

Perry Chapdelaine Page 13

[illegible]

INVISIBLE WHISTLING LETTER COLUMN (ET CETERA)

Yet, in the middle of the confusion, I've always been able to trace the real "raison d'etre"; the reason for it all. The evil influence that predestined me to science fiction as surely as that grey-bearded watch-winder that some think of as God, was not a book or a gaily magazine cover, but a radio serial. No, not a "radio serial" - the kind of hectic cops-robbers-'n'-spaceships things that used to litter our radio waves from 4pm to 7pm on every commercial station every night before television came. I'm talking about science fiction serialized; the programme was the ABC CHILDREN'S HOUR; the time - the early fifties when I had just learned to read; the radio serial - THE MOON FLOWER, by G K Saunders. G K Saunders went on to write more of these carefully extrapolated imaginative children's s f stories, ^{and} even defected to television at one time with his THE STRANGER. But (thanks to a not-too-roundabout source who Will Know What I Mean) let G K Saunders tell his own story:

I must admit it gives me great satisfaction to read your kind comments on my early "space" serials for the ABC and to realize

that, to some extent at least, the main object of those early exercises was achieved.

THE MOONFLOWER was the first of a series of s f stories which were written to a definite plan. Shortly after John Appleton took over the ABC CHILDREN'S HOUR I suggested that, in view of the appalling pseudo-s f rubbish being broadcast by the commercial stations, the ABC should produce some serious, ethical s f with a sound scientific basis. I was deeply involved at that time with experimental science broadcasts for schools and was concerned that while in school the kids were being told about the realities of gravity, mass, weight, inertia and Newtonian physics generally, they were being bombarded in the evenings with stories in which the laws of physics were being disregarded and broken all the time.

Appleton agreed, and, to give the first serial some scientific weight for publicity purposes, we enlisted the co-operation of the late David Martyn as scientific adviser and sponsor. His job was to read the scripts of MOONFLOWER (and some of the later serials, too, but once the idea was established he dropped out officially although he never lost interest in it) and vouch for the story's scientific feasibility.

We worked out two cardinal principles - no horror stuff or B.E.Ms and no violation of basic scientific laws such as exceeding the speed of light and so on. Martyn believed - and this was well before Sputnik I - that the space age was upon us and that the general public was abysmally ignorant on all aspects of science; the result would be complete bewilderment in the mind of the average citizen and a tendency to regard scientists with a sort of religious awe instead of, simply, as trained specialists who, as ordinary fallible human beings, could make terrible mistakes such as The Bomb.

By concentrating on the rising generation through the vast radio audience of the ABC in those days we could possibly influence some kids to take up scientific work but, more importantly, we could help the great majority who would never take any active part in scientific research to understand something of what it was all about and give them attitudes which would enable them to take an intelligent interest in scientific developments. (I should perhaps explain that David Martyn was an old friend with whom I worked during the war at the Radiophysics Laboratory in Sydney and we'd had many discussions on this).

At any rate, the objective apparently was achieved in your case. It also worked for my two sons, both of whom were ardent fans of their old man and are now closing in on PhD degrees in Maths and Physics.

From the above it should be easy to see which side I would take on any discussion about the science in science fiction and plain, old-fashioned fantasy. It is very unfortunate that fantasy and science fiction are so often equated by writers who only want to free themselves from the necessary and inevitable discipline of living in a world of reality. There is a place for this sort of writing but it is not s f; it is simply fantasy - magic, fairy stories, all that stuff.....

The first qualification of a worthwhile s f writer is that he should be able to write well - about people and psychology and politics and so on. The second is that he should know something about science. The latter requirement is simply a matter of integrity.

Mention of politics reminds me of another thing that irks me about many even highly rated s f writers and that is their apparent inability to appreciate the interdependence of scientific and political and social development. So often one

reads a story set in an age of technological marvels at least two centuries away - sometimes the period is specifically stated - yet the political and social backgrounds could be here and now. Nothing has changed except a few external trappings - clothes, communications and so on. But capitalism is still with us with its big corporations vying for control of the mineral resources of the moon and planets. (Apart altogether from the total impossibility of our ever being able to exploit space minerals commercially). But the characters still think about the same things in the same way - science and technology have revolutionised the external world but people and institutions remain untouched by it all!

I remember a bloke in the Czech broadcasting organization in Prague a few years ago telling me that he was anxious to find some good s f material to use on the air. As he couldn't seem to find very much locally he imported some s f anthologies from England. He said after he had read them he was so depressed he was ready to blow his brains out. I gave him one of Arthur Clarke's books and restored his faith in s f. I also sold him THE STRANGER and several other scripts, as a result of which I still have a worthwhile credit account in the State Bank of Prague which I intend to collect next year when I return to Britain.

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*I suppose it is the same idea that John Foyster advanced in SFC 10, that Franz Rottensteiner and Stanislaw Lem return to, that American writers never seem to think about. But it is pleasant to have some of these ideas expressed so succinctly. When I first discovered McGills Newsagency in Melbourne, at the age of thirteen or fourteen, the first things I rejected were the s f magazines. "They don't look too scientific," I thought to myself, thinking directly back to the lessons I had learned beside the big old thirties-style radio set on which I heard G K Saunders' serials. And they weren't too scientific, but I became hooked anyway. The first GALAXY I bought... what did it have in it? ... something by a chap named Cordwainer Smith...

Mr Saunders failed to tell me precisely what he is doing at the moment, as I have not heard too many of his scripts on the ABC recently. Occasionally I still listen to isolated episodes of the truncated CHILDREN'S HOUR, and hear episodes of G K Saunders re-runs. Let's face it - one of the main reasons for anyone migrating from (say) the US to Australia is to have the ABC on the airwaves. Blame S F COMMENTARY on them and G K Saunders, anyway.

* Talking about Stanislaw Lem (which I wasn't really, but very well can), I have here some notes by Franz Rottensteiner on SFC 9. This issue has certainly aroused the most interesting comment for some time, but (hint, hint) the Aldiss article in Number 10 has not struck the same response. I note in the latest SPECULATION (which always interests me more than most of the other fanzines put together) that Aldiss' BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD is gaining the recognition it deserves at least somewhere (and in SFR 36, I should add) and that at least three more Aldiss books are due within the next year. And for the (justifiably) anguished, may I assure them that at least one Stanislaw Lem book will appear this year: SOLARIS, from Faber in Britain, and Walker in USA. That leaves only about 25 others to be published, of course. "Shuddup, Gillespie" (I've heard that song before). Here speaketh a greater man than I: *

FRANZ ROTTENSTEINER

FELSENSTRASSE 20
2762 ORTMANN
AUSTRIA

(pre-SFC 9)

One could say that Dick and Lem are working at total cross purposes. Perhaps the most important difference is (apart

(NOW PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 20)

BEFORE YOU READ ANYTHING ELSE - READ THIS... READ THIS... READ

AUSTRALIA IN 75 ? - "THE EPIC OF THE STRINES"

THE CHARACTERS

A group of aliens (Strines) on a planet far from the Galactic Centre, having reached a suitable stage of development, decide to seek admittance to the Galactic Federation, the local Big Wheels. The Strine High Council decides that the best way to accomplish this is to show the Federation that the Strines are ready to run what is called a "Worldcon".

THE PLACE

The "Worldcon" is a gathering which takes place once every solar year and, at the time we are talking about, almost all "Worldcons" are held on Federation planets. But the Federation has occasionally allowed non-Federation worlds to become hosts in the past. The Strines hope they will be allowed the opportunity to do this.

THE PLOT

However, a recent move in the Federation makes it possible for the "Worldcons" to be held on non-Federation planets quite frequently. The Strines are naturally concerned. This makes it more likely that they will be lucky enough to host a "Worldcon", but they can't see whether the non-Federation Worldcons will serve the purpose they once did.

The Strines even go so far as to believe that the Federation members won't want to travel to non-Federation planets much more than once every five solar years, like they used to. It may even come about that eventually there would be "Worldcons" without a single representative from the Federation.

This seems to the Strines to work against their understanding of the meaning of a "Worldcon", so they are sending an ambassador to the current Worldcon (held on a non-Federation planet) in the hope that they can persuade Federation and non-Federation members that the Worldcon idea is best served by keeping the present system.

WILL THIS STORY HAVE A HAPPY ENDING? - READ THE NEXT PAGE

AUSTRALIA IN '75 ? : THE WORLDCON RULES AND AUSTRALIA.

(The previous page and the following pages written by JOHN FOYSTER, 12 Glengariff Drive, Mulgrave, Victoria 3170, Australia. John is Melbourne co-ordinator of the 1970 World Science Fiction Committee Bidding Committee. Gary Mason, Warili Road, French's Forest, N S W 2086, is the Sydney Co-ordinator. Authorized by the Committee: other members - Mervyn Binns, Peter Darling, Leigh Edmonds, Bruce Gillespie, Lee Harding, Robin Johnson, Alf van der Poorten, and Bob Smith).

This is a reprint of NORSTRILIAN NEWS, Number 7, June 4 1970. Obtainable for a 5c stamp per copy from Leigh Edmonds, P O Box 74, Balaclava, Victoria 3183, Australia.

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The June issue of LUNA MONTHLY has an editorial devoted to this subject (and we thank LUNA MONTHLY for a preprint). This is a most important subject, and there follows One Fan's Opinion.

The rules introduced at the 1969 World Science Fiction Convention specifically relating to the sites and the Hugoes are as follows:

- 3.01
1. The name of the science fiction convention now held in North America and styled the "World Science Fiction Convention" should be changed to the "North American Science Fiction Convention" (NASFiC).
 2. A true World (or International) Science Fiction Convention (or Congress, etc.) being desirable, it is recommended that a committee be set up at St Louis to confer with similar committees and individual fans in Europe, the Pacific, etc., to suggest suitable mechanisms for holding such conventions.
 3. To maintain the continuity of the name "World Science Fiction Convention", the following interim plan is suggested. The World Science Fiction Convention title shall rotate through continental zones in a pre-arranged manner. One of these zones shall be North America. The fans of each zone shall determine as they see fit which convention in their zone will assume the title "World Science Fiction Convention" when the title is resident in their zone. In North America the NASFiC would automatically assume the title when the title is resident in North America.
 4. The numbering of the NASFiC shall continue the numbering from the former World Science Fiction Conventions in order to preserve continuity when dealing with hotels.

- 3.08
- When the World Science Fiction Convention is held outside North America, the portion of the voting regulations which requires physical attendance at the voting session for the selection of the North American convention site to be chosen at that convention will be suspended. Instead, the convention site for two years hence shall be chosen by an Australian mail ballot to be administered by that convention committee. Any person who owns any type of membership in that convention and the two years hence will be eligible to vote. The regular rules will be immediately reinstated at the succeeding American convention.

- 2.14
- The Science Fiction Achievement Award is an English-language award, with eligibility limited to material presented in English, including first
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translations from other languages. If and when a National or North American Science Fiction Convention is established, then during the time when the World Science Fiction Convention resides in a non-English-speaking-country, the North American Science Fiction Convention shall administer the Hugo. At all other times, the world convention will retain this responsibility. This motion to take effect in 1971.

COMMENTS

I take these in reverse order. 2.14 plainly establishes that the Hugo shall be awarded by countries such as England and Australia, but not by countries such as Sweden and Japan. Whether Hugo Gernsback, who emigrated to the USA, would approve is something you must decide for yourself.

3.08 is the clause which probably gives rise to the belief that a two-year rotation plan is now in effect. Read in isolation, it may seem to imply that, but in fact 3.02 requires that when the convention is held outside the North Americas, whenever that might be, the decision for the Convention two years hence shall be by mail ballot. This may be as often as nine years out of ten, to take an extreme case.

3.01 is the major item. Part 1 plainly states that the convention presently understood as the Worldcon S F Convention shall be renamed the NASFiC. A new convention, in effect, will be set up, and given the name "Worldcon". The remainder of 3.01 spells out the arrangement of this new convention, except that part 4 re-emphasises that the NASFiC is in fact the continuation of the present Worldcons (the bit about the hotels may be relevant, but isn't the whole story). Part 2 of 3.01 indicates the manner in which this new convention shall be set up. To my knowledge, no committee, as required, was set up at St Louis. If it was, neither similar committees nor individual fans in Australia were contacted about it (and we are pretty near "The Pacific").

Part 3 of 3.01 proposes a plan to fill in until the committee mentioned in Part 2 has done its duty. This plan is rather broad, and its only specification is that North America shall be one of the zones, apart from the general reference to "continental zones".

In addition to these new sections of the rules, some of the old rules are relevant. LUNA MONTHLY, for example, states that there is no 2-year rotation plan in force and implies that conventions may return to the US relatively infrequently. The present 3.04 states that "the rule of rotation may be set aside by a vote of three-fourths voting, with the provision that in no case may two successive conventions be in the same division or outside North America." Thus the present upper boundary for non-NA conventions is one-half - at least every other convention must be held in North America. (My underline).

Indeed, it is worth asking whether the present Worldcon rules are adhered to carefully. 3.05 starts off: "By bidding, a convention committee promises to abide by this constitution." And 4.03 reads: "The rules of the World Science Fiction Society as decided in the business meetings shall be printed by the World Science Fiction Convention committee, and distributed with the Hugo nomination ballots,". How often is this done?

The above remarks in fact constitute glosses upon the rules which I've quoted accurately (subject to human error) from Jerry Lapidus' THE LEGAL RULES 2. I have tried to keep my own opinions out of it (sorry about Hugo, there!). Here follow, from someone who might one day be on a Worldcon bidding committee, some

ARGUMENTS (Beware of assumptions, false logic, ad hominem attacks, et cetera)

1. The most important matter, it seems to me, is to sort out exactly the nature of the conventions which would be run by non-North American countries. We know, from experience, what the Worldcons in North America will be like, and the NASFiCs, one gathers, will not be too different. Let us try to see how the non-NA conventions will differ from such conventions as the Loncons and the Heicon. Firstly, there would be competition from the NASFiC, even if the non-NA Worldcon were held at another time. It is reasonable to suppose that the NASFiC will be the big con. Secondly, conventions such as the Heicon, under 2.14, will not be awarding the Hugos, but some hypothetical, as yet non-existent awards. I believe that it is not unreasonable to suppose that a consequence of these two facts is that the attendance at non-NA Worldcons by NA fans and pros will drop considerably, especially if such conventions take place more frequently than they have in the past.

I do not think we can say just what form this new convention will take, but I believe we should all be aware of the pitfalls, which apply largely to fans from non-NA countries.

2. WHAT IS THE EXACT NATURE OF THE CURRENTLY-IN-FORCE ROTATION PLAN? This is only an opinion, I'm afraid, but I see no others around. 3.04, referred to above, and still a part of the rules of the World Science Fiction Society, defines the Five-Year Rotation Rule - it is the only rule in these rules specifying a Rotation rule (as opposed to speculation, such as occurs in 3.01). In my opinion, Worldcon sites are, as of June-July 1970, determined by the old Five-Year Plan. I suspect that it is the intention of the committee involved in drafting 3.01 to remove 3.04, but if the bidding for the 1972/1 is carried out before 3.04 is removed then the winning city is running a Worldcon.

3. IF YOU'RE SO SMART, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE DONE? An obvious answer would be to drop 2.14, 3.01 and 3.08 and start again. But is that necessary? I suspect that the old 3.04 would actually cope with the present situation quite well. If the clamour comes from non-NA countries that they don't hold enough Worldcons - fine, let them utilise 3.04 and get that little extra response to their advertising/bidding. This allows up to half the Worldcons to be held outside North America. Is the three-fourths requirement discriminatory? Try cutting it to three-fifths: but considering the disruption to the system I think there should be some kind of brake on this sort of thing. An enthusiastic group might, for example, be able to persuade a fair proportion of attendees that their bid is worthwhile, but since non-NA fans would, on the whole, be less well known, it is not unreasonable to expect that they should be rather more convincing with regard to their ability and enthusiasm than the better-known North American fans before being allowed to run a Worldcon.

4. The major need is for an informed electorate - and a large one. I hope this goes some of the way towards helping.

- John Foyster, June 1970

(SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO: John Foyster (address at the beginning of this sheet) or "AUSTRALIA IN 75" magazine; from Gary Mason (address given)).

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GIBSON on DELANY
 ANDERSON on HARRISON
 SCHEER & ERNSTING
 DE CAMP

NOVA

by SAMUEL R DELANY

Victor Gollancz :: 1969

279 pages :: stg.30/-

Original US publicati 1968

Reviewed by John Gibson

GALAXY magazine says that Delany : "As of this book... is the best s f writer in the world!"

F&SF also gave NOVA a "rave" review.

But my first reactions to this book were (1) NOVA is a typical projection of the American fantasy which desires a feudal past to become a feudal future. Why do so many US e f stories have kings, princes,

robber barons and slave classes? Is it that Americans prefer authoritarian societies to democracies? Is it a result of a childhood indoctrination in president worship? The President, even if he is the most brainless slob in the world, does seem to be held in awe by the majority of the US citizenry - as much as the Alf Garnetts worship the monarchy or the Chinese love Mao. I would guess that this is the explanation for what I call "American feudal s f", of which sort NOVA is just another example.

(2) NOVA is melodrama. It is 19th-century goodies-and-baddies stuff. Prince Rod, the chief villain, is so bloody villainous that I could almost hear the boos and hisses coming from the pages as I turned them over.

(3) NOVA is characterless - there are no deeply explored characters in the book. The closest approach even to superficial characterisation is in a couple of blokes who speak like Donald Duck's nephews.

(4) NOVA is mystical tripe. What possible relation can there be between tarot fortune-telling cards and the Universe? The trouble with most superstitious twot, from Christianity to tarot cards, is that it tries to encapsulate the magnificence of life in a few absurdly narrow thoughts. The same applies to superstitious ideologies like Communism and Fascism. Delany, like all true believers, wants to get easy answers from simple-minded systems. Tarot-reading impresses me about as much as palm-reading. Delany would make a great editor of women's magazines.

(5) As for the descriptive writing in the book, I found it all so vague, all so jerky, all so lacking in fluidity, that I frequently had to reread passages in order to comprehend what exactly was going on. The oblique ideas about incestuous relations between brother and sister were too coy to be cute. The death of the prince and Ruby Red (yeah, that's the name, Ripley) struck me as almost as sadistic as the "poetic justice" Dick Tracy hands out to criminals. Is incest such an enormity that it merits burning alive? Is Delany calling for a return to the good old days of auto-da-fes and tarot cards? The extreme sadism (with apologies to the marquis) of NOVA made me want to throw up.

(6) Is Delany the best s f writer in the world? For some people, obviously. However, I'm neither so queer nor so superstitious as to share their view. His idea that a language as flexible as English could get stuck in the rut of ending each sentence with a verb is another touch that I could not believe. Try a proposition, Mr Delany.

(7) One last broadside: he talks about the "rue de los astronauts", which might show that he did not complete his first year French course. His other ideas about men plugging in to machines and getting high on a futuristic version of LSD are horrifying enough for some fanatic to want them to come true.

A feeling of revulsion - that is the only way I can describe it - is what this book gave me. I realize that this is a subjective thing. Don't believe what I say: read the book for yourself. I would be delighted to hear opinions conflicting with my own.

CAPTIVE UNIVERSE

by HARRY HARRISON

Berkley Medallion X1725 :: 1969

156 pages :: \$A 0.70

Reviewed by Paul Anderson

The name Harry Harrison immediately conjures up visions of the now famous Pyrrus, the Deathworld. To my mind this speaks highly of Harrison's story telling ability, and while CAPTIVE UNIVERSE does not belong to the now evergrowing series of books depicting the adventures of Jason din Alt it still has the stamp of quality, the Harrison byline.

CAPTIVE UNIVERSE is, on the other hand, a change of pace for Harrison after his horrifying view of a crowded future in MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! and also his hilarious view of an unwilling conscript's life in BILL THE GALACTIC HERO. Harrison now takes one of the old science fiction hackneyed cliché plots and in the process of turning it upside down, Harrison has come up with a new variation. I would not want to give away the story (although that is what Richard Delap does in January's AMAZING). Suffice to say that it is a good adventure story that contains more than greets the eye at first sight. The reader becomes used to one bizarre

civilisation, but Harrison gets on with the action, shifts the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, and still manages not to be too confusing.

At times Harrison's descriptive style is sparse and it lacks the flowery vacuities of some of the newer writers. The book lacks superfluous four-letter words (included in New Wave writing purely for shock value?) and unnecessary "blue scenes", although there are places in the book where a lesser writer would have inserted them to pad out the length of the book. Indeed, when the hero, Chimal, is being forced to marry a girl that he does not love early in the story he suddenly refuses to continue with the ritual ceremony. Questions of sex never occur to Chimal as he acts according to his conditioning. He makes one token effort to break the conditioning of Watchman Steel, but gives up in the end, saying: "Because I changed I keep feeling that everyone else should want to change too". He does not realize that his change is inevitable, and that he is as fixed in his conditioning as is Watchman Steel. As the book ends, Chimal is patiently waiting for the next part of his duty which must take prime importance in his life.

This novel is easily-read and the reader is dragged along with the action, although this in itself could be a fault, as the reader could miss some of the little extras that have been included. The priests of Chimal's valley are very narrow in their outlook and are almost as closed to new ideas as the villains in a Campbell editorial. Harrison contrasts their actions with those of the Watchers who consider themselves far above the peasants of the valley:

"We have much more to do in our lifetimes than simple farmers."

This effectively shows both viewpoints and points out the blind spots in each (a thing that Campbell would never do) and perhaps Harrison is having a bit of a hit at his mentor's bombastic style.

CAPTIVE UNIVERSE can only enhance Harrison's growing reputation as a consistently good writer. He shows that a writer can still take a hackneyed plot and bring out a new facet of it. I look forward to his next book.

PERRY RHODAN I :
ENTERPRISE STARDUST

by K H SCHEER & WALTER ERNSTING

Ace 65970 :: US publication 1969
182 pages :: \$A 0.70

Reviewed by Paul Anderson

This book leads off another series from Ace. It is billed as the "science fiction sensation from Europe" with 50 million copies sold and an additional 200,000 sold each week. After reading this first story I can only wonder why. Surely, for a science fiction series to have such success you would expect it to have some outstanding features.

The plot is nothing new: it describes, yet again, the reception given to the crew of the first moon-rocket. The writing is very stilted and at times I found it difficult to continue reading. On Page 14, Perry Rhodan becomes "ace astronaut of the United States Space Force". Surely not in the original German! All the minor characters are described in this fashion, and make the book appear more padded than it really is. The authors further irritate with their practice of referring to the characters' full names at every opportunity. This ruins any semblance of characterisation that may have remained.

The alien visitors, or Arkanides, as they are called, are interesting, but they are used merely as a source of invincible weapons and defences against them.

The only two Arkanides that we see for any length of time are not described in any detail by the authors. The main Arkanide (Khrest) is depicted as a semi-helpless invalid who is only too willing to comply with Rhodan's wishes. He just happens to suffer from an advanced stage of leukemia, which is about the only disease that the Arkanides have no cure for. By an amazing coincidence, an Australian scientist has just perfected a cure for leukemia back on Earth.

The other Arkanide is the beautiful Thora who is merely shown as being cold, insensitive and arrogant, with a strong prejudice against "inferior" beings. I hope that her character is developed further in the following 400 adventures now in print in Germany.

This book is a science fiction adventure story of the 1930s variety, with no trace of romance. I have read worse s f, but at 70-90 cents a time I certainly won't be collecting the whole series. Rhodan's only virtue seems to be his sales figures; he must have introduced science fiction to a general book-buying public never before reached. Did the authors just hit the correct formula for writing down to the lowest level? Do Perry Rhodan's readers realize these books are watered-down versions of science fiction? The series carries to the limit the formula of (1) cardboard characters, (2) fast-paced action, (3) conflict between "the forces of good and the evil monsters from outer space". It is very much escape literature, perhaps depending as much on camp psychology as anything else, and quite inexplicable to me.

THE GOBLIN TOWER

by L SPRAGUE de CAMP

Pyramid T1927 :: 1968

247 pages :: \$A 0.85

Reviewed by Paul Anderson

This is a good example of sword-and-sorcery fiction, with the mood established right at the start by Jeff Jones' excellent cover. The story concerns yet another quest; this time to recover an ancient chest containing some old spells. Thankfully the old stereotypes are enlivened by de Camp's story-telling talents.

The reader is led through a strange world of magic and intrigue, with the background information skilfully woven into the story. There are no boring lectures. Instead the second half of the book is punctuated by a sequence of pseudo-historical anecdotes related by the hero. These stories give further viewpoints on the strangely different ways of life of the citizens of the Twelve Cities of Novaria.

The book is a travelogue as well as a story. This lifts it above the run-of-the-mill level and sets it in a world where magic rules and supernatural beings abound. The main character, Jarian of Andamai, embarks on a career as adventurer and uses a number of different aliases in his quest. Each alias shows de Camp's story-telling talents further. Eventually Jarian accepts his fate (he was booted out of his tribe) and he commences a career as a story-teller.

THE GOBLIN TOWER is a must for all sword-and-sorcery fans from the old master himself. It even survives the irrelevant blurbs on the back cover.

THIS COULD NEVER HAPPEN IN AMERICA

Arrived Claremont-Berkley Hotel evening of March 13, 1970. Though \$10 in advance and confirmation receipt in hand, no room. They gave me suite of rooms for same price as small room. Seems like Businessmen's Full Gospel Friendship Organization is here in full force. TV personality faith healer has just spoken, which explains the pile of crutches and hypodermic syringes I saw flying through the windows on arrival.

After business meeting: First off, certain members push through vote to bar all non-SFWA members from attendance. (Michael Ward of WINNIE fanzine, reports on his feelings regarding this in his publication).

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minimum contract and guild-type organization. I silently praise Harlan for his harsher writers' stand, but still await the promised deep events. When meeting is through, I feel let down. Only trivial or superficial items have been discussed, mostly under emotional suasions which just naturally suppress any desire on my part to bring forth reasonable SFWA argumentation. Ah well, maybe next time.

Saturday late afternoon and evening. Best part, cocktail lounge. No crowded hotel room, nose tip to nose tip, drinking. Room to sit and visit and to meet and to talk. Later luncheon, buffet style, was excellent. Chip Delany was outstanding as a speaker. Beautiful talk. Beautiful words. Ursula LeGuin gave a little scream of delight when she won the Nebula Award. I clapped quite loud for her. She deserved it. Bob Bloch, superb master of ceremonies. Heard him mention "Terry Carr's fanzine". He must read BEABOHEMA, too.

Best story of the evening from Randall Garrett:

Hotel is criss-crossed like scuttling cockroaches with the Businessman's Full Gospel Friendship Organization (BMFGFO) members. Our tiny SFWA band is cornered and collared everywhere, by one or two or more BMFGFCs who attempt to convert us. Even my quiet dinner is invaded by man and wife who insist on telling me to get "Jesus Christ in my heart". Fact that my oldest son is in seminary school doesn't seem to phase them, and I can't change the subject all dinner.

Randall Garrett, dressed in his magician costume, bright red vest with gold-emblemed lion on right chest, swallow-tail (or was it split tailed) black coat, moustache pulled to sharp peak at extreme right angle to nose centre line, black wavy hair hanging half way to neck, portly build and slightly bulging stomach. He stands with drink in hand and gentle, almost superior smile on his face in the hall. Full Gospel woman approaches him. She looks down her sharp nose and sniffs disdainfully, saying, "And you drink, too?"

"Yes mam!" Randall says in his best magician manner. "I also f---!"

Last scene: little old bent-over lady scuttling backward, arms and legs wind-milling through the crowd.

I heard that Randall Garrett was the only SFWA member never again to be bothered by the Full Gospellers but not sure how true the rumour.

TO ENGLAND

First stop - March 22, 1970 - Dr J Bregman, National Science Foundation Project Director of physics/art film SYMMETRY at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. Dinner with Barry Malzberg - seems to know the publishing game well. Sleep. Sleep? Hippies hold all-night jambouree outside of door. Finally get room changed since management refuses to stop the disturbance. Next morning meet with Barnes and Noble mathematics editor, then lunch with the indomitable John W Campbell. Interesting. All interesting!

March 23, 1970: I wait in Icelandic Airlines terminal; \$50 cheaper to England than other lines - turbo-prop. First load goes to Belgium with young American hippies. Second load, my plane, has engine trouble. Wait and wait. Finally, late take-off, mostly sleep. Pass Greenland ice-cap, land in Iceland near Reykjavik. I grab three volcanic rocks on way in to airport terminal. Lucky. They wouldn't let us out again. Maybe afraid we would contaminate the rocks.

Engine trouble again. Our plane disappears. Most of us are fed very well, but get quickly tired of staring at a map of Iceland on airport terminal wall. Maybe Icelandic owns only one plane and they had to fly it back to America to get fixed!

I stare outside. Temperature about 40 degrees out of wind. Wind gusting like North Dakota high blizzard. Water shivering and freezing. Gent next to me comments on the same phenomenon. Mentions he's from California. McNelly by name. "Not the Professor Willis McNelly of California State College?" sez I. Sure enough. We have corresponded in the past, and never before met. We meet, now, staring outside the Icelandic Airport Terminal at shivering, freezing water. Both going to the London Easter Con. Will turns out to be a very fine fellow and a very fine friend, though he does have greater debauchery capacity than I.

STILL ON THE WAY TO ENGLAND

Weeks hours later, the turbo-prop magically appears. We load, fly to Scotland, but land in Prestwick, Scotland rather than where we should have landed. Engine trouble again, they say. Customs at Prestwick is short. I pass, without opening my bag. Many hippies must unroll everything in their packs, including toilet paper. I get hustled out during the process. Apparently Scottish customs agents don't approve of American curiosity.

We get fed again. Seems like they must wake up hostesses and pilots of Scottish Caledonia Airlines, stationed in London, England, fly them up, and check out new plane. One young Scottish lass looks exactly like my mother when she was young. I shrug it off. Another older lass looks exactly like one of my mother's sisters. OK. I submit. We must have more Scottish in us than suspected. Won't the relatives be surprised? Here all the time we've been proudly justifying our paranoia because of the strong Irish blends. Maybe we're mostly Scottish-English, then.

Caledonia Airlines is pleasant, quick, sure. We land in London where I am met by the world-reknowned Dr Christopher Evans about 3 am. Will McNelly goes on to his hotel on a separate bus and I trek with Chris to Twickenham, his home. Small, 1890s architecture, clean streets, no billboard advertising blaring out, safe streets for young and old 24 hours per day. Lord! Watch out for the right-hand drivers. They all drive on the wrong side. Twenty four hours from New York to London by Icelandic windjammer? Tired man!

THE LONDON EASTERCON

Only George Hay could have put on this convention. Only in England could such a convention have been held successfully. Surely American fans would not permit out-groupers and scientific ideas to blamish their literary avant garde in-bred establishment.

George Hay says that the English Cons were also in-group socials which gathered egoboo for only a special bunch. He set out, this once, to build a convention which catered to new ideas and new personalities, preferring to blend mixtures of every point of view. How successful he was!

March 27, 1970: my new-found friend Professor Willis McNelly gave an address which was well received and well thought out.

After meal break came a film titled THE TRIP. It was an interpretation of an LSD trip, but I spent most of my time meeting the fabulous writers of London.

Ken Bulmer, E C Tubb, John Brunner - told him how much I respected his THE WHOLE MAN - Brian W Aldiss - had just finished his CRYPTOZOIC! - Jim Blish (the American who is presumed, there, to be English) and his wife Judy.

Hotel was huge, giving room for everything desired, but poor service, hygiene and rooms. Splendid drinking area which would have made Poul Anderson and Gordon Dickson most proud indeed. Met Don Wollheim and wife as well as my new agent Ted Carnell, very nice chap. Liked my new SWAMPWORLD WEST manuscript, advised me to move a chapter backward and to cut out 10,000 words. Good show. Will sell.

Dave Kyle and wife also present. Delightful people. Sam Lundall of Sweden again. Met him at St Louiscon in August for first time. Also Frau Charlotte Franke from Germany. Sweet woman. Pete Weston of SPECULATION and his lovely wife - oh so fine people. Nothing like these English. Nobody swore or got mad or overrode any other group. Pleasant, pleasant meeting.

Saturday March 28th: publisher's panel with John Booth, Ken Bulmer, Don Wollheim. John Booth is Panther publisher where my story WE FUSED ONES was published under Dr Chris Evans' editorship in MIND AT BAY. Also John Booth is putting out a new anthology edited by George Hay containing a new story of mine, SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE RICH! and which is to be fully criticized by experts in Richard Geis' SFR 37 under my article STORY AT BAY.

11 am: Kit Pedlar, BBC TV producer chairs panel on the need for a scientific ombudsman. Makes interesting case - draws argument from scientists scattered among the fans and literary types.

2 pm: Dr John Clarke, psychiatrist at University of Manchester gives a splendid talk on A SCIENTIFIC THEORY OF MYSTICISM. My God! A full-fledged psychiatrist has been drinking and eating and talking with me for two days! He's as much an s f fan as I am! He also writes the stuff! He presents the most spectacular, complete all-round theoretical framework for the serious psychological study of mysticism ever invented. It could never happen in America. And the fans interrupt his talk again and again with applause at his wit and his brilliant synthesis.

3 pm: America rallies. Our own giant, James Blish, Guest of Honour, talks: There was, from the 19th century onward, an enormous amount of s f writing never categorized as such. The downfall started with the specialist magazines which enabled the critics to downgrade not only s f, but cowboy stories, detective stories, love stories, etc. S f has held out due to three main appeals to the reader - it portrays thought working experimentally (Arthur Clarke's free-fall toilets, etc.); as an art-form it helps the reader to objectify the emotions particularly dear to the scientists (love of rigour, the sense of wonder, etc.); s f is involved with creating a face for a faceless time, by invoking the authority of science which, for good/evil, is about the only authority generally accepted. S f says that man can change his environment and himself, for better or for worse. New Wave concentrates on the worse.

Jim's more than excellent talk will appear in Harry Harrison's MAINSTREAM S F which he is editing for Scribner. Wonderful talk. Everyone should read it when available.

Dr Chris Evans showed how he forced his computer to "dream". Perry A Chapdelaine - that's me! - gave a film-slide talk on his Computer Assisted Instruction project. I'd like to add, here, that Arthur C Clarke and his brother Fred sat in the second row. They both seemed to enjoy themselves immensely, and came to talk to Chris and me when we finished our talks.

I showed MIT's (Dr Schwartz's and Taylor's) Computer simulation on approaching the speed of light film, and also Dr Bregman's SYMMETRY.

One sad note occurred. I had so looked forward to hearing Peter Weston and his panel. Time had run out. Re-scheduling would not have been difficult but it never happened, much to my great regret.

The fancy dress ball was so-so, and I skipped the films as well as the usual room parties with their throngs of campfollowers. The Poul Anderson bar - I just named it that - was more to my liking.

Sunday, March 29th: P J Hills of the University of Surrey gave a talk on Teaching Systems, Present and Future - a Multiple Image Tape/Slide presentation. Dr Hill was indeed a fine chap, and his subject well-received, but, like much English technology, was considerably behind American efforts. (On balance, English applied sociology is far in advance of America's).

2 pm: Keith Albarn, veritable genius of spatial structures, gave a fascinating talk mixed with random movements of slides projected on a screen, each showing some of his past work, usually in fibre-glass. I hope to see and work closer with Keith someday, but couldn't possibly predict how or when.

3pm: the most amazing phenomenon occurred. Raymond Fletcher, M P (Member of Parliament; one of the seven strongest this year) rose and gave a resounding speech, in high British tradition, of the need for science fiction writers in government. Happen in America? Not hardly. I eagerly await the transcription of his speech.

Earlier I had had cocktails with Raymond Fletcher at Poul Anderson's bar. I casually mentioned a project I'd been studying and promoting in America for nearly a year having to do with bringing s f into the educational structure of the schools. He hopped on the idea, phoned his wife that he would be late that night, and made me go to George Hay's office to type up a summary of it. That summary, he said, will be brought to the Ministry of Education and will be titled THE CHAPDELAINE PAPERS. In my own little way I've now proudly become part of the 700 year old tradition of the British Empire. He intends to follow up the idea and, if successfully introduced, I might get invited back to help build on it. That could never happen in America!

As long as he was relaxing - which I understand he rarely does - he stayed with me until 4 am that morning. Rather, I went to bed at 4 and he stayed until 5 am, telling British Empire yarns and other most interesting, colourful, humorous happenings.

A scientologist had been invited to speak. Perry A Chapdelaine - that's me again - challenged the man, pointing to facts unknown to most modern scientologists which establish beyond any shadow of doubt that Hubbard is this century's greatest hoax. E C Tubb and Ken Bulmer, among others, got irritated when time ran out and I had to stop telling about the great truths which foreshadowed England's invasion by scientology nuts. Dr Chris Evans is completing a book which will expose everything, and includes my testimony, and it ought to shake the scientology empire like a cat shakes a rat.

5pm: John Brunner chaired a delightful literary discussion. Again I eagerly await the transcription. John, by the way, looks and dresses much like Shakespeare and obviously has the old bard's gift of the gab and drink and probably gift for wenching, though I have no knowledge of the latter, only recognizing that gab, drink and wenching often go athreesome.

One evening John Brunner led off on poetry. The only ugly incident occurred when a certain publisher who disliked John got drunk and made nasty remarks. Studiously ignoring the man, John plunged poetically onward. The drunk threw a glass, cutting John's leg. Blood ran red, bright, down John's leg.

Did John scream and howl, and stamp his foot in anger? No, that would have been the American way. John reached into his pile of poems and pulled out one which just happened to describe someone as nasty as the glass thrower. John read it with relish, getting proper emotions and nuances into each line. The crowd howled it up.

Somehow, the drunk never came back.

How smoothly things did go, and delightful are the English. "So you're Perry A Chapdelaine who writes those 'orrible Spork stories?" He was a biologist with an 'orrible accent. "But what about the ANALOG stories, INITIAL CONTACT and the soon to come follow-on CULTURE SHOCK?" I rebutted. "Goooh. I loved that INITIAL CONTACT. That's the kind I like." We became good friends and he stayed up with my new friend Raymond Fletcher, M P.

The end came, unfortunately.

I MUSE OVER ENGLAND AND THE REMAINDER OF MY TRIP

George Hay and his fine wife Christine (who never got her name on the programme booklet, yet did much of the work) invited me to spend an evening at the home of Mr and Mrs Black, Christine's parents. Integrated neighbourhood. Black and white kids playing football by kicking it all around the streets. Soccer?

Heard talk here of establishing a Science Fiction Writers International organization to be set up along similar lines to SFWA but perhaps with more professional safeguards. I suspect a number of Englishmen are building the idea rather rapidly. I know I'd be happy to be an early member.

Kubrick of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY called Chris Evans while I was there. Wanted to talk about some computer programming problems.

My talk at the National Physical Laboratory apparently went well, though it's still hard for me to read the British audience. Dr Davis and Dr Newman, Chris's two top administrative scientists, stayed throughout, and asked questions. Dr James Thomas from Brunel University also asked questions and has already followed up with correspondence. Oh yes! Dr Newman worked with Turing (Turing Criteria for Machine Intelligence) and the DNA Crick.

Original Babbage calculator parts are on display there, too. And radar was invented there. Quite a place.

Chris took me to visit the Institute for Research in Art and Technology, London New Arts Laboratories, 1 Robert Street, London. It's a four storey warehouse taken over by avant garde artists of all kinds. He gave them shared-time computer terminal for use in development of computer art. Wonderful place. J G Ballard had just placed three wrecked cars on display. Spotlights, free sherry, picture talking, et. al. One little girl successfully counter-pointed the wrecked cars by wandering in and out of the crowd topless. Oh yes! She did have a small red ribbon about her neck. Of course, between the junked cars and the topless you know where my eyes were. It isn't often a person gets to see three junked cars passed off as the latest in art!

19

RAISON D'ETRE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

from Lem's greater originality and versatility, for he's tried never to repeat himself, which can hardly be said of Dick) that Lem employs methodical doubt as a scientific method, whereas Dick is given to sceptical doubt, without much trust in science or positive knowledge. Lem constantly scrutinizes various positions and pokes fun at them (including his own), a deeply rational procedure, whereas Dick finds it difficult to believe in any reality.

(post-SFC 9)

I'm quite pleased with your handling of AN INTRODUCTION TO A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF S F. However there are a few places where you corrected my English in the wrong way. Since I didn't use a dictionary, and "genological" seemed so right, I didn't know that there exists no such word in English. Your "genealogical", however, is wrong; the proper word should have been "generic" (belonging to a certain genus), as the idea of descendancy does not apply in this case. P. 36: Why "this instance can also be the already existing category of literary plays", instead of an? There are many different categories of literary plays. Also, "as a socio-psychological situation about objects and their deformations". This is wholly wrong. The real meaning is: "a socio-psychological situation", "interpreted by means of objects and their deformations"; Kafka certainly isn't writing about objects per se; he is only using them for some more significant purpose. And on page 40, 3rd line, the first word has to be "possible", not "impossible". But aside from this, your corrections are noted and appreciated.

The Foyster issue was also very impressive. Foyster's description of the ideal s f writer (and critic) reads as if it had been specifically tailored to fit Stanislaw Lem. And indeed, his achievements are noticeable: he studied philosophy, mathematics and medicine, was forced to work as a mechanic during the war, continued later in his studies, worked for a time as an assistant in psychology, writing papers on test-psychology. He is astonishingly widely-read, both in science and literature, has written books on futurology, cybernetics and literary theory (from an empirical point of view), philosophical papers (mostly on the relationship between ethics and technology). His book on s f is particularly valuable because it is written by a man who is a successful writer of s f as well as general literature - a man equally at home in literature as in science, an important writer in one of the major national literatures, and the only s f writer who is currently being discussed in long studies by serious critics who neither know much about science fiction, nor care for it. All books on s f published so far were either written by academics who knew very little of science as well as of the praxis of writing; or by fellow s f authors, trying to defend the position of s f, from whom one can scarcely expect sound judgments,.... Lem himself has repeatedly noted this total lack of a theoretical consciousness in s f criticism, the last time in connection with the Brunner/Blish debate in SFR, where he in particular remarked upon Blish's theoretical helplessness in answering his opponents.

** **

* The two most difficult articles I have typed for this magazine have been my own article on INTANGIBLES INC, and Lem's INTRODUCTION TO A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF S F. I have been promising myself the \$20 Shorter Oxford Dictionary ever since, for a start, since the only one within shouting distance is at school, and I'm always doing five other things when in the library. Franz used some rather odd, even ancient tricks of the English language in his translation, and I had to unravel those as well as translate parts of the article. But I found out the meanings of lots of words I didn't know before.

* And now, for light relief, and just in case you did not read them in LOCUS or NORSTRILIAN NEWS or LUNA MONTHLY (in which case you are really cut off from fandom), here are the NEBULA AWARDS, awarded by the Science Fiction Writers of America:

BEST NOVEL: THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, by Ursula K LeGuin (Ace; Walker).
2. SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5 (Kurt Vonnegut)
3. BUG JACK BARRON (Norman Spinrad)

BEST NOVELLA: A BOY AND HIS DOG, by Harlan Ellison (Avon)
2. SHIP OF SHADOWS (Fritz Leiber)
3. DRAMATIC MISSION (Anne McCaffrey)

BEST NOVELETTE: TIME CONSIDERED AS A HELIX OF SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES, by Samuel R Delany (Ace)
2. NINE LIVES (Ursula K LeGuin)
3. THE BIG FLASH (Norman Spinrad)

BEST SHORT STORY: PASSENGERS by Robert Silverberg (Putnam)
2. SHATTERED LIKE A GLASS GOBLIN (Harlan Ellison)
3. NOT LONG BEFORE THE END (Larry Niven)

The disinterested (no, not the uninterested; only ABC announcers make that mistake) may observe how the Yanks have closed ranks. Partisans may also note that the publishers' plaques for Novella and Novelette should have gone to the obscure English journal NEW WORLDS, where TIME CONSIDERED... and A BOY AND HIS DOG first appeared. They were only average quality in that magazine, however. Very few of the stories come from the American magazines, you might notice: LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS and SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5 were not run as serials anywhere; THE BIG FLASH, PASSENGERS and SHATTERED LIKE A GLASS GOBLIN come from ORBIT collections (available at McGills in Berkley editions), and I haven't struck NINE LIVES or NOT LONG BEFORE THE END at all. If I did, I've forgotten them.

The Hugo awards, to be awarded by Heicon, should be very interesting.

* I've heard nothing more about the organization of the 1971 Ditmar Awards (our 'umble version of the Nebula Awards and the Hugos), but here are a few more recommendations:

From VISION OF TOMORROW Number 5, you might read William Temple's LIFE OF THE PARTY. The idea of a party of travellers caught into a "dimensional trap" is not very new, but I found most of Temple's adventures and images still very enjoyable and striking. The sort of story where it doesn't matter what happens at the end, since you've already enjoyed the rest of the story so much. * Also in the same issue is Sydney J Bounds' ONE OF THE FAMILY which is perhaps too simple and does not sufficiently explore its very timely notion: as we destroy more and more species here on Earth (as the main character destroys the "alien" in typical s f fashion) who knows how many times we destroy "one of the family"? Perhaps this was editor Harbottle's Earth Day contribution. * NEW WORLDS' cutback from 64 pages to 32 pages has not improved it one bit. The only story that tickled my literary palate from this year's offerings was Marek Obdulowicz's RISE AND FALL (NW Number 196, December 1969) which, pieced together from the trendy stream-of-consciousness dialogue, is really a most original alien-among-us story. This alien has the most peculiar proclivity, which only matters when the alien happens to fall in love at the wrong time of year. If I were Messrs. Wollheim and Carr, I would pick this up like a shot. * NW has reached Number 199, by the way, but current rumours (yes, the same ones you heard three years ago) make me wonder whether there will be a Number 200. Charles Platt has quit and turned up in America, no less! *

Meanwhile Michael Moorcock continues ^{to recoup} all those losses he made on the magazine NEW WORLDS with his collections from the magazine. The latest one I have is BEST S F STORIES FROM NEW WORLDS No 5, which contains the Number 2 story on my personal list for last year, Norman Spinrad's THE LAST HURRAH OF THE GOLDEN HORDE as well as a bit of BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD (THE SERPENT OF KUNDALINI, by Brian Aldiss), a very exciting story by Graham Hall that I had not read before, THE TENNYSON EFFECT, Langdon Jones' tongue-in-cheek BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN II which satirizes music and the 19th century and Beethovenolatry; and... Well, that's a good collection of classics for a start. Since most of these stories come from NEW WORLDS issues not generally made available in Australia I would not miss this collection when it hits Australia. (Peter Weston is probably having a coronary over in England; yes, I know you sent this to me to review for SPECULATION; yes, a proper review will appear in SPECULATION; but in the meanwhile this is a pretty good deal.)

I can't think of anything else at the moment, as I still haven't started this year's American magazines. I've read half of ORBIT 5, and there are already a couple of great stories. More of that next time.

* On this booster bit: John Bangsund will not make official SCYTHROP Awards, as he indicated several months ago, but has indicated the results from those people who did fill out Award slips. John's rules were much stricter than the Ditmar awards (and will probably be the rules for next year's Ditmars) and he effectively cut out nearly all of the Ditmar winners from the running. BEST OVERSEAS S F: LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS (Ursula K LeGuin)/ STAND ON ZANZIBAR (John Brunner). BEST INTERNATIONAL PROZINE: ANALOG. BEST AUSTRALIAN S F: ANCHOR MAN (Jack Wodhams). BEST AUSTRALIAN FANZINE: S F COMMENTARY. * My own personal award, as I indicated in SFC 11, went to CASABLANCA, by Thomas M Disch.

* And on the subject of all that scandalous skulduggery that surrounded the D***** Award, we have - surprise! - Harry Warner Jr:

HARRY WARNER JR

(April 26, 1970)

423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown
Maryland 21740
U S A

You shouldn't feel depressed over the response to the Ditmar Awards. It's been only the past half dozen years, roughly, that the Hugos have drawn a really large number of voters. Most Worldcon committees kept all details about the voting a deep

secret down through the years, so it's impossible to be certain, but I've heard enough startling stories of the low response to make the Australian vote seem proportionately massive, with due allowance for the absence of a lengthy Ditmar tradition. Three or four years ago, while I was accumulating material for the fan history, one fan who has been very active in worldcons and knows most of their innermost secrets told me: "Give me twenty people and I can swing a Hugo for anyone." Apparently that era has now disappeared, and I feel quite certain that the same change will occur for the Ditmar response if you can keep the thing alive a few years. Fans, those forward-looking, dynamic people of tomorrow, are never comfortable around anything except ancient traditions, you know. There was even a situation in a long-ago Hugo race quite similar to your problem with the Calvino book. A batch of votes arrived for an obscure British story, all from the British Isles, mostly from people nobody had ever heard of before. As I remember the course of events, the worldcon committee threw out these votes as an obvious attempt to stuff the ballot box, and in more recent years, it's become necessary to prove your existence as a genuine fan if you participate in the Hugo voting and aren't instantly known to the Committee.

Re George Turner's article.... I know what caused THE BLIND SPOT to become an instant favourite when I read it for the first time (a dozen years after I'd discovered science fiction, so I can't be blamed for prejudice in favour of the first examples of the field I encountered). It was the moment when the characters hear the bark of a dog and know that no dog is there. I would like someday, when I get my collection into accessible order, to write an article on the dozen greatest moments in science fiction. That would be one, along with the page in JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH when the cryptogram is finally translated and its startling message becomes known, and the SHIP OF ISHIAR's hero's first sight of the ship in its miniature guise, and maybe the final line of either A MARTIAN ODYSSEY, or VALLEY OF DREAMS, when the cancer cure is displayed. (And a small detail about a detail: when I was a boy, newspapers and Sunday supplements and puzzle books kept publishing little diagrams that demonstrated the existence of the human eye's blind spot. You closed one eye, looked straight at a black circle, and moved the paper slowly toward your face, and suddenly another black spot would disappear as it encountered the blind spot.)

Pat Terry sounds as if he were science fiction fandom's equivalent of a celebrated fan of mundane amateur journalism, Tim Thrift, who published for mundane apas over a period of more than sixty years without gafiating. I saw someone at the Nycon who looked to be at least 90, but couldn't find out whether he was a fan or a pro. Australia could conceivably have one surviving elderly fan, if Marshall L McLennan is still alive. I haven't heard from him for a long while, although we exchanged letters annually until perhaps 1950. He would probably be in his 70s by now, if still alive, and was active mostly during the 1930s. I could try to dig out his last known address, if nobody knows for certain about his fate and someone would care to try to track him down.

I'm glad to hear about Australia's decision to shoot for the worldcon (***brg** well, not exactly; shoot down NASFiC first. **) It would be wise to try to arrange a travelling program because I imagine that almost any fans who made the trip from other continents would want to combine fan activity with sightseeing. I know that fans that go across the Atlantic to conventions spend most of their time with other fans, but there's something about a trip to Australia that implies it will be a once-in-a-lifetime journey and this could impel most of the travellers to want to soak up some impressions of the whole land.

You make me feel more conspicuous than ever with this special treatment of my letters of comment in this issue (No 11). Please don't do such things out of a sense of duty, in case I'm the only one in the United States who tries to provide comments on each issue. I don't write these things for the sake of seeing my remarks in print, but to give the fanzine editors some sort of return for their investment in me in the form of postage and paper and labour. I write locs to the fanzines that don't have letter sections. But you're wrong about one thing: I don't write locs to every fanzine that arrives. That's impossible, and I don't choose my victims on any particular basis of quality or size or kind of contents. When a fanzine issue doesn't fertilize a loc impulse, it may mean that the issue slipped out of sight in the pile of stuff awaiting comments, or it arrived at a time when I was swamped by fanzines, or I decided to write an article for the fanzine instead of a loc and never got around to creating the article or thought maybe the editor wouldn't mind if I skipped a loc since I'd written promptly about his previous seventy-four issues. If you encounter sudden silence about an issue of SFC, please assume that there's no ominous or complicated cause for the silence.

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* That sets the record fairly straight. Neil Rahman, from Brisbane, asked the fairly straightforward question: "What is TAFF?", and another correspondent

found the "in"-language not very communicative. Both those people, and probably many others would have found the first few sentences of Harry Warner's remarks about Pat Terry mystifying. Fan language forever puzzles, even though it is easy to learn. "Gafiate" is a contraction of "get away from it all"; "fanac" = "fan activity"; "apa" = "amateur press association" of which we have one in Australia - contact Gary Mason, Warili Road, French's Forest, N S W 2086 about ANZAPA; "loc" = "letter of comment" to a "fanzine" = "fan, or amateur magazine" of which this is one. They go on and on; please write to me if you find the fannish parts of this magazine incomprehensible.

My terse interjection needs explaining. The rules will need to be changed before it is worth any country outside USA holding a World Convention. See elsewhere in this issue, *

* And now, a few words from a Sydney character whose promising fanzine has not appeared for long time. The following comments are reprinted from WITH AH! BRIGHT WINGS, Alex's magazine in the 9th mailing of ANZAPA:

ALEX ROBB

(10th April 1970)

120 Herring Rd
Eastwood
N S W 2122

The "three views" of Philip Dick strike me as quite separate and intensely interesting, more especially yours and Dick's himself. Dick himself clarifies at least what he sees in the novels if at least not as much

as we see. Let me see if I can get him straight. The idios kosmos is a private and unique world, that of the psychopathic and withdrawn, against which is set a larger or shared world, the koinos. This shared world is archetypal in character and immortal in scope; it does not die (consisting as it does of millions of beings) whereas the private individual (or at least his idios) may. Now what does this mean? Either that the individual himself dies, or that the private part dies while something that is also a part of him - the larger, the archetype - lives. What may be involved is a kind of survival after death. What is involved here is a transference from one state to another, in which presumably entropy or "form destruction" is involved.... Just occasionally Dick breaks through the cardboard:

The sides of the bus became transparent. He saw out into the street, the sidewalk and stores. Thin support struts, the skeleton of a bus. Metal girders, an empty hollow box. No other seats. Only a strip, a length of planking on which upright featureless shapes like scarecrows had been propped. They were not alive. The scarecrows lolled forward, back, forward, back. Ahead of him he saw the driver; the driver had not changed. The red neck. Strong, wide back. Driving a hollow bus.

(TIME OUT OF JOINT, page 81)

...When you talk of Pinter and the Absurdists I think I see what you mean - there is the same kind of bitter irony which passes for laughter but then if we are astute leaves a sour taste in the brain. This "ironic comedy that contains no laughter" to use your own phrase attracts us as s f presumably because he is the sole or one of the sole practitioners of it and it is a thing he does very well. But your quote on page 21 I am afraid is not so much "dislocated so that he cannot respond any more emotionally" but simply an example of flat writing, as in most s f. The whole trouble with Dick's novels is that much of it is flat. The writing may be ironic and Pinterish but I would strongly argue that what draws us along is primarily escapism or the novelty of the thing.

** **

* As you can see, I'm trying to fit in about fifty pages of material into 26, and not completely failing. But that's the story of Australian s f activity at the moment - trying to make up for the long years of lothargy, and then the two or three years when John Bangsund's light shone alone. Now there are a number of dimmer lights, all trying to illuminate a number of related causes, concerns and perhaps a few grumbles.

Meanwhile ("that's more space you've wasted!") SFC correspondents, the people who have supported the magazine from the start, have been rather left behind. Now I have a vast number of letters that I cannot possibly print from people whose views are interesting and valuable, but perhaps not as interesting or relevant as some of the things I've printed here - or perhaps they are just out-of-date. And that, as some have told me, is nobody's fault but mine.

* So, WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

TOM NEWLYN (N S W) who, in September 1969 (!) commented on D M Thomas' MR BLACK'S POEM OF INNOCENCE (NEW WORLDS) which is a "valid and perceptive account of psychotherapy and 'remotivation' in psychiatry". Look for the story/poem when Mike Moorcock reprints it, if he hasn't done so already. * Umpteen letters from PAUL ANDERSON (S A) from which it is hard at this point of time to pick out highlights. In one letter he points out to Paul Stevens (SFC 6) that sex certainly does not "sell like crazy" in science fiction. Compare the circulation figures of NEW WORLDS and ANALOG. Paul mentions that ALL OUR YESTERDAYS is far more interesting than DANGEROUS VISIONS; that I can believe. He observes that although the third Perry Rhodan book was the same length as the first two, the price went up. He also notices that: "In TRUMPET 8 John Brunner lays claim to a novel called THE PSIONIC MENACE ("Keith Woodcott")... It perfectly fits the conventional definition of a hack-novel. Brunner (SFC 6) states that he finished SQUARES OF THE CITY more than 9 years ago, but sold THE PSIONIC MENACE to Ace in 1963." Paul's favourite 6 s f novels (presumably read during 1969) were 1.FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (Keyes). 2. DARK UNIVERSE (Galouye). 3. SIRENS OF TITAN (Vonnegut). 4. AN AGE (Aldiss). 5. STAND ON ZANZIBAR (Brunner). 6.CAPTIVE UNIVERSE (Harrison). Paul also notes (re. SFC 8) that "the photo of Diane Bangsund that you printed did not do her justice." Lee Harding took the photograph, so don't blame me. Paul advises me to see MIDNIGHT COWBOY (which I have, and wish I hadn't), mention YANDRO, and to note that Philip Dick's latest book, OUR FRIENDS FROM FROLIX 8 will appear soon from Ace. Paul's top 3 short s f stories for 1968-69 (compare them with the S F COMMENTARY awards) are: 1. SPLIT PERSONALITY (Jack Wodhams). 2.ARE YOU THERE, MR JONES? (Stanislaw Lem). 3.THE INFINITY SENSE (Verge Foray). Paul also extended his subscription - even though he was paid up to Number 16. Where else but ⁱⁿ Pandom are people so friendly?

* And room disappears as I keep typing, with letters still here from BRIAN RICHARDS (who reminded me that the magazine had insulted John Brunner, no matter what excuses I should offer, and who was one of the first people to tell me of Pat Terry's death); ALEX ROBB (N S W) who has exchanged umpteen letters with me over recent months, but was very disappointed that I used so much space in SFC 11 in talking about the Ditmar Awards. I only hope Alex still writes to me after this issue. ; TONY THOMAS (Victoria) who thinks he knows who Andrew Escot (SFC 5) is, but can't imagine that particular person reading, let alone praising, THE JAGGED ORBIT ; STUART LESLIE (N S W) who wrote some interesting things about Brunner, and whose last letter I still want to quote further; DICK GEIS (California) who barracks behind the lines and still thinks the art work is not up to scratch. All I need is money, Dick.; BOB SMITH, who tried reading Lem three times and gave up, and who said all sorts of interesting things which I was going to print, but.... ; DAVE PIPER (Middlesex) who writes hilarious letters while dandling his baby; and... and.... Maybe you'll be mentioned next time. Three reviews of Bob Shaw novels next time, more letters, more everything. Cheap, but not too nasty. Keep writing. * (Last stencil typed: 6th June 1970).

MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE

S F COMMENTARY 13 - CHECKLIST

A B C CHILDREN'S HOUR (pages 2 to 4) * james blish: GUEST OF HONOUR SPEECH - LONDON EASTERCON 1970 (16) * sydney j bounds: ONE OF THE FAMILY (21) * john brunner (general) (17-18, 25) * l sprague de camp: THE GOBLIN TOWER (12) * perry a chapdelaine (general) (13-19) * samuel r delany: NOVA (9-10) * philip k dick (general) (24) * austin hall & homer eon flint: THE BLIND SPOT (23) * THE DITMAR AWARDS (22) * harlan ellison & norman spinrad (general) (13-14) * john foyster: FROGS & SNAILS & PUPPY-DOGS' TAILS (SFC 10) (20) * randall garrett (general) (14) * philip harbottle (ed.): VISION OF TOMORROW (21) * harry harrison: CAPTIVE UNIVERSE (10-11) * george hay (organizer): LONDON S F CONVENTION EASTER 1970 (15-19) * stanislaw lem (general) (4, 20) * stanislaw lem: AN INTRODUCTION TO A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF S F (SFC 9) (20) * prof. willis mcnelly (general) (15) * michael moorcock (ed.): BEST S F STORIES FROM NEW WORLDS 5 (22) * THE NEBULA AWARDS (21) * 1975 WORLD S F CONVENTION BIDDING COMMITTEE & WORLD CONVENTION RULES (5-8, 23) * marek obtulowicz: RISE AND FALL (21) * charles platt (ed.): NEW WORLDS (21) * g k saunders (general): (2-4) * g k saunders: THE MOONFLOWER (3) * k h echeer & walter ernsting: PERRY RHODAN I: ENTERPRISE STARDUST (11-12) * THE SCYTHROP AWARDS (22) * william f temple: LIFE OF THE PARTY (21) * george turner: GOLDEN AGE - PAPER AGE (SFC 11) (23) * harry warner jr (general) (23) *

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