PITFCS 141

Theodore Cogswell, Randall Garrett, Avram Davidson, and Isaac Asimov enjoy a rare moment of relaxation at a recent meeting of the ITFCS. Photo by John W. Campbell, who wasn't focusing too well at the time.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE INSTITUTE FOR TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY STUDIES

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, nu?"

Special Series 141

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Secretary
Committee of Culletation

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204 McKenzie Road
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EDITORIAL COMMENT

"All we seem to talk about is shelters . . . . This isn't my idea of how to resist Communism. We ought to be thinking positively as to what we will do to them . . . if they attack us, and not think of the underground and a place to hide."

-- Senator Thomas Dodd as quoted in an approving editorial in the Muncie Evening Press, 23 Oct 61.

There was cat crap and bat crap all over the highways,
And dog dung and hog dung piled up on the byways.
Not one single sphincter would hold worth a damn
On that sad day when the shit hit the fan.

Oh, someone pushed buttons and rockets went riding.
Blasts came so fast there was no time for hiding.
Fallout came down on the whole race of man
On that sad day when the shit hit the fan.

For, somebody panicked, went mad as a hatter,
Their side or our side, it didn't much matter.
No one could stop once the fighting began
On that sad day when the shit hit the fan.

Hillside and wayside and village and town
Got dirty fast when the cobalt came down
And over-killed nicely, according to plan
On that sad day when the shit hit the fan.

FINAL CHORUS

When that day comes, when the sky falls,
When the top brass all go mad,
I'll try to remember that we won the war
And then I won't feel so sad.

-- Theodore Cogswell

IMPORTANT NOTE: The above is designed to be sung to the tune of "These Are A Few of My Favorite Things" from The Sound of Music.

WHOSE MIND IS CLOSED?

by

John R. Pierce

In an intemperate article, "The Space Drive Problem," Analog Science Fact and Fiction, June 1960, John. W. Campbell, Jr. argues that the space drive problem is a violently emotional problem rather than a physical-science problem. The chief evidence on which he bases his case is the refusal of various government agencies to inspect a "working model" of Norman L. Dean's space drive. While Campbell leaves himself strongly entrenched by saying that his position and statements are valid "whether the device works or or not," he obviously takes Dean's "drive" seriously, for he visited Dean and photographed the device in action.

Oddly enough, aside from the photographs, only a small and unsatisfactory portion of Mr. Campbell's article is devoted to the Dean Drive. We learn the patent number, we are given a rough sketch alleged to illustrate the principle of the device, a rather muddy description of its operation, and the blank statement that "no modern mathematical analysis is competent to determine" what the effect of the operation of the machine is.

Campbell writes of seeing photographs of models of Dean's machine which lifted themselves. These models, however had been "tested to destruction." We have seen on the cover of our dearly lamented Astounding a photograph of the space ship Fafner in flight. Clearly, such photographs don't help a bit in deciding what actually has happened.

Two photographs that Campbell published to, however. These, on page 97, show two views of a bathroom scales on which the machine rests. One shows the reading of the scales with the "solenoid mechanism turned off" and the other shows the reading with "the solenoid mechanism turned on." The former reading is about 16 pounds; the latter if close to zero. Moreover, the latter photograph includes a vital bit of scientific information, that is, the make of the bathroom scales, which is Counselor.

I am sure that the reduction in scale reading is a real and amusing scientific phenomenon. In fact, Marvin Minsky was able to duplicate it by means much simpler than those employed by Mr. Dean. He merely stood on a Counselor scale with a weight in each hand and pumped them up and down vigorously. By this means he obtained a reduction of scales reading of as much as 30 pounds. Don't try it on some other make of bathroom scales, however. Using other makes of scales leads to a wild spinning of the dial. The phenomenon is peculiar to the construction of the Counselor scales, which is in effect, a mechanical rectifier that responds to a fluctuating force of zero average value by a reduction in dial reading.

Unlike Mr. Campbell, when Minsky heard of the peculiar phenomenon evoked by Mr. Dean, he tried to understand it, and succeeded. There was certainly no reason to believe that the phenomenon of the reduced scale reading was connected with a reduction of wright. Apparently, Mr. Campbell didn't even try the obvious experiment of hefting the machine while it was running to se whether it was lighter then, let alone that of weighing the machine by various other means. All he did was look at the dial of a particular and peculiar brand of bathroom scale and accept a wild allegation.

Compared with Minsky's curiosity and open mindedness, it seems to me that Mr. Campbell was flaccidly incurious concerning what might be going on and that his mind had all the openness of a sprung bear trap with nothing between the jaws.

Having disposed of the peculiar properties of the Counselor scales, it is perhaps appropriate to turn to some other portions of Mr. Campbell's article. Mr. Campbell is conscious of the fact that if Mr. Dean's machine worked it would violate the law of conservation of momentum, and he appears to be bothered that engineers and scientists

continue to believe in this law.

The magnitude or amount of momentum of a body is its mass times its velocity. Momentum has a direction which is the direction of motion of the body. The momentum of a system or collection of bodies is what is called the vector sum of the momenta of all the bodies making up the system. This momentum also has a magnitude and a direction. The law of conservation of momentum states that the momentum of a system of bodies which exert forces on one another, but on which no outside or external forces act, remains constant; it does not change in magnitude or in direction with time.

One of Newton's laws of motion states that the change in momentum caused by a force is in the direction in which the force acts and is equal to the magnitude of the force times the length of time during which the force acts.

The law of conservation of momentum is a necessary consequence of the assumption that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. If I pull on an object, it pulls back on me with an equal force. If I pull a sled by means of a spring balance, the force that the balance reads acts equally on me and on the sled. If two bodies attract one another, or, if two bodies collide, the force exerted by the first on the second is equal and opposite in direction to the force exerted by the second on the first.

By using the definition of momentum, Newton's Law for the change of momentum and the assumption that every action has an equal and opposite reaction, it is possible to give a rigorous mathematical proof of the law of conservation of momentum for any number of bodies: two, three, or as many as you like.

Let us consider a simple example of the conservation of momentum. Consider the case of a pellet propelled by the plunger of a BB gun. Assume that the loaded gun is in free space. The momentum before the gun is fired is equal to the mass of the pellet times the velocity of the pellet plus the mass of the gun times the velocity of the gun. After firing, the momentum is the velocity of the pellet times the mass of the pellet plus the velocity of the gun times the mass of the gun. By the conservation of mementum, the momentum before firing is equal to the momentum after firing.

This could fail to be so only if the gun pushed on the pellet with a different force than that with which the pellet pushed on the gun. In years of experimenting in high-school and college laboratories, no one has ever observed such an instance, nor have astronomers observed such an instance in the heavens. All known forces have a reaction equal to the action. If this is so, then all systems of bodies involving known forces, all machines, however complex they may be, and however many parts or "bodies" they may be made up of, must obey the law of conservation of momentum.

Scientists are always alert to new and peculiar phenomena. A few years ago some scientists did doubt the law of conservation of momentum in connection with the decay of the neutron. The readily detectable products of the disintegration of a neutron are an electron and a proton. These didn't travel off in exactly opposite directions. Either the law of conservation of momentum was violated, or some other particle was produced by the decay. After much soul searching, physicists decided that another particle, the neutrino, was involved.

In this case, the physicists were willing to consider a violation of the law of conservation of momentum as conceivable because new and experimentally unevaluated sorts of force were involved. Mr. Dean's machine, however, uses the same old mechanical forces that have been exhaustively investigated in the laboratory by many generations of students. The students have always found these mechanical forces to act equally on the mover and on the moved. Electrical forces do, too, and all

other forces as well.

You could tell a physicist in the most moving terms that golf balls painted white fall when released in midair while the same golf balls rise if painted yellow. He wouldn't listen. You'll have equal luck telling a physicist that the same old mechanical forces with which he has experimented exhaustively sometimes pull or push without reacting equally on the puller or pusher. You'll encounter an equal deafness.

Perhaps the physicist would like to believe that a hundred-ton space ship could be sped forward at 7 miles a second by ejecting an ounce of gas at a slow crawl. However, he isn't going to believe this, or any other violation of the law of conservation of momentum involving known and explored forces. Here we wonder about Mr. Campbell. Why does he denigrate the rocket ship by insisting that it must obey the law of conservation of momentum and extol the Dean drive by insisting that it doesn't have to? Isn't this discrimination against rockets? Fie!

Mr. Campbell's article shows in many other ways a unilaterally closed mind, from which nonsense escapes in profusion but into which no idea new to him has a chance of penetrating. It is perhaps worthwhile to cite a few instances of this.

Mr. Campbell makes much of the fact that the "three body problem" has not been solved. The "three body problem" is the general problem of three gravitating masses in an otherwise unoccupied space. This problem indeed has not been solved in terms of mathematical functions. I have, however, seen an electronic computer cranking out orbits for three bodies moving in the same plane at a great rate. And, as we have noted, it has been probed rigorously that the law of conservation of momentum must hold for this system.

By some trick of numerology, Mr. Campbell converts the fact that the three body problem of gravitating masses has not been solved into a fantasy that no problem involving three bodies can be solved. The problem of the rotational oscillations of three equally spaced flywheels on a twisting shaft can be solved. In fact, the problem can be solved for any number of flywheels. Many other problems involving three or more bodies can be solved. Mr. Campbell says, "I know no modern physicist is competent to make a theoretical analysis of any system involving multiple simultaneous interactions." Mr. Campbell could have discovered his error by reading any of a large number of physics books. It appears that he'd rather invent his physics.

Some of Mr. Campbell's fantasies concern characters called Newton and Einstein, who had counterparts in the real world.

Campbell's fictional Newton had buried under his work the assumption that there is one and only one possible frame of reference. The historical Newton believed that only relative motion can be detected. And, the historical Newton so formulated his laws that, contrary to Mr. Campbell's implications on pages 96-97 of his article, in Newtonian calculations energy and momentum are conserved in any frame of reference, whatever its motion. In fact, one of us wrote Mr. Campbell a long letter many years ago showing how things work out in detail. He has probably forgotten this, or perhaps he did not read the letter.

The historical Einstein sought and found a theory that overcame discrepancies between Newton's laws of motion and the laws of electromagnetic waves. In that theory no unique idea of simultaneity appeared. Campbell's fictional Einstein rejected simultaneity because he "had no mathematical tools to analyze more than one relation at a time," whatever that may mean.

Campbell also describes astronomers who can compute planetary orbits only by successive approximations. For a moment these sound like real astronomers, but we soon realize that they are entirely fictional characters, for he says "Since no serious effort has been made to crack the (three body)problem, we do not, actually, know whether the energy interchange relations in the solar system are progressive, cyclic, or what." This after Pierre Simon Laplace (1749-1822) devoted decades to proving the stability of the solar system.

Mr. Campbell has a great deal more to say, most of which shows the adamant impenetrability of his mind to any orthodox, that is, experimentally verified knowledge. We cannot, however, regard his mind as completely closed. He has shown himself open to Mr. Dean's persuasion, photographs and show, though surprisingly incurious about the phenomena exhibited before his eyes. He believes that the asserted fact that Dean is a major executive in the Federal Housing Administration, specializing in mortgage appraisal, shows that he can do some very cogent thinking indeed. He believes that Mr. Dean's roundabout and awkward way of demonstrating a peculiar property of the Counselor bathroom scales cost $100,000.

Apparently, Mr. Campbell's skepticism is not universal; it extends only to science, which he won't pollute his mind by reading, and to the plaints of public officials harried by crackpots, who cannot convince him that they can do their duty short of investigating personally and exhaustively every single one of the multitude of fantastic proposals made to them.

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NOTE: Warren Michael is a radio and TV writer and producer for Leo Burnett Company.

SF AND TV

by

Warren Michael

NOTE: Comment by Aldiss, Amis, Brunner, Carnall, Crispin, Clarke, Doherty, Harris, Phillifent, Pollinger, Russell, Temple, Wright, and Youd on the BBC evaluation below is ernestly solicited for PITFCS-142. TRC

SF is dead on TV. Serling uses some on his Twilight series but that, for the most part, comes out of his stable. SF Theatre is still squeaking along on its original properties, which were not true TV in the first place. I have discussed this problem with several producers who were unanimous that:

1. There is only a small SF audience.
2. Good SF costs a piss pot to produce.
3. The mass audience will not buy anything that is not pure escape. If you ask them to think or participate in any manner they will flip the dial.
4. World events create bad atmosphere for SF drama

I know of half a dozen producers who would love to do good SF but so long as they are using other people's money they are going to aim at audience. They have to.

Despite the wails of Mr. Minnow and the intellectual cry-babies, I am most heartened by what I see on TV. The progress we have made in the past 12 years is almost fantastic. Technically the industry is doing a superb job. Program content still leaves much to be desired but it is still moving. When TV is good, it is remarkably good and each year there is just a little more good to be seen. True, most of what we see is drivel, but then, most of everything is drivel. For the selective viewer, TV has much to offer. If the bearded ones spent as much time supporting good programming as they do pointing fingers at the wasteland we could do much to improve our programming. Everything considered American TV still offers more to more people than any other media in any other country. ((Including the Calcutta brothels? TRC)) To see how bad tv can be, all you have to do is take a look at BBC, where the most exciting feature of the day will be a two hour lecture on "How to Stuff Skunks". As long as TV is kept out of the hands of politicians and educators there is hope: the politicians are just plain pricks and the educators are just plain dull. Besides, neither of them knows how to make their subject fun...and that is the soul of TV.

DEPT. X: GORDON DICKSON ON BUDRYS' ROGUE MOON

ROGUE MOON, by Algis Budrys, can be considered as a remarkable book for a number of reasons. The most important of these, however, seems to be that its author has accomplished at least one element in its writing by a technical device which --- as least as far as I know --- has never been deliberately and successfully used before.

ROGUE MOON(Gold Medal, thirty-five cents) is an extremely conscious book, in which almost all working elements show strong evidence of control by the author. Symptomatic of this, is the physical organization of the novel, which approaches the dramatic structure of a play. The book's one hundred and seventy-six pages are divided into nine chapters; of which the odd-numbered chapters, with the exception of chapter seven, are further divided into numbered sections. The odd numbered chapters, furthermore, are concerned with the main action of the book. While the even numbered chapters restrict themselves to the passages between the hero, Hawks; and Elizabeth Cummings, the girl with whom he falls in love (and who falls in love with him). Since the even-numbered chapters are very short, totalling only twenty-five pages out of the whole hundred and seventy-six, the physical effect therefore becomes one of several large dramatic sections spaced and connected by interludes. And this connotation of a staged story has its effect when the primary impressions of the characters develop into more than their first appearances suggest them to be.

The first appearances are important. Not merely because ROGUE MOON is an extremely conscious book; but because, being a conscious book, it is --- as I want to point out later --- therefore an extremely subtle and artificial book. I underline these two words because I intend to use them in a very particular and complimentary sense, later on. But before getting to that, I should say a word about the meaningful structure of ROGUE MOON.

If I wished to arbitrarily cram the sense of the novel into three levels or compartments, I would have to say that I find the surface or action level of the book to deal with the attempt of a man and his crew to investigate an alien artifact on the surface of the Moon --- an artifact which releases its secrets only at the price of a specific amount of human death. -That I find the character or second level story to deal with the moral disturbance of a man who finds himself forced to kill men in order to discover the means of ensuring their survival. -And that the thematic or third level story is this same moral battle with the problem of impersonal death raised in allegorical terms to the philosophical level.

My cramming, however, would only be approximate. Such compartmentization cannot be hard and fast; and particularly is this so with those books which most require it as a sort of index or map to their inner workings. Two forces combine to tear down the unnatural walls between levels. These are, first, the conflicts developing out of the minor characters; whose personal interpretations of the major problem have a tendency to spread the book sideways, as it were; instead of increasing its height and depth of meaning as the conflicts of the hero, such as Hawks, do. Second, because any novel --- and ROGUE MOON exemplifies this particularly well --- in this respect is a work of art; and not just a technical construction aimed at producing a certain effect. And therefore, the author's commentary through his characters must in the final degree be subjective and general; rather than objective and precise.

However, once it is understood that such compartmentization operates only as a sort of rough scaffolding on which to clamber about for a closer look at what has been done in the novel, then it emerges as a fairly useful thing. In the present instance, having set it up, I can now identify the character of ROGUE MOON much more exactly in terms of the two words I used earlier --- subtle and artificial.

ROGUE MOON is, let me say, very successfully a subtle and artificial book.

It is subtle in what it sets out to do. It is artificial in the way it does it. Its subtlety (I will omit the underlining from here on) lies in the intent of the author to present the reader, at the novel's conclusion, with a completed image; any objections to the reality of which, the author has previously, unobtrusively, and successfully undermined. This image is the image of Hawks conquered but unconquerable (also conquering and unconquering) by and of the Enemy --- Death. Who can kill him, but not kill him. The subtlety lies in the distinction between soul and personality. Hawks' personality on the moon, being aware that it has no soul, finds a decently quiet spot in which to lie down and expire. Barker's having no such insight, hurried back to the nearest supply of air, under the illusion that in that direction lies survival.

---It occurs to me parenthetically here that I am also putting a special definition upon the word 'soul'. But that much should be obvious in any case to those who have read the novel. To go on. . . .

---So much for the subtlety. The artificiality of the book lies in the skill with which the author has conceived and written it; and it is this that I particularly wish to dig into; and sound triumphal trumpets about.

ROGUE MOON, it is hardly necessary to mention, falls into the province of that class of modern novels whose technique has its roots in Flaubert and the Russian novelists. Its story is not told; but revealed. The reader sees the characters walking around, accomplishing things, and talking; but the reader is required, as he would be in life, to deduce the meaning behind these actions and speeches. It is far and away the technique which offers the most possibilities to the author in the way of getting value into his writing; but it is correspondingly far and away the most difficult to perform successfully.

There are two reasons for the difficulty; one which time may cure, and the other which is built-in. The one which time may cure has to do with the present general level of reader sophistication. The told story requires less imaginative effort from the reader. He need only absorb; he is under no necessity to deduce reasons from dialogue and action. Once he makes the extra effort, of course, he discovers a much more imaginative world between book covers; but the problem is as it is with bouillabaisse, to get him to try it for the first time --- and with an open mind.

The second problem is obvious from the law of conservation of which operates in literature as well as other localities; energy the author cannot get out what he has not put in in the first place. If he was able to do this sort of work in the first place and has acquired a reputation --- but has recently gone slightly off his rocker or contracted to do a book he doesn't believe in in the first place --- he may succeed in fooling the uninitiated perhaps twice or thrice. But it's difficult for one carpenter to fool another even once about a jerry-built house; and so, generally speaking, we may say that nobody tries this way of doing a book unless he honestly hopes and intends to play fair with it.

In the case of ROGUE MOON, now, it is obvious that intentional foolery is not at work. The pattern and method of the novel are so individualized that the emotional impact at the end can be taken as absolute evidence of the book's honesty. The difference is between reciting a series of clever sounds at us in hopes that we will take it to be a very sad story and be moved to tears by it. And telling us a genuine story with a sad conclusion in some language with which we are not immediately familiar. In the latter case, if we go to the effort to find out if anything actually took place, we find something actually has.

As a result, in the case of ROGUE MOON we know we have an author who has successfully accomplished a revealed novel. And done it under conditions anything but f favorable for this sort of writing. The fascination, then, lies in how he has done it.

A close look reveals that he has done it by use of a completely new and unique (as I say -- to my knowledge, at least) device; which in effect turned a liability into a working asset. He has hammered a dull set of plowshares into a number of sharp blades for a highly efficient discing machine.

He has, effectively, solved the old bouillabaisse problem; which is the first and in some ways the most important problem of doing this sort of writing. --Readers, after all, determine what they will read; and the book-and-story business is generally devoted to giving it to them. This makes experimentation difficult. However: One of the things readers will read is the action pocketbook that has grown up since World War II, especially -- and the action pocketbook generally has certain conventions and reliable characteristics that the reader has come to expect and feel at home with. Just as Indians have been required to bit dust and people to be found murdered in interesting ways in other times and places about the literary map; so in the action pocketbook specific scenes and characters were expected to be included. The reader bought the pocketbook under the impression that they would be in there; and there they were -- or else it had to be a highly unusual book to get him to buy one by the same author or publisher again.

Well, look closely at ROGUE MOON and you will see them also -- but wearing (and this is the reason for which I ordered those triumphal trumpets sounded earlier) not merely different hats as you might expect. They are wearing the same hats, but totally new and different sets of insides.

This is the element in the novel which Algis Budrys has done so beautifully. He has not only fooled the reader; but made the fooling itself into a lever by which he swayed the reader into doing the extra work of reading a revealed novel. He has conned the drought-poor farmers into sinking a deep well on land without a water table, so that he might make them all rich by striking oil.

Look closely. Have we or have we not, right around the beginning of the book -- in its first swatch of pages -- an intense, genius-type scientist who has just driven a man mad with his scientific experimentation? Does the scientist not sound a little mad himself? Does not there then enter on the scene a public-relations type who expresses his insecurity by wearing cowboy boots and his sense of inferiority by trying to take the genius-type scientist down a peg? Do they not then go to an all but inaccesible cliff-house retreat where a wildcat-type woman, insecure-variety, also, lies in skimpy bathingsuit alongside a pool, drinking Scotch and water out of a thermos jug? Does she not bend a glim on the scientist, while being brutal to the public-relations type (who goes and gets drunk) until a one-legged soldier-of-fortune type emerges from the pool to take an instant dislike to the scientist, while immediately taking the scientist up on a job that means certain death. . . . And so on.

The beautiful thing is that to describe all these people in terms of these surface indications is to lie in ones teeth, not only about them, but about the novel. ---The book does not have this surface appearance by accident or convenience; but by author's design.

The author's -- any author's -- problem with a piece of revealed writing, is to get the reader to accept it as such. If the reader refuses to look under the surface, if he insists on waiting around page after page, for the author to tell him whats going on, the book falls dead. The author, accordingly, must as best he is able, force the reader to look beneath the surface. Just as the essence of the revealed novel is to inform the reader with without telling him; so the mechanics of the revealed novel is to lay a hook in the reader's attention without obviously laying the hook.

AJ lays his hook by presenting the reader with a set of stock characters and situations which -- it soon becomes obvious -- cannot possibly be stock. They have all the correct specifications, but they are on the wrong sound stage and reading the wrong lines.

It is as if the three Musketeers and Constance were to sit down around a bottle and find themselves engaged in a Shavian type of discussion, along the lines of, say, the Don Juan in Hell episode. It is the controlled use of image raised beyond the level of symbolism in discrete objects. It might be called the artificial use of character -- which brings me back at last to my reason for using the term artificial in the specific sense that makes it a word of praise where ROGUE MOON is concerned.

The characters are almost completely controlled. The opening of the book promises a mystery -- the nature of the device on the moon which kills its investigators. However, almost immediately a new problem promises in the conflicts of the characters concerned with the investigation. But, in the face of all customary rules for characters such as these, the new problem develops to be neither a physical nor a moral one, or even a combination of these two, but a philosophical one. When such an apparent contradiction between characters and theme occurs in a novel too strongly motivated, too tightly structured, and too full of essential action to be boring, the reader is almost forced to go hunting an explanation. And if the author refuses to give him one in plain words, but requires of him the labor of deduction from observed action and dialogue, the reader has the choice of putting the book down, or putting himself to the labor aforesaid. ROGUE MOON being the sort of writing it is, it is fairly safe to say that few of the people picking it up did put it down at the point.

The great leverage that is exerted against the reader to gain this effect results mainly from the fact that these characters have such a strong conventional claim to life, in a literary sense. They are the sort of characters, at first glance, that the reader is accustomed to -- that he likes and expected when he bought the book. And, having once admitted them to life, the reader finds the permission cannot be withdrawn. He is committed to believing in them. And later, when their actions turn out to signify a great deal more than he originally suspected, he is committed to believing in that signification as well.

This, then is what Algis Budrys has accomplished: in -- as far as my own knowledge runs -- an entirely unique and different fashion from any other writer. He has taken the stock elements of the action pocketbook and not merely slid a philosophical novel behind their facade; but made solid use of them, in building a philosophical novel upon them. He has done this by finding a positive use for the apparent disadvantages of these elements; their familiarity, their generalness. Instead of playing these aspects down and hiding them, he has expanded them and brought them up to the allegorical level, in which what was merely a type of individual becomes instead a demonstrated facet of Everyman. In this way he has dragged the reader willingly to the arena of the allegorical levels, where the philosophical story may be demonstrated.

It is a remarkable creative achievement; by a man who did not stumble on it, but worked his way to it through the hard overland route of conscious writing. And it deserves just about all anyone can say of it in the way of praise.

It is not, of course, the sort of calculated formula which can be neatly packaged for possible inclusion in textbooks on creative writing. It's success depends upon individual experience and knowledge -- a good number of years of it. In fact, basically it depends upon a vast amount of previous hard work that has made Algis Budrys the expert he is with the writing tools he himself discovered, developed, and modified for his later purposes. To imply that the results obtained in ROGUE MOON could be duplicated by simple knowledge of what the author has done -- without that author's individual skills -- would be equivalent to suggestion that all that was necessary to the accomplishment of a lung resection was to read a description of how the operation is performed. So, there is a great deal more that could be said here about how the basic technical device I have explored has been implimented in the actual writing of the book. But this is essentially unnecessary for a readership of professional such as we have here; who can, and often prefer to, do such examinings for themselves.

ALGIS BUDRYS REPLIES:

I throw myself on your mercy. I seem to have written a book which fulfills most of my expectations for it, and this is so unprecedented for me that I don't really know how to act.

Rather than comment directly on Gordie's review -- and come one, now, since when you have to cross out the AJs and pencil in the Algis Budryses? -- I would like to just go on record with what I hoped to do, and then those of you who are interested can decide what I actually did. I blush to do this, but part of my original conception for this book was a feeling that I might break some new ground for all of us, and so, if I am going to be consistent in my grandiosity, I ought to tell you about it.

What I wanted to do was write an sf novel; that, is a story about a human situation which could not take place except under special conditions involving science. No, strike that last word, and substitute 'technology.' The book makes many comments on science and scientists, but the primary story, like almost all 'science' fiction stories, is in fact a piece of technology fiction.

Several critics have complained that the book has no ending -- that I do not explore the later events in the lives of all these duplicated men. I think this interpretation fails to note that the remaining lifetimes of these people hold no promise but that of further adventure, whereas the climax of The Death Machine occurs simultaneously with the conclusion or inception of the various life-plans which make these adventures possible. I feel that the matrix is more important than the events within it -- the entire technique of The Armiger is founded on that belief -- and therefore, expecially since science adventure fiction is not organically science fiction most of the time, and in the light of the fact that I've already written a novel of identity, I sincerely felt that the book was finished at approximately the same time the last line was delivered. But I may be wrong. If I am wrong, then I'm afraid my view of science fiction is so opposed to the popular view that I am soon enough going to have real trouble. Perhaps it's just as well that Halt, Passenger! is the last novel-length sf idea I showed any signs of having.

But I'm in danger of digressing. Here are some of my thoughts on the optimum technique for a popular sf novel:

The important prevailing theory on writing an sf novel for a wider audience seems to be that the sophisticated concepts dealt with for the specialized audience are over the heads of an unsophisticated audience, and that, by extension, the way to write an sf novel for the "mainstream" audience is to strike some balance between a simple fantasy one the short end of the lever and many familiar "mainstream" elements on the other. And this seems to work. The On The Beach type of story, the 1984 or Mouse That Roared satire, the Frankenstein horror romance, and so forth, proceed from a single, easily-grasped fantasized situation and elaborate entirely in terms of what is familiar to the audience for conventional novels, and are strikingly successful. The strength of these stories seems to rest on their ability to show the reader a simple, interesting distortion of the reality he can observe around him without requiring him to believe a word of it once he has finished the story.

It occured to me that, in one manner of speaking, these novels ingratiate themselves with the reader. I began to consider ways of compelling his attention whether he liked it or not.

Suburbia and the entire world of the usual mainstream novel are after all only features of the matrix within which all human beings live. A little elementary

observation shows that most people are well aware of the matrix. The massive insecurity of goods-accumulating people is founded on a very real knowledge that somewhere exists a Doom with a mind of its own -- that all our piety and wit cannot prevent an unpredictable, shattering collision with the capricious menace. Most people seem to express this as a fear of Death, and some people have the wit to regard Love as immortality. Other people express this awareness of the Universe in other terms, but all of us adjust to it in some way. We react to its presence, the possibility of its presence, or even the suspicion of its presence, in critical ways -- we will leave anything in order to combat, propitiate, avert, or attend the victories of, this Menace. Therefore, the story of Love-and-Death, to give it one of its names, is the greatest story ever told, and, provided the writer is not completely intransigent about preserving a private vocabulary, it does not seem to matter much whether it is told in terms of religion, the cottage romance, the 'thriller,' the epic poem, or even, science fiction. Telling it in terms of science fiction presents special problems, of course. Premit me to list what I took for a working hypothesis on these problems.

Looking at this situation from the point of view of a man who plots the taking of a woman by storm, and therefore is rather annoyed at anyone who educated her into believing that proper men always bring candy and flowers, it seemed to me that the general public might well have gotten the idea that sf either growls or smirks; that it growls to show how ferocious it is and how well able to protect the beloved, or smirks to show that of course it didn't mean it -- that the Sun still shines on the hollyhocks in the back garden. It seemed to me that the general public might be getting just a smidgin tired of being told that The World Is Coming To An End And Monsters Prowl It -- only not now. It seemed to me I might get some attention by saying that termites are undermining the foundations of your house, right now.

None of this is very new, of course. There is very little really new in the book, and I'm beset by the feeling that next week we will all realize simultaneously that it has no content at all. But, anyhow -- having decided what I was going to use as the main undercurrent of the book, I had to solve two problems; how to compell attention, and how to justify this compulsion.

So I started with a narrative hook, of course, using a narrative technique which, as Gordie points out -- though I got it from the movies, rather than Flaubert, whom I've never read -- involves the reader as a thinking observer. I ran a movie off in front of him, or perhaps a stage play in which the audience is equipped with boom microphones and flying binoculars. But in order to keep the reader at this hard work, I had to keep him convinced there was some urgent reason for him to maintain his interest.

Now, it seemed to me that readers are practiced symbologists. Given half a chance, they will create images -- even from typographical errors, much less from careless copyeditors' revisions. I commend to your attention John Pierce's report on the creation of stochastic words, and, beyond words, sentences and paragraphs which are accidental in origin but which nevertheless convey images. So I wrote The Death Machine so that nearly every scene, every piece of set-dressing, every bit of direction and nearly every sentence conveys a sense of absolute conflict between absolute opposites, and kept Death, menace, Love both sacred and profane, and all their collateral human reactions, running through the book as a leitmotif, or, as we say in English, cue. I was reasonably confident that, having been given this invitation to symbolize, and given a theme to symbolize on, most readers would have no difficulty relating the substructure of the book to their particular half-conscious, half-subconscious interpretation of the nature of the capricious menace. And there is of course, according to my theory, no more compelling subject. I deliberately did not create a concrete symbolic structure, because my personal symbology is not liable to be in agreement with very many other people's. I created a matrix. I did not write a piece of symbolism, in other words -- I wrote a symbol-prone book.

That, I think, is the item of value in The Armiger. I am not aware of any other writer who has stimulated but not governed the reader's symbol-making propensity directly, instead of first presenting his with a rational story which, on reflection, might be seen to have deeper meanings. Halt, Passenger! has no deeper 'meanings' in the sense that it says "This flower is the Gift of Love." What it says is: "The man is giving the girl a flower. You know it has to mean more than that. This is a story about the Menace. Go ahead and fill in your own blanks." And because I never say or do anything to contradict the reader's interpretation, the reader is free to write his own story, immediately under the overt events.

I kept harping on this sort of thing. (The book is actually very crude. I hope someone will refine the technique. I would like to hear, five years from now, the The Death Machine has become unreadable.) The exigencies of this device, combining with my need to educate the reader in technology and, to some extent, in science, forced the use of what is, objectively, incredibly stilted dialogue.

But all dialogue is artificial, as we know. And we know that most readers do not, in fact, read every word of a story -- they fly along, spotting key words and phrases, and are often much more engrossed by the attitudes struck -- and hence the characters in The Armiger are forever striking attitudes -- than by what the author, mumbling over their shoulders, has to say. If this were not true, typographical errors and editing would completely paralyze stories wherever they departed from the author's text. -- No, really, they only do it to the author; readers go right along -- and the position of words in a sentence, and sentences within a paragraph, would not be as important as they are. Readers are not, I think consciously attentive to good prose. They are much more aware of constructional details -- an outhouse arouses far more attention than a pile of bricks and a blueprint -- particularly if, occasionally, the writer carefully puts his outhouse in the grand foyer of the Pitti Palace -- and therefore how the characters say something is by no means as important as what they say, how they act while saying it, and how much urgency they convey in saying it. I have for several years been putting 'stoppers' in my prose -- deliberate awkwardnesses to halt the flying eye long enough for it to absorb the content, when I think the content should not be missed at any cost. It takes a little practice to decide what is a stopper and what is a concrete wall that makes the reader lose hold on the book, but there's no great trick to it. Anyhow -- when so much of the dialogue in Halt, Passenger! has to convey so much, and repeatedly, it is, in terms of information theory, necessary to introduce a measured amount of noise into the signal, so as to make the sleepy listener sit up and crane forward.

This about covers as much as I think even the kindest of you can bear to hear about the salient features of The Death Machine. I am told it is selling markedly well, and so I trouble you with all this because, as I began, I seem to have written a book which comes within shouting distance of my expectations. And part of my expectations -- I always have dreams of glory about every story I write -- was this business of maybe having explored something new and potentially useful.

The Armiger is a very crude book. It is heavily weighted to bear down on the Death half of Love-and-Death. It maunders, quite often, as it deals with superficial symbology whose only reson for being is to provide the reader with an additional cue to symbolize down where it counts. It is, in form and execution, as affront to a fair number of readers -- I've had the bittersweet pleasure of reading some mail to F&SF which demanded to know what the hell had gotten into Budrys -- and, all in all, it seems highly unlikely to me that it was ever written, or published. Knox Burger, from whom we have heard something on the subject, did in fact remove one of my favorite sentences -- it was 'He took a handful of strides. . .' --(Don't think I didn't have my chuckles while I was writing this book.) but he left the important things quite as they were, and suggested at least one emphasis I'm grateful for.

I could also never have written the book if George O. Smith hadn't written his matter transmitter stories, and if John Pierce hadn't written an article about them. I tried to get some mention of this into the book, but that proved impossible. I would like to mention it here. The Hawks scanner is, of course, a flat impossibility; I had thought I used three lies in the book, but the more I think about it the more I feel this was the only damned lie, which puts me well ahead of On The Beach and some others. Anybody here read Alas, Babylon?

At any rate, I do hope that even if all this foregoing stuff is an artifact, somebody else will pick it up and play with it. At the moment, I'm faced with at least three major criticisms of Rogue Moon which all premise that it's quite good, and then go on to describe three different books. This is symptomatic of exactly what I hoped to accomplish, I believe, but I am not in a position to give a 'definitive' description of the book, since I only collaborated on it with each given reader. Therefore, I ask you not to send to know for whom the bell tolls. If anybody wants to say the book stinks, and I'm a pretentious arse, fine. It probably does, and I probably am. but this is the end of it. My phone was taken away from me years ago.

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DEPARTMENT Z:

"Major Gagarin has certainly raised the bidding in the matter of returned heroes sentiments. When the first British cosmonaut goes up in 2061 he won't be able to get away with the traditional modest mumble about the sherpas being wonderful. If he wants to get reported at all, he'll have to lay the patriotics on hot and strong.

"'I won't bore you,' I see him telling reporters, 'by telling you what it is like in space, since everyone has heard so much about it already from all the Egyptians, Peruvians, Nigerians, and Tibetans who've been up. But I should like to say what a tremendous feeling of confidence I had while I was in space. I knew that if I found myself in difficulties I could always get help from the National Assistance Board in a matter of months.

"'As I was coming down I sang "Rule,Britannia" and the Eton Boating Song. When I stepped at last on to my native soil I was deeply touched to be greeted by a representative of the British people who asked me if I had bought any cigarettes or spirits aboard the spaceship. I also wept tears of joy to receive a message from Harold Macmillian, our beloved Prime Minister, who has guided our destinies for so very, very long. "My deepest congratulations," he said, "on getting Britain into space ahead of both Upper Volta and Senegal."

"'This is the happiest day in my life since that dazzling evening when I attended my first Young Conservatives' flannel dance. I dedicate my flight to the Conservative and Unionist Party of Great Britain, to Harold Macmillan, Asquith-Baldwinism, Baldwin-Asquithism, the dictatorship of the managerial classes, the peaceful exploitation of our two remaining colonies, and to the whole British nation, marching joyfully ahead towards a new dawn of controlled capitalisto-welfare-laissez-faireism.'""

--Michael Frayn in The Manchester Guardian Weekly

"Members of Rog Phillips' second creative writing class took their places beside alumni of the initial class at graduation exercises held Thursday evening, July 20, in the Garden Chapel. Due to the combination of an odd-hour unlock and a call to duty of Esque's emergency firefighters, only 14 from a class of 27 were able to attend. Four guest speakers from previous class meets came forward to give words of encouragement and advice to the fledgling authors. They were: Anthony Boucher, author-editor-critic, Poul Anderson, Reg Bretnor, and J. Fox, all prominent Bay Area authors. Associate Warden W.D. Achuff and Mr. Phillips also addressed the class."

--San Quentin News (DEDICATED TO PROGRESS THROUGH EDUCATION) 2 August 1963

DEPT. X: RICHARD McKENNA ON THE ALDISS F&SF "HOT HOUSE PLANET" SERIES.

The Aldiss "Hothouse" novelettes are as fuzzy a puzzle to a critic as one of his pistil-bearing fungi would be to a taxonomist. One needs a peculiar mental squint and a faculty of selective inattention to sift the real merit in them from out the ground mass of banalities, inconsistencies and generally inexcusable sloppiness. They are both pleasing and infuriating, because they are artistically very deep and true stuff serve up so steaming raw and unhandled and mixed with crap that they are not even one-tenth baked. They are all raw, raw, raw , nature green in tooth and claw, and Homeric carnage among the cabbages.

The problem is to examine how these stories might have fulfilled their promise, might still do so for publication as a memorable novel. As they stand, they impress one as an unmediated subliminal uprush blasting through the typewriter and into the mail without even a cursory rereading. For instance, on p. 19 of the first one, Jury leans against Ivin, who only twenty lines earlier has been eaten by trappersnappers. Such inconsistencies are larded all through these stories and could be eliminated by the judicious rewriting for which the stories cry out.

First, the science. Calling a story "science fantasy" does not relieve it of the obligation to internal consistency and, so that science-trained readers will not be repelled, the obvious scientific impossibilities must still be speciously justified, [redacted] they must be plausibly justified, but always justified, never ignored.) The latter point is a tricky one to make, and I will try to do it by an example. Suppose a man like Asimov had been graced with that fascinating picture of the senile Earth "hung about with cobwebs." His pleasure in it would be marred by his knowledge that the moon would have to be in a Trojan position, hence showing no visible disc, and the many strands of web spanning the chord would probably have collectively a greater mass than either of the planets. So he would perhaps think somewhat as follows: "The traversers have evolved a radically new metabolism that can absorb electromagnetic energy and condense it into matter, analogous to the way present-day plants store energy in chemical bonds. This accounts for the extra mass in the system. That mass, distributed as it is, modifies the Trojan stability rule; perhaps the strange physiology of the traversers also creates asymmetries in the system's gravitic field; anyway, the upshot of it all is that the unrevolving moon can remain at about its present-day distance from Earth." That would be a specious justification and, like nacre upon a grain of sand, it would relieve the irritation of the science-minded. No doubt it would also add an orient gleam to the story for the unscientific. A less obviously needed justification is one for the jungle rather than a baked and blasted desert, under the physical conditions set up.

I am trying to say that "science fantasy" does not mean the utter license that Aldiss takes. He sprinkles botanical jargon through the stories, often misused, serving the same purpose as the flashing lights and bubbling liquids in s-f movies. That's a cheap tactic in any medium, but one simply cannot get away with it in words, not and retain communicability. A dumbler (p. 6) cannot be both a spore and a seed. A fungus cannot blossom, not and still be a fungus. Aldiss is too good a writer on the sub-verbal level to be permitted to show such disrespect for the meanings of words. His carelessness is not restricted to science-terms. What is an "unwielding flipper?" How can anything "twirl laconically?" One would expect unconscious plants to grow without guilt feelings, but when they grow "remorselessly as boiling milk," one suspects the story has grown in much the same undisciplined fashion. At the end of that road sits H. Dumpty writing strictly for himself, and what might have become a story remains a manic flight of ideas.

Internal consistency is doubly important in a fantasy, as not to rupture the reader's already strained suspension of disbelief. Aldiss flouts that so grossly and repeatedly that I can only point out a few type-examples. Only two boys are in the child-group left behind when the elders go Up. When we come back to the children, a third boy, Paas, appears, bodied ad hoc out of thin air in order to be horribly killed. In "Nomansland" we are shown the fixed sun specifically and exactly at the zenith. Gren et. al. go into the jungle seeking a tribe, find it, end in a boat on a river and, apparently in a few hours, still in the river, drift about six thousand miles, so that the sun is on the horizon. On p. 116 of that story there are 19 tummybellies in the boat, six of whom are wounded. Some of the wounded die and are thrown overboard. Then on p. 119 there are twenty adult tummybellies in the crew. Clocks ticking off fertilities, indeed!

Now for some more literary strictures. The viewpoint is omniscient, but the author cannot make up his omniscient mind about his characters. Everything is ad hoc. They are clothed whenever they want to put something in their pockets and naked whenever they want to display their breasts or genitals. They have a male-female attitude inversion, except when the males wish to be masculine. None of them has a cerebral cortex, but when they please to be they are capable of sophisticated conceptual thought. In one place Gren wails, "Oh, how can anyone speak? There seem so few words!" Not long afterward he is using the concepts of castle, window, mica and glass and verbally applying the laws of optics and the dynamics of combustion. One has trouble believing that Gren's outfit of words and ideas is not really coextensive with that of Bryan Aldiss. When one of their number dies violently, their emotional response is either absent or so perfunctory as to be only a verbal gesture from the author. They are not really born yet, separated from the author, living with their own life and logic.

A special grip about the names: The personal names seem too carelessly made up; there is no pattern to them. There are too many strange beastie names and the rhymed ones have a repellent "cuteness" more suitable to the nursery than to adult fiction. In the first story 31 such names enter in only 30 pages, and 16 of them rhyme. One creature is indifferently a berry-whisk, -whish or -wish, as the author momently pleases. It is wonderful that these people after two billion years and the loss of their forebrains retain a language at all, still more wonderful that it is the same language in unrelated groups. One would expect the sound of words to alter, of course. That that the sound of "termite" should remain the same and, among these illiterate people, only the spelling of it should alter, that is indeed supernally wonderful.

A larger view of these stories reveals no clear unity of grand design. We start with a degraded humanity which is presumably to be redeemed. The first story follows a line of Bodily Assumption and celestial metamorphosis to true humanity. The lost forebrain will grow again from within, from man's own substance, and it is good. The second story recapitulates the Fall of Man into self-conscious individuality, but his forebrain is a scheming tyrant from without and it promises to be cruel and painful and bad. The rationale of the second story, that Man's original forebrain was a symbiotic morel, is inconsistent with the rationale of the first story, and Aldiss cannot have it both ways. One suspects he has not yet made up his own mind as to whether human freedom is good or bad. Possibly the series is leading to an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of light from the moon and the forces of darkness in the Earthly jungle, to resolve that issue. But from the quality of the writing one doubts that Aldiss himself knows what is coming further ahead than the next paragraph.

I have been rough with Aldiss because he is worth the trouble. Most current s-f I will not read past the first page. These stories, however, given a disciplined rewriting or two, can become memorable. They spring from the true ground of poetry.

And just possibly their natural form is a cycle of poems rather than prose fantasy, sparked by Aldiss's introductory quote from Marvell. I wonder if he has not recently been steeping himself in Marvell's "green" poems. If I make one assumption, I can read through Marvell and spot many correspondences with Aldiss, some quite complex. I will take space for only one instance: the strange island and the experience therein which ends the third story. The setting corresponds with Marvell's "Bermudas" and the experience with that stanza in "The Garden" ending "Annihilating all that's made/To a green thought in a green shade." The single assumption is that the esthetic values and feeling tones of Aldiss's imagery are always the polar opposites of Marvell's. Granting that assumption, it would be possible to do a very plausible "Road To Xanadu"-type job on Aldiss, except that I am not Lowes nor he Coleridge. But I will venture a prediction.

Marvell does not like human freedom. He feels grievously prisoned in space and time and his personal, transitory flesh, "fettered in feet and manacled in hands." He frankly yearns to escape into the pre-Fall, collective, immortal species-personality. All of his green imagery is benign and beautiful. But Aldiss transvalues Marvell and his Edenic imagery is malignant and horrible. Marvell's beatific vision becomes for Aldiss the "sappy delight" of "happy, sappy things," and for once the rhyming does not jar. So I predict that Aldiss, whether he knows it now or not, is going to end up solidly on the side of human freedom.

BRIAN ALDISS REPLIES:

The main charge that Mr. McKenna levels against the "Hothouse series is that they are not written by Isaac Asimov. There I must plead guilty.

I must also plead guilty to not writing what McKenna means by "science fiction", although naturally I am less reluctant to admit this indictment than the first. Before number one of these stories was accepted, I made it clear that they were horticultural fantasies, the nightmares of a man who loathed gardening; the whole opus is designed to read like a nightmare, not a scientific disquisition. The picture I had in my head of Earth and moon linked by cobwebs was strong and exciting enough to exist without reference to Trojan positions or McKenna's "asymmetries in the system's gravitic field". It was not intended to be that sort of a story.

Lying right here is one of those rocks on which sf splits itself over and over again. The Clerks want everything cut and dry; the Romantics work better in chiaroscuro. The Clerks need blueprints; the Romantics work indirectly, by impulse, by suggestion; they create from inside outwards, using phrases with emotional weight, where the Clerks create from externals, employing polysyllables. Since I first began reading sf, I have been aware of this dichotomy, which often manifests itself in individual authors and even individual stories, as well as over the field generally. Arthur Clarke is an example of an author with a foot very successfully in both camps. With reservations, I am on the side of the Romantics, both from upbringing and because I believe they are the more likely to create work that will last. That both groups should exist in a field like sf is inevitable and good (i.e. fructifying, if I don't have my "botannical jargon" wrong again, Mr. McKenna). But what must be jumped on is a Clerk's being measure by a Romantic's yardstick or, as more frequently happens, a Romantic's being measured by a Clerk's yardstick. This sort of criticism is invalid from the word go.

McKenna is attempting to measure me by the wrong yardstick, I think. I am uncertain of this because by and large he has concentrated on what I regard as trivial matters: that there is no pattern to the personal names, that there is too much pattern to the vegetable names, etc. When he arrives at more important

matters, I grow even less certain of his standards. He says, "A larger view of these stories reveals no clear unity of grand design". Yet as far as can be determined from an erased St Swithin's dateline on his copy and from internal evidence, he rushed into writing his essay when he had read only two or three of the five stories that comprise the "Hothouse" series. Is this so, Mr. Secretary, sir? If so, it ought to be clearly stated.

If this is so, it makes nonsense of McKenna's pretense of examining "the larger view". If this is not so, I leave it to the membership to find their own way through his talk of "a line of Bodily Assumption".

But if it is so, if he has not waited to hear me out before criticizing, it makes his judgements doubly false, and I leave them where they lie.

((The fault is mine. The McKenna contribution was solicited rather than volunteered. My original intention was to start Dept. X in PITFCS 140 and McKenna had only the first few stories to work with. I'm sure the membership joins me in thanking him for interrupting work on his own book to help get this department under way. Now that the others in the "Hothouse" series have appeared the way is open for a more leisurely appraisal. Back to Aldiss now that the record has been set straight. T.R.C.))

Talking about one's own work is difficult; defending it is profitless: either you get through in your fiction or you don't. I would say that the Romantic in McKenna drove him on to read the "Hothouse" series; then the Clerk took over, put on specs, and started picking at the grain of the canvas without glancing at the scenes painted on it. This is not my loss, except that I naturally dislike seeing "Hothouse" in the doghouse.

Here, before changing the subject, it must be said that I am conscious of many faults that the McKenna Method misses. I admit too that acting on well-meant advice I yielded and have inserted an exposition of the Trojan position in the novel version of "Hothouse". However much this may gratify the Clerks, I weakened there, and I know it; and in consequence the atmosphere I was after is weakened.

I was already aware of some inconsistences in the stories that escaped revision. The number of tummy-bellies did vary -- they would not stay still while I counted them. The berrywhisk that turned into berrywhish or berrywish has been pruned back. But the thing that "twirls laconically" remains thus twirling, since I am under the firm impression that it can be done; heck, I can do it myself!

But these are trivia. Let's turn to wider issues.

First, I intend to say something about "Hothouse" itself. (By "Hothouse" I mean the whole series collected, expanded, compressed, and combed, as Faber will publish it here in England next spring, and as Signet will publish it in the U.S. early '62, probably under their title "The Long Afternoon of Earth".)

"Hothouse" tries to do two things. It attempts to paint a poetically valid picture of a world different from ours: a world condemned to death yet still very much alive, a frightening yet a beautiful world. Within my own limitations, I tried to give this world flesh, so that it did not remain a diagram. It was flesh to me as I wrote, which perhaps is what McKenna means, granted he means something, when he says I am a good writer on "the sub-verbal level".

The second thing "Hothouse" tries to do is to show the people of that world in reaction one with the other. Humans, morels, tummy-bellies, sharp-furs, sodals, are not just antagonists; I took pains to show how they behaved together and individually -- Yattmur's attitude to the tummy-bellies, for instance, is very difficult from Gren's. If the novel has any readability, it probably owes it to these

things.

You may note here a postulate running counter to stock sf assumptions. We have so often met the hero who comes up against some sort of an enslaved tribe; he liberates them; they are terribly terribly grateful, and immediately revert to "normal" behaviour -- i.e., a copy of Twentieth Century Western behaviour, since the hero in these sagas is always a thinly disguised Twentieth Century Western type. The tummy-bellies on the other hand hate liberation, hate the liberator, while the liberator grows to hate them, and is eventually the indirect cause of their death. Neither group is moulded on a Twentieth Century stereotype.

Heavens, I don't claim this as a brilliant perception. But it makes a change in sf, doesn't it?

Again, at the end, instead of depicting Gren as a pushful contemporary type and having him head out for the stars in a grand dramatic curtain, I've kept him character, so that he slithers gratefully back into the jungle.

In several directions I tried to avoid some of the cliches of the medium. Another instance: sf is mighty short of humour in serious stories (yes, I know, it's short on humour in comic stories too); but most readers have found the tummy-bellies both funny and tragic, as they were meant to be. We hear a good deal of talk about "widening the frontiers of sf". Well, in a mild way that's what I thought I was doing.

A few years ago, when the Bretnor symposium came out, the code was that Science, scientific accuracy, scientific thinking, were all-important in sf. This was conceded in theory, however much it was transgressed in practice. Then the joints loosened up somewhat. Eventually we had argued elsewhere --dash it, I'm such a peaceable man, yet I always seem to be arguing! -- that sf has produced several acceptable characters, but it is well-nigh impossible to create a credible character without other characters near at hand to throw back reflections and round the image; there is no reason why this sort of character-building should not take place in sf (along with all our other juggling tricks), except that sf consists so largely of one or two men in scrapes. Okay, then the basic situations need freshening, and better character drawing will follow. Then maybe our audience will widen.

Not that I'd want to enforce a dogma of "character first", any more than I care about crash priorities being given psi, satire, sex, sociology, sermons, or the rest. Either you hold these beliefs or they grow in you as you write. To have alien beliefs thrust at you by critics or editors is insulting, if not downright dangerous.

The point is that if we subscribe to these beliefs when they are not our own, we handcuff ourselves. We write at less than our full power. As James Blish was quoted as saying in a recent "Galaxy" editorial, there can be as many types of sf as there are good sf writers. Cheers for Blish! This is a remark worth taking firmly to heart. If we are free to discipline ourselves, we can produce individual contributions; we shall then break free of these patterns which periodically set in can cramp sf: psi, satire, sex, sociology, etcetera.

A writer, if he is a whole man, should have it in him to write well on these themes occasionally as well as on other of his own finding. Eventually he will find editors will accept variety from him.

Eventually, too, he may find critics will judge his stories by his own intentions.

POUL ANDERSON SAYS:

Seattle was a grand party, probably the best I've ever attended. For me the only thing lacking was the presence of several people like yourself whom I'd been hoping to see. So, to all members of the lodge who were there --- most especially to Bob and to Lee, but the rest in a scarcely lesser degree --- our thanks and undying love; to those who were not, our honest regrets and hope for better luck next time. And now in haste, before this post-convention mood has me blubbering, for an attempt to put back in PITFCS the good old belligerence which has recently been missing.

Bordes: Bravo! Exactly the points I've been trying to make: that sf deals with men's discoveries and men's work, not with "Man's" piddling little neuroses; and that the object in producing sf is not to win Orville Prescott's approval but to have fun. It's fitting that this judgment should come out of France, where probably the only contemporary "mainstream" writing that anyone will remember next century is also being done. Is the general membership of the Institute aware that Fiction is not a mere pseudopod of F&SF, but the most perceptively edited sf magazine in the world? (Of course, my opinion may be influenced by the fact that they take Me more seriously than anyone of this side of the water does.) I should like to add one footnote, though. While the self-consciously lit'ry approach could strangle American sf, the murder is at this moment actually being committed by the Mark Phillipses, Darrel Langarts, Wally Bupps, and the rest of that dreary lot.

Budrys: As I remarked to you at the recent brawl, I found "Who?" a better novel than "Rogue Moon," good though the latter is. Your display of technique is so dazzling that, to me anyway, it tends to interfere with the story. Of course, I can't tell you how to run your own shop. But neither can Anthony West, Leslie Fiedler, or Edmund Wilson. I'm glad, though not surprised, to see you explicitly disown their theories of criticism as a set of academic dogmas and catty little remarks about the writer's personality. I can't help feeling, though, that you wrote "Rogue Moon" to prove you could outplay them at their own writing game. Okay, you proved it. In the long run, however, you've got too big a talent to conform to anyone's standards of excellence except your own.

By the way, I was happy to note you're a fellow admirer of Robert Abernathy and Ralph Williams, two vastly underrated writers. Are they in the Institute, Ted? ((No. Addresses? TRC))

Knight: No, damn it, the "dialogue of ideas" which I miss had nothing to do with letter columns. I meant, for example, the way Heinlein, in two stories under different names explored the uses of a phony religion as a front for rebellion and a means of tyrannical government; and Leiber then went on to the notion of a phony witchcraft as a front for rebellion against such a church. Or the way writers in general seized upon scientific and philosophical ideas almost as soon as they came out, e.g., the "seetee" series, "World of Null-A", and numerous yarns by Raymond F. Jones. Science and philosophy are moving still faster these days, but how many writers besides Hal Clement pay any attention? I give you, gentlemen, as random examples of recent developments which ought each to be good for a dozen plots: correlation between stellar age, stellar composition, and the nature of planets; direct stimulation of the so-called pleasure center, and the things this technique can and cannot do; psychotomimetic drugs; interaction between genes and viruses; stereoisomers produced to order in carload lots; human-computer symbiosis. But what are most of you writing about? Psionic gamblers.

McLaughlin: Well, isn't your complaint about stupid editing of the novels the same as earlier complaints about stupid editing of shorter stories? Everybody

agrees this a Bad Thing, and I suggest the membership simply stop submitting to publishers who offend in this respect. It might be a public service for anyone who has a horrible experience of this sort to report it in PITFCS, that the rest of us may be warned.

A more subtle problem is the doubtless well-intentioned publisher who, for some weird New Yorkish reason or other (New Yorkers are the most inefficient people in the world --- present company excepted, to be sure), can't give a book the extra few days of work which would make the difference between awkwardness and effectiveness.

Brunner, Boardman, McKenna, Russell: I think you're confusing the slogan with the reality. A good many Americans do make idiotic noises about "the struggle between Communism and capitalism;" and if that were indeed the case, you might be justified in washing your hands of it. But in point of fact, the issue is between totalitarianism, of which Communism is only one manifestation although the most immediately dangerous one, and liberty. This issue will not, I'm afraid, be settled by any comparison of living standards twenty years hence. Living standards aren't relevant. The Germans embraced Hitler in 1933, and the Depression wasn't hurting them any more than it was the Americans and British who laughed their own fascists off the podium. Likewise, in the world today we have ill-fed friends and well-fed enemies. Totalitarianism is not a menace because of its holistic character. It cannot permit liberty to exist, anywhere, for any longer than necessary, without losing its own identity.

By "liberty" I do not mean an area of permitted free discussion, such as does indeed exist in the Soviet Union --- and is actually wider than most Westerners realize. Nor do I mean the freedom of economic activity George Price was talking about. Economics is a merely technical matter, at least until it penetrates the walls of a man's home. By "liberty" I mean the concept embodied in the Bill of Rights: that the state (or the people, as the Communists put it) is there to serve the individual, not the individual the state; that by virtue of being an individual he has certain rights which no one can take from him for any reason. A libertarian society does not "permit" free discussion any more than it "permits" breathing or eating; such areas it may not touch at all.

Naturally, the inalienable rights are often violated in practice, but this does not invalidate the concept nor prove that the Western governments have abandoned it, any more than the fact that many murderers go unpunished proves that governments condone (private) murder. Of course I support the right of the Communists to propagandize; I support the same right for Nazis, black Muslims, white Citizens' Councils, and my own right to heckle them all. And in general, the American government shares my attitude. Perhaps our English members who believe otherwise simply haven't seen local criticism of such things as the Cuban fiasco. Believe me, there's been plenty.

Okay, McKenna, here's "An educated American today who honestly believes he has as much freedom of thought and expression as Americans had in 1910." At the height of the so-called McCarthy period, I wrote and sold stories which explicitly opposed everything he stood for. At the height of Eisenhower's popularity, I was openly calling him a fool and a hypocrite. I just finished correcting the galleys of a mystery novel in which one important character is a Communist, sympathetically portrayed. For reasons unknown, I have somehow been put on the mailing list of Northern Neighbors, a Canadian Communist publication. I subscribe to The New Republic. I could subscribe to The Nation if I wanted to, but I've already got Northern Neighbors to line the catbox. Out of a sense of duty --- in may ways, it's a shithead organization --- I belong to the ACLU. Several stories of mine have taken the coming eclipse of the USA for granted. My taste in economice is frankly, often printedly anti-capitalist. I number Communists among my friends and relatives. Yet nobody has laid a finger on me. What more do you want, for Pete's sake:

The danger to liberty does not lie in totalitarian propaganda, and the present Administration seems intelligent enough to realize this elementary fact. The danger lies in the armed forces of the totalitarian countries. Since "armed forces" include spies and saboteurs, defense must necessarily include internal security measures. This does not mean the gagging of anybody but only the leashing of some. By the same token, I don't feel the least apologetic about our bases, overflights, or any outright aggressions we may commit against the USSR. It has them coming. If it wants to be treated like a civilized power, let it start acting like one.

Campbell, Jenkins: But where is this pompous scientific orthodoxy you're so exercised about? Certainly there are some dogmatic scientists, and some others who are perhaps over-cautious, but there are enough of the opposite sort too. If the people, especially the amateurs, who have made such wonderful new discoveries, would stop talking about how wonderful they are and start producing experimental evidence (anecdotes are not evidence) or sound mathematical analysis, then the scientific community as a whole would pay attention --- grudgingly, perhaps, as relativity and quantum mechanics were grudgingly noticed at first, but attention would get paid and the real discoveries would in time get incorporated into the canon.

Like, take those pipe locators. JWC led me out in his back yard too, and I had the same experience as Ted. So maybe there is an unsuspected law of nature waiting to be discovered; or, at the very least, maybe the nervous system is more sensitive to slight variations in gravity than anyone now realizes. Why not? The trouble is, however, that before we can explain the phenomenon we have got to prove that it in fact occurs. And a few random visitors like me operating under uncontrolled conditions do not constitute scientific evidence. Neither does a body of engineering folklore.

It would be simple enough to give those pipe locators a real test. I could build the layout myself for about $50, and in a year or two could present the world with a large collection of adequately controlled experiments. I haven't done so, because other interests eat up my time and money. But why isn't anyone doing the job? JWC, for instance.

By the way, the three-body problem is not one for which no theoretical solution exists. It's merely one for which no general solution to the differential equations has been found, and this is due to nothing more mysterious than its complexity. Analytical solutions of certain special cases have been found, and any specific case can be numerically solved to any desired degree of accuracy.

--- Okay, I've outraged you all, but it was only in the hope of stirring up some arguments. My personal feelings are benign and happy, to be in such good company as this lodge is. Good night now; see you next year, if not before. The door at Chez Anderson is never locked and the refrigerator is always full of beer.

ISAAC ASIMOV SAYS:

I have just read Pitt-fox 140 (and I approve of this slightly bowdlerized version of the name) and assume that Will Jenkins is deliberately trying to start a fight. He and John Campbell and many others are plugging the thesis that scientists are vicious vested interests that object to advances by Bright Young Men Without Union Cards. (Most of the people who plug the thesis lack the Union Card and I happen to possess one so perhaps I am not disinterested either, but I honestly don't think it affects the correctness of my view.)

All scientific advances have been made over the die-hard opposition of most of the famous scientists of the time. That is essential and desirable (I wrote an

article on the subject in F & SF and I'm damned if I repeat the whole thing again) and in the absence of such opposition, science would quickly degenerate into a wild farrago of nonsense originating from all the Bright Young Men with their Free-Wheeling Minds.

That's point number one.

As for theological opposition, that's another thing. Where scientists oppose an idea by pitting scientific arguments against said idea (they may be lousy or wrong scientific arguments but they are arguments within the field of discussion), theologians pit non-scientific arguments against the same idea.

As it happens, the non-scientific arguments have great emotional appeal among the general public. No scientist has ever been in danger of his life because of the opposition of other scientists (at most, only his job is in danger -- and even that is very rare) but the theologians have on their side, mob violence and the thumbscrew and the stake. (I know that Galileo wasn't burnt, but Bruno was, and with Bruno's example before him, Galileo decided on discretion.)

Maybe this seems overdrawn in a century when most theologians are mild and kindly disposed toward science. But we have an analogous phenomenon. No amount of scientific opposions to Linus Pauling's scientific theories can endanger him, but political opposition to his political ideas come near to endangering his career even as a scientist.

And that's point number two.

Some comments on other letters, now:

I agree with Arthur Clarke in being appalled at Brunner's 10,000 and 18,000 per day word mark. I have in my time been accused of being prolific, too (eight books in 1960 --- one of them a large two-volume thing --- isn't exactly the result of sitting in the corner and sucking my thumb) but a rapid calculation convinces me that when I've gone 4,000 words, I have done a full day's work and go off to pant a little. And I frequently do less without noticeable guilt feelings.

How come you let Eric Frank Russell spell my name with a "z" and don't correct him? Don't you know what a social gaff that is?

And also, I have a question, which is, How come I'm so damn non-controversial? People sit around writing letters pro- and anti- this guy and that. They'll discuss the history of science-fiction learnedly, approving of this one and disapproving of that one, and nobody even mentions me --- whether for good or for evil.

Now I don't mind not being praised because I can always write a letter and praise myself. (I have done this many times.)

But I do mind not being yelled at, on account of I would just naturally reach for several sheets of paper and rave back indignantly and being deprived of the opportunity saddens my pugnacious soul.

Oh, well, right now I feel lousy. The Soviets have just announced they are resuming nuclear testing and Vice-President Johnson has pledged our "sacred honor" to West Berlin.

I may be just an old cynical so-and-so but it gripes me to have guys like the Vice-President get all misty-eyed over how freedom-loving and heroic the Ber-

liners are. Who were all those people people going "Sieg Heil" a while back? Who were setting up concentration camps and running the gas chambers?

Of all the cities in the whole world to die for --- the one I am least interested in dying for is Berlin.

JIM BLISH SAYS:

PITFCS #140 very meaty. To horse, meat:

M. Bordes: I can't think of a recent analysis more completely contrary to my own views. The amount of intellection going on in present-day science-fiction is almost invisible; the characteristic product is the Garrett-Harris novel, not the Sturgeon. Even pieces that I find I like on most other grounds usually strike me as about half thought through, or less. Even Heinlein spends his time raising logical problems based in rational premises and then ducks into a mystical answer, a procedure that has been going on ever since Beyond This Horizon and Waldo. Current social satire is accurately characterized by Sanders as "future worlds where the certified public accountants have Taken Over" and all the other complexly related aspects of society are left out; for years GALAXY has been like a map of the US in which all the rivers in the south are labelled "Swannee". Of the four most prolific and most published newcomers of the past decade, only one seems to have any cerebral cortex at all, while the others --- and they're far from alone --- have been content to let John or Horace do their thinking for them. How high a level of thinking this produces can only be deduced from the magazines, a full afternoon's work for a four-year-old boy. . . .

The difference between the introspective and introverted person is hard to delineate, but I'll respect M. Bordes' distinction. Jay T. Shurly, the University of Oklahoma psychiatrist who has done much of the pioneer work on sensory deprivation (also a s-f fan, by the way) tells me that the introvert comes out of the "blank tanks" in much better shape than the star-bronzed engineer type; he has more intellectual furniture and is more accustomed to calling upon it, so that he doesn't become bored nearly so quickly.

Will Jenkins: I see no evidence that people who doubt the exploding universe theory (like me, too) are scorned. The steady-state theory (which I also doubt) has become pretty fashionable lately, and the Einstein-deSitter model has taken a terrific factual pasting from some work done at Jodrell Banks. I am inclined to agree with Martin Gardner that one of the major changes in the atmosphere of the scientific community in the past fifty years is its abandonment of what was once a traditional (and perhaps often pig-headed) conservatism, to the point where hypotheses which would once have been thought wild and undignified are now received cordially by the most sober of journals. It was in Nature, for instance, that there popped up the proposal that we are being Listened To by a million-year-old galactic federation and that it had been sending us messages since about 1935. Nobody screamed. The steady-state hypothesis in itself is pretty mad --- as one critic remarked, it substitutes an infinite number of miracles for the one proposed by the monobloc model --- but cordially, and the cordiality is growing. I would agree with Jenkins that scientists today have been making some disgusting displays of themselves as political figures (like most of you, I despise Teller), but would suggest that they have no monopoly on this and indeed have a long way to go before they amass the record of fat-headedness accumulated in this field by other groups.

Brian Aldiss: You've put your finger on a very pervasive feeling, I'd guess. In this connection let me urge the membership to read THE MALE RESPONSE, being peddled over here by Galaxy Novels as science fiction and a sex novel. It is

neither, but instead a fine African comedy in the tradition of SCOOP and BLACK MISCHIEF.

Chan Davis: Yes, there should be no such thing as political heresy in an open society. I agree with Avram to this extent, however: A man who has been the conscious agent of the foreign policy of a country other than his own is not properly definable as being a political agent. English provides more precise words for this kind of operation. (Avram may not have been saying this at all; but I say.) A lot of what passes for politics in this country, and for foreign policy too, turns upon the exploitation of people with very small vocabularies. A. J. Liebling cites an instance wherein all the NYC newspapers labelled as an "ultimatum" a note to Tito which wasn't an ultimatum at all; similarly, Eisenhower and the press together supinely accepted Krushchev's word "espionage" for the U-2 overflight, though plainly the only precise word was "reconnaissance." (No matter which word applies, the USSR was of course within its rights in shooting Powers down; but to allow the enemy to dictate the terms of the subsequent world-wide discussion --- when he doesn't even speak the languages involved, furthermore --- is ignorance compounded into insanity.)

AJ: My most vivid memory of the Abernathy story you cite is that everybody on Mars spoke Russian, a fact called to my attention with considerable chop-licking by John Michel and DAW at the time it was published. This now looks like one of those occasions of prophecy which Sanders won't allow us. . . I hope somebody will publish that anthology. I don't know whether s-f is dying or not, but if it is, one of the contributing causes surely is lack of technical (not technological, nor psychological) criticism. It may be that such an operation has to be conducted in private, as you do it; some of the burgeoning frogs we have in this puddle mistake all criticism for the ad hominem variety.

Nevertheless I continue to think that technical criticism ought to be more than a private tool by which the individual writer makes his own stories better.

John Campbell: The way the sands shift every time the wind blows confuses me, since I know nothing about meteorology. I do think, however, that it is impossible for me to have forgotten "what Science really is," since I am perfectly persuaded that I never knew it and neither does anybody else; the philosophy of science is a knotty subject and full of the clanger of great minds disagreeing with each other. (For a good anthology of the various kinds of clangor to be encountered, see "Sovereign Reason" by Ernest Nagel.) Within the frame of your own argument, however, I don't find it persuasive to see a "Type II phenomenon" without any acknowledgment that these are fundamentally different categories. In this system of definitions, fire was once a Type II phenomenon, in that it "worked" without anybody's having the vaguest idea of what fire "is"; there then follows Eddington's assumption, which is nonsense, that fire as defined in terms of molecular movements and convection is somehow "realler" than fire defined in terms of the aspects of it directly available to the senses. (Eddington, you will remember, said that a table model of tiny electrical particles separated by vast distances was "realler" than the solid table of experience; a spectacular piece of confusing the reader with two sets of definitions only one of which is acknowledge. Korzybski spent his whole life trading upon this trick.) Thus: ". . . all the great breakthroughs must start as TypeII devices!" (JWC) This is plainly untrue. The airplane, for example, was never a Type II device; it never worked; the Wright Brothers (and Lilienthal, though he lacked a sufficient power plant) made it work by re-running wind-tunnel experiments and finding that the values then written into the tables from such experiments were wrong, as they had suspected initially from the theoretical laws of Bernouilli --- not because there were already airplanes that flew-but-nobody-knew-why. The Wrights' fundamental invention was not the airplane but the airfoil, and you cannot even see it in any functional

airplane unles you take a cross-section of the wing; it does not exist in nature and was never a "Type II device." Ditto the wheels or the telescope. Now, let us make a substitution: ". . . all the great breakthroughs must start as Type II phenomena." (JB) Put this way, the statement is true; but it is also plainly a triviality and does not support your argument. I would like to suggest to you and Will Jenkins and any remaining Forteans in the audience that this "Orthodoxy" you are tilting against is nothing more than a convenient windmill; I would also like to suggest that a state of mind which equates dowsing rods with triple-star systems cannot be in a very good position to speak ex cathedra about "what Science really is."

But while I don't find this particular Jenkins-Campbell thesis even slightly convincing, I would like to hear from Jenkins his reasons for doubting the exploding universe, and what model he currently prefers to it; and I'd like to read some discussion of the matter from anybody else in the membership who has preferences. Ike? John Pierce? Dean? JWC? Poul? How about it? Aesthetically I have always been fondest of Milne's kinematic relativity, which allows one to say that the universe either is or isn't expanding according to what time-scale one chooses to read the evidence by; but unless I misread their import completely, the Jodrell Bank results I mentioned earlier seem to be as hard on Milne as they are on Einstein-deSitter. Einstein himself used to say that the evidence for that model was in a very unsatisfactory state because it was all so indirect.) As for the monobloc, it seems to me that the main arguments against it go back to the time-table of the creation of the elements devised by the Gamow group, which has a gap in it nobody has been able to bridge as far as I can determine; but the fact that there seem to be a good many new stars and young galaxies observable in the heavens is also hard to explain in terms of the big-bag cosmogony. This leaves us with the steady-state theory, which I find repulsive. (And I hope nobody will flinch if I remark that which of these --- if any --- turns out to be correct carries with it theological implications of considerable scope.)

John Pierce: I have no answer for the question you pose in the current issue, though I think George O. Smith could answer it without any trouble; he was, after all, the winner of the contest, with the old gag about the ball-bearing mousetrap. But I would like to go back to your earlier remarks about Big and Little Thinks. They leave me uncertain whether they were meant to apply mainly to THE TRIUMPH OF TIME or to A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, but I suspect that the latter book was the one mostly involved. Whoever told you that the religious question involved in the book was "incorrect" misinformed you (there are exactly two departures from current Catholic dogma in the book, both deliberate and neither one having any bearing on the central problem), but I think it is more interesting that you allowed someone to tell you this rather than determining it for yourself; hence --- to jump wildly at a conclusion --- you regard religious speculation and disputation as Big Thinks with no real meaning or import? (As contrasted perhaps with Little Thinks about solid, inarguable realities like Dirac holes, quantum jumps and other such kickable objects?) I'd see no point in disputing such a position, but if is your position I'd like to have it out in the open. . . Second: you complain that some or perhaps all of the scientific material in TTOT is "ripped out of context." Under what circumstances could the technical material in a piece of fiction said to be in context? And what context? As it happens, a large part of the theoretical discussion in TTOT was "ripped" out of an article called "Time and Entropy" in one of the last issues of the now defunct The American Scientist; to keep it in context, should I have felt obligated to include the whole article, verbatim? That is not my understanding of how one writes readable fiction.

I raise this question because I again don't grasp the distinction you appear to be making. Most of my books, like those of many better writers contain fairly large helpings of theoretical and technological chatter, including the others of the Okie series which you appear to like; but nobody has complained that said

chatter is "out of context," nor have you, yet. Wherein lies the difference? How do I know when my scientific underpinning is in context and when it isn't? TTOT is published and nothing further can be done about it, but the information might be helpful in writing the next piece --- especially since I've lately taken to writing for teen-agers. (And brother, can the readers of BOYS' LIFE ask tough questions!)

Damon: There's no really convincing evidence that the technologically informed readership isn't with us still; the last time I was at Brookhaven admittedly five years ago, ASF was one of the hottest sellers on the installation's newsstand, and if these people aren't on the frontiers of a science-fictional subject, who is? But it may be that they no longer feel welcome, because for one thing only one of the three major magazines has even had a letter column for many years, and secondly because the whole tone of that magazine, not just the stories, has become "violently anti-rational". John naturally prints first the letters that interest him, and he is no longer interested in technology, having become swallowed up almost completely in hoaxes and superstitions. No, I continue to believe that editors' preferences must bear the largest part of the blame for the disappearance of the kind of story Poul (and you and I) like best; Horace, as you once noted yourself, never had a nickel's worth of respect for or interest in ideas per se, and since John became a self-appointed educator he has devoted most of his energy to pushing his own. The rise of the no-headed s-f writer would have been impossible without editors who not only tolerated but welcomed the decorticated copy they produced. That the readers don't welcome it seems pretty evident from the circulation figures (not counting GALAXY's which is probably a print-run figure; and with Fred at the helm the magazine shows signs of improving.)

Allan Hayes: Hail, Sycamore. Where is the fiction, man? Poetry will get you nowhere, I speak from experience.

Ted: I am not a betting man either, except on sure things like national elections; but I will bet you that John does not pick up your challenge. The nature of the subject matter is such that it would softly and suddenly vanish away at the slightest hint of a rigorous investigation, nor would you ever again see any mention of it in ANALOG. There are, you will recall, precedents, a rollcall of which would surely bring tears of nostalgia to the most flint-hearted of the membership. I wonder if anyone has bethought himself of all the discredited theories and philosophies to which ASF has been a home over the past 20 years, mostly through the contributions of van Vogt? (The true crackpot stuff, like psionics and pyramidology was mostly the editor's.) They include Spengler, General Semantics, the Bates eye-training bit, various Hubbardisms. . . wonder how Gaylofd Hauser got left out?

Mac McKenna: Amen.

Judy Merril: Hello, Harlan.

Department X: Those outside of New York City ought to be informed that Orville Prescott's way of dismissing any book he finds not positive and upbeat enough for his tastes is to call it dull, or sometimes, "dull, dull, dull!" he said this, for instance, about LOLITA. The Heinlein has many faults, but dull it isn't; the word is just a standard Prescott reflex.

JOHN BOARDMAN SAYS:

Her disguise
To sex made him wise,
But the Sturch called snuggery
A buggery. (The Lovers)

A worker can't try it
One a vegetable diet;
But fill her up with mutton
And unbutton. (The Rogue Queen)

Corpses and scars
From here to the stars.
The future is grandiose,
Not Ghandiose. (Starship Soldier)

Homo Superior
Has tendrils exterior
But Sapiens' program
Is pogrom. (Slan)

Foes human and demon
Died kickan and scremon,
But step on fresh blood?
Thud! (any Conan story)

Sir Dominic Flandry
Fought with anything handry.
If matters got worse he
Had no Mersey. (any Flandry story)

JOHN W. CAMPBELL JR. SAYS:

Trouble with your complaint that I don't "carry through, and complete the whole, final story on the 'enthusiasms!'" as you have labeled them, is that you're impatient.

The Manhattan Project started in 1941. It was over a year before the first research reactor initiated the first chain reaction. It was four years before the first public announcement. And this four-year delay occurred despite a frantic urgency on the part of all concerned, a practically unlimited budget, and the all-out co-operation of the top scientists, the best equipment, the highest priorities, and everything else that could be thrown behind one of FDR's "enthusiasms."

I predicted, in 1941, that the war would be ended by the use of an atomic weapon. That was one of my "enthusiasms" at the time. . . and I didn't carry through with it either. I didn't publish the full account of the successful application of natural uranium in a chain reaction that year. I didn't publish the account of the successful separation of gram quantities of U-235 in 1942. I didn't tell of the critical-mass experiments and their results in 1943 and 1944.

Dammit, man --- use your own, personal, direct knowledge of history of inventions and developments to get some perspective on how real developments really work. Stop thinking you're living in a science-fiction epic where Seaton & Crane observe a strange effect on Monday, figure out the basic science of it on Wednesday, start building the first inter-steller cruiser on Saturday, complete it without a single bug, sticking relay, or conflict of blueprints (Print 27-B, the electrical network, calls for a junction box here, but the shut-off valve for the hydraulic servo line, on Print 834-C, shows the valve handle has to turn through here. Redraw and redesign one of the layouts.) and have it ready to take off in two more weeks.

I have, personally, sat in on some of the mathematical theoretical developments stemming from the analysis of the new forces involved in the Dean Drive. It takes months to struggle through this sort of thing --- even with the aid of computers.

I've helped built experimental equipment designed to measure the new forces --- and found that we had to start all over, because while we could indicate the force, we couldn't measure it because of bugs in the apparatus, and low signal-to-noise ratio. If that effect had been easy to observe, it would have been observed long ago!

You, Ted, have never done any physical-science research; it's not in your line of work. Take it from me --- and from your own knowledge of history --- that it takes time, patience, and effort.

Also get over the impression that you have any right to demand of researchers that they tell you, right now, what they are discovering. If you'd tried finging out about the progress the Manhattan Project researchers were making in 1942, you'd have wound up suddenly dead, unless you were an awfully convincing talker.

By what right do you demand that men who have been sweating for understanding for a year or so should, right away, give you a detailed report of the progress they've made? Are you paying their bills? Are you working with them? Or are you simply demanding a ringside seat, foam-rubber cushioned, and with advice-giving privileges, for free? And with an electric gooser, pushbutton operated, to make those slaves doing the work get a move on?

What you want, and what you have a reasonable right to, or can reasonably expect, are different things.

You think I don't want a full-scale, production-model Dean-drive spaceship, and want it right now?

Incidentally, all those different tests that I was too ignorant and careless to think of, too, have been made. I find it necessary to repeat ad nauseum --- because some people can't get the idea through their heads --- that the major point of the article was the Scientific Orthodoxy that wouldn't perform any tests whatever. Not Dean's drive. The Orthodoxy that wouldn't test it.

For McLaughlin's information: I did hold the machine in my hands while it was running. It felt lighter. But look, guy --- everybody knows perfectly well that mere human reports of "it felt different" or "it felt tacky" are absolutely of no value, utterly meaningless, to be rejected instantly out of hand. . . so let's not mention what I did and saw and felt, but only what I measured and photographed, huh?

The sidewalk-superintendents around here don't like it either way --- and do damned little but complain!

As to putting the device on its side; if you'll look in the September POPULAR MECHANICS magazine, you'll see a picture of the same Dean model I photographed for Analog lying on its side and hauling a 25-pound load. It's not a good test; I knew about it, and knew why it was not a good test. Any kid that's played in a wagon knows that you can work one across a floor very readily by throwing your weight back and forth in it. Try standing on a board, with a sledge hammer, and hammering the end of the board. You can drive yourself across the floor very nicely. It's called an "impact drive," and any such test of a Dean drive is meaningless. Guy by the name of Bull had a working model of one of those things back in 1929.

McLaughlin wants to hold his present attitudes --- i.e., do nothing whatever --- until a finished, perfected Dean drive is presented for his approval.

O. K. --- but if somebody somewhere doesn't get in and do something about it. . . well, it reminds me of that yarn where Earth was being defeated by the Aliens, but somebody had an almost-perfected time-machine. So everybody worked frantically to perfect the time machine, so they could go into the Future, and get the super-dooper absolute weapons that men would have by then and louse up those bad-nasty

Aliens. So the guy goes into the Future, comes back, and reports. Nothing but Aliens in the Future. Nobody bothered to develop the weapons that were going to save them, so naturally, they lost, and had no Future.

Re my goof on the prediction that TV wouldn't displace radio as the soporific of the millions. I've thought of that item a number of times in the years since --- and only gradually has the answer soaked in. The trouble was that I forgot that half of the population of the United States --- say 90,000,000 people --- have subnormal intelligence.

It is impossible to concentrate attention on anything while watching TV; the point I forgot was that half the population doesn't concentrate anyway. They have stopped reading. It's fascinating to watch a sixteen-year old girl ironing a blouse by feel, while watching TV; I'd never have thought it possible. Of course, the "washboard-weepers" have died out.

My fundamental error was in forgetting the immense population of morons and idiots and children who haven't the slightest desire to concentrate.

TV is quite commonly called "the idiot box," and most of the intelligent adults I know watch it so seldom they'd never own a set if it weren't for the children.

I just forgot the proportion of morons in the nation.

A note for Chan Davis: Way, way back, at the First Philadelphia World Science Fiction Convention, I remember talking to you about some then-current news items concerning the decidedly brutal and inhumane tactics the Soviets were then using --- items reprinted from Soviet news sources, and appearing in all major United States papers. At that time you denied having seen them, and denied the possibility of their truth when I quoted them. I have --- and currently do --- object to your political attitudes and positions because you retain that same basic position; you will not notice, nor listen to those who have noticed, data which is unfavorable to what you believe.

I myself believe that, as of now, the Russians are doing an excellent --- though of course not-perfect --- job of building an industrial, high-level culture. In many respects, their methods, as of now, are better than ours, as of now. (Their space-research methods, quite obviously, for one!)

It's not an interest in Communism I object to in you; it's your failure to be willing to discuss both the good and the bad --- to weigh, evaluate and balance both sides of the problem. Your interest in Communism has never perturbed me; your intellectual dishonesty has.

To the extent intellectual dishonesty is a trait we cannot afford in college instructors, I felt your loss of your position was merited. Not because you were interested in Communism --- but because of that intellectual dishonesty that, so many, many times, is a concomitant of the red-hot American Communist.

One of the greatest political science instructors in the country, Fred Schumann, of Williams College, is a real student of Communism, and knows it in fact to a degree you only think you do. I admire him greatly as a man and as an instructor --- because he is completely honest in studying both sides of both social philosophies. And he, be it noted, was investigated and approved by the UnAmerican Affairs Committee. They weren't hard on honest and balanced students of social philosophy.

Incidentally, I generally disagree with Fred's conclusions . . . but I can, and do, respect those conclusions as being arrived at by careful, balanced, and ex-

tensive hard thinking.

But Chan . . . I think you earned your troubles by careless, and unbalanced thinking. It's much less work to reach conclusions that way.

TED CARNELL SAYS:

A word or two to let you know that PITFCS 137 to 140 have all been digested safely and although I haven't entered into any of the discussions (why should I from this Sacred Shelf?) I certainly have enjoyed skimming along the sidelines with the comments of my various friends --- and others of similar ilk whose names are so familiar.

I am most certainly looking forward to the appraisal of Brian Aldiss's HOTHOUSE series which I recently read as a new complete novel and which, incidentally, has just been accepted by Faber & Faber here for publication next Spring. Brian has been receiving considerable correspondence and comment over this series and we are both looking forward to the "appraisal" and wondering if M. MacKenna will pull out the one fly in the original ointment which gave Bob Mills, Brian and myself one big headache.

Apart from praise for PITFCS and your efforts, however, I do want to take a tilt at Poul Anderson's plea in No. 140 for a Proofreaders' Fund for Impoverished Publishers for I am sure that the same basic trouble operates on both sides of the Atlantic and that it is not the fault of the publishers or their proofreaders but primarily the fault of tired and lazy compositors. Having originally started my working life through all branches of printing I know only too well what happens at the end of the line.

To quote an example: over here I work direct from page proofs (no galleys for make-up) and after correcting one set these are returned to the printer who makes the final changes and goes to press. I never see a second set of corrected proofs as do most book publishers. Some years ago when a governing editorial board sat in judgment on all the magazines in the group to which Nova belongs I was constantly criticised for the number of literals in every issue of each magazine. Checking my duplicate set of proofs over a period of several months I discovered that the printer only made about 50% of the original corrections. More often than not, where a missing word had to be inserted in a paragraph, the resetting would contain one or two more errors, which would go through the printed edition unnoticed.

We even had the classic example on Science Fantasy one issue where an apprentice pied four pages on the stone, salvaged some and then got a couple of mono compositors to set the balance for him in their lunch break. The only trouble was that they were both using different type faces at the time and we eventually found four pages set in three different type faces --- sometimes the change had occured in the middle of a sentence! And that issue is on record to prove the point.

While this may be an extreme, nevertheless I feel sure that most of the paperback publishers work along similar lines and that they do not, in fact, see corrected page proofs.

Poul's worthwhile suggestion should therefore be turned into a Fund for Tired Correctors of the Press.

With a special Illuminated Scroll for the editor or publisher who ever gets a complete issue of a magazine or paperback free from literals. I could use a few myself to brighten these office walls for I get pretty tired at the sniping

letters which come in from all over the world over this uncontrollable factor.

PS Harry Altshuler is in town this week and we have had several lively sessions with him.

AVRAM DAVIDSON SAYS:

Yet another temptation to neglect all office and turn aside from seeking bread has come round again in the form of PITFCS 140. It is part of a sinister plot, the workings of which become clearer and clearer to me. My landlord wants me not to have rent money, so he can lease the aprtment to someone else at a higher rate. Other writers want me to write less, so that their own grossly inferior scribblings will not suffer by comparison with my own polished efforts. The Secratree of The Institute wants me to be torn loose from my roots so that I will come live of his hospitality in Masonjarville, thus giving him someone to talk to while he drinks his coffee, besides the Instructor in Sophomore Sewing and the Swine Husbandry Demonstrator. All of these (and others, and others, boy: don't think I don't know that Mack Reynolds has been putting Interpol onto me, or that Winston P. Sanders has devilishly gotten Karen Anderson to divert me further by sending copies of Vorpal Glass; et bloody cetera) unite and distract me from my work, my work, my proper work. . .

Well, here it is the weekend of the SeaCon, and I am in NY, my heart's at the end of the west. Because of the failure of publishers to drop purses of gold in my lap. Somewhere there is light and joy and sparkle and voices raised in song. . . Eheu. Ai de mi. Well, Uncle Ajay will be there. Have fun, and hoist a horn for me.

John Brunner says he is "also being delighted to find the staff of the Soviet Embassy here in London far less dogmatically marxist than their opposite numbers from the US are dogmatically capitalist." Is this man for real? Is he to be taken seriously? Does he really represent what he calls "us English liberals"? If so, then I can understand another Englishman (Harold Laski) defining a liberal as "A man with both feet planted firmly in mid-air." And, ah, and oh, The New Statesman, The New Statesman! Still swallowing Soviet camels and straining at Yankee gnats?

Idiots delight.

By now I suppose all hands do understand that PITFCS is never proofread. Philip J. Farmer and others will, I hope, accordingly realize that sentence alleged to come from my pen, "Because the idea that Mousterian Man was content, in OGRE (IF), to kill him off in 1556 not only still exists, etc", is the result of the Secretary's advanced case of tired blood, not of the softening of my brain.

Will Jenkins on the obscurantism of scientists: Item: Who remembers that only about ten years a Leading Publisher was forced to give over publishing the works of Velikovsky becaused "organized Scientists" threatened to boycott that publisher's line of textbooks? What price Free Discussion in that case? Item: less than two years ago the Director of Curriculums for the Washington State Department of Edcation revealed that he was a Fundamentalist; and, in response to questioning, gave it as his personal (not his official) opinion that teachers who taught evolution were doing wrong. The ink on the newspapers was still wet when the professional educators poured out into the streets, screaming, beating gongs, and shooting firecrackers to scare away the dragon who threatened to eat the moon. Faced with this, the Gov. fired the offending fundamentalist instantly. If any of the many people and groups who rushed to defend the Illinois prof who was fired for advocating pre-marital sex spoke a word on behalf of this other guy, no report of it reached me. Item: a scientist of my acquaintance, who has a store

of delightful stories connected with his professional work, feels unable to publish any of them because "it would hurt his career." Men in his field are not supposed to publish light and humorous items connected with it. My friend is an intelligent and perceptive person, and if he says this would unfavorably affect his chances of advancement, I believe him. Item: Never, in the course of religious/anti-religious discussion have I ever seen any religious believer react with the rage I provoked one day when (not, I hasten to say, seriously) I used Wilbur Glenn Voliva's arguments to "demonstrate" to a secularist that the world was really flat. Nor have I seen any religious believer, faced with argument against his creed, blow up in fury as did another friend of mine (not unconnected with patent offices) when it was suggested that the Second Law (I think) of Thermodynamics could be dispensed with, sometimes, in writing science-fiction.

I suppose it all depends whose conformity is being gored. Suppose White Supremacy, let's say, or Anti-Semitism, were being taught in any area where I thought I might excersize any influence. I would squawk like Hell; that's what I'd do.

Chan Davis I hope to reply to at another time. Before the next PITFCS goes to press. If I see his point at all, it is that his political ideas are nobody's damned business and that if he were a Communist or had been one he is under no obligation to admit it. To anyone.

It seems that the caparitively few expressions of conservatism in PITFCS have failed to stir me into opposition; whereas I have reacted a number of times to (viz., against) expressions from the left. I wonder if, partly in order to strike a balance, and partly because it may be of interest otherwise to the membership, you would consider publishing Paragraph Two of my letter to Bob Leman in the current (Vol. II, no. 3) issue of THE VINEGAR WORM. P. 27, beginning, "I do not know. . ." If you can't find your copy, I'll send you mine, or the clip.

"If Poul Anderson, Christopher Anvil, and Randy Garrett can keep /Campbell/ supplied with good enough stuff until writers like Mark Phillips, Pauline Ashwell, David Gordon and Larry Harris mature, he'll have his stable of high-quality writers again."

---Buck Coulson, quoted in BASTION, No. 2 (1961)

I concede that Winston P. Sanders is correct in saying that "Analog is not the Kenyon Review" --- it (Analog) pays better and pays quicker, too--- but I much question the rest of his statement: ". . . whose social concepts (in this technological century) are way behind Analog." Now, I have had a story in the Winter, /61 issue of Kenyon Review (adv.), and I consider that the social concepts expressed in this admittedly remarkable piece are by no means "way behind Analog." What does technology have to do with it? Mr. Sanders should quit living in that tree, get out and mix more with people, since he knows Poul Anderson I suggest P. get him to drink a little beer for his kidney's sake and sing some cheerful songs --- THREE KINGS, for example.

AJay --- Way I heard the legend, it wasn't his putative authorship of "The Bastard King of England" which kept Rudyard K. from the six shillings and butt of sack of the Queen's Laureateship (after all, who would have dared show it to or discuss it with her?), but his unquestionable authorship of The Widder At Windsor.

I hope that all R. McKenna means in asking me to confirm that he is right in saying that "it was in Boston they almost lynched Garrison" --- Right, Mac --- is that I am an historical authority second to none on the PITFCS mailing list. I would hate to think that. . . And I would hate even more to think that he. . . Or that I. . .

Ah well. Here it is 6:00 p.m. of a soggy Sunday (in Seattle no doubt it is crisp and lovely). Time to hide the typewriter against possible visitations from some misunderstood bongo-drummer who might want a fix while I am up in Yonkers being fillially pious and reading the week's accumulation of newspapers. Then, too, I want to do some more grubbing up of wartime letters as background for THE CORPSMAN, my mostly unwritten Regency novel. I am bemused by the Russian's latest gambit, with the bomb-tests once again. Not frightened, though I suppose I ought to be, just bemused.

L. SPRAGUE deCAMP SAYS:

To John Brunner, re Batista: The trouble is, in dealing with Cuban politicians, to tell the noble liberal liberators from the vile bloody tyrants. Batista started as a NLL, liberating Cuba from the bloody tyranny of VBT Machado. But in time he turned into a VTB himself. However, Machado in turn had started as a NLL, liberating Cuba from the previous VTB, whose name I forget. And now Señor Castro. . . They all talk prettily until they get power, when they at once begin scheming to prolong their tenure, aggrandize themselves, enrich their friends, and exterminate their foes. Any suggestions?

As for Mrs. Stuart, if you'd tell us what she said about freedom of opinion in the USA, maybe we could judge. Not to argue ad hominem, but it seems to me that about 20 years ago Donald Ogden Stuard headed something called the League of American Authors, set up by the Communist Party as part of its then campaign to divide, wreck, and then get control of the Authors League of America. I won't swear to names and dates, but the facts can be looked up.

To John Boardman, re the John Birch Society: Relax. A movement whose leader accuses the Eisenhower and Dulles brothers of Communism can hardly be called "firmly grounded." Every country has people who, convinced that the world is getting worse and worse, become fanatically devoted to the ideals of what they think were the good old days. They acquire an insensate fear of change and hatred of people and things - foreigners, ethnic groups, etc. - that don't fit their good-old-days picture. Hence Birchers, McCarthyites, the DAR, Ku Kluxers, Nazis, Black Dragons, Black Hundreds, Know Nothings, the Ossenwa Broederband, the Moslem Brotherhood, the Irgun Zvi Leumi, etc.

At the other end of the spectrum are those who, believing themselves on the bottom of the heap and unjustly so, think that if they can only stir up the heap violently enough, and kill enough of those on top, they will automatically come to the top. Either group can be organized and often are. Luckily conditions in the USA seem unfavorable to such projects right now.

Prescott, I fear, has always disliked all science fiction, save the icky-sentimental stuff the Bradbury used to write. So his roast of Heinlein doesn't surprise me as much as it may those who haven't followed his NYT reviews. I hope to read the novel; I don't think Bob could write one that bad if he tried.

MIRIAM ALLEN DeFORD SAYS:

Well, here comes that old work-stopper, No. 130, and I have to suspend my penological research for my next book and favor you with my comments. (Isn't it about time I owed you another $2? Let me know.)

I wish I could write French as well as "Francis Carsac" writes English. And he is 200% right about what he brilliantly calls psidiocies. I've been guilty of using psi myself sometimes but I too am getting awfully tired of watching authors

wriggle out of a jam by explaining that of course they guy was an esper.

Reg Bretnor: I second the motion. In PITFCS we are talking in executive session. Let in the yearners and artisticos and the whole idea falls to pieces. About 50 years ago some painters and writers and musicians formed the Bohemian Club in San Francisco. They began letting in outsiders, and now you'd be hard put to it to find any genuine worker in the creative arts in the club. Nuff sed.

John Brunner's clerihew book digests:

Scott Carey shrank
To an utter blank;
Until, misanthropic,
He became microscopic.
(The Shrinking Man.)

John Boardman et al: People scare me. We haven't been out of the trees long enough. We had an all-day symposium here on the HUAC, "Operation Abolition," etc.; it was picketed by young men from a Baptist seminary, bearing homemade signs thanking God for HUAC. At present we are enjoying a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. One of them gave a press interview saying he had been converted because everything they taught (including prohibition of blood transfusion) was in accordance with actual fact. When a lunatic hijacked a plane our revered Senators screamed obscene insults at Castro. How can we expect democracy, tolerance, or defense of civil rights (which Luscious Lucius Beebe calls "a luxury we can't afford") from people like these? What we needed was wholesale birth control about six generations back. I'm very glad I shan't in the nature of things be around many years longer. As Richard McKenna says, before we get through Russia will be a democracy and the U.S. will be a 1984-type dictatorship -- that is to say, if the super-patriots in both countries don't manage to annihilate everybody first. McKenna is right: we had a great deal more freedom of thought and expression in 1910 than we have now. I know: I was there.

Welcome to Jim McKimmey -- and if he has so darned much time on hand, let him get busy and send in his contribution to the forthcoming MWA true crime anthology, which Tony Boucher is overall editing and I am editing for this region!

Anent John R. Pierce Trio: how does Philip José Farmer get away with it? I wrote a story in which the Aliens were divided into self-fertilizing male-females and sexless offspring also produced by the said sfmf, and every editor I sent it to (even of the naughty male magazines) was revolted. Don't get me wrong; I'm fascinated by Farmer's stuff, but why does he have the monopoly?

Finally, congratulation on (a) more ink, (b) better typing, (c) better mimeographing. I could read every word of 140, and there were only a few typos. Keep it up.

J. MARTIN GRAETZ SAYS:

Was going to write when the latest hole-scrws showed up. Actually, it surprised me. I thought you'd finally seen reason and dropped me from the rolls. After all, you have every justificaltion for doing so, still more in view of current membership opinion.

To get the dirty business over with, the prospects of my becoming a writer of fiction are just about nil. I just don't have the urge or the desire to do any plotting, etc. (Hang on. Strange noises from the bathroom. . . . . just as I thought -- cat crapped in the bathtub again). I look over three or four story beginnings I have lying around, and somehow I have no real urge to finish them. One, on which I've done the most work, is a potential clinker; the other

two should have merit, but I don't have the drive to complete them.

So I content myself with Feghoots and other trivia: Jim Lyons has a couple of pieces he's been sitting on for several months at American Record Guide -- well, he says he wants them, but he's lost them on his desk. Having seen his desk, I commiserate and go along with it.

Most of your members want only authors and, maybe, editors in Itfcs. And rightly. After all, what earthly good is an in-group full of outs? Of the whole membership, only yourself, Damon, Judy, and Jim Blish have the remotest idea who I am.

For myself, I enjoy Pitfcs immensly. Once the members got over being self-conscious about their new freedom to holler, gripe, praise, and mutter, the contents of each issue improved and became quite stimulating. But is it fair to the rest of the members if they know that some schlunk is listening in while they lay themselves bare (and frequently in far better language than what they write), a guy whose only legitimate claim is a dog that appeared in the last issue of Original SF?

So I leave it to you. If you think they wouldn't mind having me around, I'd like to stay in the Institute. But if (and be honest) you think the members object to a mere gawker, then it's only fair that I not be kept on the rolls.

However, as long as I am still a member, I can wield a mighty wicked opinion. On the latest PITFCS (140):

I dunno. Maybe I'm just looking for it, but there still seems to be this undercurrent of "It's just us against the cold, cruel world, boys, but we'll save science-fiction or resign from the English language, by ghod!"

People are wondering who killed sf. People are figuring out ways to revive the corpse. People are crying their beer about sf is dead, helas!

Well, so bloody what?

Maybe you hadn't noticed, but the kind of science-fiction everyone bemoans the untimely demise of died a most timely death some ten to a dozen years ago. Since then, no one has written the sort of stuff that "made" the sogenannt Golden Age of the 1940s, including them as wrote it back then. (Those who do get roundly panned for being old-fashioned.) The years just before and during the Second War may have been Campbell's Golden Age, but the last decade or so has been the Age of Gold in more ways than one. In 1949 and 1950 three men rescued a dying craft (art?) and provided a training ground for the very folks who are now lamenting the death of the same art (craft?) so loudly.

The mourners all make the same mistake of ignoring Sturgeon's Revelation, or, to be more precise, splitting it apart and applying the two implications of it separately and unfairly.

They take the 10% good stuff from twenty years ago and say "Geez. Lookit how great!", naturally forgetting that these examples are not only rare, they are atypical. If there is any relationship in quality and content between Sturgeon's best of those years and GO Smith's average, I have yet to discover it. The stories that make the whole Early Campbell period so magnificent in retrospect are precisely the ones which do not fairly represent the period as a whole. (See if John doesn't agree.)

Now for the other half; the 90% crud is applied to our own time, and the multitudes cry, "How can you bear to even read this crap?"

And notice that they who do the loudest crying do the least writing, while those who are going to make this particular "period" a retrospective Golden Age twenty

years hence are quietly writing the stories that will do it. Do you seriously think that Budrys, Miller, Aldiss, Sturgeon, and the late Cyril are representative of our age? Hell no, they aren't! It's Garrett, Mack Reynolds, Harry Crosby, Fred Pohl.

I know what's fair. Let's all compare Feghoot against Probability Zero.

Ted: My humble thanks for cutting your page size to something which will fit into my filing cabinet.

Mr. Clarke: THE SCIENTIST SPECULATES is the brainchild of, besides those whom you mentioned, Prof John McCarthy of MIT (Just down the hall from me these days). Information on obtaining copies in the US can probably be had by writing him, but I will ask him tomorrow about the question.

Re Prescott: Boy, sompn sure stuck him in the ass, didn't it! Suggestion Mills and Ferman: better take another look at those testi--ummmm--monials hanging on the back of William. Guy who thinks Bradbury writes sf isn't fit company for Spring Byingtoh.

Sometimes I amuse myself by imagining replacements for that silly list of F&SF puffs. One set: Oscar Levant for Fadiman; for Gernsback, Clarence Budington Kelland; Virginia Kirkus for Prescott; and Sandra Dee for Byington. What Basil Davenport is doing in such a "spavined and knock-keed list" (thank you, damon.) is beyond me.

JAMES GUNN SAYS:

This is about science fiction and love.

PITFCS must be for you a labor of love, and it is filled with all kinds of love letters - gushing, romantic, nostalgic, rejected, enraged, spiteful. . . This is its charm, surely: it is like receiving a couple of dozen letters from old friends or those who, having loved alike, would be friends if paths had crossed.

I have enjoyed all this from its beginnings and felt like a leech for not contributing. But each time I have been impelled conscience, a basic reluctance has held me back -- perhaps the same reluctance which now keeps me from writing science fiction and has for the past three years. Have I anything worth saying? Is it worth the time and effort to say it? I felt impelled to join the colloquy when gentle Paul Anderson quoted some of my suggestions to sf writers -- but thought again.

Like many of your contributors and more of your non-contributing readers, I feel like a spectator at the game where once I participated -- and no longer qualified to comment on the skill and courage of the players or the rules of the game. We watch, we read, and we return out of nostalgia, out of love remembered, out of love not dead.

The question of motivation make much of dialogue in past PITFCS rather pointless. Why did we fall in love with sf? Why did we devote ourselves to it? Few of us did it for money. If we had been in it for money, we wouldn't have been in it at all.

I suppose this is true of all creative work, of all creative writing, but it seems to me paticularly true of science fiction, where the reward is well-known to be small and the fame limited. I enjoyed Fritz Leiber's analysis a few PITFCS back, but I suspect that the demon that drove us to sf looked more like love than fear.

Let us accept the fact that sf writers (and readers and editors) are atypical -- oddballs. Not for us the practical concerns of other men -- what bothers us is not

how to make a living but how to live. Most of us come to sf because we wanted a soapbox or a pulpit. All the talk about the literary freedoms of the genre is rationization. We fell in love with sf because it was wild and imaginative and true to our dreams, because it preached the perfectibility of man (is this why we drum Ray Bradbury out of the club while we bask in the reflected critical acclaim his work draws from lay critics?), because we were impatient of the now. And sf accepted us, it welcomed us, it took us into the charmed circle of belonging. It even gave us presents of money occasionally.

We never earned it. You can't earn money with an act of love, only with its counterfeit. That is provided by those we call "hacks." Sometimes, of course, a man gets lucky; he get paid well for what he loves to do. But he is the exception.

We are the odd ones. Our concerns are with ideals. PITFCS pages boil with these. Nobody else would bother.

All the anger, all the spite, engendered in us -- which spills over the pages of PITFCS -- is it not because we can no longer love with the old abandon, because we find ourselves concerned with the livelihood problems of other men, because we find it a little bit of a chore even to read sf, because we grow old?

I dare not call what we felt for sf "puppy love" because I still remember its yearnings and its fulfillments. But those of us who were young in those days -- who searched the second-hand magazine shops for old copies of Astounding and Wonder Stories, who traded two for one and suffered the complaints of the crabby proprietor that he could not live on old paper, who saw Heinlein and Van Vogt and Kuttner (in his various metamorphoses swim like new planets into our ken -- we have grown up. Asimov explains science, Cogswell teaches English, Gunn tries to increase the understanding and support of the University of Kansas. . .

Talk of love and talk of money -- somehow they don't go together. And yet part of the answer is money. Who doubts it? I freelanced full-time for four years or so and part-time for six more. I might still be at it had there been a living it it -- for me. But I wrote no more than two or three stories for the money; the rest were because I wanted to write them and wanted to write them the way I want to write them. Love. Impractical. Why should I blame someone else? A wise editor might have put some money into the care and feeding of authors, but I have a feeling he was in it for love, too, and it probably would not have been worth it to him.

Eventually there comes a time: wisdom creeps in with practical concerns. Am I perhaps sacrificing a little too much by loving too well? What about the children? A new car would be nice, a new suit, a house of our own. Some will say the world has bought the artist; others that he was not really an artist after all or he would not have succumbed.

I should add, in all honesty, that the income from those years of writing has continued to come in long after the writing stopped; the eventual reward for those four years may be significant when everything is totaled. But what is earned now could not be spent then. And without some great stroke of luck I could never earn as much writing as I earn as administrative assistant to the chancellor.

Other opportunities come along with other satisfactions and their more substantial and more regular payments -- opportunities for which writing sf may have been unsuspected preparation, opportunities for work which in many ways is less demanding. We will all agree, I think, that writing is the hardest work we ever have done. It is, moreover, a solitary occupation. It is a selfish thing. Its satisfactions are those of self-aggrandizement -- or self exposure. We, as writers, are entertainers, nothing more. We may entertain a few of the world's weary, help them forget their troubles, give them a few ideas, but in the final analysis our community, our nation our world,

our race, will be no better for our having lived.

There are, on the other hand, the satisfactions of working with people, of helping them, of producing something of permanence, of preserving or extending human institutions. These, I have a feeling are the more mature satisfactions -- or maybe it is only that we grow old.

Although I miss the pangs and pleasures of writing fiction, I would miss perhaps more the satisfactions of working with people, of aiming my writing of articles and speeches and booklets at the immediate result of moving people to understanding and to action, of inducing good students to attend the University that educated me, of persuading alumni to contribute to scholarship and research funds, of convincing a legislature that it should increase appropriations, of telling a varied public what a good university this is, even of persuading sports fans to buy season tickets (and doubling season ticket sales in one year). To have a hand in the fate of an institution like this, to contribute substantially to its welfare, and to know it is a great cause in which I work -- this is a mature satisfaction.

Perhaps it is not love. I do not forswear love. I may -- sometimes I hope I will -- return to it with open arms. But it may well take an accident to start me back. I hope someday to find the creative energy for part-time writing -- in spite of the fact that mine is a 24-hour-a-day job.

The discussion of motivation, of love and sf, that has gone before has a significant relationship to the other big question that has troubled the pages of PITFCS: what is wrong with science fiction? I do not mean merely that love dies or that marriage combines the maximum of opportunity with the minimum of temptation or even that these, for many of us, became the restless male years of wandering eyes and interests. What I refer to is the relationship between love and the amateur.

I have said it before, and I say it again: science fiction has more gifted amateurs and fewer professionals than any other writing field. I tried to document this in a fan magazine a few years ago ("Inside") and to point out what I meant by amateur and professional. I won't elaborate here except to point out that the professional devotes himself to a study of technique and to practicing his techniques, whereas many sf writers (most, perhaps) seem unaware of the fundamental writing discoveries of the past century, beginning with Flaubert. We would do well, most of us, to sit at the feet of the really good mainstream writers, those who know why they write what they write. Perhaps they need to sit at the feet of sf writers when it comes to subject and message -- but that is another question.

This is not to say -- as I have insisted elsewhere -- that sf should be self-consciously arty. I am firmly convinced that it will be nothing if it does not keep the bases for its popular appeal: excitement, action, plot, idea . . . But we need to write better, to make our choices consciously, to do our job more effectively.

For this reason I find two developments in PITFCS particularly encouraging: A. J. Budry's call for more evaluation of sf and its techniques and your note about the start of Department X -- even though I disagree with him (and agree with Poul Anderson) about full characterization and suspect that ROGUE MOON may have suffered from a misleading superfluity of that same commodity. Nevertheless, A. J. knows what he's doing and wants to know more. It's time to stop mourning the lost love and to start preparing ourselves to make a go of the marriage.

DAMON KNIGHT SAYS:

When we were discussing typing costs at the Conference, somebody, I forget who, remarked that no professional writer can affort to waste time doing his own retyping. I believe this implicitly, but it leaves me in a quandary, because I now discover that

I can't afford to have it done, either. Comment from the membership is invited.

For years I did all my own retyping, partly because my output was so small. More recently, coming to the conclusion that this was inefficient, I had a few small things retyped by local talent at reasonable rates. However, local talent has a way of getting married &/or having babies. This year, for the first time, I sent a manuscript to a professional ms. typist, one of the ladies who advertises in the New York Times. Her rate is 50¢ a page for original and one carbon, plus 3¢ for each additional carbon. When I got the work back, I found that her page count is under 200 words, so that her rate per thousand words is roughly $2.50. In addition, the job is so full of errors -- not only typos, but words left out and wrong words written in -- that it took me about three hours to make the corrections in this 11,000-word story. What her typing speed is I don't know, but for cost purposes it does not matter. Though no demon typist, I can do at least 2,000 words an hour: so that I find myself paying a typist the equivalent of $5 an hour, and putting in three hours of my own time as well. At this rate, inefficient or not, I might just as well do the work myself.

I can work with a carbon and second sheet in the typewriter, but I don't like it; it inhibits me. My own copy is sometimes clean enough to get by in first draft, but not often; translations get so heavily corrected that they are not legible without retyping. I have nothing against Ceylon, but am damned if I will move there just to be able to hire a $10-a-week secretary like Arthur Clarke's. What's the answer?

FRITZ LEIBER SAYS:

Orville Prescott manages to make his N.Y.T. review of Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land quite scathing. Seems an author can hardly pose the question "Couldn't there be a nice sex cult." without rousing a chorus of growls, groans and guffaws. Apparently the question pinpoints an area of disillusion and confusion. In particular when Prescott designates Stranger as "cheap eroticism," I'd say it indicates that today's critics, authors and editors have a load of guilt about the often cheap erotic cues that are being used today to sell books. They're squirming so about cheap eroticism in the paperbacks that they can't bear to see eroticism, in addition, taken seriously. ("The beast with two backs" is a sexy softcover.)

In most of today's books I don't find the simple, naive enthusiasm for sex -- Sex is a Good Thing -- that characterized, say, Whitman's poetry or Richard Aldington's novel All Men Are Enemies. Contrariwise, the best writing about sex is apt to turn up in books like Lolita -- and I don't think this is because Humbert Humbert is the best you can say about sex, but because it's easier to be honest about perversions than normal sex.

Georg Mann (the academic novel The Dollar Diploma; coming: The Blind Ballots) once said to me that he didn't want to write about sex at all in fiction unless he could write about it in complete graphic detail. Fine, but now that the millennium's arrived and authors can write as they please about sex, they've still got to learn how to do it. And even then we can expect a variety of treatments: Mr. Prescott to the contrary, there are other ways of describing a friendly little orgy than "with a proper combination of farce and ribald gayety -- a la Thorne Smith."

Mike Smith, the "Martian" hero of Stranger, advances such views as Sex is a Good Thing, exhibitionism and voyeurism have a wholesome base, sexual jealousy and possessiveness are mean emotions, sex means solace more than reproduction. Such views may be naive as all Hell, but they aren't cheap. They do seem cheap to those who write them off as one more seduction ploy, but I for one am getting sick of analyses of free-love cults that reduce Oneida to a giant ploy by one John Humphrey Noyes who wanted more gals than his share and to con gullible men out of their wives. And there are Casanovas with other motives than sexual insecurity.

Stranger rounds out the picture of Heinlein Martians we got in Double Star and especially Red Planet. I would say that it belongs in the main stream of his juveniles, which are really intended as much for adults as for youngsters -- and I find nothing to complain about in authors like Mark Twain and Kenneth Graham who direct themselves to all age groups. The descriptions of sex activity in Stranger are largely those of a worldly but rather finicky uncle giving the low-down to a nice bright kid. The results are at times a bit off-trail, and perhaps more than a bit, but they will get through to the young Heinlein fans and take them one step further in the growing-up process.

I'd guess that Heinlein is analyzing his own sex attitudes in the characters of Jubal and Ben. He does a pretty courageous job of it, expecially in trying to see through the male's growling possessiveness. For that matter, the whole book is a sort of balancing reaction to Starship Troopers, trying to see life from an empathetic and serene angle after having looked at it from the angle of pack survival.

Also, Stranger amounts to the story of the Whitmanites (named after Walt, I suppose) -- the free-love cult mentioned in The Puppet Masters. Heinlein has a way of filling in the blank stretches in his future history. In fact, Stranger in one of its Mark Twainish aspects revives the idea of an utterly real fundamentalist heaven from "Elsewhen."

What I find hard to take in Stranger is the easy levitation and other telekinetic magic, but I have always found this hard to take in s-f, whether in Van Vogt and Heinlein or in authors devoted to more or less conventional forms of ESP and PSI. It seems to me to be forever making something-or-other all too easy. However, with some s-f people a belief in ESP and PSI seems to be a form of religious faith. In Stranger it brings back an early not in Heinlein that figured in such stories as "Lost Legacy," "Elsewhen," perhaps "Magic, Incorporated," and (I seem to recall) "The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hogg" -- the ghostly melancholy note of "What do you do when you can do anything?" I understand it partly (like the whirling, too much too fast finishes of some Heinlein novels) as a way of saying, "Look, science and teachnology are advancing so fast that it's as if you boobs were being given magic powers overnight! For God's sake try not to fall so far behind!" But partly I find it just an uneasy-making wish-fullfilment. This is perhaps especially true of Mike Smith's power to wipe out persons he finds utterly vicious or incorrigible. Perhaps Heinlein distruts spiritual force that isn't somehow based on physical force, even if the latter be withheld -- a sot of attitude of "Weak people can't be decent. Moral people must be powerful." Though I imagine Bob in his skeptical vein would laugh off all such imputations.

Stranger also has echoes of Odd John and of the Patagonian Cult of the Boy in Last and First Men. Stapledon was of course very strong on "Sex is a Good Thing and let us hast to explore its rich diversity." (Amen!) He also tended to give his supermen psychic powers, though more guardedly and, I think, thoughtfully. And echoes of Men Like Gods, Wells's Sex-is-a-Good-Thing novel, now one of the least well remembered of his s-f novels along with In the Days of the Comet. In Experiment in Autobiography Wells does a pretty good job of exploring Sex-is-a-Good-Thing in his own life and of his disturbed discovery that its powers over us go deeper than logic and hedonism.

But I'm beginning to ramble away from Stranger. Poul Anderson is so right about typos bestrewing paperback and mags. My experience is that proofreading by printer-type personnel isn't worth much and that nine times out of ten, at least in low-budget publishing operations, this work is done by an editor. Writers should proofread their own paperbacks, reprints and collections included -- it might be an angle for squeezing out a touch more money. (Touches being a well-known measure of money.)

Francis Carsac is refreshingly brilliant on how the mainstream plain don't like us, don't want us. And there would be something a shade repellant about an sf author holding his imagination down to write a sober mainstream novel just to prove he could do it.

Like Alekhine holding down his imaginative style to beat Capablanca. (Of course he did win the world chess championship.) And it's possible to write a wildly fanciful mainstream novel --- but seems to me none of the great mainstream novels are that sort.

Eric Frank Russell has a point about writing to please mass readership rather than critics. But that word "please." Seems to me the writer's doing his damnedest, re the mass reader, to interest, cajole, lure, coax, startle, shock, arouse, and otherwise court. . . and there are all sorts of courtin' styles . . . and novelty's always desirable. Ain't no formula for pleasing mass readership nohow. Not even the famed Hearstian Blood-Money-Sex by God.

ROBERT LOWNDES SAYS:

The legendary Lowndes memory is a myth; I cannot recall whether I acted upon a former impulse to send you money, so I'll obey this one in a restrained fashion, trusting you to let me know when more is required.

Agree with Bretnor that clientele for PITFCS should remain reasonably elect and leave it up to the Secty to select any additional readers with reasonable caution.

Bordes: one trouble with psi stories is that most who write them do not impose the self-discipline necessary to make an interesting science fiction story, as opposed to a (possibly) amusing fairy tale. One way to handle the discipline would be to lay down the limitations clearly, beyond which anyone in the story cannot go, present an apparently impossible problem within these boundaries, then solve it through ingenious manipulation of what has been given. In essence, the rules of the classic detective story where all essential clues have been presented and the truth is apparent (after a certain point at least) if the reader is alert enough to spot it. The good psi stories are the one which maintained such discipline, or, as you indicate, were not psi-centered so that the question of limitations was not too relevant.

Brunner: I stand for equal civic rights for pots. The question at hand, in such instances, is not the color of the pot, but the accuracy of the pot's observation. The color of the pot may be of interest, but there never has yet been a liar who could not make a true statement, even if only by accident at times. The kettle's rejoinder of "so are you!" changes the subject but not the kettle's color.

Heartily agree with Jenkins and Knight.

McLaughlin: research seems to indicate that those Indians who sold Manhattan Island were taking in the aboriginal white men, after all. They were not members of the tribe who claimed the territory.

Davis: Refusal to plead is, of course, denying the de jure right of whatever court (or whatever else) to exercise jurisdiction over you. The standard counter-move of said court (or whatever) is to manifest its de facto over you. Which, more often than not, does not raise public doubt of jurisdiction but usually does indeed work out as badly for you as if they did have de jure right to try you. The records usually show that the victim got farther by going along with the system to the extent of fighting them on their own grounds. (He may have been executed, of course, but sometimes his defense had some influence upon the populace.)

Sanders: Are do-badders to be preferred to do-gooders? (Thanks and a tip of the hat to Jim Blish who originated the question so far as I know.) . . . There's enough folklore about science fiction now for a fascinating book; all we need is someone to make it worth while for a competent critic to write same.

Russell: Agreed that there is not and never will be any one way -- one right way -- to write science fiction, but there will always be more wrong ways than right ways. I think one reason why the EFR stories have been very consistently enjoyable reading is that they are done in one of the right ways: with conviction and enjoyment of the medium. Whatever level of comprehension one is aiming at, a good story must entertain in addition to whatever else it may do by way of edification, etc. You have a bad situation when the market is confined to a few restrictive levels, however high they may be from any particular point of view. The specialist editor can stimulate the field for awhile, as we've seen in the past; but when he dominates it, then the field suffers, no matter how good his specialty may be.

KATHERINE MAC LEAN SAYS:

I just stayed in one place for a total of ten months and lo, an issue of pitfiks has finally reached me at the address I'm really at, (at, which.) I am delighted, honored, I get a vague feeling I owe someone a sum of money but will put off paying until someone tells me how much the subscription is.

I just read it. Issue 140, delighted to hear from all you lovely people, got an instant desire to chim in with my blather, to add to you blather.

If I didn't know from personal contact that science fiction people are witty, adventurous, with a quick grasp of the essentials of an issue and a fine way of expressing them in a wisecrack, I never would have guessed from pitfox. What a lot of solomn malarky! Sure I agree with all that stuff. I agreed before you opened you mouths. Sure we have free thought around here is a free thinker doesn't mind being called a communist by an ignoramus. And if you do mind being called something you're not, and object to the name, then it sounds like you're adding to howls against the poor scapegoats, reinforcing the vigor of the rightist howls, adding nothing to public education.

But what does add to public education? And do you want to? I don't mind enlightening people if it isn't too uphill a job. But in the last fifteen years I've lost faith in my own omniscience and have been trying to enlighten myself on the principle of go and see.

Here are some tidbits that I can't add up; Those who choose to can think I am the victim of massive hallucination, and this will make it easy for them to add up their usual facts and get the usual total, but it can't help me from my puzzlement, because if these experiences are hallucinations, so are the pages of pitforks.

In chronological encounter -- Telepathy exists, it is easy, does not take much practice, has a strong psychological kickback of the other persons troubles, people who can stand it and continue to use it go underground because of the privacy problem and the blast of terror the average person lets out like a sawed off shotgun, both barrels, at the idea someone might read his guilty secrets. I couldn't take it and swore off, member of the unorganized society of extelapaths for the last nine years.

There are organized societies of practicing telepaths. You won't find evidence of it in print or verbal conversation for reasons obvious enough to be silly.

I dont know what they are up to. Something maybe. Its a question at least as interesting and less depressing than the latest counts on strontium 90 fallout. This kind of question, even briefly contemplated, makes sciencefiction plots look like pikers and ruins my sense of wonder over what I am writing, so I stop. (I wish some of you guys would stop sneering about psi and telepathy.) Second bit of observation -- from experience. Dianetics works. But it wears off.

Total recall is easy and accessible, takes less than twenty minutes to demonstrate it on even the most confirmed sceptic, no hypnotism required, free association in the Hubbard-invented reverie state can lead immediately to the past event-source of a present symptom. But deconditioning is more chancy, not reached often by just going over and over the past event. Deconditioning from the emotional effects has a lot to do with ones current emotional reserves, current way of handling emergencies. If the current technique for handling emergencies involves a lot of supression, emotional numbing, and lying to oneself, then a current re-evaluation of a past event will leave it just as much a trauma and leave you just as much tied in self inflicted wrestlers knots as the first time.

Hubbard being then and still a galloping liar, he didn't mention any of this, or didn't bother to notice it.

Total recall is only available if you put aside the normal censoring function of your conscious mind. That means either going into reverie, or being willing to withstand any emotional shock you ever had, any time you want to remember something in full detail. You can get into the movie if you buy the ticket.

Nowadays my memory is worse than it used to be.

I use my knowledge of the reverie technique and a lot of other techniques later worked out by the Dianetics group, only when someone complains to me of a psychosomatic symptom, and wants to get rid of it. I'll show em how. Fast and easy. Personality symptoms are something else. Most people are convinced that their bad temper and other such traits are themselves, their "I" and they're afraid to let go of the trouble for fear of death. I don't know what this has to do with all the super-abilities locked in the subconscious, or why these abilities skuttleback inside and lock the celler door as fast as a hardworking therapist finds keys and lets them out. It's a strange world, and will stay strange to me until someone thinks up some good explanations.

So I wish some of you guys would stop taking these old tired cracks at John Campbell for sponsering Dianetics. So it didn't sweep the world, or save us from the normal customery insanity of the hairless ape! So it doesn't work on everybody, and lots didn't even try it, and most relapsed! The theory of total recall as a normal continuous process of the mind, and memory not consciously recognized forcing reentactment of trauma and obedience to hypnotic commands -- that was a great discovery, and so far out from the accepted theory that it has taken the full ten years for the medical profession and the psychological authorities to acknowledge it.

I just went to the American Psychological Association Convention in New York. They acknowleged Dianetics. The technique was compared to driving a jet plane instead of an automobile, both in speed and the amount of attention needed by the operater. to the signs of the road. They didn't call it dianetics. They called it a new technique of light hypnosis, without suggestion or command. for use in psychotherapy. But when I went up to the lecture platform after the seminar was over and spoke to them, and admitted openly (in a timid voice) that I'd practiced Dianetics, they took

my name to send me their journal (Jrnl. of Hypn. Research), and gave me their phone number to call up next time in NY. Legit Psychiatirists yet!

I'm now studying at the University of Connecticut for a Masters in Psychology. There is now enough information available from psychological research to make it worth studying.

Another odd tidbit to puzzle over. . .

Potsmokers I met in Mexico and New York think that when they are high they are a group mind a la Sturgeons "Baby is Three". I quote "See, the human mind, it's like a radio, like. A radio is no good unless its turned on, a radio tube won't work if you don't turn it on, it won't receive until its lit up. You follow?" These aren't fans, they're beats. I swear I didn't cue them in to say this to me. The second time I heard it was in New York, I walk into my kitchen and find this adolescent pot-smoking JD busy explaining this to his girlfriend, my roommate, a fine amazonian 18yr old blond who never said anything but liked beats. The JD claimed he thought it up himself. He didn't read it nowhere, in fact he didn't read. Squares read. Hip cats don't read, they live, man.

So chew that over.

The world is getting very strange, as H. G. Wells said before he died.

Remember Unknown, the possibilities of magic, the idea that all the worlds a stage, so theres things going on in the wings we should know about?

I am about to mention an experience in magic.

I believe in science, I love science. The scientific view of the world is the clearest and most reliable view of the world ever presented to date. The Sciences were my earliest hobby, and most scientists are goodlooking ectomorphs who never age, only matched in charm by sciencefiction writers, present company not excepted.

But this next personal experience I am about to recount will be taken as treason. I will tell it to you all for your personal enlightenment, or if not then to add to your conviction and mine that the world is full of nuts experiencing hallucinations, KM included.

I was sitting in my apartment with a friend and I said "I wonder if the temperature-drop effect mentioned by the Psychical Research Society has anything to do with the temperature-drop effect of magnetostriction. You know, they say it gets cold just before they see ghosts, wonder if magnitism -" I don't have it down exactly what I said, because for five or six years I have made a careful point of not remembering, for reasons explained in the next paragraph.

When I said that, the room temperature dropped ten or twenty degrees and we both got a sensation as if we had stuck a finger into a wall plug. Only about ten volts worth, but continuous, an all over electric buzz, upleasant and frightening. We were on opposite sides of the room. "Do you feel that?" said Otto "Wow," said I, "Lets move." We got into the next room, sat down, discussed what possible effect a sente or even an idea could have on real events and how, mentioned the Speak Of The Devil superstition. The electricity-cold feeling faded. "What was it you said?" Otto asked. "I've forgotton."

I said it again. Again the room temperature dropped, the electric current started.

We took refuge in the kitchen. "Don't say it again," Otto begged. "Don't think it." We made coffee, talked about other things. I've told the story six times since

then, in as many years never mentioning exactly what I had said, afraid to. Last week I told the story again, then grew curious, let myself figure out what I really said. (May I got it wrong.) Thought it, said it. No cold wave, no electric current. Mentioned it to a friend in NY when I was there for the APA Convention Labor Day weekend. It was a hot day. Told him how I dared think it and say it because it didn't seem to work anymore. It was a very hot day. "Twenty degrees drop?" says he. "Try it again. Say it loud. What a piker you are, keeping a good thing secret until it stops working."

The empiricle mind at work. But I'm cursed by an early training in scientific theory. Things that don't fit in to the science world-picture scare me. I'm not scared enough to stop prying and poking around. But after I find out an open light socket is hot, I'll go poke into something else instead. You guys try shouting about magnetic striction and the psychic research society. Maybe you can use it for room air-conditioning next summer. Not me. I'm still scared.

Maybe everyone at the receiving end of pitfigs circulation can top me with weird anecdotes from their own lives, but this sort of thing shakes me, because when I was sixteen I thought I had the universe taped strictly from science either known or easily inferred from what was already known. When I try to fit this other stuff into my world picture it changes it considerably. It makes a pretty strange picture.

And how do I write science fiction? believing that the actual world is stranger than I dare mention, and too confusing to extrapolate from with any clear curves? Ask me again. I've done it occassionally in the last six years, but it must have been by accident.

I'm not a mainstream writer, and might never make it to that status, because I'm still more interested in the big picture than I am in the foreground details of the individual faces. If someone can rescue me from this dilimma I'd appreciate the help. Writing for money doesn't get me started. Thinking about dollars sets me to writing $$$$$$$$$ not stories.

Maybe someone has stumbled on a secret formula sentence that will generate an electric current in the typewriter. If so, mail it to me in a plain sealed envelope.

In Industrial And Engineering Chemistry last month there was an article by some chemists who wanted to find out what use acetylcholine was in the nervous system, so they laborously synthesized a molecule that would block the action of acetylcholine, and do nothing else, tried it on hamsters without effect, so tried it on two of the chemists. One waspsychotic for eight hours, one was psychotic for twelve hours. Musta scared hell out of the team! How would they explain to wives and authorities? Then the two pulled out of lunacy and were happy for eight months and twelve months each. The article had full directions for how to synthesize the stuff. Tsk Tsk.

JOHN McGUIRE SAYS:

To Mack Reynolds and all others confused by #139:

WFHA-fm, 7 Broad Street, Red Bank, J. J. is a 1,000 watt station located about 21 direct miles from the Empire State Building, the location and power meaning that we cover the area from Philly to New York thoroly. Any author in the area who wants to publicize his latest masterpiece or simply chat for a radio audience about the pangs and pleasures of writing can do so by a card to me at that address or a call to my home number. SF 1-5624, Red Bank, New Jersey.

I am assuming that you may agree with me: publicity to your work will do no harm.

We can meet anywhere convenient to both of us and a tape-recorder.

DEAN McLAUGHLIN SAYS:

Suggestion to the Secretary. If the Secretary is going to continue the policy of typing the masters with his slow-moving committee of two fingers, that is) and if the gap between issues of PITFCS continues to yawn as large as the most recent gap, I think it might be well that dates (either of composition or receipt) be applied to each member's remarks. I can't help but feel that some of my own published comments read a bit anachronistic now, though they were not when I put them on paper. Particularly my final gibe at Bester, who has since broken down and confessed. (Additional note on Bester -- for a book reviewer, I find him something of a disappointment. Since the first of the year, he has published 9 columns, having missed one issue. Of these, 5 columns deal with books of interest to the SF world, 3 others are concerned with what's wrong with SF and its practitioners, and in the other column he makes a few remarks and then hastily abandons the stage to allow Jim Blish to make a monkey out of him. Maybe I'm overly demanding, but I always thought a book reviewer's job was to review books. Of course, if he wants to play critic -- a position that permits something more in the way of flexibility -- let him proceed. But so far he hasn't shown much ability in that direction.) (Additional complaint: I disagree with a lot of his judgements.)

Very little in PITFCS 140 stirs me to comment, but there are two or three items. Briefly. . .

Davis: You don't put your attitude in its best possible light. Why not merely observe that, in a true democracy, there is no such thing as political heresy. It sort of puts your accusers at a disadvantage. (It also raises an interesting question -- do we have true democracy? Also, even accepting the statement as correct, what about the case of political ideas such as fascism -- are they heresy or not?)

Sanders: You say there is one class of writers who may be considered brave, because they risk prosecution. Pornographers. I almost believed this -- until I reflected that in the only case I know of where anyone was fined or sent to the clink for pornography, it wasn't the author but the publisher! And it has been Grove Press, not Lawrence or Miller, that has been in the midst of litigation. Likewise, it was City Lights, not Ginsberg, that brawled with the customs service out in Frisco. If you (Sanders, that is) or anyone else can cite an example, please do so and correct me -- but from here it looks like here's once where the author does have it over his publisher.

Rejoice, brothers! Not all the world is against us!

Campbell: I'd like to know when your statement was written, and I'd also like to verify something else, since I do not have access to Missiles & Rockets. I have been told that whereas the May 1st issue carried a report essentially as you describe (but which does not, as you admit, constitute a genuine test of the Dean device) a subsequent issue (May 22nd, I think my talebearer said) carried an additional report which laid its finger dead on the (alleged) hooker I have always suspected was there. I won't try to say more than this, not having the exact facts at hand nor available; I'd probably garble any attempt to repeat what I heard 2nd hand. But please check me on [illegible] -- better yet, some other member of the Institute please check me. I'm getting just a mite weary of assertions abundant in a dearth of hard facts. (Is there a heraldry expert in the house?)

General comments: I wonder if Orville Prescott was reading the same book I read. I haven't gone back to it page by page to check, but if Valentine Micheal Smith ever spent a stint in the army, I sure as hell missed it. I'll admit I was disappointed by the book (the one I read, that is) but I'm damned if I think it deserves Prescott's

cavalier treatment. (Someone should also teach Mr. Prescott to count. "Several hundred short stories"??!)

Got my hands on as advance copy of Brother Clarke's A FALL OF MOONDUST. (Harcourt, Brace & World, Sept. 13th. $3.95.) Brothers, Ladies, & Gentlemen, if science fiction is dead, at least it isn't lying down. This one stands straight and tall.

ROG PHILLIPS SAYS:

My reaction to the last few issues of PITFCS is disturbing me. Don't get me wrong, I don't want to resign. It's probably my fault anyway. I get the unreal feeling one would get listening to a couple of doctors discuss seriously whether contact lenses can cure syphalis. You know what I mean? Maybe they have a valid argument and I'm the one who's nuts. Also the blank pages that leave me wondering if my copy didn't get the most vital parts, the upside down pages, etc., leave me with the impression that you too must be sharing my reaction.

Maybe PITFCS is like the experiment where you put a million crabs into an aquarium able to support only fifty and watch nature take its course until stability is established. The stability now seems to be establishing itself with about fifty giant virile, enthusiastic crabs that slightly frighten me with their bright blue glossy, exoskeletons, their beady eyes, and their overlong antennae. Still, I am held with dread fascination and absolutely refuse to climb out. I must watch to the very end.

It is fascinating to read, "The current flatulent self-approval of self-appointed scientists could bring the age of science to an end," by Will Jenkins, and Damon Knight's, ". . . if you polled (Anthony Boucher, Basil Davenport, James Blish, P. Schuyler Miller, etc.) their lists of the most important living sf writers would be substantially the one I gave." I could go on. But I think I've forgotten the point I was headed toward, or something. No, I just remembered the point, and I can leap to it without any more quotes. I invented a science many years ago in a fanzine and gave it the name, Tangential Semantics. It's basic premise was that besides the sense of the words contained in any statement there was the motivation of the person making the statement. That is, Newton's reason for making the statement, "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," was quite different than would be, say, Winston P. Sanders', on the one had, or ayjay Budrys' on the other. Or anyone else's, including my own. What are Will Jenkins' motives for his above statement in quotes? And Damon's? When you start questioning along those lines a sometimes symbological (but not always) pecking order begins to materialize, in which Campbell is the big pecker, in several senses of the word. Then Ball State takes on significance too.

This brings out one of the most fascinating aspects of PITHISS -- the Rohrschach Effect, if that's the way it's spelled. My wife has a phobia against butterflies, and all the blots in the blot test look like moths and butterflies to her. Even the one that is quite obviously two of the seven dwarfs talking to each other. How she can think that one looks like a moth I'll never know, but to get back to the point at hand -- see? I've forgotten it again!

Oh yes. . . Quite seriously, isn't PITFCS itself the forerunner of the NEW science fiction? Give it another twenty-five years, let Campbell discover it's financial potential as entertainment and pay each character contributing to it three cents a word, and we have it made! Right?

LARRY SHAW SAYS:

Thanks for PITFCS 140. I never wrote you the postcard I promised, reminding you that I had paid the $2.00, but I will assume that it is no longer necessary. All right: ((So that's where that $2.00 came from. T.R.C.))

Page 16 was blank in my copy, which was particularly annoying because Chan Davis' letter was the one I most wanted to read. I don't suppose you have a spare copy of the page lying around?

Otherwise, it struck me as a good issue. Bordes' letter was totally admirable, and A. J. made extremely good sense. Some of the other member (ugh!) had intelligent things to say, and there were even one or two subjects touched on lightly that weren't thoroughly kicked around in the better fanzines six months or a year ago. If I were citing examples, I'd have to mention the fascinating discussion of how many words a day some of the writers produce. Boy, you'd better watch it! It might be dangerous if top-secret stuff like this leaked out to the fans.

(I could ask by what criteria you distinguish between George Price and the common rabble of fandom, but to hell with it.) ((Price is part of Advent:Publishers. T.R.C.))
If you don't mind, I would like to hark back to #139 for a moment and comment on something Poul Anderson said. The quote: "Somehow Walt Willis got hold of the unfortunate business of No. 135A and smeared it over Fanac." I happen to feel that "smeared" is a nasty word in this context, and I daresay Poul wouldn't disagree. For the record, here's what Walt said: "Kemp suggest that future postmortem proceedings be carried on in that pro fanzine with the snappy title, PROCEEDINGS OF THE INSTITUTE OF TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY STUDIES. Unfortunately, since then, according to a letter from editor Cogswell, the Institute itself has been bludgeoned to death with, apparently, mallets aforethought. . . ((A brief synopsis of 135A has been deleted as a matter of policy. It should be added, however, that if a copy went to Willis (or anybody else outside the field for that matter) it was the result of clerical error rather than intent. T.R.C.)) The more I see of the subterranean spites and jealouisies of the pro field, the more I realize what a balanced and kindly crew fandom is."

Now, I am not out to change your opinion of fandom; you and Poul can feel as much contempt for it as you like. But I would like to see an end to this peculiar double standard of yours and the beginning of a little decent honesty. Willis reported facts about two public figures in a particular field in a newspaper devoted to that field. He did so with reasonable objectivity but with obvious and natural prejudice towards the side of one Ted Cogswell. You are public figures, and if you want to object to the fact that reporters do their jobs you had better become hermits instead. Then, separately, Walt went on to state an opinion based partly on the affair reported. I happen to concur in this opinion 100%; Poul obviously disagrees approximately as much -- in fact, he said roughly the same thing about fans as Walt said about pros, except that Walt stated it as opinion and Poul as fact. Well, I can cite two cases of "gossip, innuendo, feuding, backbiting, posturing, and amateurism" in prodom for every one Poul can cite in fandom. But that seems pointless to me, because it is after all a matter of opinion. The big difference is that fannish pecadillos are more often than not perpetuated in fanzines, whereas proish dittoes are effectively hushed up -- simply because there are almost no pro fanzines.

I happen to think, though, that what got under Poul's skin was not Walt's reporting of the Miller incident, but his publicly stated opinion of prodom. He can deny it if he chooses. I will say "phooey!" or something of the sort. (Credit Ogden Nash.)

I'd just like to get both sides of the case on record, if you don't mind. When Poul's snide "Somehow" turns out to have been editor Cogswell, it casts a certain amount of doubt on the accuracy of Poul's reporting, doesn't it?

PS: Look. In all fairness, I sympathize with members who do not want to receive fanzines; there are some fanzines even I don't want to receive. It would be more intelligent and effective for them to write the offending fan editors postcards saying so (a little tact shouldn't be such an unattainable thing for writers -- and fan egos aren't all that tender) than to sit around on their proceedings bitching about it. But I'm prepared to save any member thus harrassed even that minimum

effort. My wife and I, as it happens publish a bi-weekly fanzine which is read by most other fanzine editors. Any member who wishes may drop us a card, and we'll publish a brief notice for him. "_____ does not want to receive fanzines." Just that. No more. Please don't crowd.

SAM YOUD SAYS:

Addresses seem to be creeping in these days; perhaps you would put my new one in, too, for the benefit of those I failed to send change-of-address cards to. (Vaux Douit, Le Foulon, Guernsey, C. I., Great Britain). We now have a stream which runs through the garden right under the house and disappears into the adjacent cemetery. I should be able to find a use for this, with a little thought.

PITFCS was welcome as usual, but somehow less provocative, despite M. Bordes' altogether delightful assult on the English language with which it opens. Thank God we have no Indian members. As for the matter of what he says, there is clearly some truth in it. Personally my own objection to Bradbury's work is not the anti-science part but the overwriting and the fake nostalgia. I remember a non-sf short of his in the Post, called, I think, "Grandma". It may well have been his worst story but it was in many ways his most typical. Lewis is of quite a different order, but also a little soft at the centre.

John Brunner should either let himself go in a howl of anti-American vituperation or start analysing his motives more carefully. I did love that comment about his being delighted to find the Russian Embassy staff less dogmatically Marxist than the American staff were dogmatically capitalist. You are a writer, dear boy -- such naivety does not become you. (I was myself delighted to hear the other day of the protestors against the German troops in Wales being bombarded with eggs and tomatoes (low grade) by the sturdy Welsh lads and lasses. Not because I love the Welsh or the Germans, or the Idea of War, but because I am tired, tired, tired of Bertrand Russell and his Crusade of Innocents.) It is not so long ago that Comrade Khrushchev explained, to the Party and the World, how for nearly thirty years Russia had been ruled by a man who was a bloody, deceitful, cruel and treacherous tyrant, what time apologists in the West explained and justified every act of this criminal madman. It is implied that Khrushchev, who somehow survived through this period and flourished, when most of his contemporaries were being slaughtered, is of a different stamp. This strikes me as improbable, but it may be so. I would only comment that the onus of proof is on Khrushchev, not the West. I am in favour of keeping a guard up. The choice is not, as the simple would have us believe, between slavery and annihilation, but between slavery and the risk of annihilation. And the slavery is no certain remover of the risk. As Robert Conquest pointed out the other day, the first war between Communist states has already taken place (Russo-Hungarian) and another (Russo-Polish) was only narrowly averted. Other alarming possibilities come to mind.

Do you know, the now blindingly obvious derivation of the nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays had never occurred to me, for all I've heard of Kipling's less widely anthologized versions? (Did he write "Eskimo Nell"? Some stanzas have the touch). I clearly have too clean a mind. On this topic, I recall looking, in a Geneva bar, at a bottle of Vat 69 on the shelf and suddenly seeing it as something other than the Pope's telephone number. The friend I was with hadn't seen it that way before, either. He leaned over and asked the Madame, an unmarried lady in her fifties with two charming and dutiful assistants, if the brand was popular in those parts. 'Oui, oui,' she said with a wink, 'la whisky francaise . . .'

The more reasonable story about Kipling's failure to become Poet Laureate is that he certainly did write "The Widow of Windsor". (I somehow can't see Vicky reading, or being told of "The Bastard King of England") And more reasonable still is the story that he was offered the Laureateship and begged to be excused. He was, after all, a personal friend of George V.

So Eric Russell thinks the writer's problem is finding what the mass-readership wants and giving it to them? It's a brave cry, but he'll never make the staff of the Daily Mirror. And what about his letter to The Author, protesting aginst the legal decision which permitted "Lady Chatterley's Lover" to be circulated over here? Wasn't "Lady C." what the mass-readership wanted? (The sales figures say a resounding yes). Or should the mass-readership have what they want only when it is what Eric thinks is good for them?

GEORGE PRICE SAYS:

Richard McKenna says that "It is self-evident to Price that our vaunted human rights are dependent on property rights. So it was to folks down this way just a hundred years ago, and right manfully went they forth in grey to die for that there truth. . . anyone who questioned the morality of property rights in human flesh risked being lynched." Oh, but the South did not fight for property rights -- it fought for the privilege of denying to the Negroes the most elementary property rights. For slavery is the absolute negation of property rights, since it denies to the slave the most basic property rights: the ownership of his own body.

So, yes, "human rights" are dependent on property rights. If you doubt it, try to think of a human right which would be meaningful in the absence of property rights. Example: could there be freedom of the press without the right to own printing press (or mimeograph), paper, ink, etc.? Or freedom of religion without the right to own church buildings or Bibles? Property rights mean control over objects; whoever lacks the right to control the goods upon which his life and actions depend is a slave, and the man who does control them is his master.

Pardon me, I did not say that it is "self-evident" that "an unhampered free market is more efficiently productive than any conceivable system of centralized economic control." Rather, I stated it as an economic law, which is far from self-evident, but which can be logically demonstrated and has been substantially validated by experience. I don't propose to prove it; there are ample text available. Anyone who is really interested might get something out of "Economics in One Lesson" by Henry Hazlitt (very elementary), or "Human Action", by Ludwig von Mises (the definitive study of the market economy).

One of the difficulties in defending a free-market economy is that so many readers assume that this is what the United States has, and so attribute all the faults of the U.S. economy to the free market. Of course, our economy is a very long way from being a free market, although it once came closer than any other country. In fact, I believe that most of our economic problems are rooted precisely in the various ways in which we have fallen short of full market freedom. The most obvious example is the so-called "business cycle". There's nothing mysterious about it; it is the natural result of inflation and, to a lesser extent, protectionsim (tariff barriers). Both are policies of government, practiced with the precise aim of evading the discipline of the market, and both are detested by free market economists.

Mr. McKenna says, "Well, we now have hidden persuaders abetting wastemakers in driving us all deeper into personal debt in a vain effort to consume the glut. . ." I think the charges against the "hidden persuaders" and "wastemakers" are exaggerated, but leaving that aside, I ask "What glut?" Of what is there a surplus? Yes, I know about the farm "surpluses". But they are not really surpluses, in sense of being produced in excess of demand. To the contrary, the mountains of stored farm products are a perfect example of how the market causesssupply to meet demand. The demand exists; that is, the Government is willing to pay for the damned stuff, and so the supply is forthcoming. Of course the Government's reasons for buying useless commodities are preposterous, but that does not affect the working of the market.

Mr. McKenna continues, "I know of no theoretical reason why a controlled economy cannot exploit automation to the hilt, and in point of fact Russia means to do so." After

you have read Hazlitt and Mises, you will know some of the reasons. Dr. Mises made his reputation by his analysis demonstrating that under pure socialism economic calculation is impossible. Without attempting to give the details, let me point out the general area in which the problem lies. The essence of a "controlled economy" is that it does not have a price system; that is, a system in which the prices of goods are determined by competition. While a controlled economy may use money, the "prices" are set arbitrarily by the officials. There, prices do not represent the integration of supply and demand, as in a market economy. To be sure, this is often claimed as virtue of a controlled economy, that production is not subject to the whims of the consumer (cf Galbraith, "The Affluent Society"). The trouble is that in the absence of a system of market-determined prices, accurate cost-accounting is impossible.

When Gosplan offidal Ivan Petrov wants to decide whether it is cheaper to send a load of coal to Vladivostok by railway, or around by sea, he can't do it. He cannot just compare the rail tariff against the ocean tariff, because both are arbitrarily decided by other planners, and bear no objective relation to the actual costs involved. Poor Petrov has no way of knowing the resources he commits to one project are not actually needed more for some other more important project. At best, he is making educated guesse Of course, the Russian planners have the advantage that the prices in market-economy countries give them a rough yardstick by which to judge their own costs, but it is a very poor recommendation for their system to say that it can work, in a half-assed way, but only so long as there are market-economy countries still around. (Incidentally, this leads to the amusing conclusion that it will be economic suicide for the Communists to conquer the whole world, because then there will be no outside "yardsticks" for them to use.)

Mack Reynolds takes me gently to task for assuming that most Communist statistics are lies, saying "... competent observers are of the opinion that industrial progress in Russia and China consists of phony statistics." This depends on which "competent observers" you read. God knows I have seen plenty of studies debunking Russian statistics notably by G. Warren Nutter, whose credentials as a competent observer are as good as anyone's. The trouble with most Soviet statistics is that they are inherently uncheckable, like their cute little habit of announcing percentage increases without giving the absolute magnitudes. Or like, as Mr. Reynolds says, ". . . in the first quarter of 1961, for the first time in history, Russia poured approximately the same amount of steel as did the US." How would you go about checking this? Go around to each Russian mill and ask pretty please how much did you pour? And if they told you, how would you know it was true? (American statistics are subject to the same doubt, though in lesser degree. But here it doesn't matter, because the statistics are not of much real use; the important things to know are the price of steel and how long you must wait for delivery.) Even if the Russian figue on steel production is precisely accurate, this does not tell me much that is useful. I would rather have the answers to questions such as (1) How much of this steel was wasted because of the lack of accurate cost-accounting referred to above? (2) How much of it is up to spec? (Remember the Chinese back-yard furnaces?) (3) Are the types and quantities of various alloys those needed for the most efficient achievement of Soviet goals? (4) At the present state of Russian economy, was all of this steel needed, or was some of it produced just for its own sake, to swell the statistics? And this is more than just nit-picking; each of these questions is based on things for which Russian officials frequently and publicly upbraid their underlings.

Mr. Reynolds continues, "(the Russkies) aren't so silly as to believe that phony statistics ... such things as steel production wouldn't eventually be exposed." And when they are exposed, what then? The world has a notoriously short memory, and I don't see where the Soviets have been much embarrassed by past exposures of fakery. They even have a standard technique: the fulfillment of a quota is announced, and then later it is revised way downward and some official is punished for "sabotage".

Mr. Reynolds' final point is that "Actually, every nation must have assurate, usable statistics of their own production. Certainly a country attempting to plan production must have them." Since Mr. Reynolds wrote this, Mr. Khrushchev has made a major address, intended for home consumption, in which he complained bitterly of subordinates faking their production figures in order to gain unearned rewards. That's another reason why I am dubious of Russian plans. As Mr. Reynolds says, planners need reliable statistics, and the Russians by their own admission do not have them.

For all this, I certainly do not claim that the Russians are not a dangerous opponent. Because of the inherent inefficiencies of a controlled economy, Russian production is scarcely one-third of ours -- but that is quite enough to build a most formidable war machine. And if you think they have troubles now, wait until they try to start mass-producing consumer goods, as Mr. Reynolds postulates in his stories. When they start trying to "give the customer what he wants" they will discover with horror that without a system of competitive prices, i.e., a market economy, they have no reliable means of discovering just what the customer does want.

In sum, my feeling with regard to alleged Russian productivity is the same as with regard to the Dean Machine: It is contrary to a theory which has stood the test of many years' experience, there is scant evidence in its favor, and therefore I will believe it when I see it.

Three cheers for Will Jenkins' assault on fat-heads in the sciences and professions. A case in point, which tickles my reactionary prejudices, is the much-publicized growth of Conservatism among students. It seems obvious that this is largely a natural youthful rebellion against Liberal professors who present their Liberalism as the stodgiest orthodoxy, with a quite illiberal unwillingness to tolerate dissent. Even when the orthodoxy happens to be right it is a natural target for students, and it is irresistible when the Herr Doktor Professor's personal opinions are pompously presented as the Given Word of God.

Avram Davidson asks, "Who is George Price?" Sir, I am the man to whom you should make out your $2.00 check, for membership in the 20th World Science Fiction Convention, of which I have the honor to be Treasurer. In fact, I would be very gratified if Box 4864, Chicago 80, Illinois, were to be jammed with negotiable letters from the Pitfolks.

The following appeared in the New York Times Book Review of August 27, 1961:
TROLLS AND WITCHES OF A COEXISTENT COSMOS
THREE HEARTS AND THREE LIONS. By Poul Anderson. 191 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.95 By ROBERT O. ERISMAN
This new science-fiction tale by Poul Anderson points up once again that if the genre is ever to reach a wide audience, it's going to have to make up its mind. Like most recent science-fiction, "Three Hearts and Three Lions" displays a mixture of qualities that make it uncertain whether the story is intended for intellectuals, adult readers of mysteries, or teen-agers seeking fictional adventure.

"If relativity and quantum mechanics have proved that the observer is inseparable from the world he observes, if logical positivism has demonstrated how many of our supposedly solid facts are men constructs and conventions, if the psychic researchers have shown man's mind to possess unsuspected powers, it begins to look as if some of those old myths and soceries were a bit more than superstition." Thus Mr. Anderson prepares us for the fabulous exploits of his hero as he sends him across "space-time" to the "Middle World" to play a key part in the never-ending struggle between the primeval forces of "Law" and "Chaos."

you don't have to be in an institute to get Workin - (though some think it helps)

and for

PITFCS

Here's what they're saying about Workin, Mr. Border

Bush

Founder

Heinlein

Temple

Willis

Letters of F&SF