppose it's a harmless enough pursuit, and it does keep you off the streets. If you finally succeeded in publishing The Perfect Fanzine, you would probably turn into dust as the cosmic gunkum that's been holding you together evaporated. (I don't expect that to really happen, since you're undoubtedly held together with stencil cement.)

Mike Resnick is correct that the ideas in Lon Atkins' article are a mechanical approach to constructing plots. However, there is no particular reason why plot construction shouldn't be mechanical. As far as I'm concerned, there are two classes of plots, OK and not-OK. Having a not-OK plot is a defect, but some writers have done well without having a plot at all. Once you have an OK plot, you then have to add all the interesting stuff. Some of the oldest plots are frequently the most successful. For instance, I've seen a serious article suggesting the plot of CATCH 22 was taken from "The Iliad", and the film "War Games" was an updated version of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice".

After reading the article by Sam Moskowitz, it occurred to me that "Literary Detective Stories" might be an idea for a TV series. I can imagine the literary detective uncovering things like a famous literary liticher writer secretly supporting himself by writing sleazy sex novels and a successful two-fisted adventure writer really being a maiden lady librarian. Come to think of it, "Literary Blackmail Stories" might be a better title for the series. (I wonder if anyone has ever done a mystery story in which the investigator's motive is blackmail. Real private detectives are involved in blackmail far more frequently than in homicides.)

Ditto: (the convention) impresses me as a bad idea. Having one annual gathering of fanzine fans is a good idea. A second fanzine convention sort of defeats the original idea.

Like Harry Warner, I don't really know the meaning of the word "funky". However, the word is most often used to describe things I would call "scuzzy".

[7/5/88]

Intellectually, I'd probably have to agree with your apprehensions about Ditto: The Convention. But we're not talking about an intellectual exercise; rather an emotional gathering of ~~vaguely~~ kindred souls. You, like me, Milt...probably remember the days when there was a sf con a month, rather than two or three or more a week. I suppose, in a lot of ways, they were more special for their scarcity...but enough people attended and liked them, that they proliferated...whether "we" like the results, or not. Perhaps, in retrospect, the first five Corflu's will join the first two Autoclaves as "special" because of their uniqueness. The primary argument I see against a "second annual Corflu" is the fact that the people I want to see there won't make the effort to attend one, if there is an alternative. But enough of the people I would like to see at Corflu's haven't ~~made the effort~~ made it to the four I have, so mayhaps this will double my chances of seeing them at least once a year. For me...well, I've enjoyed the last four years to an extent that I'd like to experience that enjoyment at least twice a year! And, hey, if it "doesn't work out"...we can always reinvent the ~~wheel~~ concept in another decade or so; that, after all, is what fandom does best!

...as a Public Service, for Milt and Harry:

**funk-y<sup>1</sup>** (fung'kē), *adj.*, **funk-i-er**, **funk-i-est**. overcome with great fear; terrified. [1830-40; FUNK<sup>1</sup> + -y<sup>1</sup>]

**funk-y<sup>2</sup>** (fung'kē), *adj.*, **funk-i-er**, **funk-i-est**. 1. Jazz. having an earthy, blues-based quality or character. 2. having an offensive smell; evil-smelling; foul. [1905-10, Amer.; FUNK<sup>2</sup> + -y<sup>1</sup>] —**funk-i-ly**, *adv.* —**funk-i-ness**, *n.*

--- THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE; Second Edition Unabridged; 1987; p. 777

HARRY WARNER, JR.

I should make marginal notes in genzines the way I do in apazines, for greater ease in writing locs. Now I can't locate the spot in this issue where someone mentioned in passing the problem of buying a second copy of a book because of failure to remember already owning it. I'd thought for a long while that I was the only person in the world who had such a problem until I finally confessed it in SAPS and found several other members with the same problem. Now it comes into the open in OUTWORLDS. Several circumstances make this an acute difficulty for me. One is the amount of time I've spent over the years in the public library, borrowing books, looking through other books while in the library, or just dawdling in the stacks and looking at titles on spines. Now I find it almost impossible to remember for sure if a book I'm considering buying seems familiar because I saw it in the library or because I already own a copy. Another trouble is the fact that so many of my books haven't been freed from their pasteboard carton confines for many years and when I do investigate the contents of a box I invariably find several volumes there which I didn't know I owned. In general, I buy in cases of doubt if the book I'm considering doesn't cost too much. Sometimes I'm rewarded by acquiring a later edition or an expanded edition of a book I'd forgotten I owned. Then I keep in mind the faint possibility that someday someone else might exist with my peculiar combination of interests, in which case I'll be able to dispose of all inadvertent duplicating.

On the other hand, if I'd scribbled in the margin at another place in this issue, it would have been wasted trouble. Your grumbling on page 1817 about starting lines with dots caused me to try to think of ways to fool the computer (I ran across



an occasional problem of this type with the newspaper terminals) and then I found much later along in the issue that you'd discovered the solution to the problem. My thinking was along the lines of spacing between the dots or inserting arbitrary characters before and between them which you would later remove.

Syd Field's plotting system is one way of constructing a mystery novel. It might be very helpful to an author if he happened to submit to an editor who liked this system and it isn't too different from the typical mystery novel published in the years when paperback publishers gulped down mystery novels the way they now use up women's romances. But a glance through any batch of successful mystery novels taken at random will show there is no trace of it in many of them. You can find mystery fiction in which the murder doesn't occur until more than halfway through the manuscript. One celebrated Ellery Queen novel solves the case and ties up all the loose ends with one-third of the book to go, because at this point Ellery realizes he has made a mistake and implicated the wrong suspect and must do his thing all over again. Some novels merely finish up action which mostly occurred before the beginning of the story.

I wouldn't believe the things Chris Sherman says about the capabilities of CD ROM technology if I hadn't read similar things in various other places. One person can be wrong but it's doubtful if he is if several persons are in agreement. In fact, I read somewhere about prospects for a new tiny tape recorder that won't need tape; its electronics will be capable of storing more than the contents of a reel of tape. If this goes on and science makes a few more advances along the same line, there's a good chance that all the verbiage which results from the next big fan feud could be stored on a single CD.

The search for the fiction of Richard Parmenter was fascinating as told by Sam Moskowitz. Investigations of this sort into the identity of writers from the early prozines always interest me (Graham Stone has had several successes which he has described in FAPA), mainly because the time is growing so short in which there is much of a chance of making new discoveries. Virtually all of those obscure writers about whom nothing is known must be dead by now and their children or other surviving immediate relatives are getting up in years. Only rarely does the third generation know or care much about what their grandparents or great uncles may have done two-thirds of a century ago, and in another ten or fifteen years, any source of information previously unknown will be those third generation descendants.

I know from experience that the fan historian shouldn't depend too trustingly on memories of things that happened many decades ago when those memories conflict with primary written or published sources contemporary with the events in question. I was bawled out by one oldtime fan for getting wrong the nickname for a recurring con; he'd attended those cons and I hadn't so he must be right and I must be wrong. But I'd used the nickname that had been applied to the series of cons in scores of fanzines publishing conreports; he just remembered incorrectly. Another fan complained my references to him in A WEALTH OF FABLE contained many inaccuracies, and yet most of what I'd written there about him was taken from a long letter which he'd written to me some years earlier. The 200th FAPA mailing contained a literal transcript of an interview with one of its charter members which contained numerous inaccuracies resulting from faulty memory. [7/7/88]

## HARRY ANDRUSCHAK

When I came across Brian Earl Brown's letter, and his comments on quantum mechanics and the Copenhagen Interpretation, I was tempted to write a long rebuttal. He got it all wrong. However, it is probably far better to recommend that you and any other fan interested in a good, accurate and fairly understandable book on quantum mechanics should try to get a copy of Heinz Pagel's THE COSMIC CODE. It was published in paperback in 1986 by Bantam (I think) and should still be available. I do not regard Paul Davies as being worth reading. Gribben is so-so, although his latest book THE OMEGA POINT shows some promise.

Lon Atkins and Mike Resnick for make for some contrasting reading. I tend to agree with Mike, probably because I am re-reading James Joyce's ULYSSES, and enjoying its tangled set of happenings that can hardly be a plot in the traditional sense.

Harry Warner, Jr. wonders why us technicians at JPL didn't get the colors right at first with the Viking Lander? Well, we were rushed. Also, the lander had been inactive for almost 11 months, and the calibration drifted. We did get it right eventually, after all. Had to fine tune the computer program that adjusted the three pictures through three filters into something approaching real life. By the way, I would describe the color of Mars' sky as "salmon", but then I eat a lot of fish and may be prejudiced.

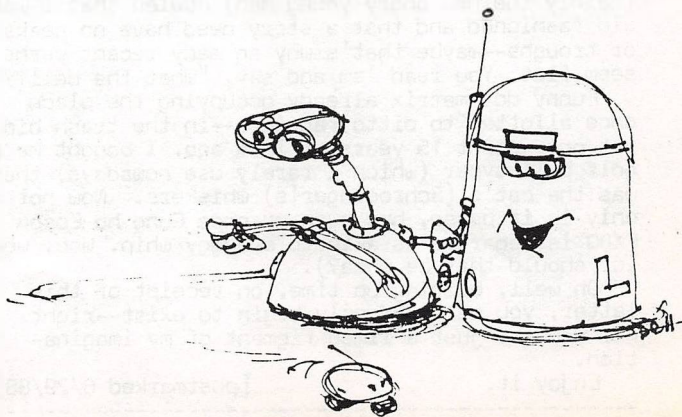
Latest findings show that Pluto does have a very very thin atmosphere. But at that distance from the sun, the sky is black from the surface. Trust me. (That atmosphere may only appear when Pluto is on that part of its orbit that brings it closest to the sun. The atmosphere may freeze out when it swings away from the sun.)

On my 13th birthday, Sputnik One went into orbit. A nice birthday present.

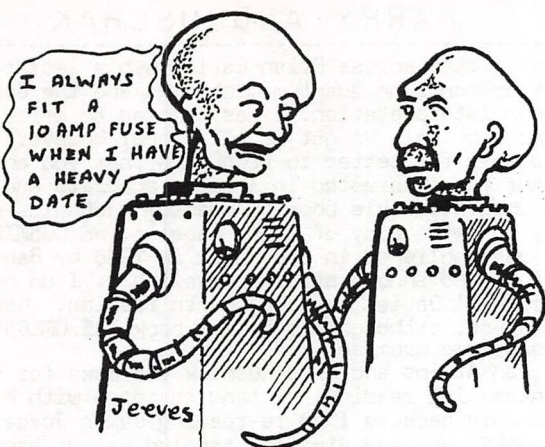
Today the New York TIMES carried the news that the second USSR spacecraft to Mars has been successfully launched. The two spacecraft will arrive at Mars and do all the things that JPL would have been interested in doing if we had ever been given the funds.

I wonder if I am too old to learn Russian, and defect to the USSR? I think I might be able to wangle a job at Baikonur Cosmodrome for their 1994 follow-on mission to Mars. What do you think, Comrade? [7/13/88]

...ah, but if James Joyce were in Lon Atkins' shoes today, and attempting to sell his first novel, would any commercial publisher "buy" ULYSSES? I really, really doubt it.







## TERRY JEEVES

That bacover thingy was interesting... as was the front cover doohickey. I much preferred the interior art, especially good old Alan Hunter.

Why no dot matrix in this issue? I demand dot matrix in my fanzines, none of this up market laser printing and stuff. In fact, I think all fen (apart from me) ought to have to go back to mimeo, so there.

[...on Brian Earl Brown's] tilting with popular versions of Quantum mechanics. That's my favorite tippie -- along with relativity and cosmology. I stick with Gribben (and others) on the Quantum effect FTL on the French photon experiment, but still can't see what is so special about Schrodinger's cat. As Brian says, we fen out here don't exist until you hear from us...but the same applies to EVERYTHING. There ain't even coffee in this cup beside me until I take a swig at it. As for the cat, well in my book it's either dead or alive from the time that particle triggers (or fails to trigger) that cyanide pellet. It's just that until we open the box, we don't know which happened--but that doesn't mean our opening the box makes the mechanism decide. Even worse is the idea that at every decision, large or small, the world line splits into two directions. Sounds even crazier than Hoyle's continuous creation, but at least he had a theory as to where the new matter came from. The split worldline johnnies seem to have a whole new universe of matter appearing from nowhere at every hiccup.

Tickled by "Art of Plotting". When (some 20 years ago) I wrote an ERG article which included the suggestion that a good story should build to at least one climax or peak point, then close as soon after that as possible, several readers (mainly the new angry young men) howled that I was old fashioned and that a story need have no peaks or troughs--maybe that's why so many recent yarns seem flat. You read 'em and say, "What the Hell?!"

Funny dot matrix already occupying the place once allotted to ditto fanzines--in the trash bin, yet only about 15 years or less ago, I bought me a golf ball typer (which I rarely use nowadays) that was the cat's (Schrodinger's) whiskers. Now not only is it passe, but even my once Gung ho Epson FX80 is regarded as akin to a buggy whip. Woe, woe (or should that be whoa?).

Oh well, belting up time, on receipt of this letter, you will suddenly begin to exist--right now you are just a limbo figment of my imagination.

Enjoy it.

[postmarked 6/29/88]

## ALAN HUNTER

Many thanks for OUTWORLDS 56 and the continuing exposure. It is warming to see the minor wave of interest my artwork has created.

That is one of the main differences between working for the fan- and the pro-zines--feedback. The only way you know your pro work is appreciated is when the editor commissions you for the next issue. The other difference is the time factor. Fanzines will accept work already completed, or allow generally a couple of months for special requests. The pro world always wants the work yesterday, or almost. Of course, they pay, but I frequently wonder if it is worth the hassel: especially, like me, when you do not rely on your art for a living.

THE ALABAMA KID article was fascinating. It might even inspire me to have a go. I have always fancied myself as a writer, ever since I won a short story contest in AUTHENTIC SF many years ago and had a few stories printed in fanzines.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE--the Article, was also interesting reading. All that detective work. Also, I read "The World Unseen" many years ago and, ever since Fantastic Voyage hit the screen, have been wondering how Isaac Asimov managed to claim all the credit without a mention of the originator.

And all those readers' letters with such exciting things to say. Makes me wonder what I have done with my life.

[7/7/88]

But Alan...some of these "readers" will express envy at the body of artwork to which you have signed your name! And, although the 'exposure' is slim this time -- I certainly am pleased to help keep that 'wave' flowing....!

...sometimes one of my "ideas" is positively inspired. I had all these little 'dots' you see, and they weren't Blue...so:

## JEANNE BOWMAN

Well, better to write than be written off. Robert assured me that you're probably teasing me with a dot. "Oh Jeanne, the love affair is over." Robert is very good at explaining fannish traditions. I was almost riled up enough to write an awful letter, but that was yesterday when a dot was the last straw in the matrix of a bad day. That crossword puzzle last time (before this) caused the delay. You knew that could happen & it did. I see now there was a logic to it & I actually got some of it correct. But I knew I was going to be fucked with by some misspellings & cuteness & I don't usually do crossword puzzles. (I'll play Scrabble, Boggle, Badpuns Mrs Malaprop Goes to Beach Blanket Babylon and Obscure Dictionary Roulette just about any time. I mean, just the other day I impressed all get out of my ~~sniffless~~ pal who's real good at Trivial Pursuit [I have never tried the game] by telling her that "boondocks" was a Filipino word.) In fact, the more I think about what I like, verbally, the more I realise I don't like crossword puzzles. It made okay art; without it I wouldn't have learned there are entire dictionaries designed to be used by crossword puzzlers. (Why, I just realised the shape is not the source of "cross" word.) You see I was contemplating the form while in a bookstore (my husband & I were out on a date) and found HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN CROSSWORD PUZZLE. "Oohboy," I thought, "I'll make one up & send it to Bill. All the clues will write a loc in the blanks & then he'll get tortured too." Fortunately this evil intent went no further as the



book was only as exciting as its title -- about 1 page of text, talking about various research tools for easy crossword puzzler solving & building and 30 pages of graph paper, some with blackened squares in patterns. Lucky for you it cost more than \$1.00 or you would be seeing, holding in your hand, a truly unbelievable book. So, as you read those two newspapers, do you do the xword puzzles??

I am enclosing a pair of devices you will instantly present to Devon Michael, or someone close to him who does not ever again wish to stab or be stabbed by diaper pins again ever. In the event that he doesn't need these (only in the Eighties have plastics become such an intimate part of our lives) I am sure you will spend many happy hours puzzling them out. (Boy, will I feel silly if you already have them & use 'em for earrings & zipper pulls & exotic plant ties [I was going to say roach clips, but no].) And if he doesn't live in Cinsanity (I will not get up & go trundle out that file drawer, I will not, Sam Moskowitz I'm not) you make sure he does get them before too long. Nick will object if I get up. He's crabby, he's got new teeth. Two on the bottom & two on the top. He laughs now. He fed me a piece of bagel & laughed & giggled about it this evening. He loved sitting in my lap with his fingers (with bagel) on my chin as I chewed. I dunno, it's something about the chortle & communion of one who fits in the crook of my arm & shares -- words fail, it was a joyous time.

I very much enjoyed the chronology, or journal-like entries of your comments interwoven in the wind (Now, I do things with metaphors [if they don't have pimentos I eat them] myself but is that wind as in the willows or wind as in the long and road?) of the fanzine. Ooops, it's after midnight, full moon & silliness time. It ought to shut up those who complained of lack of you. I liked it. I read for you first. (After that damned dot I didn't want to be intimidated by the fact that others [not mothers] had \*contributed\*.)

Nighty night.

[6/28/88]

As it happens, the very same evening I received your Care Package, I saw Devon Michael Leigh (and parents, and sibling) down at The Bobs' concert (at Cincinnati's newest riverfront pavilion), and passed on your gift. I'm not quite sure Denise knew what to make of all this...but, since becoming a "mother" she's ~~gotten boring~~ also used that state of affairs as a lame excuse for not doing fanzines, or at least contributing to mine.... [And, unless someone blows the whistle and points this out to her, in about six months, when she gets around to reading this, I'll get a blistering phone call; no new GREYMALKIN; no LoC...but still response!]

Now then, back to you, Ms. Bowman: I actually paused to make a copy of the NEW! Di-D-Klip FOR DIAPERS package, before passing it on. After very serious consideration, and much soul-searching, however, I have decided that my editorial space is too limited and valuable to reproduce the bit here. After all, it's not as if the item-in-question were applicable to something of merit. Say, ferrets, for example.

And Jeanne, although it may sound like heresy, Robert is not always right about fannish traditions. It's just that women are funny creatures, you know...and have to be "prompted" every once in a while! Yes, I still love you ~~and last after you!~~....

But I do owe you for this one! Someday....



...speaking of ferrets: Marty Cantor is the person to thank for the ferret stamp last time. And Sheryl Birkhead has kindly provided me with a pile of ferret clippings ... but if I can't spare the column-inches to reproduce something of import, such as diaper klips, I really can't justify giving two or three pages to furry little animals I'm totally allergic to. So, I'll content myself with passing the clippings on to Skel, and printing here Sheryl's annotation to one of the klippings... excuse me, clippings:

...the controversy rages on. The AVMA does not recommend ferrets be vaccinated against rabies since there is no approved vaccine. I have vaccinated them--using the killed virus vaccine used in dogs and cats BUT I told the owner their pet is still considered an un-vaccinated animal should someone be bitten. They all adamantly declare "Snook'ums would never bite someone" -- sorry, I don't buy that. The article says there are more dog bites than ferret bites--true, but there are a heck of a lot more ferret (percentage-wise) bites than dogs. If I didn't mention it before, the AVMA also came out and said they could not sanction or support ferrets as pets. Somebody knows something.

It's become obvious to even me that I'm not going to squeeze all the LoCs-on-hand into this space. ...and I'm reluctant to use someone twice, when several others will have to wait until next issue. Besides, this would have made such a neat letter to lead-off a lettercol. But, what the hell; let's give the kid a break:

## SKEL

Amazing! Letter from Al Curry, letter from Dave Locke, and an OUTWORLDS, all in the same post. Has there been an earthquake in Cincinnati, or what? Then again, that isn't all that's amazing. Little did I think, when I penned the ferret piece of OUTWORLDS 44 that ferretalia would still be cropping up in your fanzine, so many issues later. Especially as my obsession was so very childish.

Yes, it's true, I've 'got religion', I've kicked the habit. I'm more mature now. I've grown up. My ferret obsession was part of my immaturity, and I have put aside my childish things. Well, I had to. Let me explain.

It was the singing of the ferret songs that brought it all about. You know the ferret songs. All songs, or almost all songs, are ferret songs. You can for instance go in for some old Beatles nostalgia ('I Wanna Hold Your Ferret'), or even further back ('Lloyd George Knew My Ferret' and 'We're Going To Hang Out The Ferrets On The Ziegfried Line'). Or classics like Gene Pitney's '24 Ferrets from Tulsa', or my Nan's favorite 'I Will Cling to the Old Rugged Ferret...'. Most songs are ferret songs. More songs are ferret songs than aren't, and eventually you come, inevitably to the mind-numbingly tedious 'Ten Green Ferrets, Hanging On The Wall'. Now in its



original incarnation, as 'Ten Green Bottles...' this song is no problem, because it's so tedious nobody in their right minds will sing it. But, to a singer of ferret songs, there is a compelling fascination to it. One is drawn to sing it, again and again. The howls of protest from one's wife mean nothing. It is a compulsion. Well, let me give you a word of warning, Bill. Never, on no account, sing 'Ten Green Ferrets...' to a wife who is chopping vegetables. The chase through the house was strangely exhilarating, in a terrified sort of way, but when she'd cornered me, waving the knife about in a crazed and distraught manner, she made it plain that either the ferret songs had to go or something else would go...in which event I'd have to sing the songs in a somewhat higher key.

So no more ferret songs. Which is a shame, because Christmas will simply not be the same next year without constant renditions of 'The Twelve Days of Ferret'. Oh it's true that in its later stages parts of it can rival 'Ten Green Ferrets' for tedium. Lines like "Twelve ferrets a'ferretting, eleven ferrets a'ferretting, ten ferrets a'ferretting, nine..." etc. etc., et-bleeding-cetera, do not set the spirit a-quivering, but when you come to the rousing crescendo of "FIVE GO-OLD FERRETS" surely no heart remains unstirred. Then of course you ram this feeling home with the beautiful "Four Calling Ferrets, Three French Ferrets, Two-go Turtle Ferrets, and a Ferret in a Pear Tree".

Such poetry!

Listen Bill, I've arranged a special dispensation. Cas will let me sing 'The Twelve Days Of Ferret' one more time, so let's make an occasion of it. Why don't you and the millions of OUTWORLDS readers join me in one last, definitive rendition of the song. At twelve noon on Christmas Day 1988, let us all come together and reverberate the heavens with a final 'Twelve Days Of Ferret'. Perhaps then Bill, we can finally lay this ghost to rest.

If not I think my karma is in deep shit. Which reminds me--it's time I talked about OUTWORLDS 56.

That's a neat trick in the insults/back-handed-compliments you have there. You mention the concept of leading off your letter column with your "second-best" letter was something that is always in the back of your mind. Now as my LoC leads off the thing this is at once an insult (it wasn't the best) and at the same time a compliment (there was only one better). Except that you then go on and say that "it's not always possible in practice". But you at least start out trying for it, right? So I know I'm not the best definitely, and quite possibly not in the top 9,756 (depending on whether it was possible in practice or not). So you think you've got my measure do you Bill? Well it isn't that simple. Nor am I. I don't care how little you rate my LoCs. I'm going to send one almost every issue until you stop publishing, so there!

NYARRH!

So why do I have this feeling I've been out-manuevered?

Anyway, on to specifics. I consider myself duly ticked off by Bill Breiding. No I didn't tell you that OUTWORLDS54 was beautiful, but then I assumed you already knew that. Your sensibilities in this regard being far more reliable than mine. Most peoples everything in any regard is more reliable than mine. Take your mentions that the only written contribution you had on hand was the one from Lon Atkins. I couldn't understand why you hadn't already gotten the one I'd sent you. It wasn't until I came to David Singer's letter, and I checked my shelves, that I realised you'd already published it in the issue before. God, what a memory this

guy has got! Shows too how the simple thrill of being published fades, doesn't it?

So what does drive people on to produce interesting fan articles after many years in fandom? Whatever it is, Sam Moskowitz has it. That was a truly fascinating piece he wrote/you published there. Both of you, take several bows. Right, now come back on stage for an encore. Excellent.

The Lon Atkins piece was good too, and that was a nice display of editorial dexterity to get Mike Resnick's response. Mike of course writes commendable common sense--if you write fiction to a formula, what you produce will be formula fiction. But I think he missed the point. He mentions "excellence and ambition" but I don't think that's what Lon is about in this context. I don't think there are great novels in Lon's brain, screaming to be freed. I think Lon just wants to have written some books, you know. Lon must have a need to write, but that need may be satisfied with fan articles to which Mike's "excellence and ambition" can most certainly be applied. Lon's desire to have a novel or novels published may just be some hangover of the days when all our heroes were SF writers, and it seemed inevitable that one day we'd grow up to be writers too. But, inexplicably most of us never did. There's a vague feeling of an unfulfilled obligation, a ghost that needs to be laid. I'm guessing here, as it's not a thorn that's ever pricked me deep, but it seems a very high incidence of fans have felt the need to write a story, as if to say, "There, I did it". Perhaps a certain Mr. Dubious can Speak With Authority on this topic?

Anyway, it's presumptuous of me to try and second-guess Lon's motives...but I am fairly well along. Lon can take consolation in the fact that homebrew has doubtless eroded my sensibilities. I can take consolation that the benefits of fermentation have assisted in the generation of yet another LoC, and you Bill can bask in the relief that not all your LoCers need to get smashed to face a typewriter. That's what I like about fandom--there's some satisfaction in it for everybody. You take what you can get. You'll know this already Bill, being more used to taking what you can get than anybody. Well, anybody except Glicksohn.

Speaking of monumental fuck-ups--there was me, in OW55, writing about postmen delivering trees, and there was Steve Stiles with an illo of a mailman doing just that...and you didn't marry the two. Who am I writing for here, a fucking cretin?

[6/29/88]

I had three choices: 1) to run Steve's LoC where I did; 2) to run it there and repeat it with yours... or, 3) to run it with your article. The latter was definitely an option, but had I done that, I would have had to have used up a Rotlser "Lettercol" heading...which I would have loved to do--but since I've committed the mortal sin of dot-matrix, Bill has not replenished my supply, and I'm down to only 10 or 12 headings. I am carefully stretching out that supply...and that was the reasoning behind the positioning of Steve's masterwork in OW55. And here you thought I was just goofing off. I'll bet you feel really foolish now, don't you, Skel? Skel...? (Am I going to have to have Bill Breiding talk to you...)

My suggestion is that we simply gather together all this ferret-~~shit~~stuff, have Arthur Clarke write the intro...and title it THE FERRET SONGS OF DISTANT EARTH. (Perhaps we can get Stuart Gilson to do the cover: A crucified ferret on an alien hill...?)

...hopefully I'll hear from you again, before our Christmas sing-off ~~WILL WILLY!~~

-----Bill Bowers; 7/17/88



...I Also Have LoCs from: SHERYL BIRKHEAD; BRIAN EARL BROWN; BUCK COULSON; IAN COVELL; DAVE HAUGH; ERIC MAYER; SAM MOSKOWITZ; and LANGLEY SEARLES. ... squeezed out this time, most will be along in OW58.

## CONTRIBUTORS

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK: POBox 5309, Torrance CA 90510-5309  
JEANNE BOWMAN: 1260 Hill Road, Glen Ellen CA 95442  
WM. BREIDING: POBox 26617, San Francisco CA 94126  
JACKIE CAUSGROVE: 6828 Alpine Ave., #4,  
Cincinnati OH 45236  
BRAD W. FOSTER: 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving TX 75038  
DAVID R. HAUGH: 556 N. 3rd St., Woodburn OR 97071  
ALAN HUNTER: 1186 Christchurch Rd., Boscombe East,  
Bournemouth BH7 6DY, England, U.K.  
TERRY JEEVES: 52 Redscar Drive, Scarborough YO12 5RQ  
E. Yorkshire, England, U.K.  
ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES: 717 Willow Avenue,  
Hoboken NJ 07030  
SAM MOSKOWITZ: 361 Roseville Ave., Newark NJ 07107  
JODIE OFFUTT: Funny Farm, Haldeman KY 40329  
BARNABY RAPOPORT: POBox 565, Storrs, CT 06268  
WILLIAM ROTSLER: 17909 Lull Street, Reseda CA 91335  
A. LANGLEY SEARLES: 48 Highland Circle,  
Bronxville NY 10708-5909  
STU SHIFFMAN: 19 Broadway Terrace #1D, NY NY 10040  
SKEL: 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport,  
Cheshire SK2 5NW, England, U.K.  
MILT STEVENS: 7234 Capps Ave., Reseda CA 91335  
TARAL: 1812-415 Willowdale Ave., Willowdale,  
Ontario M2N 5B4, CANADA  
DAVID THAYER: 7209 DeVille Drive,  
North Richland Hills TX 76180  
HARRY WARNER, JR.: 423 Summit Avenue,  
Hagerstown MD 21740  
ROGER WEDDALL: POBox 273, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065  
AUSTRALIA

7/21/88: The Last Word -- In the interval since the IAHF's were compiled, I've received a Larry Downes Update, and a phone call from Mike Glicksohn ...who says the ~~CHUCK~~ LoC's in the Mail. They'll be along in OW58--out for Ditto. In the meantime, I seem to have another job starting Monday; ah, well! \*sigh\*

## THE ~~LAST~~ LOST FERRET

A month (or three) ago, had anyone asked me to name who was the person least likely to have their photo ever run in OW, I imagine Phil Paine would have been on the short list! Ah, well, it's all the fault of:

### BILL BREIDING

The photo? Well, a 3 pawed ferret gave me this thing. I doubt that this is really publishable, but when I was in Toronto a few years ago, I saw this notice on the telephone pole and had Phil Paine pose in the background. At the time I thought it was rather unusual, so you can imagine my surprise when OUTWORLDS started talking about ferrets and ferrets became the vogue of all your readers. [4/28/88]

...I was going to enlarge the sign, and super-impose it over some of the brickwork--but my copier is not up to the task. So you'll just have to accept this (literal) transcription:

LOST FERRET  
HIS ONE HIND PAW IS MISSING  
IF FOUND PLEASE RETURN  
TO 246 LIPPINCOT ST  
OR PHON 531-8914  
THANK YOU

...somehow, that says it all! Skel...take it away!

