

PREHENSILE 10

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PREHENSIBLE ala WorldCon. It is to read. One certified article on general science fiction. One guaranteed essay relevant to this convention. One fine stretch of fannishness disguised as a profiteering scheme. A selection of reviews some of which are examples of the finest currently published. (Now do you still want to know what the horn on Bea Barrio's cover for #9 meant?...)

It is also to look. Crunchy Shull art, wiry Rotsler art, slick Canfield art, and the bheer that made Schirmelster famous. Not to mention a bit of auld Ken Fletcher for you timebinders in the audience.

If you're tired of reading complaints about mimeo reproductions -- what a relief for you! Now you can listen to complaints about offset reproduction... Jest kidding. Trying to do something lively for this editorial, is all.

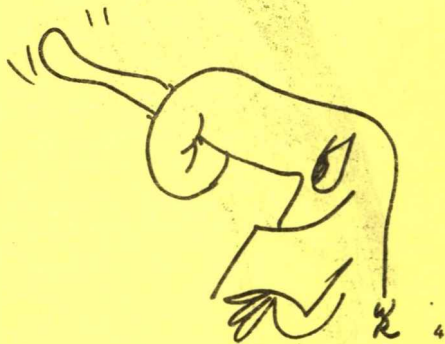
You see, my last editorial bored Gene Wolfe, and I can't think of anything more grievous than to bore a man who's willing to give you a chance. From internal evidence in his card, I see he got all the way to the fourth page before the ennui overpowered him. He wasn't the only one affected by my mutterings. The whole issue left David Gerrold speechless. Either that or the blank letter I got from him was only written to show off his new stationery.) Those who have known David Gerrold will understand what a catastrophic time this is for anything to render him speechless, much less a copy of PREHENSIBLE. Ed Cagle wrote part of a

REprehensible: Mike Glycer

loc on his copy, but started babbling something about there being real towns in Kansas named Moscow and Havana and before he could finish he had to move out of his house. Poor fellow. Got a postcard from Lou Stathis that began, "You wartlicking hunchback..." Everybody knows you have to go far to gross out Lou Stathis. Ted White referred to it in a fecal fashion. But it wasn't until Steve Simmons (we interviewed Robert Moore Williams in the days of the New Elliptic) wrote and called this a really great issue that I began to realize the full implications of what had happened. Not that I did all that much about it.

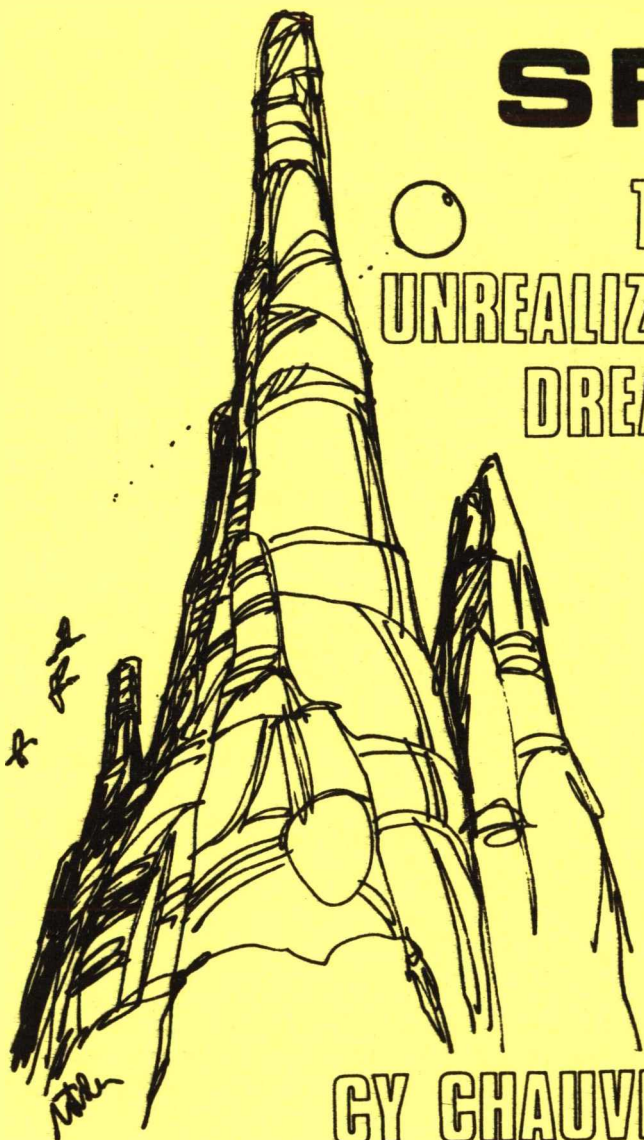
In fact I spent a lot of the time I could have wasted on this editorial working on some science fiction. (Hot damn, will you look at that? I mentioned amateur fiction and a full half of the audience fell asleep. Buck Coulson didn't even have time to drop the zine -- out like a light!) This was sparked off by my return to regular reading. I won't embarrass us all by telling how little sf this allegedly sercon fan read in the last six months. But some of the things I've gone through in this new regime is Stephen Gregg's second issue of his prozine ETERNITY. There's a surprisingly high standard of literature in #2 (barring one total crock, a collaboration that would be a waste for one man to write let alone two), which is the saving feature of the zine. The package is vastly improved -- a three color cover that reminds me of TIME magazine. Many good illustrations are included, the zine is partially typeset (but at the other extreme, some is muddily typewritten), and there's a generous usage of prestype in a number of creative ways. When it reaches the graphic quality of ALGOL I'll be more satisfied (even without typesetting, there are many lessons he could learn from Porter), but as is you'd do well to pick it up from Gregg for \$1 (PO Box 193, Sandy Springs SC 29677) and read the Disch interview, and SPLINTERS by Robert Wissner.

There's another of my alleged humorous faantasies I could plug in here, but let it ride until next time. For the nonce (and for the rest of you, too,) permit me to plug THE ORGANLEGGER (a title I shall ditch as soon as I exhaust my supply of logos) the fannish newszine (accept no substitutes) whose initial 25 subs go to the MAE STRELKOV FUND -- assuming I ever do get 25 subs. It runs political things LOCUS ignores, discussions, people news, and may in the future contain STRELKOV FUND news, depending on time and tide. You may think you can't afford to get it, at 7/\$1, 14/\$2 but if you get CHRONICLE you can't afford to be without it! Send for a sample copy today if you like.



SF:

○ THE
UNREALIZED
DREAM



CY CHAUVIN

1

What is sf? Why do people read it? What makes it unique?

These questions have been asked numerous times before, and if you do not want to read yet another article attempting to answer them I suggest you turn away now. However, it seems to me that when anyone has attempted to answer these questions before, they have usually had a preconceived answer already in mind, and tried to adapt the facts to the theory rather than vice-versa.

"SF predicts the future!" they say, or "SF is fiction about science!" -- and any story that does not fit this description, even though it may be recognized by most people as SF, is fantasy or "mainstream" fiction. Or in some cases, the person defines only good sf (such as Theodore Sturgeon did in his famous statement that "a good science fiction story is a story about human beings, with a human problem, and a human solution, which would not have happened at all without its science content."), and anything that does not fit this description is then bad sf -- although it seems to me that it's impossible to say something is "good" or "bad" unless you know what it is in the first place.

Both these approaches strike me as being faulty, and in this article I mean to point out instead what unique characteristics I believe are found in all stories regarded as sf (but not in those regarded as non-sf) and then to outline what sort of standards should be logically used in judging whether a story has exploited this unique characteristic properly or not.

What is sf? Sf is a type of fiction which uses imaginative elements loosely derived (via extrapolation or speculation) from the physical and social sciences to create a new objective reality within a story, enabling it to view man and the human condition from a radically different angle and perspective. The extent to which a story utilizes the unique angle and perspective offered by sf, and how well is the extent to which it is good sf and fulfills the potential offered by the field.

Now let me attempt to justify these statements.

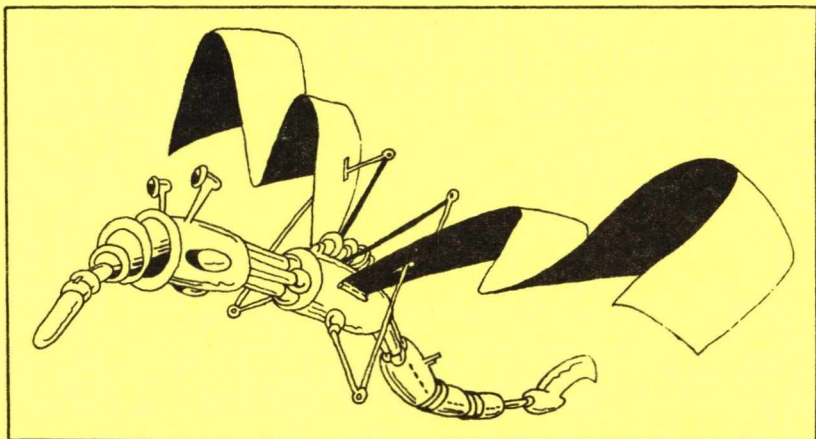
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Anyone attempting to discover the true nature of sf must also deal with fantasy, and decipher the strange, incestuous relationship that exists between the two fields. Every major science fiction magazine, for instance, has had a fantasy companion at one time or another, from ANALOG (with UNKNOWN) to NEW WORLDS (SCIENCE-FANTASY/IMPULSE). The most respected magazine in the field is THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Both the "Science Fiction Achievement Awards (Hugos)" and the "Science Fiction Writers of America" award (Neb-

ulas) have been given out to fantasy stories -- most recently to Fritz Leiber's "If I Met in Lankmar". (F&SF 4/71)

No one can deny that some similarity exists between fantasy and sf, and yet at the same time few would say that they are one and the same thing. It is necessary to define both their similarities and differences.

David Pringle in "SF and The Death of The Future," gives a clue to how these two types of fiction are related when he says that "Verne's inventions were a new imaginative vocabulary, one which gained its authority from science. They were the latter-day equivalent of the gods and spirits of an earlier literature..." (CYPHER 7, p.23). The similarity between sf and fantasy is that both are heavily imaginative kinds of fiction, and use their "imaginative vocabulary" to create a new reality within a story, from which to view the human condition -- as does all fiction. The difference between them lies in the type of imaginative elements they use. Sf uses imaginative elements loosely derived from the physical and social sciences -- everything from Ballard's biological clothing in his VERMILLION SANDS stories, and Poul Anderson's beer-powered spaceship (in "A Bicycle Built for Brew"), to entire future or alien governments, cultures and religions, as depicted by elements loosely derived from religion and traditional myth/legend, and includes everything from gods, flying carpets and elves, to entire "secondary universes" (as Tolkien called them) -- such as heaven, hell, or the world depicted in THE LORD OF THE RINGS.* In both cases, imagination is the essential factor.



SCHIRIA 73.

*Note: When I talk about "fantasy," I mean traditional fantasy. Surreal fantasy rearranges the elements of our reality into unusual and abnormal configurations, rather than adding new elements to it. Some writers distort the sf elements in their stories, too, such as Philip K. Dick, giving
7 their sf a surreal character.

But why do sf writers derive their imaginative material from the sciences, and fantasy writers from religion/myth, and not from something else? I think it's because science and religion are in their own way the two major methods of explaining the workings of our reality. Science is the new way -- since around the time of the Industrial Revolution, when sf also first began to evolve -- and religion/myth the traditional way. Unlike the writer of contemporary or historical fiction, who accepts the physical environment of the past or present as a given, the sf or fantasy writer is forced to create a new universe, an imaginative one, differing from our own to a greater or lesser extent. Since this is so, it only seems logical that he should derive his imaginative material from science or religion/myth, and loosely pattern the workings of his created universe after one or the other of these two systems of thought that try to explain the workings of our own world.

The idea that sf is defined by its unique elements is nothing new; it's surprising how many people have brushed up against the idea but dismissed it. James Blish, for instance, said that he felt quite discontent after writing such a definition for Grolier's Encyclopedia. "At that time I could do no better than repeat the usual routine of defining the thing by its trappings -- the far journey, the future, extrapolation -- but I could not help but feel that when I was done, the emperor wore no more clothes than before." (MORE ISSUES AT HAND p.9) The "trappings" of sf are obviously its imaginative elements. But did the emperor really have no clothes? Or is it simply that once you remove the clothes there is no emperor?

Consider: if you took a science fiction story, and removed from it all the imaginative elements derived loosely from the physical and social sciences, would the story still be sf? I don't think so, and if that is true, then I have isolated what makes sf unique.

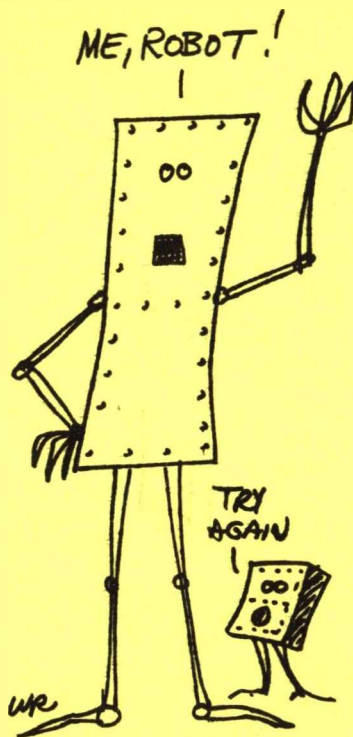
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There are two ideas that are often brought up whenever the nature of sf is discussed. One is sf's relationship with science. I have already pointed out that sf is only loosely connected with science -- and by "science" I mean both the physical and social branches. STAND ON ZANZIBAR, with its imaginative social customs, government, nation states, etc., is just as much science fiction as Poul Anderson's TAU ZERO, with its imaginative application of theoretical physics. It is not sf's dealings with science that make it unique; novels like Sinclair Lewis' ARROWSMITH, or many of Edgar Snow's works, deal with science yet aren't sf. And the whole Naturalistic school of writing, around the turn of the century, emphasized the use of "the scientific method" in their fiction, but none of them ever wrote any science fiction.

Since sf is only loosely connected with science, this means that scientific accuracy is not an absolute essential, as some have insisted. John Foyster, an Australian fan, has pointed out that criticizing a story for its lack of scientific accuracy is not justified "unless the fault in the science interferes with one's enjoyment of the story." (SF COMMENTARY 29, p.17) Most people will say that inaccurate science interferes with their enjoyment of a story because it destroys the believability of a story. This isn't strictly true: what they should say is that inaccurate science destroys the believability of 8

the science in a story -- not necessarily anything else.

Related to this is a long item I recently ran across by Donald R. Howard, in his introduction to the Signet paperback edition of THE CANTERBURY TALES. Howard says that "We are... meant to suspend our disbelief in important particulars: we know that the pilgrims did not tell their tales in rhyming couplets or stanzaic forms, and that no one could hear a tale told to a group of 30 while riding through open country." (p. xviii) Scientific inaccuracy in THE CANTERBURY TALES? Accor-



ding to Howard, the people couldn't hear the tales being told which makes the book impossible; but that doesn't prevent THE CANTERBURY TALES from being called a great piece of literature.

Science is not the only launching pad from which the rocket of imagination goes blazing forth. People don't read sf because they want to learn about science, any more than people read historical fiction because they want to learn about history; textbooks are designed for these purposes. People read sf, as they do all fiction, for other reasons entirely.

The second factor that is often brought up when the nature of sf is discussed is the notion that sf is "possible" (while fantasy is not). This seems to be an outgrowth out of the old idea that sf somehow accurately predicts the future. This has long proved invalid, and if you examine any of the sf stories

about the first moon landing, from Verne's to Heinlein's, you will find that each differs markedly from the real event. If possibility was such an important factor in sf, then you would expect sf to be much more closely related to contemporary-realistic fiction (which is even more possible than sf) than with fantasy. Yet just the opposite is true.

The notion that sf is possible (while fantasy is not) becomes even more shaky when various stories widely recognized as sf are closely examined. Is Philip K. Dick's parallel-world novel *A MAN IN A HIGH CASTLE*, in which the Japanese win WW II, possible? If it is, then that means you must accept the parallel world/universe theory as possible. According to it, there are an infinite number of parallel universes, some which differ from our own only in that I misspell the next word in this sentence, while in others all matter has remained in a single primitive glob. But if there are a number of possibilities for parallel universes, then that means there could be a parallel universe where *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* takes place. Which indicates that the "possibility" notion doesn't really define the difference between sf and fantasy at all.

Another problem lies in such stories as Heinlein's "The Man Who Sold The Moon" -- which was once possible but is no longer. Is it still sf? Some would say yes, because it was possible when it was written, and that's what counts, not whether it is possible or impossible today. This seems a rather artificial distinction, however; an author could duplicate Heinlein's story today, and yet his would be fantasy while Heinlein's is sf. According to this criteria, Michael Moorcock's pastiche of the early scientific romances, *A WARRIOR OF THE AIR*, should be classified as "fantasy" along with *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*, while the stories it had most in common with -- such as some of Wells' novels -- are classified as sf. Supposedly, there is a greater gulf between the two than between Moorcock's novel and *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*.

Then there are time travel stories, such as Heinlein's "Up by His Bootstraps" or Silverberg's *UP THE LINE*, which have numerous paradoxes, including the duplication of the main character. Not many people regard these stories as "possible" yet they are widely recognized as sf. And what about the numerous stories by Roger Zelazny, Jack Vance, Andre Norton, and others that seem like fantasy and sf mixed together? According to the possibility idea, they must seem this way because they are both possible and impossible at the same time. Absurd!

And are the fantasy stories so impossible? If one can believe in parallel worlds, time-travel, or faster-than-light speeds, why not ghosts, astrology, angels, voices from the dead, etc.? Certainly we can not absolutely rule out these things as impossible -- yet they are obviously not the province of sf.

The notion that sf is possible, while fantasy is not, seems to me to be a false one. It is full of too many contradictions and does not apply to all those stories most people commonly regard as sf. It is too subjective; it depends upon what a reader believes is possible, or what an author believed was possible 20 years ago, rather than upon something concrete and objective within a story. If sf somehow seems more "believable" than fantasy, then it is only because religion and myth -- upon which fantasy is based -- seems a less valid way of ex-

plaining the workings of our reality at present than science.

Sf's relationship with science has been overstressed, and the notion that "possibility" separates fantasy from sf is false. Both these ideas have distracted attention from sf's real importance, from the imaginative qualities that truly make it unique, and give it the ability to view man and the human condition in a new light. We have been led down false paths.

4

"Although, ostensibly, sf deals with the future," says John Brunner, "when I am writing, I am always conscious of the fact that I am thinking in the present and by the time the reader sees what I have written it will belong to the past. Already, in the twenty years or so I've been writing sf, I have seen many, many of my imaginary futures overtaken by events, so that they belong to neither the future or the past, but to a limbo of unrealisable possibilities." (VECTOR 60 p.5)

If the simplest answer is always the most probable one, as scientists say, why assume that a sf story is somehow set in "the future" and then later overtaken by events -- why not assume that it is set in that "limbo of unrealisable possibilities" that Brunner mentions from the beginning? If sf stories were really set in the future, we should expect them to become contemporary fiction after awhile, just as contemporary stories become historical fiction after awhile (look at MOBY DICK, THE GRAPES OF WRATH, etc.) But this does not happen.

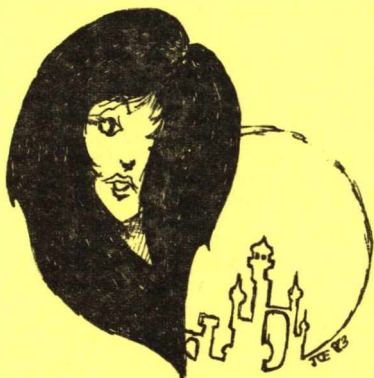
Instead, as events change the world we live in, we begin to realize that the story was never set in our reality in the first place, but in a fictional universe constructed by the author's imagination. A parallel universe where events did not take the same course as our own. Universe creation is a natural function of sf's and fantasy's imaginative elements. As Ursula K. LeGuin says, "/Sf's and fantasy's/ reward is the special complexity of invention... The invention of secondary worlds (SCYTHROP 22, p.2)

Perhaps, however, as Samuel R. Delany suggests, all fiction indulges in universe creation to some degree, or is set in parallel universes. "Naturalistic fictions are parallel world stories in which the divergence from the real is too slight for historical verification," says Delany. (SFR 33, p.13) So what I am suggesting is nothing revolutionary, but something characteristic of all fiction. The difference between the imaginary worlds sf and fantasy create, and those that other types of fiction create, is in their degree of difference from our world, and in the fact that the sf and fantasy writer is consciously creating an imaginary world (whereas, most other writers are not). The fictional worlds sf and fantasy create are not just imaginary, but very imaginary; they do not simply diverge from the real, but diverge greatly from the real. It is the sf and fantasy author's conscious alteration of the physical environment within his story, and this environment's extreme difference from our own world, that gives sf and fantasy its importance.

Some would say that this is also what makes sf and fantasy "escapist." But I think a good sf story is "escapist" in the same sense that a rocketship leaving earth is "escapistic,"

and I think the benefits gained are similar. An astronaut looking down from a spaceship orbiting earth is able to see everything everything in a new light, from an entirely different perspective. It has often been reported how satellites have discovered new things about our planet, things we were never aware of before, because they were able to view our planet from a distance and as a whole -- rather than close-up and piecemeal, we we must do most of the time. Sf and fantasy performs a similar function. By creating a new, very different imaginary environment in a story, a sf or fantasy writer is able to view our emotions, our feelings, the entire human condition -- man -- from a radically different angle and perspective. To quote Reginald Bretnor, "Science fiction produces new understandings of reality. ...From them, it derives new pictures of old human problems, and pictures new problems which the human race has not yet encountered, and an infinity of new approaches to all of these." MODERN SCIENCE FICTION, p.294)

Ultimately, then, sf's purpose is the same as that of any other kind of fiction: an examination of the nature of man. It differs only in that the imaginative possibilities offered by sf enable the writer to view man from a very different perspective. But this is an important difference; so much so that I think a special set of criteria should be applied to an sf story to discover how well it fulfills the unique potential offered by sf.



5

People often claimed in the past that sf could not be adequately judged by ordinary literary standards, but needed a special set of standards, unique to itself. Usually this claim was made in an attempt to prove that some sf story was a masterpiece and a "classic," despite the fact that ordinary literary standards said it was inept and poorly written. This is not my intention. Instead, I only wish to add some other criteria -- some imaginative ones -- to the set of standards we judge all fiction by. The imaginative aspects of a story are as important as any other aspect of a story, and deserve as much attention and evaluation.

To what extent does a story utilize the imaginative possibilities -- the radically different angle and perspective -- offered by sf? I think that's a question we have to ask of any piece of fiction that pretends to be great sf. And to what extent are these possibilities utilized properly -- i.e. developed logically and consistently, made an integral part of the story and not a superficial garnish, and cliched and overused possibilities avoided? The extent to which a story meets these four criteria, as well as normal literary criteria, is the extent to which it is good sf, and can be said to be fulfilling the true potential of the field. Unfortunately, in recent years the importance of the imaginative elements of sf seems to have been downplayed.

There has been a welcome increase in concern and improvement of sf literary qualities. Too many so-called sf stories are borderline efforts -- exploiting the unique possibilities offered by sf to such an insignificant degree that readers and writers can't even agree whether the story is sf or not, let alone good or bad. Too many stories still use sf's imaginative elements merely as a colorful backdrop, that can be changed like stage scenery at the touch of a typewriter; the authors of such stories fail to realize that if the imaginative aspects of a sf story do not affect its plot, character or thematic development at all, then there is really no point in writing the story as sf at all -- its imaginative aspects are a superficial facade. Too many stories still repeat the same cliched possibilities -- the romantic dead Mars Kingsley Amis once complained about is no longer quite so popular, nor the blue-eyed All American space cadet routine, but they have only been replaced by a standardized, overpopulated, polluted near-future world. Despite all the noise about science fiction undergoing a "revolution" in the past decade, despite all the talk about the New Wave, a great many sf stories still fail to meet the four criteria I advanced above. The revolution is obviously not complete. Or to borrow a metaphor from Alexei Panshin, sf may no longer be an ugly toad, but it is not quite yet a beautiful princess.

It is essential that sf writers realize that the potential of the field not only in the adoption of standard literary techniques, but also in the exploration of sf's own unique imaginative elements. Alexei and Cory Panshin have pointed out that "Early/ sf criticism operated under the premise that science fiction should be subject to mimetic /i.e., contemporary fiction's/ standards of excellence -- no doubt because these were the highest standards available. To the extent that sf began to question itself for the first time and to care about the presence or absence of technique and style and other felicities, the results were highly desirable... But to the extent that sf was encouraged to form itself into the image of mimetic fiction, the innovation was less desirable and the apprentices and journeymen /or sf/ misled." (FANTASTIC, Feb 1973, p.106)

Some new criteria, as I have said, need to be added to the old set borrowed from contemporary fiction, if only to remind writers what makes sf unique. For a conflict seems to have built up among the "apprentices and journeymen" of sf, between what Norman Spinrad aptly calls "the novelistic imperatives of plot, destiny and unity" and the "sf imperative of universe

creation." Some sf writers, it seems, have so yearned after literary merit that they have not only thrown away all the crude pulp-magazine techniques sf has acquired, but also sf's imaginative virtues as well. They have mistakenly taken these to be as much a symbol of "bad fiction" as the techniques which have accompanied them, and have imitated contemporary fiction instead. Polish sf writer and critic Stanislaw Lem says that "If [sf writers] imitate 'mainstream' literature, they will lose their exploratory powers rather than become accepted by the 'mainstream' and acknowledged as equal members. We cannot compare the sf writer's status to that of the American Negro who, when he asks for equality, wants to maintain all his cultural characteristics, and enrich them with the white man's culture. At present the aspiration of the sf writer is like a negro who tries to bleach his skin and make his curly hair straight. In short, an imitative sf writer resembles a negro who totally renounces all his intrinsic qualities. When [a sf writer does this] science fiction [no more] succeeds in becoming a branch of 'normal' literature [than the negro succeeds in becoming a white man]." (SF COMMENTARY 22, p.48)

6

Some people have said that sf "has expanded beyond its definitions." I think that sf has yet to fulfill the potential offered by its definition (i.e. distinguishing imaginative characteristics). Alexei Panshin says that "Sf's removal from the here and now offers tremendous possibilities, most of them not only unrealized, but undreamed. If art seeks modes in which to concretize new abstractions, then the possible worlds offered by what we call 'science fiction' have to be potential major art." (FANTASTIC, Aug 1970, p.122)

If sf is ever to become "major art", then the old false notions that it is "possible", and has a close rigid relationship with science, have to be shaken off, and new more valid ideas adopted. Sf is both literary and imaginative, and both these aspects of it are of equal importance, and must be exploited jointly. Until they are, sf will remain a beautiful but unrealized dream.

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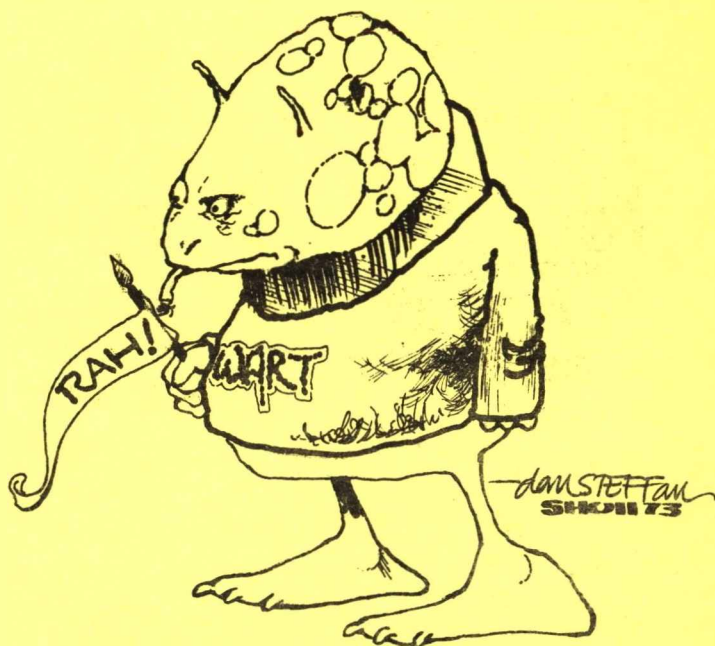
THE NEW Modern sf convention

JERRY POURNELLE

(Although I am President of the Science Fiction Writers of America, the following is not an official SFWA statement, but merely an expression of my own opinions.)

A long time ago, Worldcons went broke. Con Committees could expect to lose a lot of money, and often did. Since well-attended Worldcons are obviously in the interest of SF writers, it seemed natural that writers would aid Con Committees as best they could, and with no thought of compensation. A tradition grew up, and it was a good one.

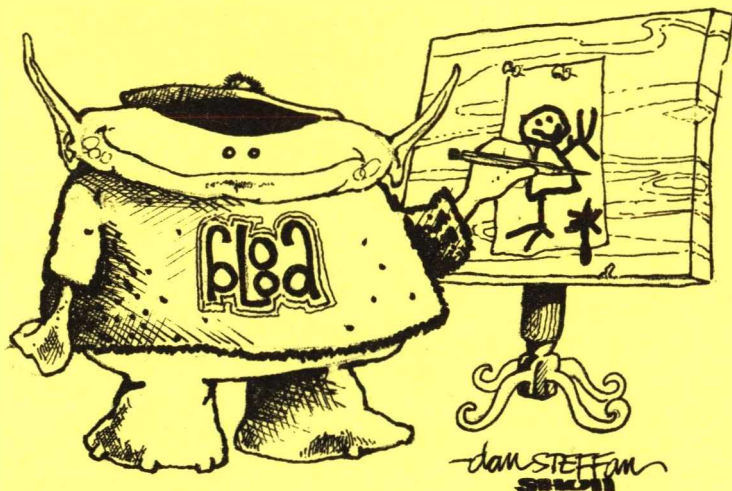
In those dear dead days Convention attendees might or might not pay for their badges; Convention speakers might or might not pay; it depended in part on who could afford to. Not very much money was involved in any event, Convention registration fees being only a dollar or two. And writers participated on panels, made speeches, donated manuscripts to the auction, and often served as auctioneers. There were even auctions of an hour of the writer's time, the proceeds going to the Committee.



It's all changed now. Conventions make money. The LA Worldcon reports some \$27,000 cash flow and does not report other profitable activities like the book display-sale, those activities having been given to other fannish organizations or activities. Committee members got free hotel accommodations and meals during the convention, and compensation for many expenses incurred in putting on the Worldcon. Two members were paid for a trip abroad to present the bid.

I am not complaining about this. Convention Committees work hard, and there's no reason to insist that they go broke doing the work of furnishing the rest of us with a week-end of fun. If Convention income is high enough pay legitimate out-of-pocket expenses for those who put the Con on, that's the Committee's business; but when there is that much money involved, others who have helped the Convention also deserve to be represented when accounting time comes.

I have never suggested that Convention speakers be paid. I suspect that with the kind of money that Cons make, there may be some pay for speakers in the future: a Committee may



well find that some of the better "drawing card" writers will insist on payment on the grounds that it is because they are speaking that the crowds will come and pay high registration fees. Indeed, some non-science-fiction conventions are already operating on a businesslike basis, with paid speakers and performers. I understand that there may be personal profits for the promoters who put on these specialized Cons, and I for one say more power to them. They haven't asked SF writers to donate their time, and the one specialized Con I have attended was exceedingly polite to SF writers.

On the other hand, when WorldCons make a lot of money, it seems reasonable to me that the SF writers -- who are, after all, the reason for high paying attendance by mundanes, whatever their power to draw fans -- have an interest in the disposition of the proceeds. Why is it a less legitimate expense for a Con to pay for a writer's banquet ticket than to pay for a trip abroad for a Committee member? Note that I do not question the legitimacy of the trip abroad; I only say that there are other "expenses" that seem to me legitimate, and certainly worthy of thinking about.

Why should convention speakers pay for their registration and banquet ticket? I agree that con speeches and panel participations aren't a lot of work and aren't very well prepared for lately. Why should they be? Many of those freebie speakers get \$500 to \$1000 for lectures, and those they do prepare for, but why for a freebie that will possibly even cost you money?

And why shouldn't it be a legitimate expense for Conventions to furnish hospitality facilities to writers? To buy coffee in the mornings for writers and convention participants? Writers aren't aristocrats at Conventions, but let's face it, most of that income from mundanes wouldn't come in if the writers weren't present to attract them. The Con couldn't take in the money without the writers. So whose money is it? 17

For myself, I think Conventions ought to plan to give away lots of benefits for everyone who attends. I know that Committees don't see much of that money in advance, and worry up to the last minute before the Con begins whether they'll recover what they've laid out; but once the money comes in, is it unreasonable for the Committee to have planned some activities that it will pay for contingent on being able to afford them?

But that's something for fans to negotiate with Committees. I have heard that SFWA ought to use its influence to get Committees to do certain things for fans. We often do. But here I can put on my SFWA President hat to say this: SFWA doesn't represent fans because it can only speak for its members. It would be silly for us to speak for fans even if we were asked to: who'd represent fans to US? We can only bargain for benefits to SFWA. We can ask for benefits to fans, and we do; but we can't speak for them or represent them.

While I've got my SFWA President on, this is a good time to announce that TORCON II has graciously offered a number of benefits to writers, and for me to wish TORCON II the great success it deserves. Now I'll take the official hat off and close this as just myself again.

Science fiction writers, as writers, sell science fiction. As fans, we wish fans and conventions well. As convention attendees, we want to have a good time as much as anyone else. As writers again we want every convention attendee, fan or mundane, to have a good time and go away with a burning thirst to buy science fiction.

Cooperation with Con committees produces a happy Con, and it's in writers' interest to extend that cooperation. As individuals many writers do far more than simply cooperate. Some writers work as hard as any fan in making conventions a success.

But when Cons become themselves a large source of income derived from consumers of science fiction, the professional writers, artists, and other SF pros have an interest in that money.

I don't say they have a claim to that money. I know of a few writers who will go that far, but I don't. I do say we have a legitimate interest in what's done with it.

Most of us would be no use in running Conventions, and wouldn't want to if we could. We don't want, as individuals or as SFWA members, to get involved in the management of Conventions.

All writers can do, and all SFWA can do speaking for writers, is to ask for certain benefits. Other groups are free to make their own requests and use their own influence in bargaining for them. And I still think that convention benefits for writers as a class are as legitimate as other expenses noted on the LACon audit. The Con couldn't have been put on without the work of the Committee -- but it wouldn't have ended up financially solvent without the writers.

The Old Fanzine Dealer's Guide

BY JOE BALONEY, as found by

ken faig



the following mimeographed publication -- itself something of a curiosity -- was recovered from an abandoned dealer's table at a recent science fiction convention. it is offered here for the information of the fanzine-collecting public

"Most of the time, when I buy up a big collection of sf or fantasy, I just dump all the fan stuff into a box and take it along to a convention where I can unload it on the unsuspecting neos. None of the big-money collectors are going to spend a dime on that shit, and it isn't worth the price of the paper it takes to advertise it on. In short, unless you enjoy philanthropy, forget the fan stuff..." -- Joe Baloney longtime dealer and collector.

Probably 9/10 of the well-known dealers in science fiction and fantasy material would give you the same line as Joe Baloney on fanzines. There just ain't no money in 'em. Take the time and money to catalogue a moderate collection of the fan stuff -- even vintage stuff from the forties and fifties -- ask a nice modest price for the ordinary items, and what do you get? Three neos send their checks in for the minimum order (all requesting the same zines -- w/o alternatives); so you haul in \$2.00 for all your effort. After you've spent 14¢ on the lucky neo's postage and 8¢ each to return their checks to the unlucky candidates, you've made about \$1.70 in return for mailing out those several pages of catalogue. And g'od knows what that cost you!

Now why doesn't Sangfroid Snatch, your star customer from Bazooka, S.D. snatch up a whole pageful of fan stuff, just like he picks your used book section clean by long distance telephone call two minutes after receiving your catalogue by air mail special delivery? (Sometimes you think old Sangfroid will have a heart attack when he learns your other star customer, Archer Ornerly, of Busted, W.Va., has beat him out for a particularly choice item.) After all, Sangfroid was a fan himself once -- putting out four awful hectographed issues of Neptunian News before leaving fandom for the mail order gun trade.

Well, the answer is pretty simple -- back in the days when he was a fan, Sangfroid would bang out his letters of request by the dozens, tape on his sticky (or rather, to-be-sticky) nickels and dimes, and mail 'em off with visions of glorious fannish things dancing in his head. (Forrest Ackerman once showed us Sangfroid's badly-typed letter virtually begging for a copy of Time Traveller -- but don't let that get back to Sangfroid...) Sangfroid dreamed of having the complete collection -- every science fiction book, magazine, curio and fanzine ever published.

And Sangfroid tried damn hard, too! Of course, Sangfroid early on rounded up all the professional magazines he needed (when he purchased Superfluous Science Tales for February, 1941, from me in 1970, he told me that made his magazine collection absolutely complete); in the forties there were some rumors that he bribed the supervisor at the local pulping mill (didn't know Bazooka had a pulping mill, did you?) to pull out the choice items for him. At the time, of course, that was highly unpatriotic. After all, the Armed Forces could be going without vital forms for the sake of a superfluous copy of Superfluous Science. But none of these mundane difficulties deterred old Sangfroid -- and even today he's still snatching up books from me in the hope to own every book in Bleiler and more before he dies. (Old Sang is past his prime, you know.)

Why, Sang even has a special "secret" collection of some 350 books not in Bleiler; "science fiction and fantasy as sure as I was born -- and I'm keeping 'em a secret so as to have for my collection alone..." he once wrote me. Why in hell, then, isn't Sang interested in my offerings of choice fanzines from the past -- mellow old copies of Shaggy with gently rusting staples and Ackermanian delights, choice Lovecraftiana compiled by Laney for the old Acolyte, even those rarest-of-all hectographed items of eofandom. Of course, Sang does have just about everything up to 1938 -- back from his writing, requesting and sticky quarter days; though to tell the truth, Ackerman never did say whether he sent Sang those copies of Time Traveller or not.

But this is just where the difficulty comes in. By 1938 so damn many fan magazines were busting out all over the scene, that even faithful old Sang was going nuts trying to keep up. He'd hear dimly of a new hectographed venture coming out of Podunk, Neb., write frantically away to all his friends for the address for several months, and, finally, upon learning the sacred information from one of the pimple-plagued members of the Bellview, La., Science Fantasy Society (whose hectographed journal Smudge was quite a sensation in its day) only to find out that twelve-year-old Hiram Hinckle had already sold all eleven copies of Freakie Fantasy (less-well-known than Smudge, but still a sensation.)

This phenomenon escalated as the number of fanzine-producers began to climb to the stars; so that by 1938 Sangfroid had already estimated that he was missing roughly five per cent of the current amateur output.

Curiously enough, one can find the final blow recorded even in so general a fan history as that of Sammy Moskowitz (op. cit., q.v., *ibid*, e.g., cf., et al). That final blow was the refusal of Billy Sudser (Pecos City, Okla.) even to sell Sangfroid a copy of his Western Roamer, first produced in the summer of 1938. This resulted in Sang's famous attempt to block Billy from membership in FAPA when his name came up for admission on October 23, 1938 (see Moskowitz for the documentation). A special edition of Fan News for November 9, 1938, brought the news to the attention of a waiting fandom in FULL CAPS HEADLINES underlined. (Associate editor Jay Bud had wanted double spacing, too, but the editorial board vetoed that.) Fan News for January 19, 1939, brought the news of a close ruling of the FAPA President; because he had not yet been a member of FAPA at the time Sangfroid requested a copy of Western Roamer, Billy was not obligated to sell Sang an issue, according to the ruling of the FAPA President.

It would stray too far from our subject to relate in great detail how Sang thereupon made another attempt to order the summer, 1938, issue of Western Roamer; was refused again by Billy; and upon his second appeal to the FAPA President, was again turned down (see Fan News, February 3, 1939). In any case, cursing somewhat more than mildly, to say the least, Sang put an end to the whole affair (and his glorious blaze across fannish history) by quitting FAPA and fandom in a letter to the FAPA OE dated March 22, 1939, reported in Fan News for April 11, 1939. Sang only notes with glee that according to the report of a friend Billy never got to see a copy of Sang's own Neptunian News -- the last number having gone out in the mailing before Billy's admission.*

So old Sang can still get a chuckle out of his fan days; and once in awhile he'll even unpack one of his boxes of stored fan material for a few hours' entertainment. He even turned down \$100 I offered him for the whole lot; so he hasn't been completely fannishly alienated. But inquire of him on one of his long-distance phone calls if he would be interested in this or that choice fannish item, and be prepared to get your head blasted off. "Yeah, Sang, I know you put out good money for the stuff you buy from me. Right, you want regular printed-type professional paid-for stuff. I agree, nobody ever did nothing good without being paid for it. Right. I know the world is crawling with the damned mimed and hectored things. Right. Right, they deserve just about the circulation they get. Right. You bet I wish that old supervisor had let a few more fanzines go through the mill and saved more Superfluous Science -- you know I can get a hell of a lot more for old Superfluous than for fan crap. Right. Sorry I mentioned it. No, I think your collection is complete without that stuff. It isn't published. Typed like any old unsold manuscript, just that it's typed on stencils and a couple of hundred copies of the manuscript -- the manuscript, that's right, Sang -- run off. Right. Sorry. I'll get that mint Moon Men of Jupiter to you in the morning mail. Right. So long. Right, I did read what that crumb Bill did to you. Right. Right..."

I guess you get the gist of Sang's current feelings on collecting fanzines. He won't collect, so I can't sell to him, my best customer.

Ole Arch Ornerly is even less kind. See, Arch, a retired bartender, never was a fan. He just liked the sf and fantasy pulps and kept on buying and collecting until he had a tremendous accumulation. He'd as soon let a fan in the door as a magazine thief -- in fact it's doubtful he would make any distinction between the two in his mind. He's so damned anonymous that he rented the only post office box in Busted, W.Va. -- good old Box 1, Busted -- just to keep anonymous. (Seeing as the population of Busted is 7, I can't see how a travelling fan would have much difficulty in finding him, though.) Anyhow I once made the mistake of asking Arch about fanzines, too. Let's just say that he was even less democratic than Sang. What he said, in fact, was that he couldn't afford to have "that...screwball...shit...cluttering up...my...attic" (supply your own expletives -- you'll come close enough) and that his collection was complete without it.



*A check with Harry Warner's history reveals that Billy was active in the Cosmic Circle as late as 1944 -- in fact, holding the position of Deputy Acting Regent of the Southern Vice Imperium embracing Mexico and South America.

I guess I made those two calls back in 1970 after I got ahold of Hyman Wasserman's big fanzine collection. But I have been figuring since. Why don't these gents -- who will otherwise gobble up everything as ravenously as their purses will permit -- want to buy fanzines from me? And I got the answer. These gents don't want to buy fanzines precisely because they can't possibly hope for the kind of complete collection they lust after in all their other collecting domains.

Sure, ole Arch lusts after the fourth lobby card for the Butch Allison movie serial (1936 -- very rare), and there's probably a good chance I'll get one some day and unload it on Arch for two hundred three hundred bucks. There's a chance he'll fill those annoying gaps in his magazine runs. But as to old Arch -- never a fan -- starting to build up an Ackermanesque garageful of old fan stuff -- he could never do it. Whereas 30 magazines elude him, 300 fanzines would always elude his grasp. Moreover, Arch isn't about to do the things which might allow him to latch onto a large pile of this stuff. Checking up on old fans, writing personal letters -- that's not for Arch. A cash on the line, I preserve your anonymity, you preserve mine man, all the way. (He only abandons that stance when he wants to know if Sang has beaten him out for another choice item. So Arch rejects fanzines as a defense mechanism -- if he admitted them to his collecting canon, why he'd be greener than the newest neo writing away in this or that unpretentious fanzine. Arch would have a complete Weird Tales, yeah, but he'd have a miserable Shaggy file, nothing of the Willis zines, my heavens, not even a respectable file of Energumen or other more recent greats. (I suspect Arch may secretly suscribe for Locus and Luna Monthly but publicly he says "why the hell should I pay to get the sf book news when I get it for free from you guys trying to sell me the stuff." So Arch does not collect fanzines.)

But then there's Sang, the fan/collector. My God, Sang began with Neptunian News in 1936, joined FAPA at the start in 1937, and only bowed out after his big to-do with Billy in 1939. Up to 1939, he probably had as big a collection of fan stuff as Ackerman, Laney, Moskowitz, and the other super-actives. Obviously, at one point Sang did want to collect fan stuff -- and he wanted a complete collection, too. But Sang found that fan-stuff was one area in which it was simply impossible to indulge his completist fantasies. (The other stuff is toc, but you don't think I'd let my best customer know it, do you?)

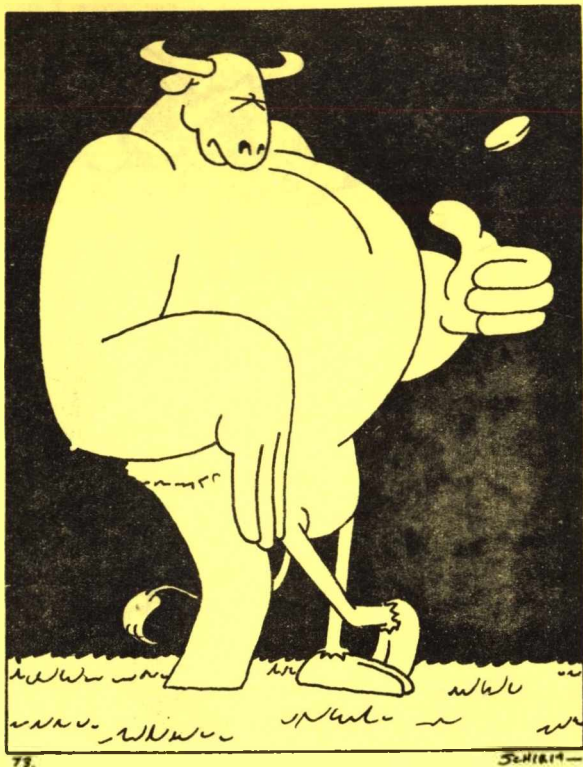
Today he can laugh about Billy Sudser -- but in 1938 and 1939 and 1940 he would have crawled on his belly to get a copy of Western Roamer. A private sale?-- let me tell you how private fandom was back in those days. For all I know, Sang may have eventually picked up a copy of the Western Roamer, just to spite the memory of Billy, but the important realization on his part was that in the field of fanzine collecting, he would always be one among many. He might have a nice collection, one which pleased him, but his lust for completism would leave him always in a state of nervous dissatisfaction.

To tell the truth this "nervous dissatisfaction" is the whole basis of my business and yours; if all our customers



ever decided that all they wanted to do was read and enjoy sf and fantasy, if they made the weight of their preference felt on the public library, my god, we'd be a poor bunch. Now lusters may also be readers and readers lusters but without the lust, let me tell you, we'd be in a hard way. Anything that is as monetary as huckstering has got to depend on some pretty primal instincts -- people don't bleed their purses for mental abstractions.

Now as I say the "nervous dissatisfaction" is actually what keeps Sang and others like him going; he can't ever complete his collection, and even if he did he would find that he would merely have to begin collecting something else to live. One might almost view collecting as a never-ending night of love-making in which the collector is ever denied climax. Periods of excitement and exhaustion alternate but there is never "satisfaction." I thought Sang came pretty close the afternoon I announced to him he had beaten out Arch for a Barlow-bound copy of HPL's Shunned House (well, at least I certified it as one) but after a period of sheer amazement of exhaustion, he was back bidding as intensely as ever for choice items from my list. Sang merely shuts fanzines out because the state of 'dissatisfaction' in which he would find himself as a hopeful fanzine completist would simply be too much²⁴ for his nerves.



So there's why I only sold one neo something from the Wasserman collection.

Here's where I give all you fellow hucksters and dealers what you've been waiting for. There is a way to sell fanzines -- mimeo'd, hecto'd, old, new, whatnot -- to such as Sang and Arch, i.e., the money boys. At the same time, these methods build up the demand which was already there among ordinary fen.

I won't be systematic about describing my methods; I'll be rambling -- after all, are all you dealers going to cut me in on your fanzine profits just because of my help?

NOSTALGIA -- there's a key word. Five fen today are five fen -- pleasant, impossible, but mostly just people. Even Mr. Big-Name-Writer just writes and earns his bread. I mean, fen are mundanes in essence. But let a young fan get a load of Harry Warner's history or Sammy Moskowitz' history, and boy, you got nostalgia for something he never even knew. I think I first realized this when I caught Arnie Katz drooling over a box of old Wasserman stuff I had brought to some Lunacon or or other; hell, I would have let the whole box go for \$10 if he hadn't been so interested in it. (As it was, I made him

pay \$2.00 for an "irreplacable" D'Journal he had drooled just a little too long over.) What the hell, then I read of American fen -- young ones -- gobbling up the BSFA fanzine foundation when it was auctioned off last year. Those prices were in pounds sterling! Sure the productions of a BNF like Willis drew the highest prices; but even the more humble efforts got at least as much as I would get for the average digest zine and many as much as I would get for your run-of-the-mill pulp.

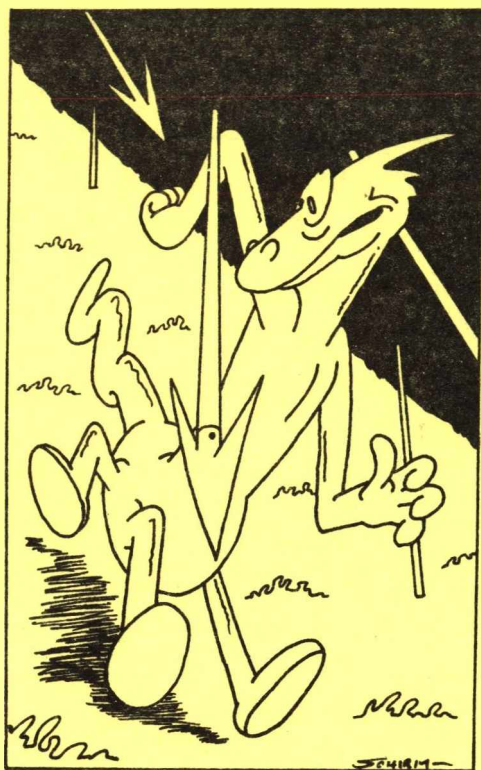
That is, for twenty-year-olds, stuff from the forties and fifties and even the sixties (depending on how precocious they were in their fannish development) has acquired the "glamor" of history. Fandom isn't just those five fen we mentioned above, but all this great tradition, too. One can even write analyses of fannish writing as it developed over the years. Better yet, there are all those mysterious cats like Degler who have become near-myth to the readers of Warner and other books. You can bet I can sell anything with Degler's name on it for plenty!

Okay -- you say -- young fen have some potentiality as fanzine buyers, but they're still poverty-stricken. How do we get the big-monied boys, the collectors, interested in fan stuff? To guys like Sang, Ackerman, Wollheim and Schwartz aren't legends -- they're various ones of those five guys we were talking about before. Nostalgia for a period one has actually lived through is more limited and restrained, less glamorous, than nostalgia for a period one can never know. If I could get Sang interested in fanzines again, he might buy some Wollheim stuff to complete, say, his Phantagraph file; but he wouldn't buy it out of some glamorous mystique exercised by the unknown. (Time Traveller and other eofannish stuff Sang missed might bear the potential for such mystique, however.) No, what I need is something to make fanzines collectible in the same sense books and professional magazines are collectible.

There are two good ways to offer 'em:

ENTIRE FILES OR LONG RUNS. Boys like Sang and Arch love these in the magazine and book fields. Look at all the anxiety they relieve; all the work they accomplish in one fell swoop. If one buys all but two Avon Fantasy Readers in a lump why, then, one needs only two issues -- easy enough to find in a year or so of looking. So Arch and Sang love these deals. Even if some duplications result, then they've got trading copies. So if I can build fanzines as attractive items, entire files or long runs of individual titles will be good deals. This assuages the collector's basic realization that he can never be a true completist in the fanzine field. If he can show someone his complete Acolyte, Shaggy, or D'Journal -- well, he is doing something.

ATTRACTIVE SINGLE ITEMS. After all, a fanzine is made of people writing. A description like "second issue of Willis' classic fanzine" doesn't do me much good. Many fen have heard of Walt Willis, but I could do far better with a more graphic description. Let's say that issue has Willis' immortal "Boon Boogie" sketch -- later dramatized at the 1958 Worldcon. Let's say Harlan Ellison has an amusing letter in the same issue. Do I mention this stuff? You bet! So I pay



for two more lines of mimeo -- I jack the price up a couple dollars.

You see, I want the fanzine to be something which Sang or Arch might be influenced to believe would be something worthwhile for their collections. Sang, for instance, is an Ellison fan. He lovingly collects all the Ellison he can find; and when something he collects otherwise (like an sf magazine) has an Ellison item in it, Sang buys an extra copy, so he can have one for his Ellison shelf, too. From Sang's viewpoint, Ellisoniana is worthwhile. Now by my description, I tell Sang -- hey baby money-bags, this Ellison here in the Willis magazine is the same Ellison you got on your shelves. What's more, this particular Ellison bit is far rarer than most of what you got on your shelves. So if you are collecting Ellison, you want this. That's what I try to sell Sang by my description. Then again here I have a 1971 fanzine, hot off the mimeograph in a world-shaking edition of two hundred copies. But god damn it, it's the first review I've seen of Ellison's latest book. If I stash this fanzine away for a couple of years (at least until it's out of print), I can hit Sang's Ellison weakness again. After all, a review is part of the literature, isn't it?

You see, I'm out to subvert Sang's completist passions by emphasizing the relative attractiveness of individual fanzine packages to his library. Sabe? Of course, not every fanzine has anything in it. How can I build greater acceptability and desirability for the average fanzine -- without relying on a completist fervor which just isn't there except in the case of a very few completist (I should say, hopeful completist) fanzine collectors?

FIRST, I play up the fannish nostalgia. If I can't have Ellison or Bradbury, I can have Ackerman or Laney -- maybe.

SECOND, I can play up stuff which no one ordinarily plays up about fanzines. Anything that's "mint" is worth a whole lot, isn't it? The important thing though is rarity -- if I say that a Tucker zine was one of the focal points of forties fandom, and then I say, well, probably no more than 150 were ever produced and that probably less than half of those are available today (in known collections), I think I have increased the desirability of that fanzine somewhat. Even the most wretched hecto'd item of 1935 is infinitely more desirable than the same of 1955 -- even if no BNF or pro condescended to contribute anything. Boy -- if I could get ahold of copies of those schuster carbon-copy magazines; or of Time Traveler; Comet; and any of the other of the earliest fan publications, you bet I would make a mint on this age and rarity ploy.

Then, under this general category, there are the special provenance copies. One usually thinks of special provenance books as ones which belonged to George Washington or some other great; and in the sf and fantasy world, of course, that means a well-known author or fan. Now author Isaac Asimov has sold sf like hotcakes for decades. Ought we to expect anything less of sf items -- like fanzines -- which were originally addressed to him? And -- the fanzines come with built-in proof of an address label originally filled-out by the publisher. Say there's something inside by or about the personage to whom the fanzine was addressed -- triple zowie! Not only a fanzine of illustrious provenance (yaas, the Arthur C. Clarke copy of ---), but a unique association copy (yaaaas, Arthur C. Clarke's own copy of ---, containing his ---). You can bet you would have Sang or Arch nipping at something like that!

THIRD, however, and I think most important, I emphasize a fanzine for its own worth and contributions. It's important to deemphasize the comprehensive collecting of fanzines -- and to emphasize the importance of individual fanzines as individual works contributing to our field. For those smitten with a glamorous sense of nostalgia, of course, we emphasize that aspect to the hilt. And to tickle even the neo's collecting sense, we go heavy on the rarity bit. For Arch -- and the fellows like him who will probably never catch a sense of the fannish -- we go down heavy on the importance of fanzines' individual items as associational collectanea -- something which in fact is collected selectively rather than omnivorously. Thus we can make Arch proud both of what he has and wants in the fanzine field as well as of what he wouldn't care to have if you paid him. Authors and BNFs, of course, we lay on heavy for Arch and fellows like him. Even reviews of their books -- everything which would lead to such 28

a construction that a fanzine could not be regarded as an independent production by an independent group of people, but regarded as an adjunct of the material which Arch so studiously collects. Some fanzines are legitimate collectanea already among collectors like Arch -- try to get a hold of a Fantasy Commentator or an Acolyte these days -- and with effort I think that we -- the dealers -- can develop a far more numerous field of profitable items.

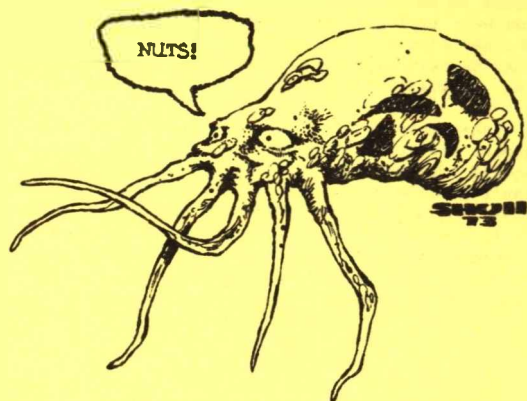
So I think that's about as deep into this as I am going to go. Natch, I'm not going to spill the beans about good sources of old fanzines -- after all, you're my direct competitors. If fewer bid, they bid less and buy for less. But if we each bid in our own markets and then aggressively develop the general collector's market -- heh heh! There's the gold!

Pretty soon I'm going to be sending out my Wasserman collection catalogue -- and some of you will probably be floored by both the prices and the care I have taken to make detailed description of a number of the more valuable items -- and, to be honest, of some quite unmitigated junk. I think even Sang -- and maybe even old Arch -- are going to weaken and start laying down some bread in an entirely new field for serious collectors. At least I am hoping. I even have the second of two issues of Western Roamer (1938) and I'm hoping to learn whether Sang ever did break down and rustle in some copies. Maybe he'll pull out a slug of Neptunian News in an offer for trade; I'll have to be careful not to chortle too gleefully. In any case, I don't think you out there are going to be hauling those boxes of old fan stuff, ten for a dollar, much longer. One for ten dollars, I say!

Naturally, I was quoting myself to begin this article. That was two, three years ago. Now, I hope, I have every potential of becoming a wiser -- and richer -- man.

A tip of the hat to my esteem'd colleagues -- Sincerely,
Joe Baloney.





JAMES BALLARD AS A LIQUID SALVADOR DALI

The standard question was asked once again at WESTERCON 26 -- "What is the future of science fiction?" To which several standard, unsatisfactory answers were given. I don't think there can be a satisfactory answer to the question of where such a conglomeration of diverse interests and styles is headed. As a matter of fact, I don't myself have a clue, except that I don't think it will be going anywhere new in the near future. This is mostly a gut-level feeling, and I can't support it with lots of facts but to say that several new developments (such as science fiction's growing popularity both with the academe and the largely disinterested masses) have come and gone in the last few years, and they haven't done much to change science fiction either for the better or the worse. What I do have instead of a theory is a kind of wish.

One of the writers on the panel probably made the most intelligent and modest claim there when he said that science fiction will see a new rebirth in the hard science stories due to new discoveries in physics relating to cosmology. I don't see that it will -- for one thing, too many new writers don't like doing the research to back up their work, and for another, when you get down to it, how many new things are there really to do with quasars and black holes? Taken at the outside likelihood, that quasars are holes in the universe, and that black holes may be tunnels to some other point in time or space, how many really new

THE VIEW from GROUND ZERO
by
RICHARD WADHOLM

plot ideas do you actually have? It might be my impoverished imagination, but I've been trying to think of something new and not-so-obvious to do with the new cosmology for a long time, and I'm not doing well. Black holes may be used as portholes to other parts of the universe, but how exciting, literarily speaking, is a new kind of subspace engine?

My wish-theory for the near-future of science fiction is to see an enlargement and formalization of the field of surrealism. This doesn't require any more research than the writer wants to put into it, and it doesn't promise right off to be outdated as soon as certain cosmological questions are answered, the way the proposed new hard science stories might. Surrealism looked like it might be coming on strong for awhile, especially between '64 and '68. Judith Merrill's BEST SF 11 and ENGLAND SWINGS both have a large number of surrealist essays, stories and poems. So do many of the Carr/Wollheim BEST SF collections and a few of the Aldiss and Harrison ones of the 60s. Ballard's work is almost exclusively surreal in style if not in content.

Surrealism during the 60s was lumped together with the general plethora of abstract and avant garde work that made up the New Wave. This was a mistake which should have been cleared up then. Surrealistic fiction is as different from the abstract works of Phil Farmer and Harlan Ellison as Salvador Dali is from Mondrian. Surrealism, as defined by the dictionary glowering at me from the corner, is a painting, sculpture or literary work that "combines the convention and unconventional, or the familiar and the bizarre, in order to represent the imagery or thought patterns characteristic of dreams and other subconscious activities." A better idea could be gained by seeing surrealism in the works of Magritte. Surrealism is the exposition of a landscape of the mind. It is marked by bland acceptance of anomalies or impossibilities either composed of recognizable, familiar objects, or set in a background of mundane familiarity. Magritte was famous for this. His style is photographically realistic. His attitude is placid and nonchalant. He could be painting a rose for all his involvement and interest.

The one writer I can think of who comes closest to this dryly detailed approach is Brian Aldiss. Many of his short stories, such as "Heresies of the Huge God" and "Scarfe's World" have an almost static plotline that doesn't so much progress toward the resolution of a conflict as expose what the conflict would be in a more conventional action-oriented story. "Heresies of the Huge God" is the most forthright example of this bland, photographic approach. A giant mantis-like insect flies in from outer space and lights on the world for several generations and then leaves again. The story is sort of a religious history of the destruction it caused and the civilization that built up after it. No explanation for the insect's existence. No explanation for why it came or why it left. We are too small and inconsequential for the insect to know anything about it except that it is an established, accepted part of the landscape.

James Ballard takes a more active approach. His work is so close to the mindscapes of Salvador Dali that some of his stories -- "The Time Tombs" comes to mind most prominently -- seem to be written to give life to Daliesque paintings exclusively, without much more to recommend it. Anyone who has read his Vermillion Sands stories knows of the languid, morphine-fantasy atmospheres he constructs, but most people haven't noticed the actual similarities between Dali and Ballard. They're both in a more active vein of surrealism, not content to unreal the painting without painting action into the finished product. This is more obvious with Ballard, since he is the writer and can point the action out from the background specifically. With Dali, it's more difficult. Dali's

31 paintings would appear to be unanimated still-lives in many cases, until

you'd seen the works of the other surrealists and found what you're looking for. Dali paints life into his landscapes. His objects, no matter how large and seemingly motionless possess a subtle fluidity. They may be seen still at the moment, but they are either in a state of melting, anti-gravity, or a state of what he terms "antimatter", which is very hard to describe without being seen.

They are also similar in purely physical ways. Most of Dali's landscapes seem to be occurring in the late afternoon. Many of the important scenes in Ballard's stories, when he's at his most evocative also seem to be happening in the late afternoon or early evening. Most Dali landscapes occur in a dry, arid place, a kind of non-dimensional desert. Vermillion Sands and Ballard's Mars are as arid as they are moody. Also, the points both men seem to be making are very deeply psychological -- so deep, in fact, that they lose their contact and most of their usefulness to the outside world. It's not impossible to see the points that Ballard and Dali are making, but very often, the themes of their work are so fractured and removed from real life that they have no practical purpose once discovered. J. G. Ballard's social comment makes Delany's themes seem like homey little anecdotes.

There are other writers, too, who either have shown a firm understanding of the ground rules at one time or another, or -- especially in England -- have adopted surrealism as their medium. Franz Kafka, Samuel Delany, Tom Disch, Bob Dylan, Fritz Leiber and others of equal stature have all written some of their best work as surrealists. Admittedly they haven't all written much in recent years in that medium, but this is where the wish-part of my wish-theory on the future of science fiction comes in. I think that there are lots of fans of surrealism who don't even know they're fans. Anyone who's ever been arrested by the stunning imagery of Phil Travis or Edgar Froese would be willing to shell out 60 or 75 cents to at least try a prozine bent on giving life to their bizarre imagery. At the worst it could go broke -- which is an old story to science fiction prozinery -- but it could also go the other way and establish surrealistic fiction as a definite subgenre to science fiction. In that way, it would have a touch of the same effect Harlan Ellison was trying to create with his DANGEROUS VISIONS anthologies -- that of opening up a market to stories that had none before. As a serious prediction, it's doubtful, but still, wouldn't it be nice...?

PRE REVIEWS --
OF AND FOR YOUR
ENTERTAINMENT

STAN BURNS
DONALD KELLER
RICHARD WADHOLM

UP AGAINST THE
BOOKCASE --
mit der Editor

THE INCREDIBLE
REVIEWING FAN --
flicks with
Bill Warren



Tiptree

TEN THOUSAND LIGHT YEARS FROM HOME by James Tiptree

Ace 1973, 95¢

+ +

reviewer: Stan Burns

Tiptree is, in my ~~WADHOLM~~ opinion, the most exciting and original talent to hit the SF scene in recent years. He reminds me of that period in the mid-sixties when Delany and Zelazny were competing to take the top awards away from each other. For those schmucks out there that don't understand what I'm saying, he's finger-licking good!

I've been complaining recently about DAW books. Mike Glycer takes great pleasure in mentioning DAW in my presence just to see the agony its mention brings. He likes to block the entrance to the nearest john and stand there evilly laughing while I run madly around trying to find some place to vomit.

This book costs the same as a DAW book. It is a short story collection, like many DAW books. But there the comparison ends. This book is original, entertaining, astonishing, and very enjoyable. The average DAW collection is dull, boring, and filled to the brim with outdated stories from the fifties...

Tiptree, unlike the new authors DAW publishes, has command of his medium. He is equally at home with hard-hitting emotional new wave (as in "And I Awoke And Found Me Here On The Cold Hill's Side") and original SCIENCE fiction (as Bova calls it, in "Mamma Come Home") He can handle characterization (the giant who has inch tall women living in his suit

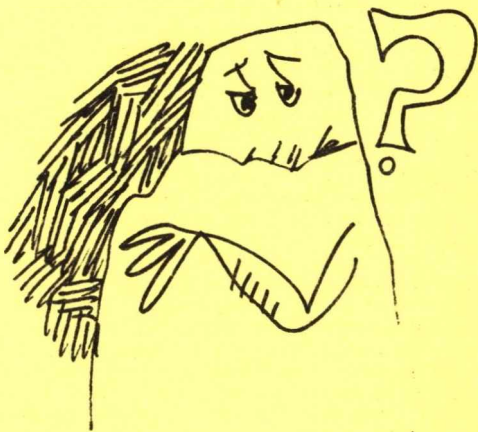
pockets because of the housing shortage) in a droll, effortless style. For example:

"You go into Little Junction because you've been craving it, dreaming about it, feeding on every hint and clue about it, back there in Burned Barn, since before you had hair in your pants. Whether you know it or not. Once you're out of Burned Barn you can no more help going into Little Junction than a sea-worm can help rising to the moon."

This book contains fifteen stories in a little over three hundred pages. That's almost twice as long as the average DAW book. Of the fifteen stories, there was only one ("Mother in the Sky With Diamonds") I didn't like. Not that it was a bad story, I just didn't like it. In the average DAW collection, I'm lucky if there's one story I do like.

Tiptree's worldview may not converge with mine. His characters might not be the kind I'd want to marry my sister (if I had one). But his stories are worth every cent they cost, and every second invested in reading them...

Hey, Mike, I have an idea. If everyone gets a copy of this book, and sends it to Wollheim with a short note explaining "Hey, this is what you should be pubbing!" he might get the idea...



Carr

THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #2, edited by Terry Carr
Ballantine, \$1.25 370pp. + + reviewer: Donald Keller

As happened last year, I picked up Terry Carr's best anthology and discovered that I'd read most of the stories in it already -- twelve of sixteen. Further, I had elsewhere in my collection all but (a different) four. But I bought the book anyway, because it was nice to have all the stories in one place; especially since Carr pulled the remarkable feat of choosing seven (or nearly half) of the Hugo short fiction nominees.

The first thing I did, of course, was read the stories I hadn't managed to read previously. "Miss Omega Haven" by Naomi Mitchison is a short, fascinating vignette about raising the intelligence of birds, told from their viewpoint. It is utterly convincing, and offers the not-uncommon observation that intelligence is not the dividing line between beast and angel. A fine achievement.

"Caliban" is a typical example of Robert Silverberg's recent work -- prose clipped to the bone yet falling into simple poetry at times, and tasting of bitterness -- and concerns the only ugly man in a future where everyone else has made themselves beautiful genetically. It's a highly unrealistic story -- I find the science behind it very unlikely -- but it could not make its strong point any other way.

Graham Leman's "Conversational Mode" (which appeared last year in Pohl's best anthology) somehow makes a good story out of the tired old relentlessly-logical-computer theme. This time it's a wackily unconventional professor against a psychoanalytical computer. There is a great deal of amusement in the contrast of the computer-language and the worm-runner's Joycean wordplay (both of which Leman is adept at), but the underlying grimness eventually and chillingly engulfs the story.

I am not a fan of Poul Anderson's sf (though I love his fantasy) so I was not looking forward to reading "Fortune Hunter"; I was therefore pleasantly surprised to find it excellent. It is thematically similar to Kate Wilhelm's brilliant "The Chosen": it concerns a city-living man who finds he much prefers the nearly inaccessible wilderness. Happily, though, the story concerns the wearily relevant subject of ecology, it does not harp on it. The best thing, however, is the characterization: his people are brought across as real in the normal fashion very well, but Anderson also manages to make us see and feel the hidden motivations behind their dialogue, which adds a fine, extra dimension to their characters. I was highly impressed, and if Anderson keeps writing stories like this and "Goat Song". I may decide to read him much more regularly.

Of the remaining dozen stories, I felt impelled, for one reason or another, to reread half of them. For example, Ed Bryant's stories always alude me on first reading, so I was glad to take the opportunity to reread "Their Thousandth Season." The second time I read this evocation of the future city of Cinnabar and its elite, bored with their immortality and unable to love properly, I liked it much better. Bryant is a fine writer now, and his importance will increase as his writing improves.

Joanna Russ tends to elude me as well, however, rereading "Nobody's Home" didn't help much. I still find it a beautiful "inside" view of a superintelligent future society where a "normal" person is a misfit, but the ending still bethers me: it obviously is important and applies to the story, but I simply cannot make the connection. Still, this does not detract from the story's excellence.

I was once advised that Alexei and Cory Panshin's "Sky Blue" was a good pastiche of Lafferty; I read it, and hated it. This time through, I appreciated it a bit more, but I still find that the Panshins, in attempting to be cute and clever, tried too hard: it comes across as forced and unnatural. It actually does not resemble Lafferty so much as Tiptree in his less serious moments. It also pounds its Message in too hard. In any case, I think it proves that serious and sober writers are likely to fail when they try to write like unsobor

I was somewhat bothered that Lafferty's own "Eurema's Dam" received a Hugo nomination: for the second year in a row, a lesser story of his made the ballot. Oh I liked it ok, both times; it made a point in typical Lafferty fashion, about invaders being people who can't cope; but he's done much better work. Oh well.

Gordon Eklund is a writer I'm not fond of; I have to admit he writes well, but somehow we are on different wavelengths. Two readings of "Grasshopper Time", which concerns a telepathic man/alien halfbreed and two children, have left me with the impression of a good story that just doesn't move me the way a story like this should; but I can't say exactly why. It may be because the pattern of emotion and feeling is too schematic, sketched in lightly rather than clearly drawn. But I'm not sure. I suspect many people will like it better than I do.

James Tiptree, on the other hand, is a writer I love: his nonfiction is crystal-clear and brilliant, while his fiction frustrates me because I want to like it even though I don't always understand it. The first time I read "Painwise" it impressed me, yet there was much of it that I didn't catch; happily, the second time it all came through clearer. It's a deserving Hugo nominee about a man who can feel no pain who is trying to get home to Earth, helped/hindered by his first computerized ship and then by an enclave of empathic aliens. Tiptree always has important things to say about humankind, even when he says it frivolously or obscurely, and he is worth listening to.

The remaining half dozen stories made their impression, whatever it was, strongly enough the first time that I felt no compelling need to reread them in order to competently comment on them.

Two of them, Robert Silverberg's "When We Went To See The End of The World" and the posthumous Pohl/Kornbluth story "The Meeting", made the Hugo ballot, though I think neither deserved it. The Silverberg is a slick, superficial thing about a jaded set of future partygoers each of whom sees something different on a time trip to the end of the world. The satire and cynicism are obvious and overdone, and I think it falls flat. Bryant did it better.

"The Meeting" is a different kettle of fish. It's written unobtrusively well, is very human and realistic, has an important point it doesn't hammer in, and the reader-teasing ending is perfect. Yet... it is so barely sf, with an ever-so-slightly-speculative element, that for all its excellence I cannot view it as anything more than the sort of (good) story you might find in COSMOPOLITAN or somewhere. I hate to think it made the ballot on the Pohl/Kornbluth name, but I wouldn't have nominated it for any other reason. It reads more like an outsider's sf story than The Real Thing. I have to admit this is a terrible way to judge a story, but I can't help myself.

And out of all the excellent fiction in AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, the only one Carr chose to reprint was Ben Bova's "Zero Gee." Now this is a damn fine story, no mistake: clearly and straightforwardly written, strong on the technical aspects as you'd expect, but also a helluva good people story. But I cannot honestly see either Bova or this story as particularly forward-looking or important to the genre; and to ignore the ADV-fiction that was, is, I think, a mistake on Carr's part. Bova wrote a good story, but hardly among the year's best.

Yet in some ways, Bill Rotsler's "Patron of the Arts" is quite similar; yet I have no qualms either about its selection or its Hugo nomination. It is, like Bova's, not in the least experimental, but 36

written in basic English prose, and its message is an old one. I think one reason it impressed me so is that Rotsler is one of the best writers going at basing his stories on strong, genuine human emotion, whatever its faults, a Rotsler story will always move you. Too, he has created a believable future world, a fascinating future art form, and a triangle -- artist, patron and patron's wife -- who act and react and interact as real people. And he has a lot to say about both art and people which has universal application. This is the VERTEX revised version, which I prefer to the original version in UNIVERSE 2, but the difference is small. In any case, here is a moving, fully-integrated story with something to say, and that's really all one can ask.

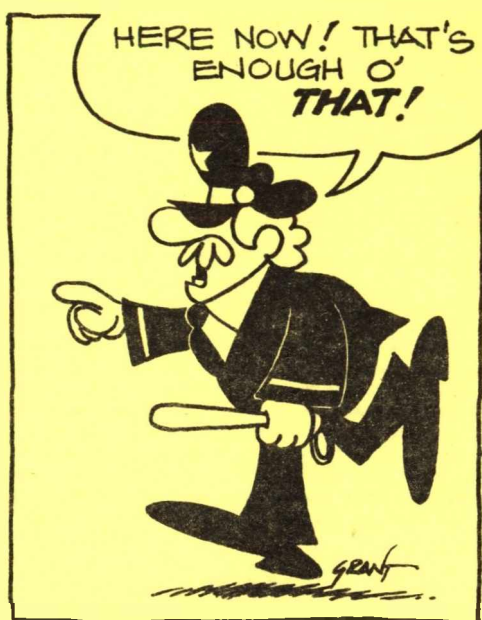
With a large book to work with, Carr was happily able to reprint two really long stories, both Hugo nominees in this year's tough novella category. Joe Haldeman's "Hero" will remind most people of STARSHIP TROOPERS; here is the same expert detail of a future infantry by a man who knows the military, utterly convincing in its thoroughness. But there are differences, particularly because Haldeman finds a useful way to deal with sex (raising a ruckus among ANALOG readers), unusual in this type of story, and the message of "Hero" is the opposite of Heinlein's. Haldeman is strongly opposed to war, and he implicitly makes this clear throughout, so that his last-page diatribe seems just a bit overdoing it. But this small flaw hardly mars a truly excellent story.

Finally there is the best story in the book, and one of the best ever written; as Carr notes, it's an instant classic, one of three such novellas (LeGuin's and Pohl's Hugo nominees being the others) to appear this year: Gene Wolfe's "The Fifth Head of Cerberus." The exotic flavor of the narrative is not Gothic, as Carr seems to think, but the latest and clearest manifestations of Wolfe's debt to Proust. This story is a "Remembrance of Things Past," and a knowledgeable reader will immediately feel an affinity between the openings of it and Proust's masterpiece.

Thinking back on the story, I find that there is an awful lot in it: enough ideas and world-building for a very long novel. Yet the story is only 70 pages long, and furthermore manages to move slowly and leisurely. It is the most brilliant recent example of the society revealed from the inside: the reader gets no clue as he begins, but gradually the world unfolds in front of him, detail by convincing detail, until he has before him a richly exotic culture on a far planet with its own mysteries and legends. It is a Bildungsroman, as well, a growing-up story, about a sensitively-evoked young man. On all counts it is a gorgeously enriching reading experience, and is worth the book's price if you've missed it.

As I found last year, Terry Carr's taste and mine only intersect somewhat. I prefer stories that stretch the capability of the genre, especially stylistically; he prefers (too much, I think) the solid nonsense of story with no pretensions. (He also likes satire more than I do.) If you examine all the stories he chose, you will find they emphasize people first, ideas and/or worldbuilding second, and style last or not at all. They are all "safe" stories, solid fare, that any genre needs to survive, but hardly the kind of thing that will revitalize sf like it needs.

But by any sane judgement, one cannot complain: there is an awful lot of excellent and thought-provoking reading in these 370 pages. Carr chose some stories I wouldn't have, and left out some others I would have preferred to see, but on the whole this is a rich and trustworthy overview of the sf genre's year.

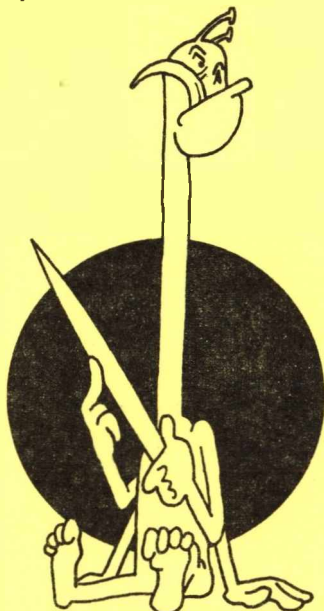


UFO-1: THE FLESH STEALERS ++ reviewer: Richard Wadholm

You know, I'm really glad that they've started putting these books out. Why? sez you. Oh Mighty Wad of the infamously good taste, how can you like such obvious, silly pulp? Wull, I don't. I don't like the book, either. And that's the thing. You see, Mike's got this thing -- this idiocyncrasy -- about reviewing television shows. He says that if people don't have anything to lose -- like money -- for watching, then what difference does it make to review it, right? So now, I can kill two turkeys with one stone. I can get this book -- see? And not only that, but I can give this truly awful tv show its just desserts. So there, Yuh ol' Mike Glyer you.

Last fall, this tv show came on the air, see? And it was about the Earth being attacked, right? And everybody...me anyway... thought "Aw, come on. That's so old, there's got to be more to it than that." Well, as we all now know, there wasn't. As a matter of fact, there was a lot less to it than that. It was all very earnest and very tragic in a liberalistic, British way, and very claustrophobic and very, very dull. So take the low quality of that tv show, and play it up in a tv book series, probably the worst way to waste typewriter ribbon that I know of, and what have you got? UFO-1: THE FLESH STEALERS. It is the kind of book that gives an amateur writer a nice glowing feeling to read. I mean, I start to feel like I'm one of the truly baddest writers of our time, and then I look at this and I realize that I'm not. This is the most poorly-written book I've ever read. Jack Harness, Tom Digby, Lee Gold, are you listening? This book has been published. And nothing you ever wrote is this bad. All you need is an angle and a contract and you can rip yourself off an easy 2000 dollars.

It is a ghastly, silly, overwritten piece. It's based on a segment of the tv show about Colonel Foster being accused of treachery against SHADO. Pasted over different parts of this is another story that lets them bring in their space battles and the little dirt clods of detail behind all the interesting...ehh...personalities and details of the show. And the way this guy does it. Subtlety is not in his vocabulary. He's going along on one page, doing his traitor number, and then he squeezes, by the barest of excuses, into doing up the personality of Foster or Freeman or Ellis. He somehow manages to explain them without illuminating them. He makes Lieutenant Ellis a cold, ravishingly foxy slave to women's lib and male chauvinism. (The Snow Queen, I believe he calls her.) He makes her out to be as nasty in private ways as Straker is in public ways; trying to make it in a man's world. What could be more ambitious, Puritan-ethicky and righteous, right? Even at this he has no subtlety. When he tries, it's laughable. Yes, Lieutenant Ellis is the one person on that program that appeals to me. But not as some cold, ambitious beauty with the mind and soul of a stick-up-the-ass computer constantly and annoyingly called "Gay". She's not cold, she's bored, as we all are. She punches in at nine, saves the world a few times, and punches out to go home. The perfect, disinterested, ultra-modern warrior. The only hero in that whole cast of HEEEROOES that could actually live in 1981. Her characterization here annoys me more than the others because she's the only one on that plane with any kind of potential, but all the characters are handled equally badly.



Schwarz 78.

Straker is, as always, inexcusably strident, graceless and loud. Here he is excused -- even deified in a good WASPish American way. Foster is still the flashy playboy of outer space, with nothing in him to indicate that he has a thought about anything besides duty to honor, country and manliness. Everyone is a cardboard statue with reams of awkward explanation that passes for characterization. The narration is in third person, yet he goes off at awkward lengths to speak in a 39 second or first person mode. The plot isn't even worth talking about.

It's so broken up and useless, it is irrelevant to the book. The book itself is irrelevant to the book. It's one big strung out advertisement for a bad program. And it's even worse than the subject. If you are a reader of science fiction, do yourself a favor and pass this up. If you're an unpublished author, do buy it. It'll cheer you up when you see what the real amateurs are getting away with today.

Zelazny

TO DIE IN ITALBAR by Roger Zelazny
Doubleday 1973, \$4.95 182pp. (Book Club) + + reviewer: Stan Burns

Well Sports Fans, Zack the Hack has struck again!

At this point many people are expecting me to go into my "Zelazny has sold out and become a hack" spiel. Well believe me, I'm sorely tempted. But this novel has some dialog that is too good, some writing that reaches his old level. Just enough to point out the obvious flaws, to enlarge them, to make me want to scream "Goddammit! Why wasn't the rest of the novel as good as this part!" Now I can take a bad novel, 'cause I'll toss it after reading awhile and go on to something I hope will be better. And once in a great while I'll find something that is. That makes the whole vain effort and waste of time worthwhile. But there is nothing more annoying to me than the "This could have been really great if he'd..." type novel. And this novel sure as hell falls into that category!

How many of you out there have read ISLE OF THE DEAD? Ah, come on now, raise your hands. Don't be bashful! "Why is he asking such a question?" you ask. Well, aside from the fact that it was his last decent novel, ITALBAR is sort of a sequel. (Sort of? Well, it's like this ...) You remember Francis Sandow, worldmaker and sometime killer of Gods and Demons? Well he's a character in this novel. Of course he isn't introduced til the novel is half-finished. And not again 'til the very end. And most of his scenes take place off stage. The characters form a discussion group and talk about what he is doing. God I hate that kind of ripoff hack writing, and I don't feel friendly toward those who do it. It's this type of "here's two hundred pages, gimme my two thou" writing that exploits the reader to line author's pocket, never mind he only first drafted it in a month and quality in SF, you've got to be kidding I've got a mortgage payment due...

I enjoy reading sf, really. But I'm getting sick and tired of being taken for a sucker by those who turn out trash to run a fast buck. Writers like that seem to feel that a Hugo or Nebula is some sort of gift to let them make money at the expense of other writers and readers by doing a hack job, selling it on their name or credits alone, and generally lowering the level of SF. And when you compare their most recent novels to what they wrote before, you know that what they are producing is trash. ITALBAR in no way matches LORD OF LIGHT. But what's the use. Those who agree with me know what I'm talking about, and the Zelazny freaks are gathering together to sabotage my typer...

Let's take a look at what he does wrong. (I can't resist saying "what doesn't he!") The book doesn't have a point of view. Or point of attack. Or whatever. It has zillions of characters running around like chickens with their heads cut off. And none of them do anything. Except "off stage" -- which has got to be the surest mark of hack writing I can think of. The same sort of effect can be imagined if you cut out the chase scene or the final gunfight or whatever from a movie. It doesn't go anywhere; it just sits there and stagnates.

I suppose the confrontation can be said to be between good and evil (what else do you ever find in a SF novel? And how many of you out there have met a truly evil person, or a truly good one?) But the conclusion, the fight, between good and evil is carried out off stage (left?) and the minor characters (who have since become the only major ones) stand around and ask each other "what's happening, baby?"

Add to this mishmash the fact that he has introduced several characters he dumps after using them to fill up space, and never does anything but refer to again. My Ghod, why bother to establish them in the first place???

But so as not to give you the impression that the book is a total waste, it does have one saving grace. The style. It is crisp, smooth, easily flowing, the only good thing in the book, and at points it is deeply moving and involving. And it only points out the flaws previously mentioned even more, for it gives the promise of what the book could have been if Zelazny had the patience to put a little more thought and effort into it.

Silverberg

NEW DIMENSIONS II, edited by Robert Silverberg
Doubleday, \$5.95 229pp. + + reviewer: Donald Keller

The first volume of NEW DIMENSIONS, published in 1971, gathered a sizeable handful of award nominations, and a surprising percentage were chosen for best-of-the-year anthologies. And one or two of the book's best stories were ignored. It was perhaps the most auspicious debut of any anthology series.

So what has Silverberg done for an encore? The second volume, while lacking the individual brilliance of its predecessor, is better in overall average quality. And though, as Silverberg notes, the table of contents is weighted towards the newer writers, there is, unlike most original anthologies, a certain amount of attention paid to the older writers.

For example, there is a new story here by Isaac Asimov, and it is probably the best short story he has written in several years. "Take a Match is a straight sf puzzle story, quite similar to those he wrote for years, with bright characterization, clean, uncluttered writing, future science as impeccably believable as the present science, and a touch of the Asimov humor that many times does not come through in his fiction. After wrestling with too many vague and frustrating avant-garde stories, it is sometimes a pleasure to read a well-done straightforward honest-to-God science fiction story.

Miriam Allen de Ford has also been writing a long time, and she hasn't lost any of her writing ability. "Lazarus II" is a vignette somewhat similar to DANGEROUS VISIONS' "The Malley System", making the reader wonder who is worse, the brutal murderer, or the men who calmly experiment on him afterwards. It raises doubts about technological advance and its effect on human rights.

The rest of the book is given over to the newer writers. There are two stories here by Barry Malzberg, for which Silverberg rightly feels no need to apologize. "Out from Ganymede", as the title suggests, is another of his astronaut stories, and like some of the others the reader wonders what is actually happening and what is being imagined by the astronaut. Malzberg seems quite concerned about the effect of outer space upon the human psyche, and is apparently intent upon exploring



Silverberg provides a convenient handle for Malzberg's "The Men Inside" by calling it FANTASTIC VOYAGE as written by Dostoyevsky. It is a diary by a Messenger, a member of a future profession that consists of being shrunk to microscopic size and crawling through capillaries to destroy cancer. The story meanders here and there, attacking the main questions very obliquely, never quite coming to grips with them. This fits right in with Malzberg's intention, because it creates in the reader the same frustration and despair the protagonist feels. Though I have to admit that Malzberg is a skillful and polished writer, I have to say that I just don't like him -- his dark-cramped vision bothers me excessively.

It has been pointed out to me that Joanna Russ is one of the most versatile writers we have, because she never writes two stories in the same style. "Nobody's Home" is no exception. Here we have a sophisticated future society, complete with telepprtation and multiple marriage groups, where the average intelligence is around today's genius level. It is told from the inside in a playful and sophisticated style, so that the reader only gradually gains his bearings. The story concerns a girl of average intelligence and her place and effect in this society. The whole works extremely well.

Happily, there are stories herein by two of our most idiosyncratic writers, James Tiptree, Jr., and R. A. Lafferty. The latter's "Eurema's Dam" is a trifle less wild than some of his, telling the story of the last klutz, and how this forced him to be a mechanical genius. It's a strange idea, and Lafferty develops it in his typical strange fashion. Nobody has ideas anything like Lafferty's.

As the title suggests, Tiptree's "Filomena & Greg & Rikki-Tikki & Barlow & The Alien" is absolutely crazy. It concerns the crew in the title bombing around in Washington, DC, doing insane things. The story is hysterically funny, especially the glimpses of the galactic civilization's attitude toward the backward planet Earth, though it manages to turn sad and serious at the end without ruining the mood. This is one of Tiptree's more successful tales; in most of them, all the bright bits manage not to cohere into any significant pattern -- here they do.

The remaining four stories are written by four of the finest of the newer writers of the seventies. Ed Bryant, who generally writes extremely strange avant-garde pieces, writes in "No. 2 Plain Tank" a mostly straightforward story of pro-ecology sabotage which says a lot in a few short pages. It's one of his better stories.

Gordon Eklund's "White Summer In Memphis" bears a resemblance to his earlier "Home Again, Home Again" in QUARK 3 and comes to the same basic conclusion, but while that story had a playful tone that provided a fine contrast to the violence, this new one is written straight ahead and well. It's the only story in the book that has anything like a real plot, and it is a good one. It develops the twin themes of future racial relations and the dangers of genetically breeding humans and intertwines them well. The only thing is, like with Malzberg, I am not at all sympathetic towards Eklund's writing as a rule, and I really didn't like this all that much.

The one story in the book that I did not see as a success was Geo. Alec Effinger's " $f(x)=(11/15/67)$." A lot of Piglet's stories are ambitious, and he has not got his talent together sufficiently to bring them off. This is one of them: it attempts to draw a parallel between the progress of a love affair and a scientific experiment, and the conclusions just don't seem to lead anywhere. It's as aimless as the experiment it depicts, which is a shame.

The finest story in the book is Gardner Dozois' "King Harvest." This story, on the heels of his brilliant ORBIT 10 story "A Kingdom By the Sea" confirms and fulfills Gardner's promise as the best of the new writers that have come to prominence in the last couple years. "King Harvest" has very little in the way of plot; the only action is an old man wandering about a city deserted because of an ecological catastrophe. The details are every bit as sordid, and even more realistic (at times stomach-turning) than in Malzberg, yet the minute detail and striking imagery full of apt similes of Gardner's writing, at times approaching poetry, leaves the reader not depressed but aesthetically exhilarated.

It seems to me that Gardner's work bears a close resemblance to Sturgeon's. Both excel at turning near nothing situations into marvelous fictions by sheer intensity of writing (Gardner's "A Dream of Noonday" in ORBIT 7 is strikingly similar to Sturgeon's magnificent "The Man Who Lost the Sea"), choosing the exact pertinent details that bring their prose and powerful underlying emotions into their fiction. I feel that all that separates Gardner from a similar stature to Sturgeon's is a larger body of work.

CONTINUED ON PAGE: 48

mike glyer

UP AGAINST THE BOOKCASE!

HARLAN ELLISON A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CHECKLIST.

COMPILED BY LESLIE KAY SWIGART

1000 copies. \$3.00 (+6% sales tax in Calif.) PO BOX 8570, Long Beach CA

They tell a little story about Alexander the Great, how he found the Gordian knot -- impossible to unravel by hand -- so he took out his sword and whacked the knot apart. And they tell how Alexander's grave was visited by Julius Caesar -- who wept over the fact that Alex in his short life had "conquered the world!" and all Caesar had done at the time was rig a few elections.

Harlan Ellison similarly has sliced through the Gordian knot, of popular culture, and this bibliography documents how. And if Ellison is not dead, it still presents Isaac Asimov with a section of Caesarian weeping that says: "Here I stand with a face like a Greek god and with writing ability beyond compare, and with the ability to write hundreds of books on hundreds of subjects, and I create only the slightest of ripples. (I'll kill you if you agree with me.) Harlan, on the other hand, need only turn around and he creates a tidal wave." Reading this checklist you might well decide he created the whole ocean.

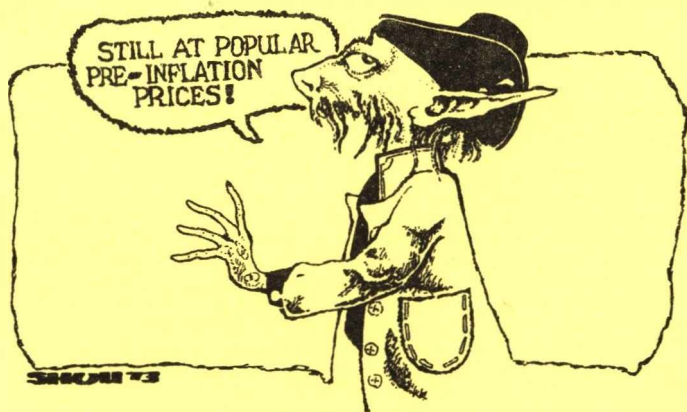
He wrote street gang novels. He wrote Ace Doubles. He wrote comic books. He wrote introductions. He wrote amateur fiction for PSYHOTIC. He wrote Hugo-winning science fiction. He wrote Nebula-winning speculative fiction. He wrote about writing. He wrote about learning about writing. He wrote for money. He wrote for free. He wrote as Cordwainer Bird. He wrote as Harlan Ellison. He wrote tv criticism. He wrote book reviews. He wrote screenplays. He wrote feud material. He wrote "Burke's Law" episodes. He sang. He danced.

And what the hell. He even wrote a short story with a passage imitated above that now forms part of "one of the dozen most reprinted stories in the English language," -- "Repent, Harlequin, Said the Ticktockman." (So shoot me, I couldn't resist.)

Leslie Swigart's Ellison bibliography represents three years adrift in the Ellison Wonderland through books, scripts, fiction, articles and essays, introductions and afterwards, reviews, published letters, interviews with Harlan Ellison, fanzines he edited, titles announced but not produced -- all the portions her final compilation was divided into. It is indexed, numbered, and ordered chronologically. Its thoroughness and easy usability would alone make it worthwhile.

But there is also copious entertainment value in the package. Eighty-nine photos of novel and magazine covers illustrate the checklist of his works. The script section includes two rare photos, one from DEMON WITH A GLASS HAND, another a weird shot of Spock and Kirk with arms around Ellison. There is a pictorial biography of Ellison, 21 photos of him and his environs over the years. (Perhaps it is one of the sacrifices of modern times that none of them is a tintype of the five-year-old author in a sailor suit -- I thought everybody famous had at least one like that.) There are half a dozen Appreciations, by Asimov, Bova, Bryant, Russ, Silverberg and Sutherland. Ellison himself supplies an endpiece. On the front cover, in red yellow and black, is the Dillon illustration for "'Repent, Harlequin,' etc." that ran in CAD, while wrapping up the back, just in case you couldn't tell from the front who this was all about (it has no printing to identify it) is a picture of -- you guessed it!

Now with all these things in its favor, you'd expect in this era of superinflated prices and ultrahype merchandising this item of Ellisoniana would be peddled for eight and ten dollars. Not so. In the kind of irony we can all appreciate, this milestone in the trail of the arch-marketeer costs all of \$3.18 -- suggesting the moral to my fable: get it.



AN EXALTATION OF STARS, edited by Terry Carr
Simon and Schuster (Book Club), 181 pp. + +

Stories of transcendental experience, perhaps, but SF stories to be certain. When you start dropping a theme like that around I think of Indian gurus, or William James, or other of that kind of transcendental baggage. To blend transcendentalism with SF would seem to demand either experimentalism in style, content, or at least different kinds of action.

So what is really in this book?

45 Robert Silverberg plays leadoff with THE FEAST OF ST. DIONYSUS, an

uneven story. It may either be the intent or the shortcoming of Silverberg's prose, but the fact is that his straight action-description and characterization comes alive -- it touches something behind the forehead and gives one visions born of realism; yet the bouts of winedrinking, intoxicated perceptions of cosmic import, religion and spiritualism, all are confusing and unreal. Either the characters accept things too matter-of-factly, or the transcendental events are static, uninteresting, contradictory.

The plot concerns the lone survivor of three Mars-exploring astronauts whose guilt drives him into the desert and into the throes of an orgiastic cult. His experience ostensibly provides him a transcendental revelation, and towards the end all crises are rapidly papered over, our hero and his goodwife walking into the literary sunset. THE FEAST is written episodically; that keeps the story moving but prevents a long build up needed to make the climactic revelation and trip back to Mars emotionally effective. More troublesome, Silverberg kills his major scene stylistically. In the opening, about LA, or Mars, or the architecture of the commune, everything is highly visual. Then when he attempts to be visionary, he discards his good tools. There is a sudden shift from past to present tense, feigned grammatical simplicity (actually it's just broken), with lots of strained metaphors about the sea and God and so forth. There must be a way to straighten this story out, and I'm sort of sorry to see such a good one published with so many problems untouched.

The best in the collection -- and I'll write it only once -- is Zelazny's 'KJWALLL'KJE'K'KOOTHAILL'L'KJ'K. That'll still be freaking out indexers years from now. It's another story of the man who has included himself out of the worldwide data bank, about his free lance investigating assignments. The binding substance is a murder mystery, but it plays second to rich seascapes, speculations on dolphin mentality, and a never-ending parade of characters, for as the character of the op says: "'I had determined, therefore, to amass as much information as I could as quickly as possible. Speed always seems particularly essential when I have no idea what it is that might be growing cold.'"

You might even say that speed and flow of characters pose one of several minor problems of the story's structure. Zelazny has such a skill for rendering characters that you end up knowing as much about a man who lives for only a paragraph as you do about the protagonist. After awhile the storyscape is like one of the two-story high paintings at Forest Lawn -- a mob scene in overwhelming detail. Another problem is that the opening action hook is followed by a flashback of such length and independence as to render the beginning superfluous. Neither of these is crippling, or even too important in an otherwise excellent specimen of speculative fiction, one that patrols the bounds of transcendental experience between telepathy and chemistry, and represents Zelazny artistry near its best.

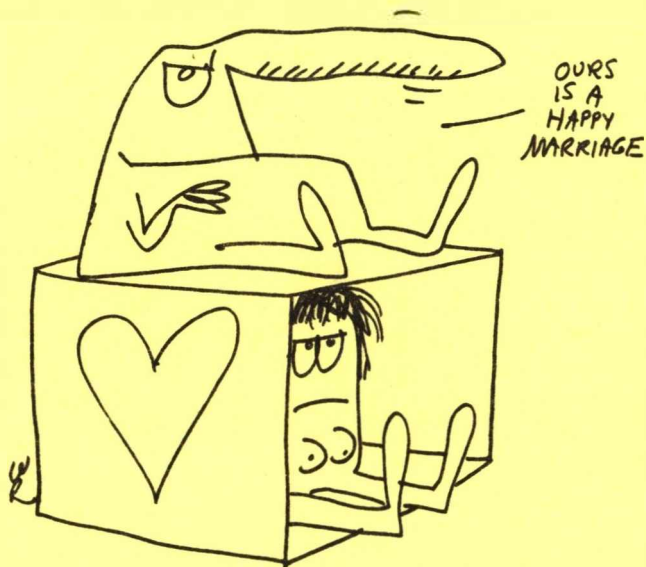
I could have done without MY BROTHER LEOPOLD, Edgar Pangborn's offering in this collection. This sort of story does nothing for me. After you've read BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON and THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER all civilization-after-the-fall and religion's-contradicting-themselves stories seem pretty poor, (except CANTICLES FOR LEIBOWITZ, which is great). Tack onto that train "The Quest for St. Aquin" and half-a-zillion other pseudo-Tigh-Church-in-the-25th-century-Dark-Ages and there's little purpose to writing more of this sub-genre as Pangborn has done. The letdown of seeing this after Silverberg and Zelazny is emotionally the same as reading "Bedsheets are White" in the middle of AGAIN DANGEROUS VISIONS, although Pangborn is a writer and alone this story beats that by leagues.

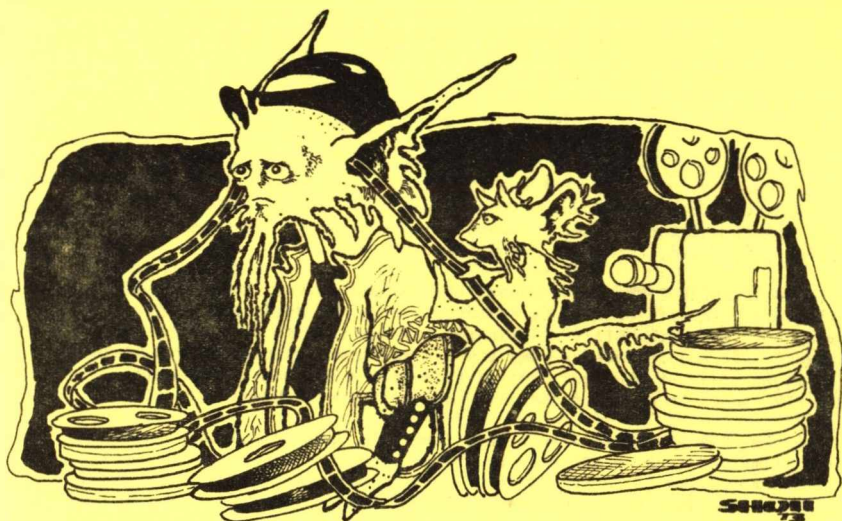
But two out of three ain't bad -- in fact you probably ought to get around to the Zelazny story before Hugo nominations time and see how it stands up to competition.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE:4

On the basis of its first two volumes, then, Silverberg's NEW DIMENSIONS has to be regarded as the finest original anthology series going: more experimental than Carr's UNIVERSE, more representative of the whole field than the defunct QUARK/ or the on-again off-again NEW WORLDS, and more consistent than Knight's ORBIT.

"Like a two-door Ford out of gas, you've got class." -- T. Digby





BILL WARREN

Editor Glycer says this issue is going to be distributed at TORCON, so perhaps some words on this year's Hugo nominees for Dramatic Presentation are in order, as well as some on the Drama Hugo in general. A few years ago there was some talk of eliminating this category from the Hugo ballot altogether. At least once recently there was a vote of No Award, which I think is a mistake of ignorance. Presenting No Award this way seems to be based on a mistaken assumption: that there is a bottom level of quality for the Hugo, that in a given year no film has measured up to a standard of excellence (unspecified and probably unspecifiable), and therefore no award should be given that year. I disagree with this idea because as said above, it is based on ignorance. Fantasy & science fiction are now and have been for some time staple products of the film industry (never more than now, with so many made-for-tv movies being in this category). Every year some country produces a film that is eminently worthy of the Hugo. Unfortunately not all of these get shown in the US (or if at all, not widely); because of the overwhelming North American orientation of the Worldcon, many of these fine films get completely overlooked. Furthermore there are actually worthwhile films shown in the US in "No Award" years, films which don't attract enough Worldcon

THE INCREDIBLE REVIEWING FAN

attendees (or notoriety) to gain a nomination. Possibly some of this overlooking is due to a mistaken belief that "mere" fantasy films are not eligible for a Hugo, that only SF films can qualify. Unless they changed things while I wasn't looking, the Hugo rules specifically allow fantasy films. Lack of awareness of the rules is the only explanation I can think of for the lack of nomination of *THE NIGHT STALKER*, Richard Matheson's Las Vegas vampire movie, which was received with gratifying enthusiasm when I showed it at LACon. Comments?

Of the currently nominated films. This seems to be the Year of Kurt Vonnegut Jr. *BETWEEN TIME AND TIMBUKTU* is sort of a salad of ideas and characters from many Vonnegut novels and short stories, but the script wasn't written by him. My memory of it is hazy, but I recall it as being disjointed, thin, but funny & entertaining.'

SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE is an exceptionally good movie. Although the SF elements were soft-pedaled by director George Roy Hill, in the film seeming much more like Billy Pilgrim's delusions than in the novel, Vonnegut's wit and characters come through relatively untouched. I admit to a strong bias for Vonnegut, but of this year's nominees, *SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE* seems to me to be the film most worthy of a Hugo.

However, *THE PEOPLE* is also a very fine film, one of the best made-for-tv films yet (and on ABC they are often good). Francis Ford Coppola, the producer, seems to be incapable of working on a bad film. He is supposedly fond of fantasy & science fiction, and will, hopefully, produce more in the future. Director John Korty's gentle & faithful treatment of Zenna Henderson's pastorals was smooth and affectionate. I suspect this film will become a "cult" favorite in years to come, as it has the small, quiet but powerful feel that many "personal discoveries" do. ABC-TV seems anxious to cooperate with cons so this movie will probably continue to be shown at Worldcons & regionals.

I do not like *SILENT RUNNING*. Furthermore I do not think it is a good film. (I'm not being redundant. Too many people think that if they don't like something, it's bad, rather than the other way around.) The special effects vary erratically from fair to excellent, the acting likewise. The story was based on such an unbelievable premise that I could not accept it at any level. The technology seemed to be a copy of that in 2001 without that film's aura of reality. Unfortunately I think this simple-minded "liberal" (in the worst sense) film will probably win the Hugo. Can't puppets feel their strings being pulled?

Of the current crop of films, the best is, as I had expected, *THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE*. Director John Hough somewhat junks up Richard Matheson's well-structured screenplay, using too many pointless close-ups and allowing performanxes in several styles. But the story is powerful, and builds to a sensational (if inexplicable) climax. Performances are generally good, especially hammy but hypnotic Roddy McDowall. He is perfectly cast as a sensitive, emotionally-shattered physical medium, in contrast to smugly confident Pamela Franklin, also excellent as a mental medium. They have been hired to investigate a haunted house with scientist Clive Revill & his wife Gayle Hunnicutt. Two die before the ghost (Michael Gough) is laid to rest. Highly recommended as an entertaining thriller. This was produced by James H. Nicholson, his only film after severing relations with AIP, which he helped found; *HELL HOUSE* was not finished when Nicholson died, but remains a tribute to the man who apparently gave AIP films what quality they had. Richard Matheson seems to write good thrillers with enviable regularity; his screenplay of *DRACULA* is now being filmed by Dan Curtis with Jack Palance in the lead. (Note: Pamela Franklin should have known better than to be involved with haunted houses: her first role was as the angelic Flora in the best ghost movie ever made, *THE INNOCENTS*.)

The Marvelous McDowall is also in THE BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES, the latest, supposedly last, and almost the least of the Apes films. The plot involves the intelligent apes & their human allies battling a bunch of bored mutants. It is well-photographed and moderately entertaining, but the script lets down the fine actors. A real if clouded attempt is made to dodge the "historical" events of the first two Apes films (the second ended with the world being destroyed), but this seems to have been unclear to most viewers. And the film is raking in money at such a rate that I doubt it will be the last, especially since the man who produced all 5 and was determined to make no more, Arthur P. Jacobs, died recently. To be honest, I hope there is another Apes movie -- the series has maintained a higher level than any other film series I've encountered.

Another current sequel is SCREAM BLACULA SCREAM. In this, Blacula (again played by the magnificent William Marshall) is revived by voodoo, much to his regret. The plot you might expect ensues. What you might not expect is that this film is not only better than BLACULA, but is a very good little horror movie (granting that it is a hopeless endeavor in the first place). Most of the quality is due to director Bob Kelljan, who also directed both Count Yorga films (very well, too). SCREAM is, by the way, very funny -- deliberately. I didn't spot any accidental laughs.

SSSSSS has 2.5 things going for it -- Strother Martin (1) and Heather Menzies (2). They play cliched parts, but so very very well, superbly in fact, that I wasn't aware that the roles were so cliché until the film was almost over. He is a mad scientist and she is his bookworm daughter, but they are fully-realized characters; what a waste of talent. The .5 is the makeup, for design only. The characters really do look ophidian, but they are the color of grapefruit and this almost ruins the effect. For the record, the plot is about a scientist who wants to combat pollution by turning everyone on earth into King Cobras.

THE BOY WHO CRIED WEREWOLF has good makeup; THE NEPTUNE FACTOR -- AN UNDERSEA ODYSSEY has a good cast and good sets. Both, otherwise, stink.

And now a brief word about a totally non-fantastic film, AMERICAN GRAFFITI, editor Glycer permitting. (It has a slight connection to SF -- Harlan Ellison reportedly provided the title.) It was produced by Francis Ford Coppola and directed and co-written by George Lucas, who did the same for THX-1138 (a license plate in the film is THX 138). This is an extremely good movie, the best I've seen this year; I will be surprised if I see a better one later. It takes place in Modesto during one night in 1962, and is emphatically not a LAST PICTURE SHOW -- SUMMER OF '42 nostalgia-trip movie. Please see it; you will like it.

If you like this column, by the way, tell Editor Glycer. Please. Thank you, Michael Carlson.

Norm Hochberg: When you are going 50 or 70 mph, you aren't going 60mph. When a film is 1.4, it is not 1.3 or 1.5 or 1.6. I know I'm being somewhat arbitrary, but when you see as many as 500 movies a year (which I have), a shorthand form of judgements becomes necessary as an aid to memory, if nothing else. Of course this rating system is subjective; damn few things in films, even on a technical level, can be judged objectively. I try where I can, but the ratings are subjective. (Hey, HARRY WARNER - - did you see THE GRISSOM GANG? Did you like it?)

ROBERT BLOCH 2111 Sunset Crest Drive, Los Angeles CA 90046 (8/1/73)

PREHENSILE 9 is the best yet -- and arrives at an opportune time. I'm thinking particularly of Stan Burn's review of TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE. The book itself reached me yesterday morning; yesterday afternoon I got a phone call from Robert A. Heinlein. During the course of our conversation I told him I was looking forward to reading the novel and asked how it had done. He said that the professional reviewers were largely favorable and the fan-press reviewers largely unfavorable. So today here comes Staniel with a review that is both! I must call this to RAH's attention: and it incites me to get on with my own reading of the opus.

Your editorializing was another high point of the issue for me -- also the news that Harlan Ellison gets 200 letters from sex-starved females a week. I get one letter, every six months, from an elderly lesbian who has had her uterus removed. Well, that's life, I guess.

GENE WOLFE P.O. BOX 69, Barrington IL 60010 (8/9/73)

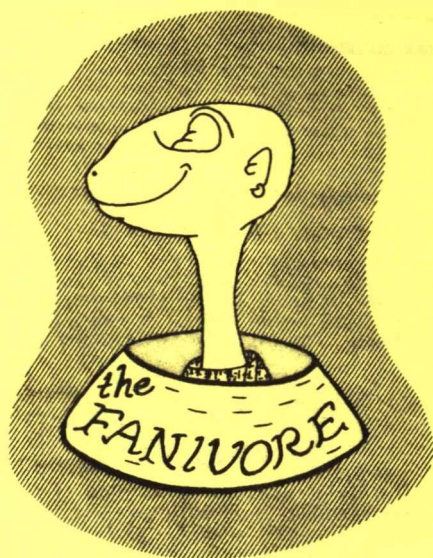
Do I get this all the time? If so, it's been a long while since the last one -- I don't remember it. I think you are sending me every third or fourth. Have to admit I found this one rather boring -- most of the issue was pretty hard to get through -- I kept finding that I was skipping. And by the by it doesn't remind me of MT. ((Bless you, sir.)) (You know where you said, "you may fall asleep in the middle of this editorial?" Well I darn near did.)

I enjoyed the black hole awards more than anything else -- I read all the way to the end of that, though it was pretty tough going in spots. I'm somewhat down on cons myself right now so maybe that helped. But you could not seem to make up your mind about whether you wanted to be funny or serious, and it showed. ((Can't help it. This really happened -- I didn't even run it.)) Anyway you seem to be making the basic mistake of thinking fandom is about fandom in the same way that baseball is about baseball. ((Of course -- baseball is religion.)) Now I confess I would far rather sit and talk with a fanfan than with a comics fan (yuk!) or a movies fan (yuuuuk!) ((want to alienate the ST fans while you're at it or shall we save them for next issue?)), But fanfans are stuffing their ears with mashed potato all the same.

RICK SNEARY 2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate CA 90280 (8/14/73)

I was amused by your humorous view of the serious charges being made against the LACon committee. There is a long tradition in Fandom, that some of the dirtiest feuds have been plowed under, by use of humor. The more a fan gets involved in a feud, the more likely he is to become self-righteous and pompous, and the easier to be pricked with the pin of a sharp satire. Your casting it as a movie, alas, leads me to think of other contemporary comparisons, and Watergate came slipperily to mind. I love making lists, so, supposing myself for the moment on the side of those that seas wrong doing, I came up with a cast, something like this -- As The President, of course Bruce Pelz, and Crayne as Agnew. Then as

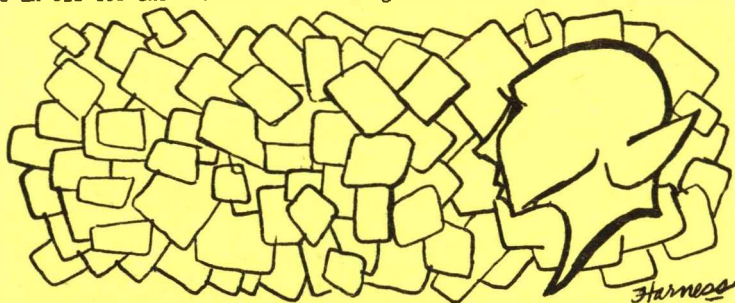
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John Erlichman, would be Milt Stevens. John Dean would be Craig Miller; H.R. Haldeman would be Fred Patten; John Mitchell as Dan Alderson; R. Ziegler as Elayne Frances; F. LaRue as Drew Sanders; C. MacGregor as Jerry Pournelle; M. Stans as Lois Newman; H. Sloan as Len Moffett; R. Chapin as George Scithers; C. Colson for the Trimble -- there are many more names of each to fill, but that is all I could find reasonable matches for -- after all, who in Watergate would be like Bill Warren, and no one on the concom is as colorful as E.H. Hunt.

I have already expressed my views on the charges against the LACon ((ORGANLEGGERS 2)) but there are honest arguments on both sides of the question of Conventions being too large; charging too much, and trying to appeal to too many types of people. There is a 30 two sides to the question of whether or not Conventions should pay speakers fees to Pros, who are asked to be on the programs. But: the inference of remarks reportedly by Harlan Ellison would seem to be that he thinks WorldCons are rich and commercial enough to pay Pro Writers for a few hours time in talking, but not rich and commercial enough to justify the Committee to take more than bare expenses, for working much of their spare time for two years. --(I know that it might be argued Authors spend time in travel but is there anyone who sells more than two stories a year that doesn't take convention expenses off his Income Tax as a business expense?) My personal feeling is that all recent WorldCons (in the US) have been too large, and resultingly too expensive. Concoms have become overly interested in body count, in trying to surpass those that have gone before. No one seems to have given any thought to why they do it, but each year they try to advertise more widely and add things that will interest more types of people. The desire to win, and then be successful, seems to have blurred the idea of what a Con is for, and what the regular members want. Or, it may be that I am an old grouch, who would like to attend fairly inexpensive Cons, of less than a thousand people, that are not overprogrammed with films and seminars, so that I can have a chance to meet the old friends (that are the only reason for my attending Cons now) and have the time to have a drink or a meal with them, and some real conversation. The older I get, the more elitist I become.

My, my -- Mike Glicksohn is quite knowledgeable about LASFS and the people in it and the cons they put on and/or plan, isn't he? I do wonder how it slipped his attention that Bruce Pelz is not connected with the LA bid for the '75 worldcon -- slight inattention to detail.



I'll give Glicksohn the benefit of the doubt, and assume he means that the West Coast will have Westercon every year -- not that it's a monopoly of Pelz & Crew. So far it's almost always been in California -- under the rotation plan, so far in the Bay Area in the Northern region and LA or Santa Barbara in the southern region. However, it can be as far west as the Hawaiian Islands go; as far north as North America goes; as far south as the Guatemalan border; as far east as the western borders of the Dakotas.

That bit about Pelz being maybe more interested in possible loss of income tempts me to ask how much Glicksohn got while he was still on the Torconcon. However, that would be an impolite query. Besides which, he could easily have been paid off in Hugo votes.

Occurs to me that under the principles Glicksohn advocated, LAConcon would've been perfectly within their rights to do the following: Announce a couple months before the con that the two-year voting plan had never been properly adopted and was therefore invalid. Ditto the mail ballot. Ditto the rotation plan. Therefore the '73 Worldcon would have to be chosen by on-the-spot voting at LACon; with competition from anywhere in North America. A further ruling that sites outside the US would need 3/4 vote to be considered, and an announcement that LA was bidding for '73 -- and there you are.

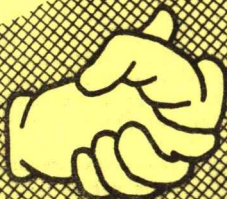
Ah, well -- time to leave this discussion. Next issue we can all talk about whatever has gone wrong at TORCON.

Lunacon used to be a decent, small, one-day sercon convention, with homemade muffins provided to all attendees. Then it expanded to a couple days, the Eastercon was instituted running as a partycon during the off-hours, and it was a nice larger con. I left NYC end of '68; was crogged when the '69 Lunacon was reported having had 300 attendees. Was it '70 that conreports said happily that now local fans were taking rooms in the conhotel instead of commuting, and it had become "a real con"? Perhaps Lou Stathis and I should form the Committee for the Promotion of Unreal Cons. And maybe NY fandom should consider the relative merits of homemade muffins and Harlan Ellison -- I know which I would rather pay for.

A bit of fanhistory for Michael Shoemaker: seems that, when the second apa in fandom was founded, it was seen as an attempt to wreck FAPA. (For all I know, the founders of VAPA did hope to win a battle to the death.) FAPA has proven nicely that it can survive having other apas around. Later -- within my time in fandom -- there were members of the CULT who thought there was something horribly wrong with having TAPS as a competing rotating APA. Both TAPS and the CULT have survived. Now people are saying that having a NASFiC would hurt the WorldCon....

"...the salary he s making from it." I strongly doubt that Charlie Brown gets a salary from LOCUS, it simply isn't set up that way. He might be making a profit, which is somewhat different in a number of ways (not being a fixed amount, to beging with.) However, I have my doubts about that -- which is why I haven't gone into competition with LOCUS. Anyone who believed that LOCUS is making large amounts of money, could use such profits himself, and has not started his very own sercon "newspaper of the science fiction field" is some kind of fool.

Shake hands
and come out
writing!



DAVID STEVER 610 Worcester Road Apt. 433A, Framingham MA 01701

Oh wow, Cap'n Ohwow! You should thank your lucky stars that I'm on your mailing list now, because I can shed some light on the subject of the Monogon Papers. I got my files, perhaps volumes two and three?, from Terry McCutchen and Russel Seitz (the former head of weapons development for the Biafran government). From Terry, I read the CIA file on the Heavy Water Balloon. This membrane, as detailed, would be a sausage-shaped device of mammoth proportions, at least larger than most fusion devices. It measures some 45 centimeters in length, and some 18 centimeters in diameter, and is covered with a thin, rubberoid skin. ((Ho ho ho!)) It bears resemblance to that children's toy, the water balloon, but there the resemblance ends. The Heavy Water Balloon (HWB), is a fusion device designed to be smuggled into enemy camps, to be exploded in the simple action of dropping it on or near an enemy installation, by a native in CIA employ.

After I showed interest in the device, Mr. Seitz smuggled two models of it into via a MIT student in the employ of the CIA. The agent and I tested the main body of the device, without the "trigger" while at the Lexicon, Volume II, a small convention held outside of Worcester, Massachusetts. I can tell you, Mike, the effects were absolutely devastating! The device would be dropped from a height of about 10 feet, so we stationed ourselves in a second story window, and waited for a likely person, who would simulate the enemy target. We found none, but we did end up testing the effective radius of destruction of the device, minus the trigger, as I've said. The HWB had a death radius of some thirty feet, and a so-called "splash radius" of some sixty feet. Believe me, I can believe your shock upon finding out about the IBST, but fans must find out all these things that the government is trying to hide from us.

LA can blow thousands (about double the cost of Noreascon's Program book) in getting an expensive printer, but that's just inexperienced in getting bids. But to throw away the rules /as Millard has/ so blatantly is unforgivable. ((The Noreascon Program Book was about 30 pages shorter than LACon's. Start with that and figure out the rest for yourself.))

I would like to take this opportunity to announce the results of the test taken on the brown ring around Richard Wadholm's neck. It is not a high water mark, no indeed. That is how far up his head was stuck when he wrote about science fiction series. Since he doesn't know the difference between quality sf, like Anderson, Delany and Silverberg, and the stuff in the porcelain convenience, his library must have been taken away by the Public Health Department a long time ago. Only the series or recurring character type of fiction allows for the full development of any given universe. After all, why abandon a universe after writing just one story in it? Speaking about Anderson, how can anything as large as his Future History be knocked? ((I didn't realize largeness was necessarily a virtue... I'll keep that in mind.)) It's close to three million words and still growing, you can read how the characters of Flandry or Falkayn evolve as they age, and believe me, Wadholm, Anderson compared to the author of that PROBE 6 crap is like comparing Nestle's Crunch to the stuff in your bathroom bowl. ((Now all you bacteriologists don't write me all at once -- I'll be inundated with comparisons that will startle Mr. Stever to no end.))

((As to the future history of Anderson, the main sequence does have a few things one need not necessarily be ecstatic over. The anthropomorphism of all the aliens, the patronization of minorities -- and for all you liberationists -- the utter complacent chauvinism of Flandry and Falkayn and the social assumption of a continued sexist society 7 centuries hence. These are not exactly the products of brilliant innovation, more the continuation of decades old pulp fiction traditions. I happen to like that sort of thing, as you do, but then everybody already knows what a Conservative Chauvinist Creep I am. They won't even believe I voted for Bradley. That's nothing. I can hardly believe I voted for Bradley-- but then I like to be surprised. With Yorty there'd just be 4 more years of the same. that ain't enough, Sam. 'Course it was a rough contest in my mind -- with Sam out of office you don't get to hear all the dj's on LA radio doing Mayor Sam imitations.))

But on the other hand, when Wadholm writes about rock, he knows a bit more. While I like Hawkwind, I also rave about Tangerine Dream's Electronic Meditation. Migod, what a crescendo.

Rumor has it that at the Nebula Banquet in New York, Ben Bova had a pizza delivered to the banquet for himself and his wife. The reaction to the event is unknown. The only comment I have about the Ranquet transcript is that it isn't as incomprehensible as a MITSFS meeting. Too bad, better luck next time.

No one is either all right or all wrong, or all one thing or all another, but Lou Stathis comes as close to being totally obnoxious as anyone I've met or seen in print since David Gerrold (?????), but the one thing that does prevent him from being totally up his ass is his appraisal of THE MAN WHO FOLDED HIMSELF. That book is totally David Gerrold, just as TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE is totally Heinlein... ((You have got to be kidding about both Stathis and Gerrold. Stathis' written medium is the insult -- he just exaggerates, he doesn't intend to incite anything, simply communicate in a detached manner. As to Gerrold being obnoxious, you ask Ted White who's obnoxious and Gerrold ain't

going to be in the top ten on his list. Or anybody else's. but number one on the TW Top Ten may well be a familiar name.))

...As the holder of the "George Clayton Johnson Memorial Space War Medal", I hereby challenge anyone to a series of three games each for the world championship. On the final Monday night at the con, I managed to rack up a game high score of 110 alien mothers, whereas the death eaters were unable to scorch my screens once. NESFA members are trying to get a computer terminal up to Toronto so we can play a lunar landing progrr; the perfect landing is to land next to the only McDonald's on the moon, so that the man will order a Big Mac and two cheeseburgers to go, rather than just plant a flag. I've played it about six times so far, and all I've managed to do is destrou the McDonald's, an event that I was chastised for by the program.

NORM HOCHBERG 89-07 209th St., Queens Village NY 11427 (8/1/73)

Ah yes - PRE 9, the fanzine with the most useless ToC page around. Tell me a secret, Mike, do you put out PRE after 1 am (and before 5 am) or do you use downs before a typing session? ((Which one of those shall I answer first?)) It's nice of you to give us page numbers in your art credits and ToC, but not on the issue's pages themselves. It's like getting an ignition without getting the car.

Overall, PRE 9 looks like it should be a nice meaty issue from its thoughtful front cover to its ink stained back. And I did enjoy it, Mike; really -- I did. I just didn't really enjoy it.

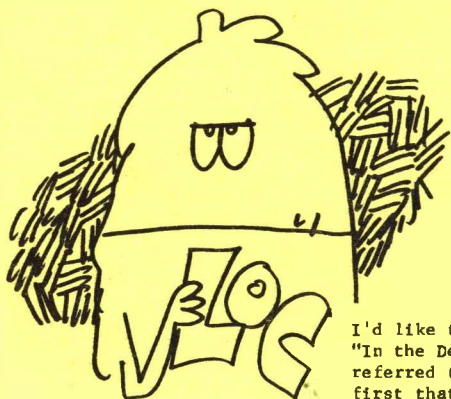
The big reason is your writing. It is usually entertaining and substantial in content. In PRE 9 a large part of it is flashy powder-puffery. ((Hm -- others thought it was a heavier substance.)) You're still moving the words around nicely, but now I can't see the reasons why as well.

Your experiment with "Fanivore" doesn't quite work except in one case -- Lou's. For me, your immediate answer is necessary. I see your attempt to unify your answers by topic but it just doesn't flow that well. Your answer to Lou was long enough to be put separately, so that was good (though poor Lou surely didn't deserve the trouncing he got; he asked you for info, he wasn't stabbing you or anything). ((I surely didn't mean to trounce Lou; I thought I was dealing with the whole thing -- just telling him "naw, Pelz didn't do nothing" might suffice for him, but unless I say more in print nobody else is going to pay it any attention. Next time I'll avoid using somebody's letter as a specific jumping-off point for a diatribe. It's not a good practice.))

Trying to make Lou seem like a shit, eh? Trouble is, most people don't know him well enough to know when he's kidding. "Old palsied Coulson" is as much a meaningless nickname as "old paint" or "old salt." To many, though, Lou might seem vicious. Oh well, he can defend himself, I think. ((Oh, I figured if Coulson could handle Lou -- and he can, he knows Stathis is putting him on I'm certain -- then everybody else would learn in good time.))

I am a film reviewer, you may remember, so let me review the Milt Stevens flick. For one thing the plot is just too fantastic. Who would believe it, ever? Transcension of violence, eh? The script looked familiar in many respects -- to many analogies to real life. Too many stereotyped characters. Too much good/bad guy dichotomy, too little plot development. All in all, a damn fine film.

GRAPHICS LOG: 1973



PAUL NOVITSKI (Alpajpuri)
1690 E. 26th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97403
9 July 73

I'd like to comment on both David Gerrold's "In the Deadlands" and what is currently referred to as 'graphics'. I thought at first that the free-verse structure got in the way of the story's overall readability,

until the end, and as Cy Chauvin says, the whole left me moved. But the way the story appeared is the way Gerrold wrote it. The structure is as much a part of the whole as the punctuation and the choice of words and the structure of the fiction itself. In the same way, a fanzine is a product of its 'verbal' and its 'graphic' content.

My basic feeling in this area is that writing is a graphic medium, graphic because it's perceived with the eyes rather than the nose or ears or fingers. There are several different ways to communicate in the graphic medium, and one is unfulfilled without inclusion with the others. The way my mind works, I tend to accumulate similarities between things over their differences. I notice the differences, but what insights I have into the workings of the universe tend to be those gained from putting superficially distinct things into the same category. It's a very idealistic standpoint, and I don't always come up to my egalitarian ideals, but it's the way I perceive.

I think most fans will agree that it is the conceptual content of a word that makes it important to them. I perceive conceptual content not just in books, but also in paintings, films, whatever lies before my senses. In an effort to break from the ghettoization of "writing", to combine the many into one category, I cling to the graphic medium. When I read a book, it's not just the conceptual content of the words I notice. The words relate to each other through their order in a sentence, which is the graphic relationship between the symbol-groups we call words. Those sentences order themselves in paragraphs, pages, and chapters, lending more and more complex relationships (hence, meaning) to the whole. To give a word a special stress, the writer may put it in a sentence by itself. To give a sentence special stress he/she may give it a paragraph all its own. And to give that paragraph special stress, the writer may give it an entire page to itself, and this is where we enter the sticky field of 'graphics'.

The essential difference between prose and free verse that I discern is that in free-verse a word or phrase is given a line to itself, to accentuate its importance in relationship to the whole. Or when more than one word or phrase inhabits one line, spaced far apart, to set up a special relationship between the concepts they convey. This is what Gerrold has done "In the Deadlands." He has freed his words from the restricted, linear universe inhabited by most prose, given his words an additional dimension he apparently believes is necessary to the total story he has to tell. The specific story "In the Deadlands" we have read could not have been told in a purely linear form.

Upon inspection, this term "purely linear form" tends to lose its apparent meaning. Dividing strings of words into sentences, paragraphs, pages, and chapters is a two-dimensional exercise. Prose is not a monoliner form. Now, freed from the restrictions of one-dimensional thinking, we may explore the possibilities of communicating in the two-dimensional matrix. This, for me, is what fanzine publishing is all about. Fanzines come in two-dimensional pages, not linear strings. I don't always succeed in communicating that much more in two dimensions than I could in one, but I try to stay aware, at least, of the gestalt when I plan layout.

Now I don't always have the energy or enthusiasm to devise layouts in which the two-dimensional presentation is fully integrated -- this letter is basically linear, with only simple divisions for sentences and paragraphs. Indeed, as time goes on I find my enthusiasm for the whole schtick waning. But in these cases in which I just sit down and type, I'm not magically functioning outside the realm of 'layout,' I'm just using a simpler form of layout.

Obvious as it may seem, this is a distinction I specially point out, because many of the locs I read are from fans who maintain they don't use 'layout' or 'graphics' when they edit their zines. It's not something you can escape. As soon as you put a piece of paper in your typewriter you're dealing with layout -- the variables are how you deal with it and how well.

Many of my past locs in fanzines have had an unintended air of arrogance about them, as if implying that unless you utilize the two-dimensional matrix to its utmost you're somehow failing as a sentient organism. Rather, I've tried (and failed) to simply get across my own personal excitement with the possibilities available, and the point that regardless of your intentions you're always dealing in a two-dimensional matrix when you're working with a page. But the way in which you utilize it is completely up to you.

Some of the most attractive (since I'm personally concerned with aesthetic appearance) fanzines I've received are those nearly devoid of illustration, just solid type -- but it's neat, readable type and it doesn't interfere with the concepts it spells out. Most of Arnie Katz' fanzines fall in this category. Other nice fanzines are those bedecked with illustrations and clever manipulations of blocks of type in such a way that the verbal conceptual content is complemented or supplemented by the graphic whole. (Words are still considered more important than drawings in this day and age -- illo lib, anybody?) Unattractive or unclever fanzines I see are either simple but technically sloppy, or decorated "graphically" with no thought to the integration of all the elements; in these cases the 'graphics' get in the way of overall readability. I have published fanzines in all four categories.

Many fans are simply not interested in the complex, much less the

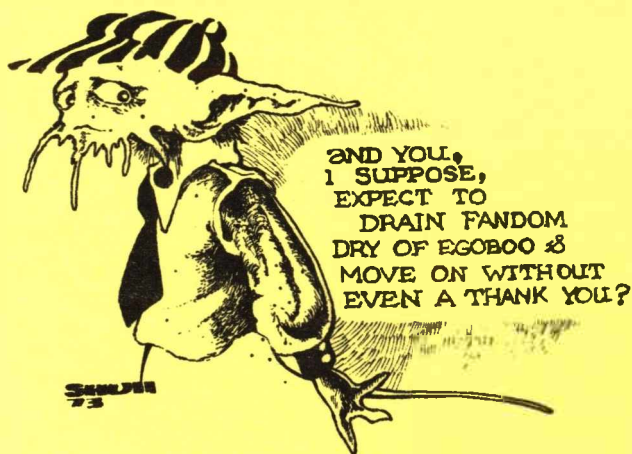
multiplex, utilizations of two-dimensional space. They're concerned with linear sequences of words, and occasional cartoons which are themselves basically linear. I wish in no way to infer that I think these people are somehow lacking in any superlative qualities as human beings -- they're simply specialists, whereas I'm simply a nexialist. What the hell,archie, to each his or her own. With effort they'll go farther in their linear field than will I, and perhaps I'll develop my own brand of two-dimensional communication farther than they. I don't see any conflict here, just a matter of different tastes.

More power to us all.



Due to time and everything else, I will save the rest of the letters until next time. And speaking of the next issue, as usual it will mostly be starting from scratch -- TOROONreport, of course. But the rest will surprise me as much as it surprises you. Probably more.

LOCUS POCUS



Charlie Brown wrote the following letter to Bill Bowers on May 15, and supplied me with a xerox copy. Bill published the full text in INWORLDS last month, but informed a couple weeks ago that all his copies had been sold/distributed. So for those who wish to see it, here it be.

Dear Bill,

Thanks very much for the defense of LOCUS in the last issue of INWORLDS. If you don't watch out, you're going to end up with the fannish newszine that so many people want, get a lot of subscriptions and be attacked for making money off fandom. It won't matter if you do or not, people will make up their own figures and use them without asking. Letters about how LOCUS isn't a fanzine because it makes money or is only about SF and not fan om are usually filed in the wastebasket. The Hugo rules say that an eligible fanzine should be "about science fiction or related subjects." My own feeling about "related subjects" would probably be pretty narrow and disqualify most of the fannish fanzines as well as others.

I hadn't planned on saying anything about LOCUS in print, not because there are any particular secrets involved, but because it's probably of little interest to LOCUS subscribers (the fanzine section of LOCUS has always been the least popular item) and because I hate to seem to be trying to justify LOCUS or how we run it. (I also don't like to write to fanzines because most fans don't seem to know the difference between arguing about a subject and arguing personalities.) You, however, seem to have the perfect forum and the interest in the inner workings of fanzines, so here goes.

Since we moved to the West Coast, I've been tied up professionally and Dena has been handling more and more of LOCUS including writing and editing. She handles all the mail (2 to 3 hours every day), does all the typing, layout, etc. I write the reviews, some of the major stories, and do some editing of what Dena writes (she does the same for mine). I wish people would stop giving me all the credit (or blame). Answers to letters she writes come back addressed to me. It's very annoying and I hope people would realize it.

LOCUS is normally produced in 3 days - one for writing and typing (10 hours), one for running off (12 hours) and one for collating and mailing (7 hours). We serve refreshments and usually dinner for helpers, which runs us between \$15 and \$20 per issue. This and free subscriptions are the only ways we have to show appreciation for the help, without which we couldn't do LOCUS.

The various fanzine editors who say that LOCUS doesn't trade for other fanzines annoy me quite a bit. What they mean is that LOCUS doesn't trade all for all, which is an entirely different matter. Every fanzine we get receives from 1 to 5 free issues of LOCUS, depending on size, interest, and what we had for breakfast. It's usually equal to the cash price of the fanzine. Even the lowliest crudzine gets one free issue. We checked our records on Tom Collins who says we don't trade and found we have given him over 20 free issues of LOCUS in the past. The only exceptions are fanzines we actually pay for (there are some). Those are not reviewed at all since LOCUS policy is to review only items sent for review. As you can attest to, the LOCUS "reviews" which fanzine editors seem so unhappy with are a good source of new readers.

By the way, you might be interested in a sidelight on our "subscriptions only" policy (not strictly true, since, of course, we still give away copies on the same basis as trades, to contributors, etc.) At the end of the first year of publications, LOCUS had about 100 subscribers and gave away 400 copies. We couldn't afford it and started to demand subscriptions. The response of letters and information went up, not down. People who shelled out hard cash for a fanzine tended to value it more and responded accordingly. I wonder if that's true with you or other editors. Another interesting sidelight concerns the greatest number of free copies we send out. We send at least 2 free copies to every book publisher in the US and England, free copies to all original anthology editors, and free copies to various agents and major reviewers. (These aren't exactly free since we get most of our news and all the SF books published because of it) A number of these people insist on subscribing even though we offer them free copies. Interesting, isn't it? I guess we're doing something right.

The main complaint against LOCUS seems to be that it makes money because it has too many subscriptions and should be disqualified from Hugo competition. I wonder who is to decide how many subscriptions are too many? The only fair way, obviously, would be to disqualify any fanzine which accepts subscriptions or "donations." This would cut the Hugo competition down to size, I guess. The other complaint is that LOCUS sends out too many copies for others to compete with. Obviously you or Mike Glicksahn could print several thousand copies and send them out to everybody you've ever heard of. The cost and work would be incredible, of course, but it could be done. It might not work, though, unless you did it with several issues. I can speak from experience there. The first issue of LOCUS went to 2000 people and had a subscription response of about 40. (It was sent for free as a flyer to the MITSFS mailing list which supposedly included everybody in fandom at the time.) The second issue of LOCUS had a circulation of about 80. I guess mass mailings are not really the answer.

Should we then eliminate all fanzines with circulation over 1,000 copies from Hugo competition? 500? 250? 50? How could it possibly be enforced? How could you justify penalizing someone for being too successful at what he does? "Thou shalt publish a good fanzine, but not a too successful one"? It would be more logical to exclude all fanzines with circulation under 500. Obviously they don't fit the "generally available" provision since there aren't enough copies to cover all the Hugo voters. The committee could send an inspector around to make sure the rules are obeyed. It might cause the membership fee to go up to \$100 or so, but it certainly would be fairer. By the way, we should have eliminated ANALOG from the pro category since it had nearly 3 times the circulation of F&SF. Oops, I forgot. F&SF was the winner last year.

If the Hugo depended entirely on circulation, we'd be inundated by the comics and SF movie fanzines, many of which have circulations in the 5,000 copy range (I recently got a comicszine which had gotten a 3,000 copy circulation in 3 months!) Wow, Dick Geis could live off that. Hmm, both Dick Geis and Andy Porter have announced print runs of 2,000 for their next issues. Perhaps the era of the big circulation fanzine is just starting. Circulation doesn't mean everything, of course. AMRA, ERBDOM, and RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY all apparently have higher circulations than LOCUS and none of them made the Hugo ballot lately. It's interesting to remember that HYPHEN - probably the first fannish fanzine of all time - which had a healthy circulation for its day, was nominated but never won a Hugo. On the other hand, WHO KILLED SCIENCE FICTION won a Hugo in 1961 even though it was only distributed through FAPA and SAPS. The people who join conventions, nominate, and vote for the Hugos have always been more interested in straight SF than in fannish writing, no matter how fine it was.

I guess you still want to know if LOCUS actually makes money or not. Since we figure some expenses only on a yearly basis, the most recent issue I can fully describe is #130. We printed 1425 copies and ended up with 1375 good collated copies. We mailed out 1300 copies, 1200 in North America and 100 overseas. Less than you thought? You were probably thrown off by 2 figures found in the year-end report. LOCUS went to 1600 people in 1972, but that includes 300 who expired during the year and did not renew. The number of fliers we ask for is 100 more than the print run to take care of any expansion in the 3 issues between receiving and running. Of the 1200 North American copies, 900 were subscriptions at 23¢ each (nearly all subs are the 26/¢6 kind. Very few people renew for only 3¢), 300 were non subscription copies to publishers, editors, trades, collators, artists, news furnishers, etc. US postage cost \$96. Of the 100 overseas copies, 60 were subs at 30¢ each and 40 were free to publishers, editors, etc. Foreign postage was an incredible \$29.75. We send some copies to agents to remail - these cost about a quarter to send. Individual copies cost 42¢ to mail which means that every foreign sub is subsidized. Air mail postage is high.

Advertising income for the year averaged out to \$12 per issue giving us an issue income of \$237. Paper cost \$21.60, ink \$9.00, stencils \$2.40, electrostencils \$5 and computer labels, keypunching, and air mail postage to and from New York cost \$25. Our total issue expenses were therefore \$189, giving us a gross profit of \$48. I guess some fans could live on that, but it represents quite a bit less than I make in one day as a senior engineer.

But wait, we've only mentioned the direct per issue expenses so far. We also had two monthly expenses - telephone was \$50 for LOCUS involved calls and typewriter rental was \$21.30 (remind me to show you sometime why it's better to rent than buy). On a yearly basis, we spent \$75 for

mimeo repairs, \$200 for advertising -- including renewal notices, fliers ads and sample copies, \$120 for office supplies and nearly \$400 for entertainment of collators, artists, and other people who help with LOCUS. Someday we may make a profit on LOCUS, but not yet. The problem is that you can't make money on a fanzine unless you print several thousand copies and sell them through bookstores and newsstands. You can never do it on subscriptions alone because the bookkeeping and record keeping is more than an individual or couple can handle. In the science fiction fanzine field, Dick Geis, Andy Porter, and maybe Leland Sapiro are the only ones who may be able to do it. All have printed magazines, use professional advertising, and sell through bookstores. I don't think a mimeographed magazine can ever do it because the work is too much and the average bookstore or newsstand buyer won't even look at it. We decided a long time ago not to distribute LOCUS this way because the paperwork as a biweekly magazine is just incredible. If we had a quarterly or semiannual magazine we might be tempted, but that isn't what we want to produce. So, we constantly refuse to use professional advertising. We've even stopped advertising in convention progress reports.

At the LACon, Mike Glicksohn asked me if we were going to withdraw LOCUS if we won that second Hugo. I asked him if he was willing to engrave his Hugo as "Best Fanzine except possibly for LOCUS which withdrew from competition." I didn't get an answer. We were actually thinking of withdrawing last year, but the static we got from various self-righteous fans at the Worldcon convinced us otherwise. Who knows what next year will bring? Anyway, Dick Geis and Andy Porter may be the people to beat instead of LOCUS no matter what we decide. Both have large circulations and strong appeal to SF readers (Geis is apparently advertising in PSYCHOLOGY TODAY which could have interesting results)... I wonder why nobody complains about how many Hugos Kelly Freas, F&SF or Tim Kiera wins? The fanzine category seems to be the only one which excites people. Was it only 2 years ago that LOCUS was the Great White Hope trying to stop SF Review from winning a third Hugo?

If any one would look at the earliest issues of LOCUS they might be surprised. They were mostly fannish and had little straight SF content. The SF portion gradually increased, mainly because we got more response and more egoboo out of it. Finally we had to make a choice on which field to cover since there just wasn't enough room to do both as completely as possible and we weren't interested in doing a half-assed job on both. We chose the SF field and haven't ever regretted that decision. The response and praise from professionals and SF readers has been overwhelming. Is it any wonder that these are the people we continue to write for and about? We work hard and long at LOCUS and are proud of the result. We're also proud of the 2 Hugos we've earned (that's right, earned) because of it. But most of all, we enjoy what we're doing and the results and plan to keep it up as long as we can.

