$1.50

PRETENTIOUS * SCIENCE FICTION * QUARTERLY

NUMBER 2 SUMMER 1978

EDITORIAL BUSINESS

*The Inside Scoop on the Inner Workings of P*S*F*Q*

Here's the second issue, and here's the second editorial. The second editorial is always easier to write than the first. By now we have received hundreds of fan letters from the literate masses and have, ourselves, seen the beauty and truth and charm of the first issue, neatly printed and carefully packaged (with only the usual quota of screwups in the form of untrimmed edges, missing or inverted pages in few copies, and a printers' plug that wasn't.)

In this editorial I talk about the first issue, and what a pain it was to put together, and just how great it felt when the last copies were mailed out. I talk about this current issue, and tell about the ways in which it resembles the first, the ways in which is surpasses the first, and the new features that have been added. I talk about the issues to follow in endless and unbroken succession, landing in your mailbox one after another like waves breaking on the shore, each more brilliant and more colorful and weightier than the one before. But enough; there'll be time for all of that later on. Right now I want to talk to you about a subject that is near and dear to all of us. No, not money. I want to talk to you about writing for P*S*F*Q.

Those of you who can read are probably thinking that P*S*F*Q is swamped with manuscripts, whole attics and garages filled with submissions the great majority of which must be returned, however reluctantly, to their authors because they have failed to surmount the threshold between the merely excellent, and the transcendently superior work you see in this issue. Indeed, your guess is very close to the truth. I cannot remember how many times I have cried as I have reluctantly mailed back an almost-useable article, mailed it back to its distant creator in the author-supplied stamped self-addressed envelope. Nor can I count the times I have had to consign an almost-brilliant piece to the circular file here at the modest P*S*F*Q offices because the writer forgot to include return postage. All of these experiences had one element in common: The awful discovery that someone out there in the vast reading and writing public, someone who may even now be writing the perfect P*S*F*Q article, that someone has not yet sent it in. Do it! Finish that essay, terminate that article, put final summary sentence on the final paragraph and type it up (double-spaced!), make a Xerox copy, and send it in to this magazine at **Box 1496, Cupertino CA 95014.** If you don't know what to write, there's a wonderful list in the first issue, and if you don't have that issue a SASE will bring you a copy of the list.

continued on page 22

*P*S*F*Q Editorial Conference*

PRETENTIOUS SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY

Number Two
Summer 1978

"If mothers' milk were 90 proof,
they'd never have weaned me."
—Nietzsche

ARTICLES

Editorial Business ..... Michael Ward 2

A Short Walk to the End ..... Richard F. Dutcher 4

Michael Bishop Interviewed ..... Michael Bishop 6

Science Fiction Games ..... Jeff Pimper 8

Special Science Section | Conservation of Species ..... Michael Ward 12

Special Science Section | Charmed, I'm Sure ..... Terry Garey 13

On the Demon Lover ..... Chelsea Quinn Yarbro 14

Kiss the Blood Off My Sword ..... Paul E. Moslander 18

Fast Mail ..... Letter Column 23

ARTWORK

Front Cover and Back Cover ..... Jack Gaughan

Something About Michael Bishop (page 7) ..... Greg Bear

Four Visions (pages 10 and 11) ..... Jack Gaughan

Regular Reader of P*S*F*Q (page 17) ..... Smith & Nordling

Inside Back Cover ..... Grant Canfield

Pages 2, 23 ..... Dover Archives

Pages 19, 22, 26 ..... Don Simpson

Pages 24, 25 ..... Grant Canfield

Pretentious Science Fiction Quarterly is published four times a year by Michael Ward. Editorial and subscription address is P*S*F*Q, P. O. Box 1496, Cupertino, CA 95014. P*S*F*Q welcomes contributions of articles and illustrations, but please write first. Unsolicited material must include return-postage-paid self-addressed envelope, or it will be lost, lost, never to return to you again.

printed with loving care
by human hands and an
offset press at
Mother's Printing
1337 Lincoln Ave.
San Jose, CA 95125

A SHORT WALK TO THE END

Some Notes on Suzy McKee Charnas

By Richard F. Dutcher

I am compelled to do something hazardous: To present Suzy McKee Charnas' *Walk to the End of the World* as an exemplar of values that I hold dear in science fiction. These values are not Charnas' primary concerns in the novel; rather they relate to her technique in constructing the society of the Holdfast. She has succeeded in constructing a society with a whole past, present and future, an integrated sensible history. This sort of accomplishment always excites me, regardless of any other virtues or difficulties a work may present.

There are difficulties—*Walk* is not a pleasant book. It is set in a society that takes seriously many of the male-female roles propounded in the Gor novels. Friends of mine have been unable to finish the book, finding both the society and the characters too distasteful and repellent, a reaction which is a tribute to Charnas' training as an economic historian and her acute good sense.

As historians must, and science fiction writers should, Charnas understands that the past lives on in the present, and constrains the future. Many people act on the assumption that the world began at their birth, and that all that preceded them is somehow unreal. But that unreality is a powerful influence: An author who ignores it risks such idiocies as the 10,000 year dictatorship toppled by a lone hero, or similar inanities entirely too common in science fiction.

Science fiction is very prone to ahistorical settings: Societies and people isolated in time and space from any others. Charnas' Holdfast is such—physically set in a world devastated by a nuclear war, surrounded by "wastes"; with no neighbors, or none whose existence cannot be denied; and temporally imprisoned in a mythic version of its own "true" past.

Several generations past, the leadership of an unnamed, but probably Anglo-Saxon, country emerged from shelters into an empty world—Man is the only surviving large animal, and the only usable plants are some strains of edible seaweed that feed on old industrial and nuclear wastes, and a mutant form of marijuana. The Holdfast territory consists of one river and its drainage, with most of the population concentrated about the river's delta, where both weeds are cultivated. Far up the river is the town of 'Troi, where old mines and ruins are worked. The surrounding "wastes" are purportedly empty, although there are hints that might be real or wish-fulfilling legends.

During the long underground stay and the founding years, an elaborate mythology has arisen, blaming the war, the destruction, and evil generally on Women and Beasts—animals, "Browns", "Blacks", and "Yellows", mockmen confused in dim memory into one mass of enemies. The structure is similar to racial anti-semitism: Beasts as the (extinct) open enemy, and Women as the "enemy within."

Prior to the war, the myths say, the Beasts conspired against the rule of (White) Men. Women were so base as to subvert the natural order by encouraging sons to rebel against, and ultimately murder, their fathers. The object of the Holdfast's Oedipal fantasy is not the possession of the mother, but the death of the father. The elite of the Holdfast fear Youth, Women, and Beasts, in approximately that order.

This mythology is compounded of familiar elements. Charnas' feat is to put it together plausibly, and relate it to a very real economy of scarcity and a sexual/social/colonial structure of exploitation. The agricultural products require lots of hard, dull labor in paddy cultivation, semi-industrial processing, and policing and control of labor and intoxicants.

Women are the colonial base. With no surviving animals, they have become literal beasts of the field, in a state far worse than chattel slavery. The men of the Holdfast have become citizens of a garrison state, organized as a sequence of age cohorts, communally raised in barracks. As women are animals, then love among equals is homosexual, as in classical Greece. Heterosexual contact is beastiality, required as a duty for reproduction and tolerated as a minor perversion among the elite. No man wants to know which animal was his mother, and society proscribes knowledge of paternity for fear of patricide.

Boys are raised in barracks resembling nothing so much as English Public schools. Youth are educated simultaneously in the official religious/mythical history and ideology of the Holdfast, and in the real workings of intergroup politics, underground heresies, and hypocrisy.

Upon graduation, cohorts are rotated through the economy at various tasks, their status rising as the group both ages and shrinks due to death and illness. While economically inefficient, this is an extremely effective means of social control. No one cohort becomes so expert as to be indispensable; rivalry among cohorts prevents serious challenge to authority; peer pressure within controls potential dissidents.

The Holdfast exists on the edge of economic disaster. The novel's crisis is triggered by the progressive shortages of seaweed, as the pollutants on which the strains depend are finally leached from the delta and nearby sea. In economies of scarcity, allocation of commodities and the associated rivalries are tools of status guo control: Such tactics are used today, in Argentina, Chile, Uganda, and elsewhere. Economic efficiency and surpluses are political dynamite in such societies.

Charnas has constructed an elaborate ideology for the Holdfast, which I regard as a major accomplishment. She is aware of the necessity for such an ideology, the complexities involved in the meshings of ideas and realities, and the role of ideology as a social force. She starts from the guilt felt by the original leaders for their complicity in the destruction of the world's macrofauna, and builds mythos from the personal and social refusal to accept or face that guilt, and its projection back upon the world.

An eternal Male principle of order and purity has been ensnared in the mire of the material world by the Evil/Female principle. Evil is manifest most hideously in women, but also in Beasts and mockmen, parodies of (White) Men, those most perfect of the imperfect material reflections of the Male Divine. The machinations of Women and Beasts caused the war, their subtlest trap being the knowledge of Father and Son, which drives the Son to destroy the Father in order to prove himself.

From this Gnostic, neo-Platonic base, Charnas builds a complete religious-mythic-ideological system. Its form and content allow room for the sharpest minds to roam, seeking inspiration, subtlety, the beauty of grand ideas. The ethical system is flexible enough to both inspire wild idealism among the young and to survive blatant hypocrisy among the elders, two necessary conditions for a functioning society.

Lesser writers postulate societies where heresy is unthinkable, and therefore unthought. Charnas knows better—she knows that heresy is one of the better means of strengthening faith by counter-example, by taking communicants through normal doubt into greater faith. Obduracy, obstinacy in error, may be punishable, but reasonable doubt is expected, reasoned with, and directed into safe channels, nurturing both idealism and hypocrisy. Hypocrisy begins when self-interest or self-indulgence takes precedence over avowed transcendent or altruistic ideals. It is a necessary component of any society, the glue that holds it together, while idealism is the solvent that prevents solidification.

Walk's credentials as a feminist novel lie within Charnas' portrait of the Fem subculture. Women, as the only surviving animals, are used only for breeding, as pets, for physical labor, or in industrial processes too poisonous for more valuable Men.

Infant girls are weaned, tossed into "kitpits", and forced to survive in savage competition for scraps and living space, until the survivors are removed at age six or seven. Most are brutish, physically and mentally, barely able to talk. Readers should not reject Charnas' creations as unreal; virtually identical descriptions of peasants are frequently found in European travelers' records, especially in the backwaters of the Balkans and Russia. She is describing truly the results of consistent sensory and material deprivation and brutalization. Those who survive such a process of "selection by misery" recognizably human are extraordinarily lucky or gifted people.

Alldera, the only major female character, is both. After surviving the kitpits and showing some talent for speech, she is spotted and adopted by the Fem elite. This elite exists only because of the presence, even in desperate circumstances, of the top 5% in any group; total solidarity among the Fems, even those whose condition, mental or physical, is that of a horse; and utter lack of concern from Men, who are much more worried about ritual pollution than political resistance.

Charnas avoids the easy out. She shows the Fem underground suffering the tragedy of most oppressed subcultures: It is a fun-house mirror image of the oppressor. The Women's account of the final war, while more accurate than the Men's, suffers from similar distortions of viewpoint. The Fem elite is not the repository of Truth, nor the salvation of the Holdfast. It is merely the leaders of the sorely oppressed, desperately trying to survive an inhumane tyranny.

The inhumanity of the Holdfast is, I'm sure, one of the primary reasons many people never finish reading *Walk*. Even Gor fans would complain that the characters aren't enjoying themselves. I have strong reservations about believing that any society so brutal could survive as long as Charnas proposes, even given the special conditions of temporal and spatial isolation. But my cavil is based only on faith, and history provides too much evidence of worse to dismiss her vision out of hand.

She does describe a society in process, not one frozen in stasis. The Holdfast changes through time, not only progressing towards a Malthusian crisis, but showing an active and changing intellectual development. She achieves this by understanding the information networks that operate in the Holdfast.

The education of Servan d Layo and Eykar Bek, the two major male characters, is outlined in the novel. We are shown the three major kinds of information: The official, the unofficial, and the occult.

Official learning is the religion of the Holdfast and the technical knowledge necessary to function in society. The unofficial is the formal hypocrisies, the realities of everyday life and politics. Occult learning is the body of secrets at the heart of Holdfast life: The religious rituals around the death-house at Endpath; the cultus of the Berserks and their controllers; the books in the library stacks; the technocrats of 'Troi; even the secret Fem underground. All are privileged areas of knowledge accessible only to initiates. Such networks are common to all cultures. Their interrelationships are crucial to the way people grow up and solve, or fail to solve, their problems.

Part of the final crisis, the economic ruin of the Holdfast, results from the lack of mutual access among the occult elites. Charnas has described not a frozen society, but one where these groups have become locked away from each other. All of the knowledge needed to describe, and possibly solve, the Malthusian crisis exists scattered among them—but there is no communication, no means of bringing it all together, and the Holdfast crashes.

Given an understanding of a culture and its past, a novelist must still move the characters through the maze. I think Charnas does this superbly. I will mention only two outstanding examples of characters trying to cope with reality and their own pasts.

Eykar Bek, on the trek to 'Troi, in a confrontation with Alldera, has a revelation of the true nature of male-female relations in the Holdfast—and, by extension, male-male relations as well. It is almost a religious experience, scales falling from his eyes. But the knowledge is useless; the Holdfast is collapsing, and they are traveling to 'Troi to find Eykar's mysterious father, the only person who may be able to save something from the wreckage. Unlike Saul on the road to Damascus, Eykar is not inspired but embittered by the depth of folly and futility he has finally seen. His vision fades almost as rapidly as it came, having fallen on unsuitable ground.

Raf Maggomas, Eykar's father, is an obscure figure, known only by rumor and hearsay. Charnas builds him up as a fearless technocrat, unfettered by religion or dogma, an engineer in a fine old science fiction tradition. But when we meet him, he turns out to be a cannibal and a butcher, even more tragically bound by the past than is the elite in the central city. His reputed skepticism and practicality are tied tightly to his firm belief in the ultimate ideals of the Holdfast. He even wants to eliminate all Fems, even for reproduction—a triumph of idealism over hypocrisy, of transcendence over survival.

There is much in the novel that I have not covered or only mentioned in passing; Charnas is trying to make some very important points about the ways people relate, and the roles played by power, position, and sex. *Walk to the End of the World* is the first of a trilogy; the second, *Motherlines*, will be published soon. I have read it in uncorrected galleys, and it is less concerned than *Walk* with the issues I have discussed here. But even if I didn't substantially agree with Charnas about the problems people have relating to one another (and I do, Male-Female, Male-Male, Person-Person), I would recommend *Motherlines* as well. I eagerly await the final novel, and any others she writes. Suzy McKee Charnas has proven to me that she is one of the select few science fiction writers who understand the role of the past in the future.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL BISHOP

conducted by Michael Bishop

Finding anything pretentious of at least passing notice (and having been sniped at myself as an occasional purveyor of needlessly highfalutin prose, as witness the elegant syntactical construction of this so far incomplete but relentlessly on-going periodic sentence), I've just about convinced my alter ego—Hallao, Mr. Geiss!—to submit to a mini-interview. Therefore, without further ado, let us begin.

MBA: Why are you doing this?

MBQ: I don't know. Maybe because I enjoy receiving fanzines through the mails free, and this is cheaper than subscribing.

MBA: I'm supposed to be asking the questions, aren't I?

MBQ: No, I am. Please note the Q in my initials. So if you don't mind, I'll assume my proper role: What subject do you feel deserves to be treated with more thoroughness by science fiction writers?

MBA: Toilet training.

MBQ: Toilet training?

MBA: Exactly.

MBQ: Would you elaborate? Was your own particularly severe?

MBA: I don't remember my own, I'm afraid. But my son's was. This is my public confession of my regrettable incompetence in that area approximately four years ago, perhaps longer. I did much better with my daughter, although, as I understand, girls are supposed to be easier to train.

MBQ: What has this to do with science fiction? Not, you understand, that your remarks aren't admirably pretentious.

MBA: Thank you. Well, I'll let you write a poison-pen letter to John Simon at ESQUIRE if you can name the most compelling treatment of the topic of toilet training by a contemporary science fiction writer.

MBQ: Golly, that one stumps me.

MBA: I thought it might. The answer of course is Gardner Dozois' "Chains of the Sea." What disturbs—indeed, discomfits me mightily—is that the young protagonist remembers *his toilet training. He recalls his father sitting in the bathroom with him, talking to him soothingly and gesturing with a cigarette whose lighted tip inscribes glowing diagrams in the dark. He has fond recollections of the experience.*

MBQ: And of course what discomfits you is that your own son won't have fond memories of a similar episode in his life?

MBA: Yes. We have quite a good relationship now, so my hope is that he won't remember this episode at all.

MBQ: Well, this discussion has been more revealing than you perhaps realize. Would you care to go into the science-fictional possibilities of the Oedipus or Elektra complexes?

MBA: Farmer's plowed that ground before me.

MBQ: Since you're essentially reviewing yourself, is there any particular question that you would like to ask yourself? And if so, what is it?

MBA: "Do you sleep in the nude?"

MBQ: I'm afraid that's a rather personal inquiry.

MBA: No, you misunderstand—that's the question I would like to ask myself. You asked me what I would like to ask myself and I said—

MBQ: All right. Very good. Do you sleep in the nude?

MBA: I'm afraid that's a rather personal inquiry.

MBQ: Forgive me. What's your favorite vegetable?

MBA: Fried okra.

MBQ: Really?

MBA: Absolutely. As a matter of fact, we have some coming up in our garden at this very moment.

MBQ: Fried?

MBA: Of course not. However, this line of questioning does remind me of the only time in my life that I ever formulated a pun in my dreams. It seems that I was going through a cafeteria line, and a tray of okra, unfortunately not fried, was flanked by servings of green beans and squash. It was in a medial position, and my subconscious mind formulated a single-word expression to account for both its position on the line and its likely flavor . . .

MBQ: Please don't finish this.

MBA: I won't. I was a freshman in college. Am I my subconscious' keeper?

MBQ: Please remember that the Q is in my initials.

MBA: Sorry.

MBQ: Let's bring this discussion—this exchange—back to a less frivolous and more informative area.

MBA: Back?

MBQ: What, for instance, strikes you as the loneliest or most forlorn image of life in contemporary America you can presently think of?

MBA: Now that's pretentious.

MBQ: Please.

MBA: The image of a small clapboard farmhouse—passed at night on a seldom-traveled highway—in whose living-room window is visible the monochrome flickering of a television set. Unless it's tuned to M.A.S.H.

MBQ: What is your favorite pronouncement about the status of science fiction vis-a-vis *other categories and genres?*

MBA: Tom Disch's suggestion that it ought to be considered primarily as a branch of children's literature. On the grounds that it is "limiting intellectually, emotionally, and morally." Please see page 143 and ff. (how do you pronounce that?)in Science Fiction at Large, *edited by Peter Nichols, to one of whose essays your columnist Paul E. Moslander referred in the first issue of P*S*F*Q, citing Alan Garner's discussion of engrams.*

MBQ: This is still another instance of a science fiction writer's biting the hand that feeds him, isn't it?

MBA: I'm not aware that Tom Disch has left teeth marks in his own hand. At any rate, he finally admits that his theory is only a partial one. Let me see—how exactly did he phrase it? Ah, yes: "I am left with an interesting and only partially valid observation, whose chief merit is that it has been a small annoyance to various people I don't like." (p. 144, ibid*) Aren't my powers of accurate recall amazing?*

MBQ: To whom do you think Disch was referring?

MBA: And so I said to myself, 'Well, since it's between the other two vegetables, it would be fitting if the sign in front of its tray were to read MEDIOKRA."

MBQ: I thought you were going to spare us. And yourself.

MBA: I was waiting for the appropriate moment. In dreams begin responsibilities, I grant you that, but it doesn't necessarily hold that we are responsible for our dreams. I was a freshman in college. And the food in that cafeteria was terrible.

MBQ: I'm not sure that this is the sort of interview Michael Ward had in mind. What's the title of your next book?

MBA: Catacomb Years,*unless someone changes it before the galleys come back to me. The title, that is; not the book. If the* book *gets changed, that will be my doing. It should appear from Berkley/Putnam in the Fall of 1978.*

MBQ: This is another novel based on your concept of domed Urban Nuclei, isn't it? Where did you happen to come up with an idea as provocative as that of domed cities? Absolutely fascinating, by the way.

MBA: Does a Q after your initials automatically turn you into a cretin? Or a Visigoth? By the way, did you see M.A.S.H. *last night?*

MBQ: You can have my Q. Give me your A.

MBQ: How do I look?

MBA: Like a cipher with a cedilla. A crooked cedilla.

MBQ: One last question. How do you feel about world politics, science fiction awards, the women's movement, the Panama Canal, abortion, biorhythms, frolf courses, Robert Heinlein, manned exploration of space, the demise of truth-telling, lung cancer, SFWA, your latest story, and the solicitation of interviews without any word of payment?

MBA: Passionately.

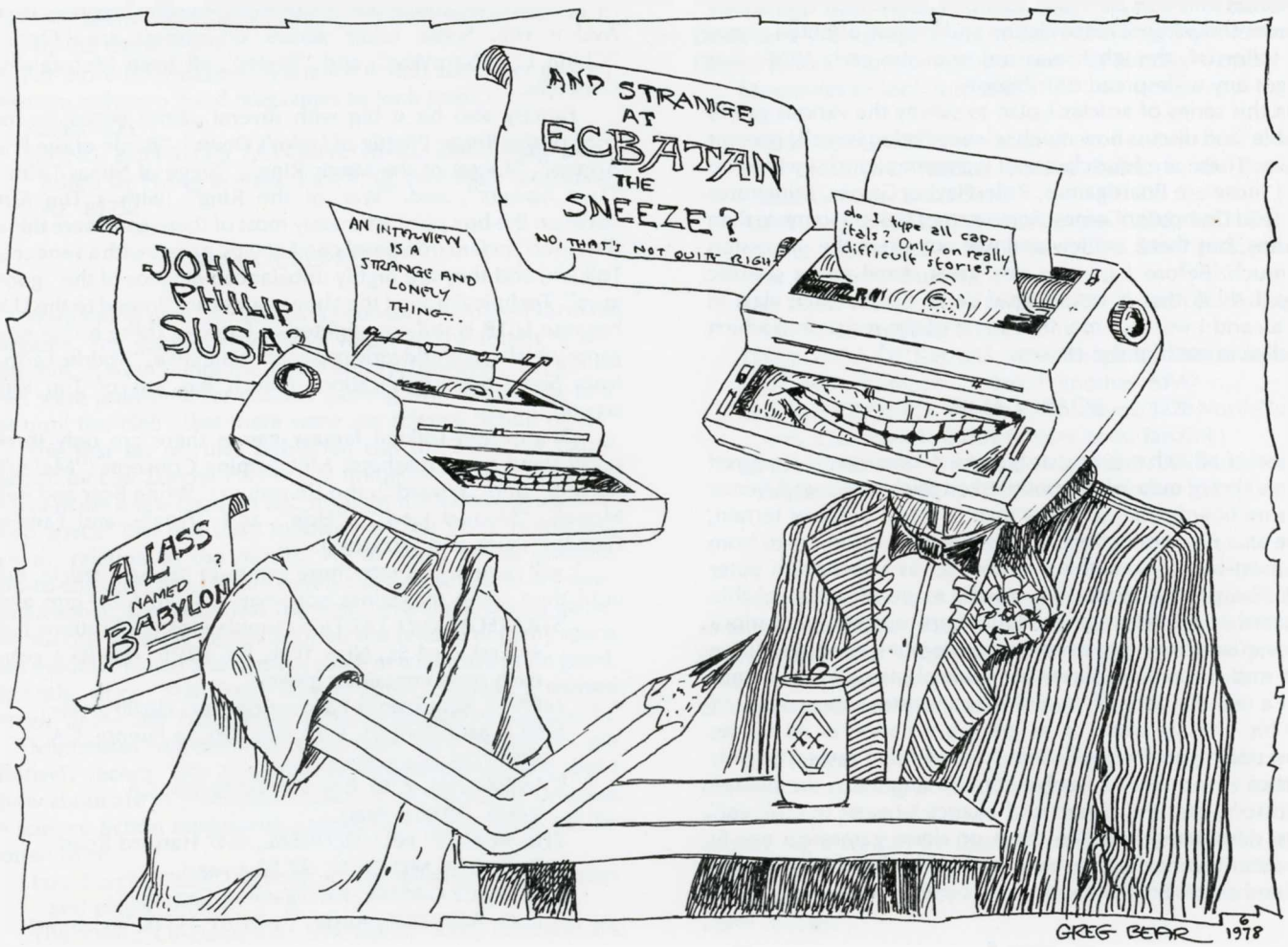
MBQ: Thank you, Mr. Bishop.

MBA: Is this a put-on?

MBQ: Do you want your Q back? Give me your A.

MBQ: (You realize, of course, that this hasn't done anything to enhance your reputation?)

MR. BISHOP APPENDED A NOTE, PORTIONS OF WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS: ...I will not sue should you decide to run this mini-interview. On the other hand, I don't intend to avow my uncoerced complicity, either...



SCIENCE FICTION GAMES

A Discussion from the Point of View of the Science Fiction Fan

by Jeff Pimper

While boardgames have been with us since before recorded history, games which make an attempt to mimic reality are a relatively new phenomenon. The earliest of these games are the various forms of Kriegspiel originally designed as military training aids. The first games designed for public consumption were intended for use with toy soldiers or model ships. The original *Jane's Fighting Ships* was designed to be a guide to playing a naval wargame; the description of each ship included coded strength factors needed for the game. A number of science fiction writers, including L. Sprague de Camp and L. Ron Hubbard, met regularly in the late 40's to play a naval war game invented by Fletcher Pratt (which is still the basis of almost all naval games played today!) Finally, in 1950, Charles Roberts invented the first true board wargame for the public, called "Tactics"; it used abstract counters, with fighting strengths printed to represent the opposing forces. Very soon the Avalon Hill company was founded as the first specifically wargame company. Science Fiction and Fantasy oriented games soon followed, though it was not until the early 1970's that they got any widespread distribution.

In this series of articles I plan to survey the various games available and discuss how much science fiction is really present in them. There are four classes of wargames which I will try to cover; these are Boardgames, Role-Playing Games, Miniatures Rules, and Computer Games. Some games belong to more than one class, but these are few and will not affect the discussion very much. Before I go into any great detail about specific games, I think that it would be wise to discuss each class in general, and I will also mention some of the magazines which specialize in each of the classes.

BOARDGAMES

First of all, what is a boardgame? A boardgame is played on some sort of map (often mounted on thick cardboard, hence the name boardgame), either a map of a real piece of terrain, or else an a piece of fictional geography which can range from the almost-real to something as abstract as a section of outer space. The playing pieces are usually made of pieces of thin cardboard on which are printed numbers representing various factors quantizing movement rate, combat strength, firing range, and so on. The player has control over all of his units just as a real-life general would. He can move some, none, or all of his units as small or as great a distance as he wishes limited only by the individual units' movement rates. The only time dice are used is to resolve conflict situations; the die roll is used to reflect the element of chance present in all "real" battles. Abstract games like chess or chase games do not fit these criteria since the rules do not allow the freedom of movement and the element of chance in conflict resolution.

The first science fiction boardgame falling within the true wargame classification was "Lensman" (1970) which is played on a Galactic scale. There were a few other, small distribution, games in the early 70's—notably "Triplanetary" (which had nothing to do with Doc Smith), "Second Galactic War", and "War of the Worlds II".

In 1974/75 began the sudden rush of SF boardgames, most of which had pretentions of being based on hard SF but which were in fact based on traditional game mechanics. Games of this period include "Battle for Andromeda" and "Warriors of the Dark Star" (both from Taurus); "Fomalhaut II", "Star Raider", and "Rift Trooper" (a rip-off of Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*)(all three from Attack Wargaming); the "Starforce" trilogy from Simulations Publications; and "Stellar Conquest" and "Ythri" (based on a Poul Anderson story)(both from Metagaming Concepts.)

There is an authorized version of *Starship Troopers* from Avalon Hill. Some other games of interest are "Ogre", "Chitin I", "WarpWar", and "Rivets", all from Metagaming Concepts.

Fantasy also hit it big with several games based on the *Lord of the Rings:* "Battle of Helm's Deep", "Battle of the Five Armies", "Quest of the Magic Ring", "Siege of Minas Tirith", "Two Towers", and "War of the Ring" (with a Tim Kirk cover on the box.) Unfortunately most of these games are thinly disguised ancient/medieval combat type games with a veneer of Tolkien, and they are highly unbalanced in favor of the "good guys". Technically all of the above games are limited to the U.S. because LoTR is still copyrighted in Europe. There is one new game which has worldwide copyright clearance, "Middle Earth" from Simulations Publications (which has lots of Tim Kirk artwork.)

Of the non-Tolkien fantasy games there are only three really stand-out publishers: Metagaming Concepts ("Melee", "Rivets", and "Wizard"), the Chaosium ("White Bear and Red Moon", "Nomad Gods", "Elric", and "Troy"), and Fantasy Games ("Lords and Wizards").

I will review and rate these games in my next article, but until then some magazines you may wish to look into are:

STRATEGY AND TACTICS, Simulations Publications Inc. 44 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010 ($14.00 a year; each issue contains a game.)

MOVES, Simulations Publications Inc. ($8.00 a year)

FIRE & MOVEMENT, P. O. Box 820, La Puente, CA 91747 ($8.00 a year)

CAMPAIGNS, P. O. Box 896, Fallbrook, CA 92028 ($9.00 a year)

THE AVALON HILL GENERAL, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214 ($7.50 a year)

THE SPACE GAMER, Metagaming Concepts, P. O. Box 15346, Austin TX 78761 ($5.00/six issues)

COMPUTER GAMES

Almost as soon as computers were invented, games were created that could be played on them. Most computer games fall into the class of simple strategy games, but some quite complex games have been written (one even plays Master Level Chess.) Computers can be used for gaming in several ways.

The simplest use of a computer would be as a mere bookkeeper. The STAR TREK and ADVENTURE games are examples of this type. However, the games can be dressed up with all sorts of fancy bells and whistles to make them seem much more complex than they really are. Once the Galaxy (STAR TREK) or Dungeon (ADVENTURE)is set up by the original programmer, the computer simply keeps track of what the player does, changing whatever tables are appropriate and feeding back the new state of the game to the player. Most of the consumer video games fall into this class.

The next step up in complexity would be to use the computer as a referee for several players, to control the interaction between the players while still doing the bookkeeping. SPACEWAR and STARWEB are good examples of such games. In neither of these two classes does the computer do any sophisticated decision making; it follows algorithms given to it and, except for certain randomly chosen strategies, it does exactly what the original programmer told it to.

The most complex class of computer games is that in which the computer takes an active part in the game as a player. There are to my knowledge no widely available science fiction/fantasy computer games of this type, though I expect that there may be several such games in existence, probably at colleges and/or research facilities. There is one game of this type available to those on the ARPA computer net (it resides at MIT). It started out as an extension of ADVENTURE; it was originally called DUNGEON but in its current incarnation it goes by the name ZORK!

For more information on science fiction computer games, there are only two good magazines to look into:

SUPERNOVA

FLYING BUFFALO'S FAVORITE MAGAZINE, both published by Flying Buffalo, Inc., P. O. Box 1467, Scottsdale AZ 85252

MINIATURES RULES

Wargaming with miniatures is probably the oldest form of wargame. Toy soldiers have been found in the tombs of the Pharaohs. It wasn't until the 20th Century, however, that guide rules were published for realistic gaming with miniatures, and not until the 1960's that there were any science fiction rules.

The first set of rules published was the *Star Trek Battle Manual* by Lou Zocchi. Paramount immediately suppressed it, so Lou made a few changes and brought the game out again as *Alien Space*. This was soon followed by *Star Wars* (predating, and no relation to the movie.) All of these games simulate ship-to-ship combat. Unfortunately the Zocchi games are two-dimensional; *Star Wars* was the first three-dimensional game. The success of these games inspired the release of many space ship models (in lead and plastic), some of which are quite good. Recently, since "Star Trek" is now public domain, a revised version of the *Star Trek* game has been released by Lou Zocchi.

Miniatures representing human and alien individuals are relatively recent. The only rules for individual combat that I know about are in *StarGuard*. I know of no magazines devoted to science fiction miniatures. Figures and ship models can be gotten from:

Lou Zocchi, 7604C Newton Drive, Biloxi MS 39532 (rules and plastic ships)

The David Casciano Co., 314 Edgley Ave., Glenside PA 19038 (rules, figures, ships, boardgames)

McEwan Miniatures, 840 West 17th South, Salt Lake City UT 84104 (rules, figures, and ships)

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Role-playing games are another new phenomenon, dating from late 1974 and the release of "Dungeons and Dragons" by Tactical Studies Rules. RP games are unique in that there need not be any victor, or everyone in the game can "win". The enjoyment of the game is in the playing and usually it matters not exactly what happens. The idea behind such a game is that each player creates and controls one or more characters; the object of the game is to advance the character in power, skill, and riches without getting him killed. Usually one person acts as the Game Master and sets up the game environment (which may be a dungeon, a city, an island, continent, or even an entire planet, star system or galaxy.) The players create their characters (or use characters from previous games) and bring them into the environment.

The players are allowed to do pretty much as they please, with the Game Master determining the results of their actions. He also springs surprises (in the form of monsters to fight or situations to solve) and gives them rewards for their successes (or in some cases, their failures.) Rewards take the form of treasures, special abilities or equipment, or "experience points" used to advance the character toward his ultimate goal.

When played right, these are the closest to real fantasy gaming. The principal fantasy games of this class are "Dungeons and Dragons" and "Empire of the Petal Throne" from Tactical Studies Rules; "Tunnels and Trolls" by Flying Buffalo; and "Rune Quest" from the Chaosium. Science fictional versions are "Metamorphosis Alpha" from Tactical Studies Rules, "Starfaring" from Flying Buffalo, and "Traveller" from Game Designer's Workshop. There is even one based on *Watership Down*, called "Bunnies and Burrows" by Fantasy Games.

Magazines to look into are

THE SPACE GAMER (see above)

THE DRAGON, Tactical Studies Rules, P. O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, Wisc. 53147

ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS, Lee Gold, 2471 Oak St., Santa Monica, CA 90405 (an APA; $0.75 plus postage for non-contributors)

THE WILD HUNT, Mark Swanson, 71 Beacon St., Arlington MA 02174 (another APA)

THE LORDS OF CHAOS, n. c. Shapero, 200 Davey Glen Rd. #420, Belmont CA 94002 (another APA)

THE DUNGEONEER, Anshell Miniatures, 1226 North Russell Ave., Oak Park IL 60302 (a very good fanzine)

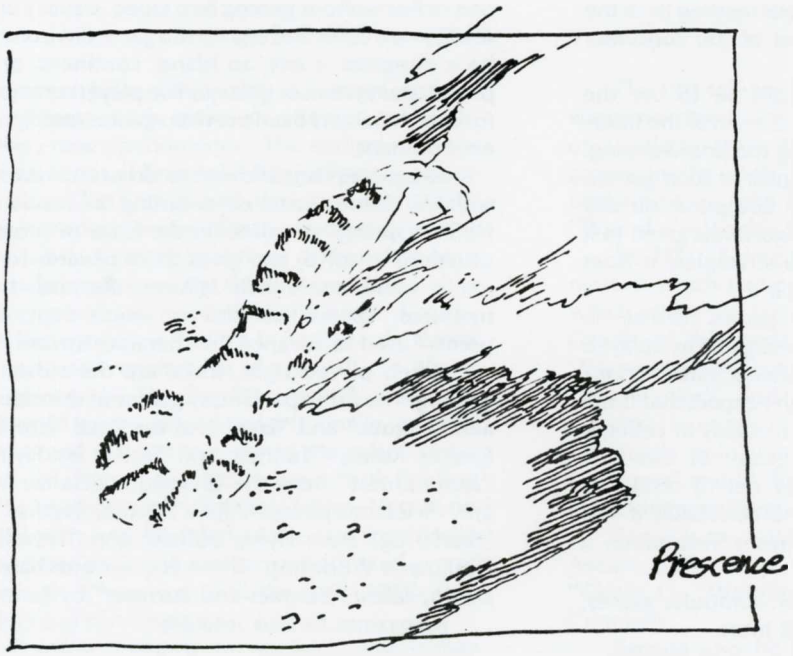
UNDERGROUND ORACLE, Lou Nisbet, 206 Morrison St., Edinburgh EH3 8EA, SCOTLAND (another good fanzine)

A FINAL NOTE

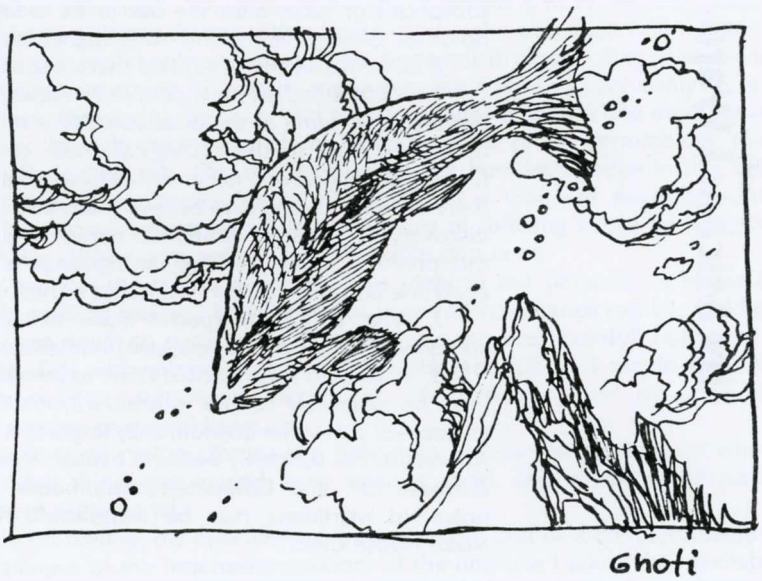
Science fiction and fantasy games are BIG business now, so almost any hobby shop which carries adult games will have a few game and magazine titles in stock. There are also several mail order firms, most of which advertise in one or more of the magazines already mentioned.

Jeff Pimper is a fan of both science fiction/fantasy and strategic wargaming/boardgaming. By day he can be found in and among piles of software at Lawrence Livermore Labs and by night he can be found most anywhere human imagination can take him. He also deals games, and will undertake to supply the major part of what you need (address supplied upon request.)

FOUR VISIONS



Corridors and Vistas



by **JACK GAUGHAN**

SOME NOTES ON THE THEORY OF CONSERVATION OF SPECIES

by Michael Ward

The Book of Genesis tells us that Adam named all the birds and beasts and fishes, but it does not tell us what names he gave them. As the years have passed, particular names have gone into and out of style. Few in number are the female children of today named Prudence or Patience; fewer still will be the children of the next decade named Revolutionella Nine or Mistersoul. Names are abundant, and a name, once used, has been diminished not a whit; it remains and maintains an ever-available repository of itself. It would be possible (though somewhat impractical) for all the children born next year to be named Leslie without in any way depleting the store of Leslie names *qua* names.

Not so the species named by the First Man (and, in next year's translations, First Woman.) A modern theory of the origin of the world, based on Creationist principles, must hold that the Darwinian theories of species evolution, though they may appear to explain apparent divergences in biological development, cannot tell the complete story. If the multiplication of species is due to varying responses (over the long term, on a species-wide basis) to changing conditions, why then does paleo-biology indicate that so many species have died out rather than change to fit the new environment? The ardent Darwinist will claim these species became over-specialized, or the conditions simply changed too fast for the evolutionary principle to do its work. He will hold that all of these cases are ultimately proof of the maxim, "Mutate or Die." But the truth is far different, and will be stated as follows:

The total number of species is a fixed and unchanging constant. Only the names and faces change through evolution.

(As a corollary, we can state that as subspecies or races are created or die out, other subspecies or races must die out or be created. In similar fashion, this principle likewise holds for Genus, Family, and other higher levels of biological classification.)

It immediately becomes clear that some of our most basic questions have obvious answers:

1. What killed off the dinosaurs? Answer: The proliferation of small mammalian species required that some of the dinosaurs become extinct. As time went on, the rest died because of broken links in the ecological chain caused by the departure of their co-generians. It does not, however, necessarily follow that absolutely all the dinosaurs are gone; in fact there are many reasons to believe that some amphibious species may still survive. The recent discovery by Japanese fishermen (which was, sadly, thrown back into the ocean) supports this premise, as do the regular sightings of the Loch Ness "Monster". And, of course, everyone is familiar with P. M. Roget's Thesaurus.

2. What about the species made extinct by Man? Answer: Man has also provided an equivalent number of new, semi-human subspecies, such as Lascars and Dacoits.

3. Where do recombinant DNA experiments fit into the scheme of things? Answer: We must be extremely careful in arbitrarily creating new life forms, lest we wake up one day to discover that some economically important animal, such as the Mailman or the Gas Station Attendant, has suddenly become extinct. Remember what happened when we created the Burmese cat, and Competent Automobile Mechanics disappeared. Attempts to breed polyploid marijuana may be responsible for the near-disappearance of Doctors Who Make House Calls.

Where does this leave us, then, in the study of biology? For one thing, it puts a limit on the number of 3-ring looseleaf binders necessary to hold the classification guidebooks. For another, it gives us some measure of hope in our eternal war with insects—the knowledge that the number of remaining undiscovered species, although large, is finite. (This will please some entomologists and distress others.)

Finally we can, through the process of analogy, apply this principle to other fields. Particle physicists, for example, will be happy to know that the remaining number of undiscovered particles is finite (though very large), as is the number of different descriptive characteristics (such words as charm, strangeness, truth, beauty, quality, dialect, and imperturbability) which must be used to classify them. Organic chemists and hallucinogenic drug dealers will be unhappy to hear that only a finite (though very large) number of chemical compounds can be created. And science fiction book collectors will be glad to hear that only a finite (though very large) number of different books can be written, though there does not seem to be any limit to the number of editions (with different titles and new cover paintings) that some of these can go through.

by

Terry

Garey

At a certain point in the finale of his superb stage show, Professor Tai King Lee, an 83 year old Chinese-American magician, climbs up on a spindly chair and poises above a pile of shattered plate glass. He has just shown the astounded audience his ability to do a jig on the deadly shards that were splintered before their eyes only minutes before, and he has just announced that he proposes to jump.

"My weight is one hundred twenty-three pounds," he declares. "If I jump down, my weight must be increased. This is due to law of physics." He takes several slow, deep breaths, spreads his arms, hesitates just for a moment . . . and jumps, certain that the audience understands the enormity of what he is doing.

And indeed they do! They are overwhelmed by the loud crunching sound as his feet hit the glass. The sight of that tiny old man dressed in scarlet robes and his physical demonstration of a scientific principle for the sake of their entertainment wows the crowd each and every time, and awes them a little, too.

It certainly awes me. Professor Lee has offered many times to teach other magicians how to do the glass trick (for a price, of course) and no one has ever taken him up on it. They understand the laws of physics and the habits of plate glass only too well. The Professor jumps, and we watch, fascinated.

As well as human daring, the science of physics has always fascinated me. At an early age I was intrigued with the idea that there were laws that governed the world around me, laws that governed light and sound, the structure of objects and their behavior, the directions things must fall and what happens when they get there. I loved the idea that the universe was an orderly, sane place with consistent patterns and a reason for everything. It gave me, an untidy disorderly person by nature, the comfortable feeling that the earth was solid underneath my feet, and that, allowing for the vagaries of humankind, the universe would continue on for ever and ever, long after my bones had nourished some nice trees and flowers.

I was not able to pursue this in school, however, due to unfortunate circumstances. My family moved around a good deal and I got caught between two schools of math (SMSG and Traditional Algebra), both of which hated each other and could not be reconciled. In high school I used to hide underneath the windows of the physics room and listen to the lectures and then get a friend of mine in home room the next morning to explain what he could. Looking back, I think that though he tried his best, he didn't really understand or like what he was learning, and I became very confused, and gave up the notion of trying to improve my knowledge in college. I took English, like a good girl.

Finally, one day a few years ago, I found someone who was willing to sit down and explain what he could to me. We had been going to dinner with a friend of his, who also majored in physics, and I was feeling very stupid because I could only understand about one fourth of what they were saying. I enjoyed their conversations, being something of a science groupie, but I wanted very badly to grasp at least a little more of what they were saying. So Ctein and I sat down after breakfast one morning and, bravely, he started walking me through the history of the science, some of the terminology that was used frequently, and some basic concepts. Oh, my! I began to see how knowledge in the field has been slowly built up over the years, theories being put forth on a trial and error basis, in one year and out the next. I began to be dimly aware how one way of thinking could be thought to be the absolute last word on the subject, and nothing but laughable dust later.

I gained insights on how the mind progresses, how ideas of our physical world are coloured by our religious and philosophical feelings, how tenacious universal acceptance can be, and how fleeting.

After a while we got down to particles. And there I saw the slow, painful journey of the human mind as it has had to deal with things more and more abstract. Just as I would think that we had gotten down to the smallest unit, Ctein would say, "And then so and so came up with the idea that . . . " and another one would pop up.

I was full of questions, of course. Things like how does nuclear fission fiss, and what is a quark and why, how did these things get named, how small is small, and where do physicsts get their ideas? It must have been quite a trial.

Hours later, my mind reeling, my eyes alight with enthusiasm and new concepts, feeling that I had at last gotten a tiny glimpse of the innermost workings of the universe I asked the inevitable question, "Where can I go to see a particle?" Ctein looked at me blankly for a moment and then croaked that no one had ever seen any of these things, they were too small to reflect light. It was all just theory and experiments.

I was stunned. I thought I had grasped at last the bones of the universe and I really didn't even have a hair. And I suddenly realized how human a science is physics.

"Ah," I said, really quite awed after all, "so physics is really a matter of Faith."

CHARMED, I'M SURE, BUT ISN'T IT A LITTLE STRANGE?

(A Poet Looks at Physics)

ON THE DEMON LOVER

The Metamorphosis of a Myth

by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro

From the birth of human consciousness, there has been a strong inward drive to transcend that consciousness, and the two most potent methods from earliest time right down to the present have been through sexual and religious experiences. That these two sorts of experiences have been linked either sympathetically (as in Dionysian worship) or antipathetically (as in most post-Council of Nicea Christianity) through the centuries reveals the similarity of their force and effect on the human psyche.

In some cases, where the identification is between these two experiences, the sexual act develops religious significance, and the impact of such acts gains the added efficacy of worship. Tantric Hindu practices are the most obvious of these techniques. The various temple carvings showing an astounding variety of copulative acts, though shocking to most European and American viewers, are considered as reverent and holy to the devout Hindu as a stained glass window of Christ in Glory is to a sincere Roman Catholic.

Most western religions of the past fifteen hundred years or so have followed an opposite course to that of Tantric Hinduism, by labeling sexual energy as evil, destructive, ungodly and dangerous with the unstated intent of establishing a monopoly on psychically transcendant experiences. Unfortunately, enforced sexual denial has a way of becoming excessive, so that more and more the religious expression is colored by repressed sexuality. That most rigorously chaste and austere nun, St. Theresa of Avila, in her writings of her mystical experiences, uses curiously coitive language to describe the angel who pierced her with the Holy Spirit, and the ecstatic spasm that was the result of his visitation is clearly orgasmic.

For the majority of worshippers, however, instead of angelic visitations, their flesh was tormented with devils, with incubi and succubi and other unwholesome manifestations of unexpressed and unadmitted desires. The most obvious examples of this are the many representations of the Temptation of St. Anthony, in which the poor hermit is surrounded by every loathsome and unnatural creature that the individual artist could invent. For the modern viewer, there is very little tempting about that horrific display, but for the deeply repressed, when pleasure is completely denied, then ugliness and opression become attractive, even desireable.

It is an easy step from the externalization of needs to their personification. Echoes of Greek and Roman pagan deities were strong in Europe long after the rise of Christianity/Catholicism began to put its stranglehold on the psyches of the populace. Pan and Priapus were not forgotten, but as part of the restrictions that were put on the minds of their worshippers, they began to be expressed through their darker, negative sides, and to meld together into one being: a wild thing, animal-like and cloven-hooved like Pan, sexually potent and insatiable like Priapus. As a final, malific touch, Christian religion insisted on giving this new, hybrid deity all the attributes that were considered to be the opposite of those that were God-like. Partaking of the negative aspects of Hades, god of the Greek and Roman underworld, only in his role as the one who punishes those who have done great wrong, this strange conglomerate creation was labeled inaccurately as Satan, and in what was surely one of the most psychically tragic transformations, the most beautiful, most perfect fallen angel became the Sabbat Goat.

Satan became the Lord of the World, or, more accurately, the Flesh, and his characteristics were fleshly in the extreme. In art of the Medieval period, he is depicted as beastial, overpowering and adult while angels traditionally were elevated, ephemeral and pre-pubescent. Some of this was associated with the glorification of virginity and the denial of genuine intimacy, but most of it was rooted in the determination of the Church to disparage all exalted states of consciousness other than the one it provided. At the height of this phase, extreme brutalization of the sexual act was common, and devout couples were provided with shifts with holes in the appropriate places so that intercourse could take place without any contact other than genital. Forbidden by the Church to take any pleasure in sexual acts, and reducing such acts to a level even below mere physical satisfaction, the starved psyches of the worshippers naturally looked elsewhere for sustenance.

Leaving aside the entire question of Devil-worship (or of reverse Catholicism, which is what it really is) in Europe, and dealing simply with the new stereotypes that had displaced the Roman and Hellenic ones, this personification of sexuality, the Demon Lover had been born with his step-parent, Satan. Since sexual energy could be sublimated but not denied, any manifestation of it was regarded as external and diabolical, an alien force that overpowered its victim, possessing the victim to such an extent that the victim was unable to resist in any way. The ramifications of making a person the victim of his or her sexual experiences were vast, and still with us to this day. By dehumanizing sexual expressions, Christianity gave a tacit approval to all the more degrading aspects of sexual acts, at the same time removing responsibility from the perpetrators of such acts by making them the victim of their own repressed desires. This sado-masochistic relationship was fostered by the attitude of the formidably patriarchal structure of European society as well as by the guilt-based structure of the Catholic Church. Only in such a psychologically distorted environment could Torquemada say that the erections he experienced while watching female witches being tortured was proof of their witchcraft.

During this time there were, of course, rebels who attempted to achieve some sort of reasonable balance in their lives, but they were the few and much of their supposed balance has an overtone of hysteria. The Courts of Love admitted sexuality but exalted it (at least in theory) by expressing it only in art, so that it would not be contaminated by reality. The other and more extreme reaction was in orgiastic travesties that were identified as Devil-worship, or the deliberate and meticulous reversal of the Catholic Mass. If one is to believe the confessions of witches, most of which were obtained by torture, the sexual experience during such a gathering was no more enjoyable than it was on any other occasion. The Sabbats tended to be rough and explosive, more a frantic letting off of steam than a pleasant escape. There are some questions about the true extent of such events, given the method of obtaining information, and there is reason to believe that much of what has been called the wide-spread Satanic cult of Medieval Europe existed primarily in the minds of the monks who were determined to stamp it out.

Yet there is no getting around it—sexual experiences are often pleasant, and in time the Demon Lover became less of a ravening beast and more of a polished seducer. The courtly Satanism of the French aristrocrats during the time of Louis XIV was for the most part an excuse for debauchery. This is not the case where Madame de Montespan[1] is concerned, since hers was a far more serious and deadly group. In general, however, the Satanic pursuits of the Seventeenth Century were part of the expected behavior of the licentious court. It is true that open lewdness is not much of an improvement over the unadmitted salaciousness of total denial, but it was a predictable reaction, given the changing social and political face of Europe. In the wake of this change the personification of sexual gratification divided, one form becoming even more beastial and alien, the other form more apparently civilized and recognizably human, and in these two forms, in literature at least, the Demon Lover is still with us.

The great fad in Gothic literature swept Europe in the last part of the Eighteenth and the first part of the Nineteenth Centuries, and from it came some of the finest fantasies ever set on paper. The first major success, at least in England, was Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, which opened the genre to critical examination. There is little of the Demon Lover in the tale, though there is a villain who is the victim of his own sexuality: Manfred, driven slightly crazed by the death of his son plots to murder his wife and marry Isabella. The rest of the supernatural elements are of the wildly picturesque variety. For Ann Radcliffe, all the seemingly supernatural agents are revealed with what passed for rational explanations. Her novels made several contributions to the Gothic traditions, and developed what had previously been a minor plot device—the sinister foreign nobleman (in her case usually an Italian) who lured her heroines into peculiar, not to say fantastic, settings. This seducer had one character of the Demon Lover, in that he could confuse and dominate the will of his chosen victim.

So far the use of sexuality in these novels was confined to the sort where the villains were suspected of practicing some nameless perversity and the heroes and heroines were models of purity. That began to change in 1795 when Matthew Gregory Lewis published *The Monk*, which abounds in sinister religious types, a foreign location—in this case Spain, though most of the spellings and names are Italian—transvestites, incest, and those other sensationalistic elements that quickly became the mainstay of the Gothic novel. The main character of the novel is the monk Ambrosio who is thought to be pure but who turns out to be wholly consumed by lust. This was a transitional phase between the villain who is the victim of demonic sexuality and the knowledgeable Demon Lover of later stories.

A few Europeans, notably Alexis Tolstoy and E. T. A. Hoffmann, were exploring Demon Lover themes, but in general chose to picture that character as a kind of malevolent ghost or psychically voracious presence, and very unlike many of the later interpretations of the Demon Lover.

In 1819, at one of the high points of horror literature, two tales emerge, and it is here that the literary Demon Lover makes his major divergence, for it was in this year that Dr. John Polidori published *The Vampyr* and Thomas Peckett Prest[2] published *Varney the Vampire or The Feast of Blood*. Of these two, the Polidori is the more enduring story, and was the product of that remarkable evening by Lake Geneve in the summer of 1816 when Lord Byron suggested that everyone in the party should write a ghost story. *The Vampyr* was Polidori's contribution, but it has been wholly overshadowed by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus*. It is interesting to note that about the time these two remarkable tales were being written, Matthew Gregory Lewis visited the Shelley/Byron menage on Lake Geneva.

In *Varney the Vampire,* the vampire is quite monstrous, a frightening, un-human creature that attacks his victims, tearing out their throats and compulsively destroying them. To modern readers, Varney seems to hasve more in common with werewolves than with vampires. He is compelled to do terrible acts that often leave him as horrified as his audience, acts which he cannot comprehend. He is a victim of his overwhelming urge, and in turn makes victims of those whom he assaults. Those he desires are mutilated and killed, and the sexual aspects, such as they are, are those of rape, not seduction and are now regarded as part of the werewolf tradition. In this, Varney is like the older form of the personification of sexual energy—he is possessed by a force that is incomprehensible, compulsive, evil, ugly, and destructive of Demon Lover and victim alike.

This is not the case in Polidori's *The Vampyr*. The anti-hero of the title is quite dangerous and compelling, but he is not the rabid monster that Varney is. John Polidori used more than a little of the personality of his employer, Lord Byron, for the model of Lord Ruthven, the seducing, destructive, dominating vampire. But horrible as Ruthven is, he is not a ravisher, and, more importantly in terms of later literary development, he is an aristocrat. Like all later vampires, Lord Ruthven knows precisely what he is and what he wants. He is not overwhelmed as Varney is. Ruthven controls and uses the force within himself to satisfy his admitted desires. Because of his aristocratic position, he has social power and can command respect. His victims are courted and surrender to him in spite of theselves. This is the later expression of the Demon Lover, in which the acceptance of this particular sexuality brings necessarily guilty pleasure, and the price exacted for that pleasure is death.

The equating of death and sexuality was nothing new. It was a common theme in Romanesque and Medieval literature, and certain aspects of this unfortunate bonding can be found in the plays of classic Greece. Sexual gratification, being fleshly, was not only sinful, but part of the lure of Satan, and therefore condemned the participants to death and damnation. The revival of this attitude during the Gothic fad contributed heavily to the morbid streak in the literature, poetry, and graphic art of the Romantic period. The bed of pleasure was often compared with the tomb, and orgasm with death. The transcendant experience of sexual satisfaction was identified not just with religious expression, but specifically with dying—to be sexually active was to end life.

Yet vampires, the more lover-like of the Demon Lovers, do not, in the usual sense, kill. Their victims are contaminated by them so that rather than die and be liberated from the fleshly experience of sexuality, they share the characteristics of their seducers, and take on their powers as well as their needs. All nature of normally forbidden sexual expressions are possible to the vampire. J. Sheridan le Fanu's *Carmilla* is probably the best-known example of this aspect of the Demon Lover, who in this tale is personified in an attractive, moody, capricious young woman who is in pursuit of another, quite self-contained young woman. This was in large part a response to the extreme repression of Victorian society. Until that time, people were allowed to have sexual feelings provided they denied them and put the energy into religious expressions. In Victoria's time, it was finally acknowledged that men, lamentably, did have sexual needs and had, upon occasion, to vent them. Women, on the other hand, were not allowed to have sexual feelings of any kind. Prior to that time, it had been assumed that women were far more sexual than men and had to be controlled. With the advent of Victorianism, even that demeaning attitude was ruled out. Thus, when the seducing vampire, the embodiment of voluptuousness, is a woman, expressing needs that were known at that time to be wholly unnatural to women, then it is another woman she seduces, passing on her fatal taint of physical pleasure—in vampire fiction, when homosexuality is expressed, it is, for the most part, lesbian.

Another forbidden side of sexuality, pedophilia, occurs occasionally in vampiric literature. In *The Sad Story of a Vampire* by Stanislaus Eric, Count Stenbock, the vampire, quite traditionally is an exiled aristocrat, and his oddly willing victim a young boy. Children rarely figure in Demon Lover stories, and when they do, as in a few of Saki's tales, they are more often than not the Demon not the prey; in one case the Demon is a werewolf, almost a feral child, who, though aware of what he is and therefore more like the vampire, is also apparently helpless to change and therefore within the werewolf tradition.

Robert Louis Stevenson brought a scientific touch to the Demon Lover lore in *Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde,* introducing a man-made potion that induced the werewolf-like change in the saintly Dr. Jeckyll, harking back to the first state of the Demon lover again, the overwhelming, possessing, violent aspect of sex; and, true to the canon, Dr. Jeckyll is not an exiled aristocrat, but a commoner in his own country. He is as much a victim of his Demon-self as those with whom he carouses, rapes, and murders. In his Dr. Jeckyll identity, he is unaware of the enormity of his crimes, and horrified to learn that his alter-ego is capable of acts that he himself regards with the greatest revulsion. Both the good Dr. Jeckyll and the evil Mr. Hyde are destroyed by the latter, accepting death as a fitting resolution of the demands of unacceptable lusts.

The trend that had begun with Polidori, which suggested a religious component to the Demon Lover, reached its height in the vampire tale *ne plus ultra,* Bram Stoker's *Dracula,* the novel to which all previous stories are compared and the standard by which all subsequent novels and shorter works are measured. In earlier works the Demon Lover had been more Demon than Lover, but in Stoker's vision, the two aspects were balanced in a way never successfully attempted before then. To enhance this impact, Stoker came full circle, imbuing the vampiric experience with religious parallels, so that the seduction becomes communion, which is the transcendent moment of the Mass.

Like Polidori, Stoker used his employer as a rather remote model for his anti-hero, but unlike Polidori's abrasive and unhappy relationship with Byron, Stoker's dealings with the great actor Sir Henry Irving, for whom he was manager for almost twenty years, were affectionate and cordial. Some of this personal feeling is apparent in the character of Dracula, for no matter how dire his acts, how disquieting his behavior, there is an underlying sense of humanity in this greatest of vampires, and from that humanity comes a large part of the fascination with the novel. Dracula is true to the formula: He is an exiled nobleman, even in his own ruined castle; he is completely aware of what he is and has little or no feelings of guilt for what he does. His particular sexual taint is very strong, as evinced by the recurring references to the voluptuousness of the vampire women, and Lucy's transformation from pure submissive virgin to fully awakened sexuality after her ineffective death.

At the time of the greatest triumph of the literature of the Demon Lover, the old objections to it were raised (it isn't godly) as well as the new one of a technological age (it isn't scientific). With both these condemnations being leveled at the genre form, it is not surprising that critical opinion went against the field, dismissing it as trivial and lumping such works with the worst of penny dreadfuls and pulp fiction. To make matters worse, the emerging philosophies of psychiatry began to point out all those subliminal elements that had made the Demon Lover so attractive, and rather than deal with such desires, denial once again took over, this time in the name of science rather than in the name of religion.

Yet in spite of such tactics, the Demon Lover survives in art, in books, in film, and in the secret places of the mind, where respresive social training still persists in enforcing the belief that sexual gratification is something that is done to a person, not an integral part of a person. So long as the acculturation process insists on externalizing sexuality, the Demon Lover, in all his forms, will continue to haunt us. There is hope, of a kind, however. It has been my own experience that it is possible to make the Demon Lover not an adversary, but a friend.

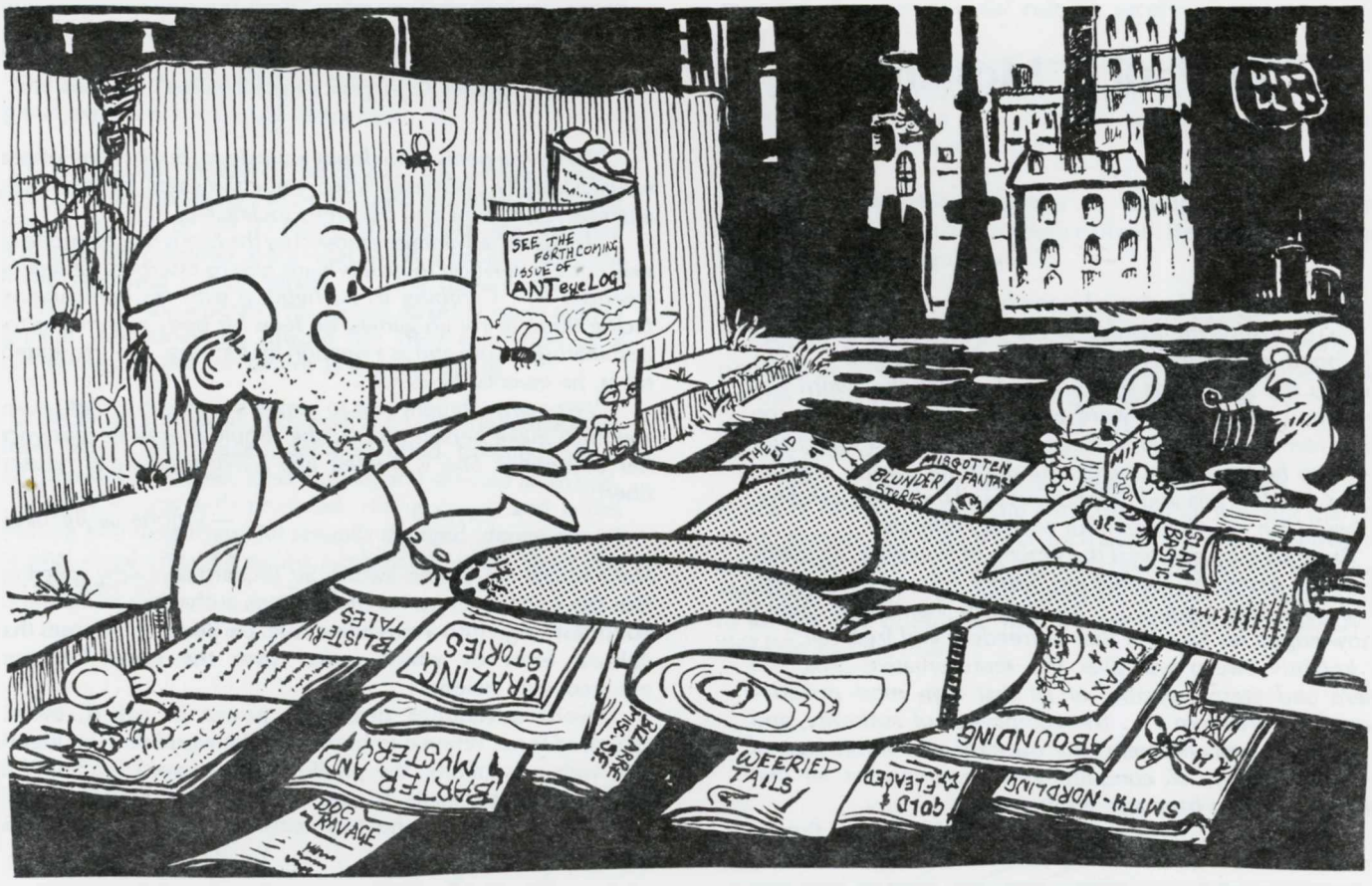
1. Françoise-Athénaïs de Rochechouart, Marquise de Montespan (1641-1707), mistress of Louis XIV from 1667-1679, was part of the coven of La Voisin, who practiced various Satanic rites, one of which involved the ritual sacrifice of a 13 or 14-year-old girl by crucifying her upside down and bleeding her to death over Madame de Montespan's naked body. Infanticide was also practiced. The coven was discovered and broken up as a result of the Affair of the Poisons in 1679. Madame de Montespan eventually retired to a convent, where she rose to the rank of Superior.

2. Or possibly James Malcolm Rhymer

Chelsea Quinn Yarbro is the author of a number of books in a wide variety of fields including science fiction, horror, mystery, and the Opera. Her recently published book Hotel Transylvania *might be described as a vampire/horror fantasy/gothic/historical novel . . . it features a gentleman of the persuasion described above. (A prequel is due out in a few months and three other books in the series are in various stages of completion.) Ms. Yarbro may be found weekend evenings at the Magic Cellar, 600 Turk in San Francisco, where she reads palms and Tarot cards.*

MAN IN THE STREET READS

Pretentious SCIENCE FICTION *Quarterly*



ACT NOW! FILL OUT THIS SUBSCRIPTION BLANK, AND SEND IT IN A STAMPED, SEALED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, ALONG WITH LOTS AND LOTS OF MONEY, TO

MICHAEL WARD, P.O. BOX 1496
CUPERTINO, CA 95014

please make checks payable to Michael J. Ward

cut along this line

or don't; see if I care

YES! Please put me on your list! Here's my money (I enclose $1 for a sample issue/ $5 for a four-issue subscription). Hurry! I can hardly wait for my first issue to arrive!

NAME: _____

ADDR: _____

_____

_____

SEND MONEY NOW!

KISS THE BLOOD OFF MY SWORD

Dominance-Questing Through Gor

PART ONE

By Paul E. Moslander

"The history of the Sword is the history of humanity . . . He, she, or it—for the gender of the Sword varies—has been worshipped with priestly sacrifices as a present god . . . To surrender the Sword was submission; to break the Sword was degradation. To kiss the Sword was, and in places still is, the highest form of oath and homage . . . The Sword Killed and cured; the hero when hopeless fell upon his Sword; and the heroine, like Lucretia and Calphurnia, used the blade standing. The Sword cut the Gordian knot of every difficulty.

"From days immemorial the Queen of Weapons, a creator as well as a destroyer, 'carved out history, formed the nations, and shaped the world.' . . . In knightly hands the Sword acknowledged no Fate but that of freedom and free-will . . . The knightly Sword was ever the representative idea, the present and eternal symbol of all that man most prized—courage and freedom . . . the companion of authority, and the token of commandment; the outward and visible sign of force and fidelity, of conquest and dominion, of all that Humanity wants to have and wants to be.

—Sir Richard Burton

John Norman's Gor fantasia descends from at least two weighty traditions. First strides the sword adventure.

Fatter credentials for the brandished blade's archetypal power could not be offered than those trumpeted by Burton. The symbol keeps currency. Even as gunpowder was distancing the sword as an effective armament, Walter Scott's historicals and William Morris' pseudo-epics reacted, spawning the sword-romance.

"Under the Moons of Mars" concocted an odd melange of scientistic mythology and antique swashbuckling. John Carter's net of glittering steel kept supremacy over the radium pistol.

Conan first thrust into print the year *after* the Shadow's twin .45's first barked out their message of industrial revolution. We know which figure generates more boodle today.

Now, it seems fashionable to wink and nudge and make rude observations when men prize their swords. I believe this a classic Freudian phallacy. When push came to poke, Freud viewed the male member neither as an organ of drainage nor as an instrument for psychophysiological pleasure. He perceived the *lingam* as an aggressive weapon. As a sword.

"To have a penis is no doubt a privilege, but it is one whose value naturally decreases when the child loses interest in its excretory functions and becomes socialized . . .

"The great advantage enjoyed by the boy is that his mode of existence in relation to others leads him to assert his subjective freedom . . . Climbing trees, fighting with his companions, facing them in rough games, he feels his body as a means for dominating nature and as a weapon for fighting . . . He undertakes, he invents, he dares . . .

"(Woman) is taught that to please she must try to pleasure, she must make herself object; she should therefore renounce her autonomy. She is treated like a live doll and is refused liberty.

—Simone de Beauvoir

Here squats the phallic sword. Sir Richard shrewdly specified that the gender varies. He did not lock authority's companion, conquest's sign into a masculine role. De Beauvoir exposes that cultural error by which power over the world becomes equated with maleness.

Sword adventures deal with power in naked, blood-spattered form. When dominion over the world remains identified with masculinity, the phallus acts as sword symbol. This pregnant image leads to the second—and kindred—great tradition underlying John Norman's *oeuvre*: sadomasochistic pornography.

"The best pornography has certainly not been written for profit, but was produced from a deep and compelling social sense, from the same impulse to communicate which is the mainspring of all art.

—John Glassco

Ahem. Delicate territory, this. In times past erotica-busters promoted anti-sensual virtue. Nowadays moral voices loudly oppose the exploitation and degradation of women. Witness Harlan Ellison's understanding with the current Worldcon committee, outlawing "sexist entertainment."

I am not sure if he means Kansas City's lewd yuks symposium, or their Masquerade stripteuse, or the road show Slave Boys of Gor. Whichever, he remains sister under the skin to the prozine lettercol writer who protested the Fahfrd and the Gay Mouser tableau at '72's Worldcon. Both must be respected for their Calvinism.

Fortunately, we can tread lightly. Susan Sontag approaches libertine lit not as "as item in social history" or as a manifestation of sexual *malais*, but as " a minor but interesting modality or convention within the arts."

"The fact that the site of narrative is an ideal topos *disqualifies neither pornography nor science fiction from being literature. Such negations of real, concrete, three-dimensional social time, space, and personality—and such 'fantastic' enlargements of human energy—are rather the ingredients of another kind of literature, founded on another mode of consciousness.*

"For the critic, the proper question is not the relationship between the book and 'the world' or 'reality' . . . but the complexities of consciousness iteslf, as the medium through which a world exists at all . . .

She analyzes Pauline Réage's *Story of O*, revealing Zen-ish religious experience in sexual masochism.

"O is an adept; whatever the cost in pain and fear, she is grateful for the opportunity to be initiated into a mystery. That mystery is the loss of self. O learns, she suffers, she changes. Step by step she becomes more what she is, a process identical with the emptying out of herself . . . the transcendance of personality . . . the woman who is given no other name than O progresses simultaneously toward her own extinction as a human being and her fulfillment as a sexual being.

O becomes a mystical nothing-thing by being kidnapped, chained, bared, felt, flogged, debased, pried, tongued, penetrated, branded, exposed, labia-ringed, and dressed as an owl. The imagery surges with phalluses, riding crops, and ladies flourishing branding irons. All sexually charged ideographs of force and dominion. All sword symbols. All seen from the victim's viewpoint.

This mastery of the culturally-approved objecthood that de Beauvoir has cited finds reflection in Norman's *Slave Girl of Gor*. In 437 pages, Judy Thornton, "a lovely college student and poetess," journeys to the center of her psyche to blossom as Slave Flower.

"I had grown free on Gor, though I wore a collar. Strange, collared, I was free. Uncollared I had been a true slave, a prisoner of a pathological culture, ascetic, mechanistic and twisted.

" 'I never knew I would meet a man who could lust for me and desire me so much,' I said, 'that he would keep me as a slave . . . You are a secret dream, which I scarcely dared dream, come true to me, Master . . . '

Andrea Dworkin confesses to having followed Susan Sontag's tack on O's transcendence of self. Her demur from that viewpoint applies equally to Gor.

"Story of O is a story of psychic cannibalism, demonic possession, a story which posits men and women as being at opposite poles of the universe—the survival of one dependent on the absolute destruction of the other. it asks, like many stories, who is the most powerful, and it answers: men are, literally over women's dead bodies.

"pornography, like fairy tale, tells us who we are. it is the structure of male and female mind, the content of our shared erotic identity, the map of each inch and mile of our oppression and despair. here we move beyond childhood terror. here the fear is clammy and real, and rightly so. here we are compelled to ask the real questions: why are we defined in these ways, and how can we bear it?

Indeed. Neither O's narrative nor Slave Flower's autobiography saw birth as social polemics or utopian tracts. They do not attempt to dictate women's proper role, imposing cerebral schemas from on high. In each, the author plucked a mode of consciousness from a shadowed cloakroom in his or her psyche. John Norman wrote from within just as truly as Réage.

" 'Who am I finally,' said Pauline Réage, 'if not the silent part of someone, the secret and nocturnal part which has never betrayed itself in public by a thought, word, or deed, but communicates through the subterranean depths of the imaginary with dreams as old as the world itself?' Whence came to me those oft-repeated reveries, those slow musings just before falling asleep, always the same ones, in which the purest and wildest love always sanctioned, or rather always demanded, the most frightful surrender, in which childish images of chains and whips added to constraint the symbols of constraint . . . I have never known how to tame my life. And yet it seemed indeed as though these strange dreams were a help in that direction. . . . Thus I learned at a very tender age that you should not spend the empty hours of the night building dream castles, nonexistent but possible, workable, where friends and relatives would be happy together (how fanciful!)—but that one could without fear build and furnish clandestine castles, on the condition that you people them with girls in love, prostituted by love, and triumphant in their chains.

—Pauline Réage

Submission glides hand in claw with dominance through the nightside of our souls. *The Book of Job* sings of surrender before the universe's unknowable caprices. Compassionate Gautama taught us to escape reincarnation's hellish cycle by extinguishing personal desire—by object-izing the self, in order to stay dead forever.

Swinburne found orgasmic bliss under the birch. Lawrence atoned for his sins against the Arabs with an annual flogging. Havelock Ellis detailed the auto-flagellation enjoyed by liberated suffragette Florrie.

Volition has its frightful uncertainties. Self-willed action contains not only anxiety, but disappointment. The raw strength demanded by autodeterminism cannot always be mustered. To go with the flow is the new watchword.

Submission has positive survival value. *Stress* seems the villain of the moment.

I know a woman whose ballet career and parental situation slowly shredded her wire-taut nerves. Now she goes around bright-eyed in joy, born again, having loaded the responsibility for her life into Christ's hands.

I've surrendered my soul into service of the awful majesty of the Federal Law. Thank God for the life of a Government lackey.

Sexually loaded, this submission is masochism.

"The film explains that most of the men who go to these houses are normal. The man I ride like a horse is incredibly important in Paris. He came to the studio because his maitresse told him to come. He didn't know a film was being made. She said, 'if you don't come you'll be punished.' He was in his 60's and very rich. While he was waiting, he did his stock market report.

—Bulle Ogier on "Maitresse"

"So the point about s-m is that it can, when necessary, help in individuation in the largest sense. For a moment of controlled self-divestitute the past can become vocal, atavistic urges be recognized and assimilated . . . S-m is not a mechanism for defense against, but rather of release for, culturally repressed tendancies.

—Gerald and Caroline Greene

The desire for dominion, as Sir Richard suggests, lies back among these urges along with the ardor of which Reage speaks. In the world of the Sword, if you wield it, Thou art God; if you bow before it, thou art Job.

The mind's dominance-submission mode-playing can be perfectly healthy. It can also turn pathologic.

"The individual who is a subject, who is himself, if he has the courageous inclination toward transcendence, endeavors to extend his grasp on the world; he is ambitious, he acts. But an inessential creature . . . cannot find self-realization in acts . . . habituated to seeing in him a superb being whom she cannot possibly equal, the woman who has not repressed her claim to humanity will dream of transcending herself with the sovereign subject. There is no other way out for her than to lose herself, body and soul, in him who is represented to her as the absolute, as the essential. Since she is anyway doomed to dependence, she will prefer to serve a god rather than obey tyrants . . . She chooses to desire her enslavement so ardently that it will seem to her the expression of her liberty; she will try to rise above her situation as inessential object by fully accepting it . . . she will humble herself to nothingness before him. Love becomes for her a religion.

—Simone de Beauvior

"It is said, in a Gorean proverb, that a man, in his heart, desires freedom, and that a woman, in her belly, yearns for love. The collar, in its way, answers both needs. The man is most free, owning the slave. He may do what he wishes with her. The woman, on the other hand, being owned, is institutionally and helplessly subject, in her status as slave, to the submissions of love.

—Slave Girl of Gor

Or institutionally object, as de Beauvoir has it. Thus the phenomenon of women rising to defeat ERA.

No sin dwells in the dominance-submission modes of consciousness. The bitter social evil that de Beauvoir and Dworkin protest lies in restricting one half the human race to one mode, surrender—while goading the other half to constant conquest. The arbitrary definition of either sex in terms of either mode constitutes sexism, not the modes.

Geoffrey Wagner calls *Jane Eyre* "a profoundly and healthily s-m fiction."

" . . . the major Bronte sisters were too intelligent to accept this male-imposed (Victorian) universe without question and went out to challenge it, on two planes. Both Heathcliff and Rochester, therefore, have to be—for their fictional, and theoretic, purposes—godlike yet satanic . . . For, if you overcome the Devil, you have no need (or little) of the God-figure when the latter is seen principally in terms of repression. Freed of such, the devil (as here, of sexual passion) can go to work.

"Rochester . . . sharpens her tools for her so that when she eventually meets St. John she can stand her ground and resist the moral blackmail—'Again the surprised expression crossed his face. He had not imagined that a woman would dare to speak so to a man.' Her love can now call her back to his side via the telepathic cry. Now they are truly equal and now she can say to him, 'I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you distained every part but that of the giver and protector.'

" . . . Rochester is the classic 'dominant.' Jane early reflects that his 'sternness has a power beyond beauty.' . . . at Thornfield she muses, 'it had a master; for my part, I liked it better.'

" . . . when she finally sees ((the blind and maimed Rochester)) we read 'it was my master, Edward Fairfax Rochester' . . . the 'sense of power' Jane had first felt over Rochester now makes it possible for her to be the submissive, the Helen Burns she had earlier envied, since he has accepted her as his intellectual equal.

Significantly, the damaged god is regaining his sight as the book ends, though he remains minus a hand.

"In Jane Eyre Charlotte depicted the complete equal. For when the wife is such with her husband as Jane was at the end with Rochester, she forms part of a mutual imagination and can create herself as submissive if she so desires and requires.

John Norman provides the extremes of domination and submission in Tarl Cabot and such women as Slave Flower. He avoids the creative partnership suggested for Jane and Rochester. The closest comes in *Imaginative Sex*, yet that stays coyly condescending:

" . . . love games are meant to be performed only between lovers, usually men and their wives. Without love there is not even fantasy, there is only exploitation and degradation . . . the important thing is to care for women, and love them.

"The man who truly abuses a woman is not a man. He is no more than the freak who abuses animals or children. Fantasy can be delicious; but reality must, on the whole, be where we live.

So much for collaboration of equals in "The She-Is-Forced To-Please-Him-As-A-Bound-Captive Fantasy." Males must protect their pets, and not break them.

Not that Norman cannot conceive of and enjoy a masculine-submissive role. Such scenarios as "The-Male-Livestock-Fantasy" indicate appreciation that men, too, can kneel. They need not clothe their psyches in female forms, such as Slave Flower, in order to savor sweet masochism. Yet, his rhetoric crackles with male dominance.

Also, the structure remains rigid. Whoever wields the sword keeps it. Modes of consciousness cannot alternate (unless it be for a frigid bitch of a free Gorean woman to become a rutting orgasm-machine once she finds her true slave nature.) The freedom inherent in bivalent sadomasochism, the freedom enjoyed by the author, who leaps from dominant persona to submissive, stays denied the characters in his novels.

"A person who is whipped or penetrated by another may be the other's master as well as his slave. The ambivalence of pain and pleasure, of humiliation and pride, enables the libertine to dominate any situation. Thus Juliette can transform into pleasure the same tortures that prostrate Justine. Fundamentally, the content of the experience if unimportant. The thing that counts is the subject's intention.

—Simone de Beauvoir

Collared Slave Flower, "free" in her surrender, and Tarl Cabot, "free" in his mastery of women and men with branding iron and sword, both lack the fluid liberty Wagner attributes to Jane and Rochester together, or which de Beauvoir credits Sade's Juliette with in her sovereign independence.

John Norman writes without the poetry native to Réage. He lacks the visionary strength of Sade. He suffers from Ayn Rand's incessant didacticism (and rather limited, black-white cosmology.) Yet he explores the dominant-submissive modes of consciousness thoroughly, to the limit of his tether.

Where his chain ends, there fructiful complexity begins.

Part Two of this essay, to appear in the Fall issue, will further explore, analyze, and codify Norman's universe. Or, as Mr. Moslander himself puts it, "Wonders . . . ! Beyond telling . . . ! Maslow on a golden cloud. Robert E. Howard. Specific criticism of the dom-sub relationship as not being as self-defining as Part One might lead one to think. One really long quote from Norman—that son-of-a-bitch soliloquy from Marauders' first pages, 'I wondered how men should live . . . '

QUOTE SOURCES

Burton, Sir Richard: *The Book of the Sword,* 1884; Barnes and Noble reprint 1972, pp. xi-xiii

de Beauvior, Simone: *The Second Sex,* 1952, Vintage Books 1974 translated by H. M. Pashley; pp. 315-316, 713, 714
"Must We Burn de Sade?", 1951, in *120 Days of Sodom and Other Writings,* by the Marquis de Sade; Grove Press paperback, 1967, p. 54

Dworkin, Andrea: *Woman Hating,* E. P. Dutton, 1974; pp. 53-54, 63

Glassco, John: quoted in *S-M: The Last Taboo,* p. 101

Greene, Gerald and Caroline: *S-M: The Last Taboo,* Grove Press paperback, 1974, p. 111

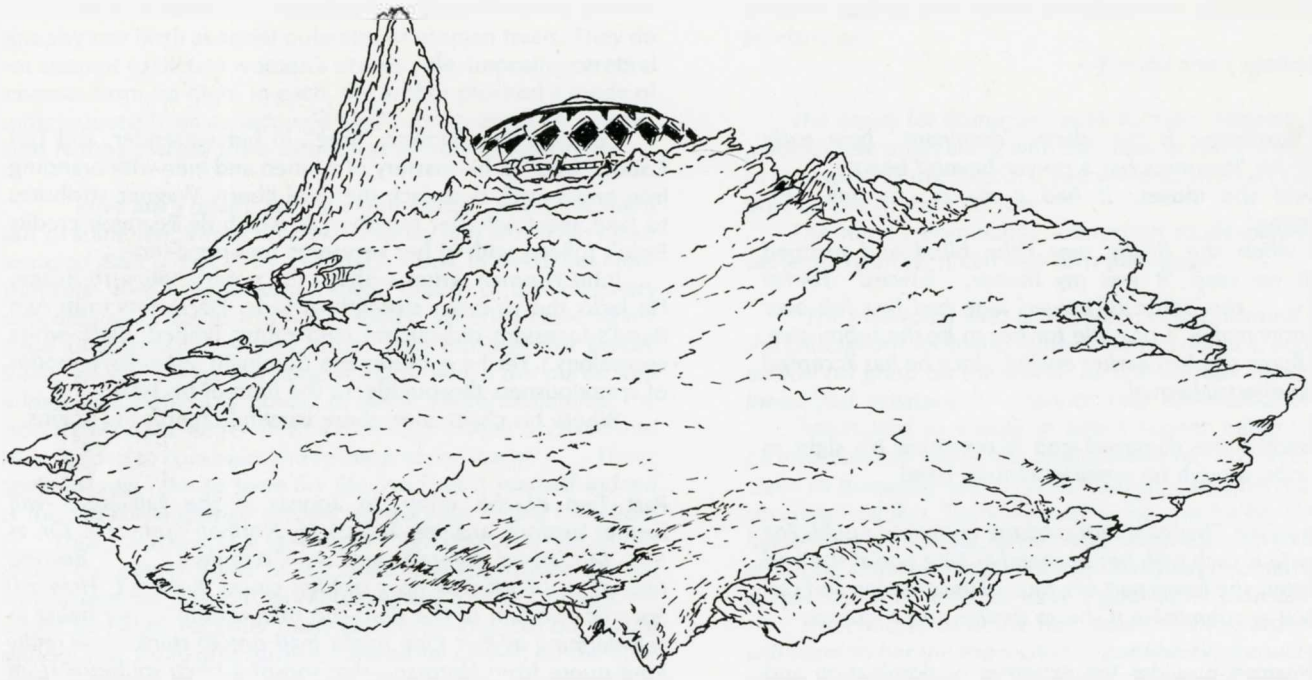
Ogier, Bulle: quoted in "Bulle Ogier: The Hottest Actress On the European Scene" by Judy Stone; Datebook section of the SAN FRANCISCO SUNDAY EXAMINER-CHRONICLE, Nov. 28, 1976, p. 24

Réage, Pauline (pseud): "A Girl In Love" in her *Return to the Chateau,* Grove Press paperback, 1971, pp. 10-11

Sontag, Susan: "The Pornographic Imagination", 1966, in her *Styles of Radical Will,* a Dell Delta Book, 1970, p. 35, 41, 46, 55, 58

Wagner, Geoffrey: *Five For Freedom, A Study of Feminism In Fiction,* Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1973, pp. 125-126, 131-133, 137

Norman, John (pseud): *Imaginative Sex,* DAW Books, 1974, p. 248
Slave Girl of Gor, DAW Books, 1977, pp. 180, 445
Tribesmen of Gor, DAW Books, 1976, p. 319



EDITORIAL BUSINESS

continued from page 2

Oh yes, money. Naturally you are thinking to yourselves, "What on earth does he plan to say about money?" Let me quote myself: "Send money. All you can. Borrow from your friends and neighbors. Steal from your goldfish. Sell your book collection, your locomotive, your maiden aunt. Cash in your Liberty Bonds (we won). Convert your books of Green Stamps. If you can't send cash send negotiable bonds. (Signed) Your friend, Michael Ward."

He says it much better than I ever could. Let us take a lesson from his words. I have already sent him most of my loose cash, much of it earmarked for the development of this magazine. Some of you, however, are not yet subscribers—O pitiful, hopeless wretches—and you had better realize that Time Is Running Out! New postal rates may force me to raise the subscription price. Bigger issues with more features (not to mention increases in the costs of paper and printing) may force further subscription rate increases. You can still subscribe now for up to eight issues ($US 10 or equivalent plus 10%). Do so. Send the money to P*S*F*Q, Box 1496, Cupertino CA 95014 USA. (Please make all checks payable to Michael J. Ward, *not* P*S*F*Q.)

Back to the program. In this issue we have serious essays, non-serious essays, a special science supplement, fine illustrations, and a letter column. The letters have been trimmed in places to fit the space available and to present only those parts deemed interesting to the general readership. The Editor makes occasional comments in a different typeface inside double parentheses, but, in general, the correspondents are allowed to speak for themselves. It is a reflection of my interest in railroads that the column is titled *"FAST MAIL"*. If I should happen to receive some particularly stupid letter it may wind up in the letter column supplement, to be known as *"HALF-FAST MAIL"*.

Last issue was printed on 70 lb Dello Opaque; this issue should be back to 60 lb. I would be interested in your opinions as to whether the extra expense of the 70 lb is worth it. Future plans include heavier cover stock, some two-color work, and halftones of various kinds. Stay tuned.

With the preliminaries out of the way, a short biography: Born in 1945, and still living. Began reading SF about age 12; did not get involved in fandom until about 1964 or so at the MIT SF Society. Helped compile and publish the MITSFS *Index to the SF Magazines, 1951-65*. (This volume is currently being handled, sold, and updated by the New England SF Association.) Published various fanzines, was a member of various APAs during the mid and late 60's. Moved to California in 1968; helped found PenSFA in that year. Published a West Coast science fiction newszine, WINNIE, 1969-71. In FAPA one year; dropped out due to total gafiation, 1971. Back into the science fiction mainstream beginning with Westercon 1976, MidAmeriCon 1976, and onwards. Began P*S*F*Q late 1977, first issue February 1978.

I'll be doing this magazine for the next couple of years (at least I plan to . . .) Paste-ups and production are by me. Likewise, I do my own typesetting, thanks to several people at Hewlett-Packard (including George Carey and Roger Robinson, with special thanks to Rich Webber who showed me how to run the typesetting computer.) Debbie Notkin helped with some of the copy editing, and Barbara Clifford and others with some of the proofreading. All typoes are my own. All errors of fact are someone else's.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a request for you to subscribe. Please do so.

That is all.

—Michael Ward

FAST MAIL

Edward Wood / 873 Tower Avenue / Hartford CT 06112

I'm afraid an error crept into the article on Advent. You made George Price the superactive fan in Chicago. You must have dropped a line or two. I'm sure most of the knowledgeable fans will understand what is what.

P*S*F*Q has a neat format but I thought the contents of your first issue a bit lightweight. I don't know what you're aiming at with the magazine but I think you can get some interesting material considering the many problems facing the SF field.

F. M. Busby / 2852 14th Avenue West / Seattle WA 98119

At the end of his Advent article Ed Wood claims all errors for his own. *((The George Price/Earl Kemp error was mine; see Ed Wood's letter, above.—MJW))* Well, few of us have perfect memory regarding events peripheral to our major interests. I'd like to pick Ed up on a couple of minor points, merely to keep the record straight. Nothing serious.

Condensing Ed's statement so as to quote only the erroneous parts, he says, "George Price was putting out his Hugo-winning fan magazine *SaFari* as a member of SAPS, was on the waiting list of FAPA, bidding for the next midwest World Science Fiction Convention . . . " (Oh, yes—all of this was "in 1960".)

THE ERRORS:

1. Earl Kemp, not George Price, edited/published *SaFari* in SAPS. Earl was also on the FAPA WL. I don't recall George in (or on the WL of) either group at any time—but here my memory may be leaking.
2. Earl won the 1960 Best Fanzine Hugo, but not for *SaFari*. He won it for a oneshot publication, a symposium including many contributors, entitled "Who Killed Science Fiction?" Which was, of course, given a much wider distribution than the 40 or so copies put through SAPS.
3. While George Price was a member of the "Chicago in '62" bidding committee, that committee was headed by Earl Kemp, who then became Chairman of ChiCon III, held in Chicago in 1962.

Nothing earthshaking in these corrections, you see—merely that I hate to see factual errors marring an otherwise good article, and perhaps being perpetuated. Okay?

Also in P*S*F*Q 1 :If I hadn't read Kate Wilhelm's *Sweet Birds* two years ago, Paul Moslander's review would indicate to me that Kate had written a totally different book from the one I *did* read. My copy tells the story of a desperate experiment that saved the human race from extinction but did not, in the long run, prove to be the best way for human society to develop—and the personal impacts on individuals over the years. I thought the book succeeded mostly but not entirely, and I'm glad Kate wrote it. To me, the review shows a great deal of Projection, seeing things in the story that Kate didn't put there. However, differences of opinion are what make horse racing.

Good luck with P*S*F*Q.

Susan Wood / 2236 Allison Rd. / Vancouver BC CANADA V6T 1T6

I would like to make three points about Dick Lupoff's essay. *First*, he implies that I made the statement he attributes to me in some sort of public context. I did not. I was writing in a letter-substitute, a private communication, with an extremely small readership. The emphasis is on *private*, and I consider it a serious breach of etiquette, to say the least, for Dick to have quoted me without my knowledge, in a public forum.

Second, the one quotation he gives, while dumb—it was written first draft—is dumber out of context, which Dick doesn't give. My emphasis in saying that "the good new sf of the next few years will be written by women . . . young women who have actually had to think about being people, about sf, about restructuring societies" was not on gender but on THINKING . . . the "actually had to think" clause. Young women sf writers *have* had to think about such things—about whether they want to write traditional rape-and-murder sword-and-sorcery, or whether they can do something different with the form, for example. Show me *male* writers like John Varley and Michael Bishop who've done some thinking, and I'll be ready to praise them too. I did a lot of work last summer on stereotyping in sf; what appalls me about seeing the cliches of 1940 is the fact that they're repeated everytime I open ANALOG in 1978, or scan the racks of new paperbacks.

In context—which Dick ignored—I was leading into an enthusiastic discussion of three books I'd read which *broke* the patterns, which were doing something new. All were by women . . . who, in part because they were women—had had to think about society and how it could be restructured. That concern came out in their fiction.

Third: Everything else Dick Lupoff attributes to me, in the entire article, is *his* fabrication. The ideas Dick attributes to me are his distortions, *not* things I said, or that I believe. Dick calls the ideas "hooey."

I call them lies. So much for the "Ministry of Truth"—and we remember what came from it, of course.

Graham Hall / 695 Cordova / Pasadena CA 91101

. . . I thought I had successfully gafiated ten years ago . . . I must say that P*S*F*Q is the best produced zine I've ever seen . . .

I'm not going to comment on the articles (secretly believing that they—and future ones—have incredible promise for a fanzine); I mean, no-one reads fanzines—they just flick through them look for their own name. (The English Charnocks, in their fanzine WRINKLED SHREW, once facilitated this process by providing an index, a custom that should be adopted by all fanzine publishers.

C. J. Cherryh / 11217 N. McKinley / Oklahoma City OK 73114

Bravo, Dick Lupoff! Well said. It's vexing to be *forever* asked by interviewers (A) How I Get Those Ideas and (B) How About Women In SF, prefaced with the statement about "all the best new writers are, . . . etc. etc. etc." I've begun to wince at both. Categorizing people is *not* my favorite game, and I'd rather be asked about *All* the New SF Writers, thank you, or about Themes in SF, or *anything* but A & B.

the P*S*F*Q letter column

Fred Patten / 11863 West Jefferson Blvd. / Culver City CA 90230

Bruce and Elayne Pelz are trying to organize a group flight to the Seacon, and have been polling people as to how long they want to stay in Britain and how much traveling they're planning to do while they're there. So you can probably get info about BritRail pass travellers from them. Incidentally, if you're interested, since Brighton won the '79 Worldcon last September I have received 57 new attending memberships *((as of April 3, 1978—MJW))*, 18 supporting-to-attending like yours, and only 6 supporting memberships. It looks like the number of Americans planning to attend the Seacon is even higher than the Committee is beginning to suspect.

Gene Wolfe / Box 69 / Barrington IL 60010

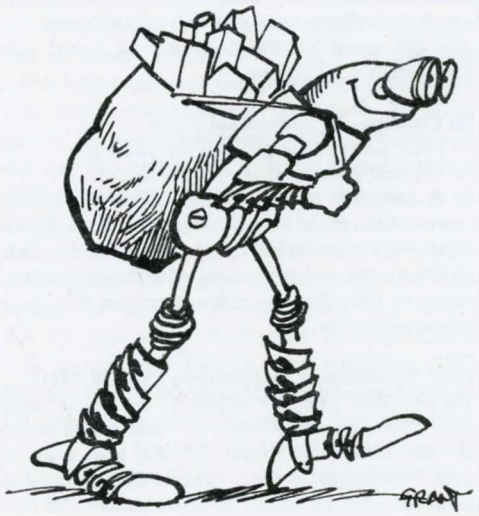
Mike: Thanks for sending P*S*F*Q—most promising.

I was flattered, of course, by Lupoff's mention (somebody should have mentioned Lupoff). The real question (it seems to me) is whether we will see *any* good new writing from women; the climate is unfavorable; hate is uncreative.

PLEASE don't run any more of Debbie Notkin's list—I can imagine so vividly how she would capsule everything I've ever written.

Victoria Vayne / P. O. Box 156 / Stn. D / Toronto, Ont. / CANADA

. . . I did enjoy your zine even if you do insist on calling it a magazine. What I'm after here, though, is the article by Paul E. Moslander, "Clone Wars Survivor". Last year, I published a fanzine called FANTHOLOGY 76, a collection of what I liked from the 1976 fanzines, and I'm considering doing a 78 version next year. (FANTHOLOGY 77 is in the hands of someone else, in the meantime; not in my control although still within my sight, so to say.) At the moment all I'm doing is compiling a preliminary list of items I like as they appear in current fanzines—a list that will comprise articles that *may* get into the final volume although not necessarily; and then only if I'm the one to do the book. Final selection will be next year when the entire 1978 production run is in. Anyway, to get back to Paul Moslander's article after a lot of tangents, I'd like to include this piece on my preliminary list, along with Tom Roper's full-page illustration. . . Like my 1976 version, the book will be sold with profits to faanish charities, primarily the FAAn Awards and to a lesser extent, TAFF and DUFF.



Ray Nelson / 333 Ramona Ave. / El Cerrito CA 94530

I must say your fanzine, PRETENTIOUS SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, impressed me greatly. Most of all I enjoyed the Andi Shechter article on Star Trek cons, though I disagree with some of the points she made, particularly about Trek con influences on Mainstream SF cons.

I found that those features which she calls "out of place" at the Octocon to be all improvements over traditional practices, with one exception, and that exception I feel she has not properly understood.

The exception is the out-of-the-wayness of the art show, which she claims is a practice imported from Trek cons. I too have attended California Trek cons, and as I recall the art shows were not shunted off into limbo, as she says. The Octocon broke new ground of an unfortunate sort in this one case.

The use of a fairly large, centrally-directed gofer squad at the Octocon was one of the things that made the con run so smoothly. This style of gofer action, though it may have originated in Trek fandom, should become a standard part of all science-fiction conventions that have a fairly high attendance.

As for the location of the events far away from the bar, I welcome this. I am a light drinker myself, and have always been annoyed by the subtle and not-so-subtle pressures brought upon me at cons to booze it up. From a practical standpoint, the presence of booze acts as a barrier between fans under and over the "legal age" and undermines the comparative freedom from ageism that has always been one of fandom's most attractive features. I hope that the example of the Octocon will encourage future con planners to move the action still further away from the bar. (Come to think of it, the Canadian Westercon was not bar-centered either, and as a result was much more enjoyable for me.)

Also, I dfid not find the discussion of Star Trek at a mainstream con objectionable. What has annoyed me is the snobbish way other cons have excluded "Trekkies" or at least Trek program presentations, as if Trekkies were not quite human.

Which brings us to one of the Octocon innovations I hope to see become standard practice at all science-fiction conventions: The Octocon provided room and board for the pro authors who attended. What's wrong with that? If the pros get star treatment it's because in our subculture they *are* stars. Science fiction authors are rarely wealthy, and almost never wealthy from writing science fiction. A convention could be an impossible financial burden for some of the most important writers in the field; for others it could be a strain; for all an unjust imposition. Is it fair to ask someone who makes his living (such as it is) writing to pay his own con expenses and then, on top of that, to make an unpaid performance as part of the program? No, the Octocon has acted to redress a long-standing wrong, and if this is what comes of a Trekkie influence, then pass the Tribbles, please.

Finally, autograph lines.

The autograph sessions at the Octocon were better handled than at any other con I've ever attended. In particular the sessions were better handled than at either of the two Trek cons I've been to. At Final Frontier 2, if I recall correctly, the autograph sessions were so badly handled that I was the only author who put up with them. (I had had experience as a show business performer that kept me from storming out, as others did.) At Final Frontier 3 only the biggest of the big names were allowed to have autograph sessions at all. As a matter of fact, I was one of those rudely refused admission to the ranks of the demigods. Fortunately one of the newer fan groups, The Network, set up a table for me in their exhibit room and literally saved the con for me.

This may be a minority opinion, but I believe that the Trek influence on mainstream fandom has been nearly all to the good. (I haven't mentioned how Trek fandom has, for the first time, pumped into the mainstream women and members of non-white races, redressing an imbalance that was so embarrassing that at one point fandom had to invent an imaginary Black fan, Carl Brandon.)

I'd like to stop here, but I suddenly realized that another Octocon innovation was the donation of the proceeds of the con to charity. I believe that, too, is a Trekkie importation, and one more policy I'd like to see become standard practice at all cons.

Mainstream fandom has, it seems, adopted the good innovations of Trek fandom while avoiding the bad . . . mainly the shady dealings of some of the promoters.

Mike Glicksohn / 141 High Park Ave. / Toronto, Ont.
CANADA M6P 2S3

Old newszine editors never die, they just grow pretentious in their old age, eh? Welcome back, and impressive indeed is your Second Coming.

. . . this is an attractive looking production (although some of your layouts are somewhat unesthetically bewildering; the double page spread on four and five, for example, simply doesn't work well) and eminently readable. Unfortunately (for you, not me) I'm not really a sercon fan and it's highly unlikely that I'm going to be able to respond with the sort of insightful critical reaction you're going to want to publish. I read and enjoyed the issue—highlighted by Dick Lupoff who always has been and continues to be one of my favorite critics/writers in the fan press—but that won't satisfy either your publisher, your own editorial need for constructive feedback, or your backer's insatiable (and decidly unfannish, tsk, tsk) lust for lucre. So the decision as to whether I get a "Second Copy" rests entirely with you; if you send it to me, I'll read each issue and enjoy parts of it, but it's not likely that you'll get more than an occasional short note telling you I enjoyed it, and since P*S*F*Q doesn't seem to be geared towards being a fanzine that probably won't suffice. So I'll understand if you cut me from the mailing list and concentrate one those whose orientation is more towards publishable reaction to science fictional material. And I certainly wish you every success in getting the magazine established.

Before I go, though, let me say that I loved your editorial section where you quoted your sentence from the editorial stating that you don't believe in quoting sentences from the main body of the text in large type: delightful! The Advent Story was informative although not exactly scintillating writing. And Lupoff was, as always, stimulating and interesting to read: I happen to agree with him entirely, but I expect that Susan Wood was guilty of a little hyperbole in her half of the statement. Undoubtedly she feels that *much* of the good sf to be written in the next few years will be by women but it's a little out of character for her, even with her feminist sympathies, to make such a blatantly silly statement and actually believe it. Should be fascinating to see if she replies to Dick's taking her to task.

And lastly one cannot pass up the chance to concur with your enthusiasm for Don Simpson's artwork. He certainly is a fine craftsman; perhaps not deserving of a Hugo considering his very minimal output lately but definitely an overlooked artist who should get wider exposure and more praise for his fine work.

Jeff Hecht / 54 Newell Rd. / Auburndale MA 02166

P*S*F*Q 1 looked good, and I enjoyed Debbie's account of the Putnam slushpile. And Bravo! to Dick Lupoff, although I suspect his criticism should be directed more to the people who cite Sturgeon and Wood than to (at least) Sturgeon himself (Wood, however, seems to have made the mistake of putting her foot firmly and formally in it in writing, which is a shame because I normally respect her judgments thoroughly. *((Please see her comments above—MJW))*

Gregory Benford / 1105 Skyline Dr. / Laguna Beach CA 92651

Thanks for P*S*F*Q. Fine issue, indeed, Careful or you'll get to believe your reviews and then you'll become pretentious, of course.

Dick Lupoff is dead right about the feminist claims for dominance of sf. We've heard all this before, but I think Dick is the first to say what rot it is in public. I like some women sf writers and not others, but I don't think they're 'remaking the field' or 'striking out to bold new horizons' or any of the rest of the hype that's been flooding us these last few years.

A tough fact is that it's damned hard to write well, and genitalia have nothing to do with it. As well, I don't really think we've seen bold new thinking from women sf writers that outclasses that of their contemporaries. Sorry, it just ain't that easy. Even as revered a writer as Tiptree is not, in my opinion, that much better than 6 or 10 other male short story writers. Her winning prizes for "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" was, I thought, a terrible indictment of sf readers' taste. It was a sexist tract that, as several have remarked, written by a man with the roles reversed would have led to his lynching. I think time has come for this sort of leaning-over-backwards critical hype to come crashing down. A prominent woman sf writer recently remarked that she now refuses to read any sf not written by a woman, and I think that says it all, right there. Sad, though.

John Millard / 18-86 Broadway Ave. / Toronto, Ont
CANADA M4P 1T6

Number 1 is a nice package, and while good graphics are very helpful, content is far more important so let me comment on the contents first, then a word or two on graphics.

. . . I found Paul E. Moslander's article "Clone Wars Survivor" a bit difficult to get into because of his style. Once I got into it I found it very interesting. I think it would have been much more effective in simple-straight-forward English.

"The Advent Story", by Ed Wood, is an excellent article written in simple English. It fills in a number of gaps in my knowledge of the firm, as it had its beginnings during a period of gafiation for me. It would be interesting to see some articles of a similar nature on other SF organizations. *((We're working on it.—MJW))*

"A Bulletin From the Ministry of Truth" by Lupoff. Bravo for Dick. He tells it like it really is, not how some would like it to be. Who really cares whether the author is male, female or other, is white, black or red, worships an idol, or something called God, just as long as they can tell a good story, that's all that really matters. Let's have some more Lupoff.

Debbie Notkin and the "Slush Pile". No! No! Very repetitious and doesn't go anywhere. You say, you have some more, then better bury it at the bottom of the pile and forget it's there.

Andi and "I'm Sorry, There Is No Bar". At first I wondered, what's an article on Star Trek Cons doing in P*S*F*Q? It's not that I have anything against Star Trek and its cons, but they are just not my cup of tea. Well, I read it anyway, and I am happy I did so because it confirms my own thoughts with regards to the show and its phenomena. It's a well done article, in straight-forward simple English, which doesn't depend upon fancy analogues or comparisons to get its message across. I would recommend it as required reading for anyone with aspirations for organizing or working on a convention, be it SF, ST, or any other kind. It has information at the grass-rootslevel that would be valuable to any one with enough moxie to make use of it. Let's have more articles along these lines.

((Here followed several specific comments on layout, type faces and point sizes, page numbers and number locations, formats and edge trimming. Thank you, John.—MJW))

Brian Earl Brown / 16711 Burt Rd. Apt. 207 / Detroit MI 48219

It's sad to find that your P*S*F*Q is every bit as pretentious as advertized. Even one pretentious fanzine is—frankly—more than enough. Paul Moslander had some interesting things to say regarding Kate Wilhelm's novel, but you as editor should have cut short his flights of metaphor before they interfered with understanding what he was trying to say.

Lupoff's piece was sadly marred by overemotionalism. It would have been easy to have refuted the notion that women will form the next wave of major SF authors—Budrys just did so in F&SF without meaning to—instead he's come up with a counter list that includes people like Effinger who's never written a second piece as good as his flawed first novel, writers of persistent unexcitability like Zebrowski, Utley and Waldrop and unknowns like Robert Aspirin. The women usually mentioned as major include—McIntyre, Wilhelm, Russ, Tiptree and Bradley—and they're the people receiving major fan attention. Half of Lupoff's list has had their works studiously ignored by the fan press, suggesting that fans do not consider them major writers.

George R. R. Martin / 2266 Jackson / Dubuque IOWA 52001

Thanks for thinking of me, and sending a copy of P*S*F*Q. I was impressed. Quite impressed, in fact, especially considering that this was a first issue. To tell the absolute truth, I was so impressed that I'm actually going to subscribe, despite the general inadvisability of sending money for fanzines that haven't yet demonstrated staying power. A check for $5 is enclosed. If you fold now and never publish a second issue, I won't forgive you. *((Not to worry. The last time I folded a fanzine, back in 1971,* **I returned the subscribers' unexpended monies.** *This caused a few raised eyebrows.—MJW))*

A couple of things in the first issue deserve special praise. First is Richard Lupoff's article. I find myself in fairly frequent disagreement with Lupoff's criticism in ALGOL, but this time I think he's completely correct in debunking the ridiculous "all-the-good-new-sf-writers-are-women" schtick, which has puffed itself up bigger and bigger in recent years. The idea is sexist on the face of it, and what's worse is demonstrably false, and Lupopff demonstrated it quite well. While the contributions of some of the bright new women writers like Lisa Tuttle, Phyllis Eisenstein, Pamela Sargent, and especially Vonda McIntyre have been first rate, any list of new talent that omits the important new male voices that have been heard during the same period is only half-complete. In partaicular I think that Michael Bishop and John Varley and the late Tom Reamy have already established themselves as *major* authors in the genre. Even if they wrote no more—and Tom, sadly, will not—they will be remembered a long time on the basis of what they have already done. Bishop's *Stolen Faces* and Varley's *Ophiuchi Hotline* will be read and reread as long as any novel of the 1970's, as will Reamy's forthcoming novel, *Blind Voices*.

Paul Moslander's detailed and painstaking critique of Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* is also worthy of note. One does not often see this calibre of criticism—something that goes far beyond simple reviewing—in the fanzines, and even in the prozines only Algis Budrys consistently does work on this level. You are to be commended for running it. Paul E. Moslander, eh? That *really* takes me back. I remember Moslander from the days when I first started writing, back when I was active in comic fandom of the early 1960's, while still in high school. I never knew Moslander personally, but I knew his products—an excellent genzine called JEDDAK, and some first-rate amateur fiction, run both under his own name and under his pseudonym Victor Baron. I was writing amateur fiction myself those days—prose superhero stories about characters called Powerman and Dr. Weird and Manta Ray and other like things—and corresponding with other high-school comic-fan would-be writers, including Texan Howard Waldrop, who has also gone on to establish himself as an SF professional. But Moslander regularly wrote rings about all of us, and in the years since JEDDAK folded and Moslander vanished from our ken, Waldrop and I have often speculated in letters as to whatever happened to him. To judge from "Clone Wars Survivor", he's still alive and well and writing better than ever. I wonder if he ever writes fiction any more. If not, he should. He had a hell of weird imagination, and probably more talent than the rest of us put together, at least back then, in those bygone days of 1966. At any rate, do keep him as a regular contributor, especially if he keeps turning in material as good as his Wilhelm article.

Don D'Ammassa / 19 Angell Dr. / East Providence RI 02914

Now there's a name out of the past. Aren't you the same Michael Ward that I met very briefly way back in 1965 in Boston? *((The same.))* I'll bet you don't remember it at all either. *((You lose.))*

PRETENTIOUS SFQ is, as first issues go, stupendous. As fanzines go in general, it's still pretty good. I was particularly impressed by the Lupoff piece refuting Sturgeon and Wood, two people for whom I have very high regard, but about whose statements I can only agree with Lupoff. There is a certain degree of fanaticism slipping into the words of many fannish feminists that disturbs me, and it is particularly disturbing to hear them originate from someone who should, and I'm sure does, know better. . . *((See comments earlier.—MJW))*

Paul Moslander found *When Late the Sweet Birds Sang* grim and unpleasant? I agree completely, but I suggest, for those really looking for well written books describing horribly unpleasant situations, D. F. Jones' *Implosion*, in which a sterility disease leaves only a few fertile women, and they are involuntarily pressed into service as breeders. Jones is a fine enough writer to make this sound every bit and more as wretched as anything you could imagine.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM

A goodly number of other people. Thank you all for writing. Now it is mea culpa *time.* **Jessica Amanda Salmonson** *and* **Avedon Carol** *sent fine, interesting letters which I put in the file to quote from in this letter column. Somewhere along the line they disappeared. I must do my best to apologize to both of you. Jessica was very upset at Dick Lupoff, claiming that he hates feminists. Avedon had a number of other comments to make, and pointed out—correctly—that the list of articles planned for upcoming issues did not include anything on women in sf or feminist topics in general. I am open to suggestion; anyone out there with some ideas along these lines?*


BURP!
GRANT CANFIELD

SKETCHES FOR ANDRE NORTON'S "QUAG KEEP" Athenaeum

WHY YOU GOT THIS ISSUE OF P*S*F*Q

or

FIGURING OUT YOUR MAILING LABEL:

Most of you will find (should you happen to look at the mailing--address--label on the envelope which carried this issue of P*S*F*Q to your door/box) a letter or number or some combination of both following your name. These mean something. First and foremost, if the number is the same as the issue number of issue which came in the envelope in question, you must do something immediately lest your steady supply of P*S*F*Q be cut off.

S5 indicates you have a subscription which will run through the fifth issue

L7 indicates you have had a letter published in a previous issue--in most cases the issue immediately preceding this issue or the issue itself

T6 indicates I am willing to trade for the issue of your journal that you sent me, and I (in my power and wisdom) calculate that my sending you issues up through (in this case, 6) will be an equitable arrangement for both parties. Complaints go to the front desk

C8 indicates that you have contributed articles or artwork or some such to the glory and success of the magazine, and are deemed worthy of issues up through #8

G4 indicates that this superb production is a Graft copy, and you must realize that everything, even Graft, has a limit. Those labels with no number following the G imply a source of unlimited Graft

FS indicates that this is a Free Sample. Free Lunch, no; Free Sample, yes. You get this one, count it, one, issue. Please subscribe or do one of the other desirable things mentioned above

R indicates this is a Review Copy. Please send a copy of your review