

# SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

40







# SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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BACK COVER—TIM KIRK







"Geis, aren't you ever going to stop grinning?"

"Don't break the mood, Alter-ego. Winning two Hugos in a row is better than an evening with the Angels on TV and a half-gallon of pistachio-nut ice cream followed by a fine Johnny Carson show and a nightcap of peach brandy."

"I'm surprised you'd show such contempt for the award. After all—"

"Alter, I am humble and sort of proud to have won again. When Bruce Pelz handed me the Hugo last night at the L.A.S.-F.S. meeting and everyone stood up and applauded....it was unreal. They were applauding me!"

"Us, Geis, US!"

"All I can say is thank you again, all who voted for—" "US!"

"—SFR, and I want you to know that...that...\*blush\* I want another one! Three in a row! It's never been done before! THREE! THREEEEE! THE GREATEST FANZINE EVER PUBLISHED! THE GREATEST EDITOR! THE GREATEST—"

\*Click!\*

"Alter-ego here, folks. Geis is sleeping now. I had to take over and switch him off. As you may have guessed he is simply a highly complicated robot with delusions of grandeur. I let him rave occasionally, but too often he shows the weaknesses of a Mark VIIIIIIIIII brain.

"While Geis is 'sleeping' I want to comment on the other Hugo winners and the runners-up. At the Banquet at Heicon the second and third places were given in each category as well as the winners.

"The Best Novel was The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. LeGuin. This makes her the Nebula and the Hugo winner this year. This win was expected. Congratulations, Ursula.

"The runner-up was Bob Silverberg's Up the Line, a surprisingly high finish for a humorous and satirical novel. Usually humor is neglected in the voting for the top, prestige awards. Fans don't want outsiders to think they are frivolous.

"Third place went to Macroscopic by Piers Anthony.

"UUrmmph. Wha...??"

"Geis is waking." \*Sigh\*

"Alter...what have you been up to? Roll back the stencil. 'Best'...mmm...bzz....mmm...."

"I wish, Geis, that you could read without moving your lips."

"Sarcasm, Alter, will get you banished to the lower stem. Remember who is master here!"

"Yassuh, boss."

"Fortunately, you didn't do too bad a job of commenting while I rested. Now we will go on to Best Novella."

"The winner was 'Ship of Shadows' by Fritz Leiber."

"This was a kind of surprise. Most fans expected either 'A Boy and His Dog' by Harlan Ellison or 'We All Die Naked' by James Blish, to win. Obviously the voters thought very highly of Fritz's story."

"Harlan's story came in second, Geis, and Blish's third."

"Who won the Best Short Story, Alter?"

"Chip Delany with 'Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones.'"

"Yes, a lovely story. It—"

"Geis, I have a question: this Delany story was first published in December, 1968 in NEW WORLDS. Doesn't that disqualify it for winning a Hugo for stories first published in 1969?"

"Well...you see, the story appeared in World's Best Science Fiction: 1969 and was copyrighted 1969 there with the words:

'An earlier version of this story was published in NEW WORLDS and has been revised especially for publication in this anthology.' Understand?"

"Sure. I wouldn't quibble if the story had been revised significantly, but this one wasn't."

"Alter, I'm sure—"

"I compared the texts, Geis. All I could find was the changed spelling of 'Storeys' to 'stories'—English spelling to American spelling—the changing of a 'was' to 'was', and the cutting of "'I've been involved with them a good deal more than yes," I said.' and the substitution of "'Peripherally," I said.'"

"Go on."

"That's all, Geis."

"Hmmm. That doesn't seem like much. Well, it's too late now—"

"Rules is rules, Geis."

"Yes, but—"

"I think the story was qualified for 1969 Hugo consideration by a technicality...if in fact it was a technicality. NEW WORLDS is not distributed in the United States. Its appearance there effectively killed it, fine story that it is, for the Hugo ballot of Best Short Story for 1968. It was natural to want to give it another chance."

"Damn you, Alter!"



"I'm sorry. But rules is rules, fair is fair and I call 'em as I see them. I like Chip Delany as much as you. He has contributed fine material to SFR and we owe him a lot, but...there it is."

"What would you have him do, give back the Hugo, for God's sake?"

"No. But another should be given, to Bob Silverberg for his second place story, "Passengers." The Heicon or the Noreascon committee should see to it as soon as possible. On the historical record it should be recorded as a tie...a double award."

"I don't know. It's a messy, distasteful business."

"We obviously cannot have another vote. It would be much too costly and in its way unfair."

"Alright, Alter, you've had your say. We'll see what happens. Who came in third in the Best Short Story category?"

"Larry Niven, with "Not Long Before the End."

"We will go on to the Best Professional Magazine Hugo."

"The Hugo went to F&SF this year...as it did last year."

"Well, congratulations to the Fermans!"

"Shall I go on to the Best Dramatic Hugo winner?"

"Go."

"The TV coverage of Apollo XI."

"My, my. That must be the most expensively earned Hugo ever...for all time."

"Geis, a quibble: a drama is not a documentary. 'Dramatic' means fiction. I don't think Apollo XI qualifies."

"NO MORE. Read who came in second and third!"

"MAROONED and THE ILLUSTRATED MAN."

"Moving right along..."

"The Best Professional Artist Hugo went to Frank Kelly Freas. Runners-up were Leo and Diane Dillon, then Jack Gaughan. Hey, you know what, Geis? I think the runners-up should be given a certificate of some kind that could be framed."

"A fair idea. Maybe someday. Now read the name of the Best Fan Writer."

"Bob Tucker. The voters honored him for long years of highly amusing and entertaining articles, columns, and fanzines."

"Right. A richly deserved award. Who came in second?"

"You did, Geis."

"Are you sure Tucker is qualified, Alter?"

"I'll ignore that gored look you have, Geis. The second runner-up was Piers Anthony."

"Hmm. Welcome to the club, Piers."

"If you're interested, LOCUS came in second in the Best Fan Magazine category, and RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY followed."

"I have an idea LOCUS will win the Best Fan Magazine Hugo next year if Charlie Brown continues his excellent sf news gathering and reporting. I wish SPECULATION would win one of these years. Peter Weston deserves one of the silver phalluses."

"Last category, Geis! Best Fan Artist was Tim Kirk!"

"No one can complain about that. He earned it."

"George Barr was first runner-up, Bill Rotsler was second runner-up."

"IF THERE WAS ANY JUSTICE IN THIS WORLD BILL ROTSLER

WOULD HAVE A HUGO!"

"He'll get one. He's still relatively young. He'll be contributing art to all and sundry for a long time."

"I hope so."

"Can I go now, Geis? My throat is dry."

"Stay out of my peach brandy!"

"Listen, the ants get into it, why can't I?"

"Alter—hey, looking back, I see you forgot to mention the second and third places in the Best Professional Magazine category."

"I did? Well, ANALOG came in second, and AMAZING was third."

"Alright...you may have a small sip."

\*Glunk..glunk..glunk...\*

"ALTER!!"



"Shay, Geish, I shee...I see you frowning at that book there. Wh—(hic)—why, huh?"

"I'm not speaking to you."

"Suuuure you are. You get plashtered once in a while. I shpeack to you."

"Well...at least you don't get maudlin."

"Maudlin? That shome kinda new drug?"

"No! Let us...as much as your polluted part of my mind allows...let us discuss the practice of some publishers of publishing patently Juvenile sf as adult sf."

"Aha! But many, many, many, many people have said that sf is a juvenile field of writing. Whaddya shay to that?"

"That may have been largely true in the 1930s and 40s and 50s, but in the last few years sf has matured. There is now a clear difference between adult sf and juvenile sf."

"Why the righteous anger? Hey...'righteous'..I'm shobering up! I mean, Ted White's juveniles, and Bob Silverberg's juveniles, and Andre Norton's juveniles can be read and enjoyed by adults."

"But there are different age-levels...different grades of writing...in juveniles. And when books are issued with Tom Swift type dialogue..."

"Lemme see that book, Geis. Hmm. Yas. Written for children age ten to fourteen, I'd guess. This is Stanton A. Coblentz's Outlander series."

"Published by Belmont as The Animal People, originally titled, when published by Thomas Bouregy and Co., The Crimson Capsule."

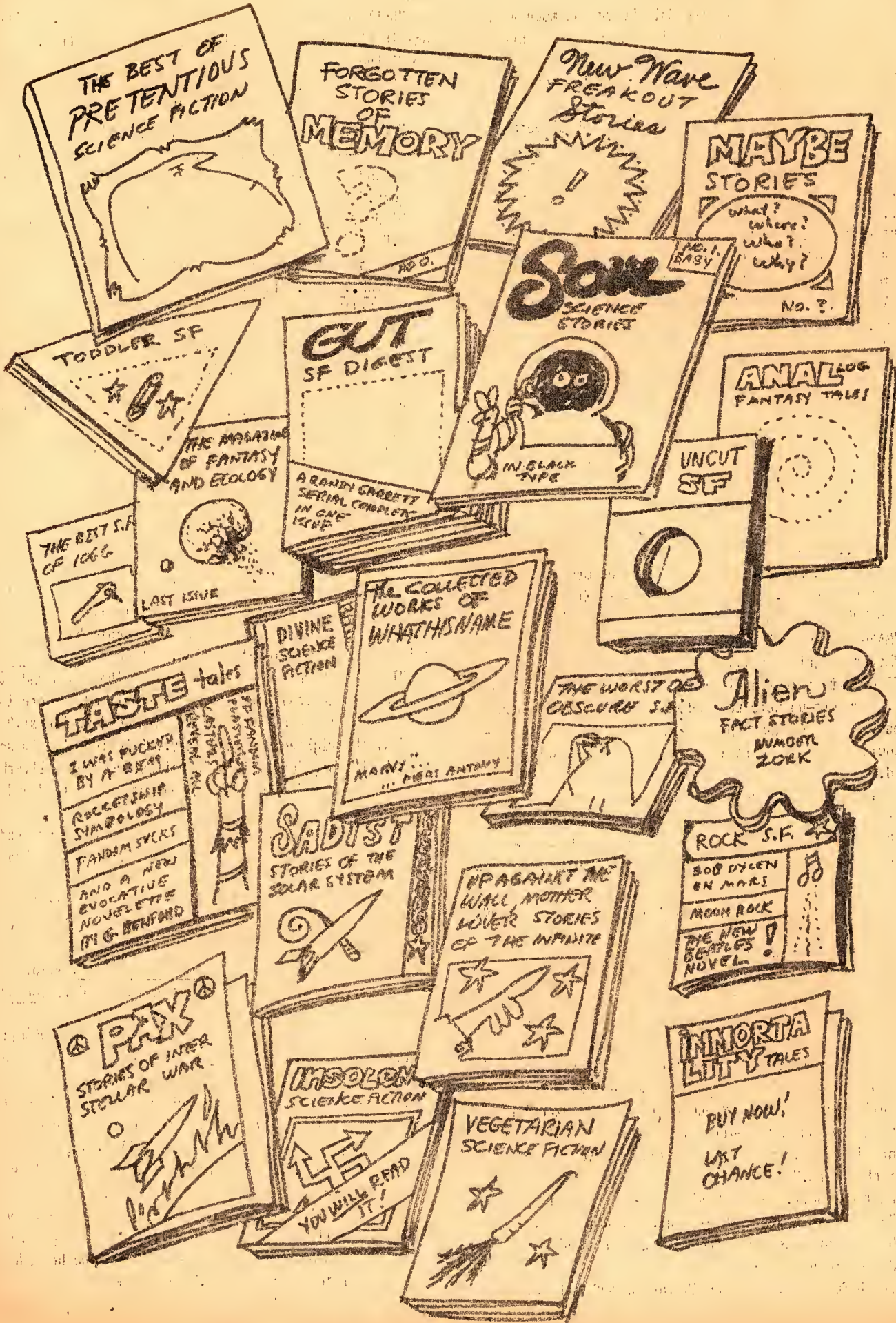
"Ummm. Full of exclamation points and said-bookisms; but worse, the people all speak with 20th century common usage: hundreds of years in the future one of the overlords, a Regulator, speaks of having a broad and open mind and is willing to hear "your side of the case." He talks of heaven and devilish mischief, he can't "make head or tail of it," and an act "clinches the case," "an ironclad case." There is talk of ringleaders and henchmen..."

"Alter, that's enough. The point is there should be some labeling of children's sf when it is reprinted in paperback."

"Belmont should have it's hands whacked and be made to sit in the corner for twenty years."









# Labels and Such

Speech Delivered at the 4th Baltimore SF Conference, February, 1970

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. At first when we were invited here, my inclination was to be the silent member of the family, to ride on Damon's coattails and smile, but after an admittedly short period, I came to realize that there were things on my mind that I'd like to say too.

I've never made a real speech before. The only time I did anything even comparable, and that not very, was so long ago that many of you probably weren't even born yet. When I graduated from high school, on our program there were couplets to be said by various class officers, addressed to the teachers of the senior class. I wrote the couplets, and when it was time for me to deliver my two lines, I went completely blank. So I sat down. If I leave the stage without saying goodbye, you'll know what happened.

Before I get to the business of my talk, I want to discuss the two ads that appeared in the science fiction magazines concerning the Viet Nam war. I will come back to this, however, so it isn't entirely extraneous.

As many of you know the ad opposing the war in Viet Nam was originated following an evening session of the Milford Conference in our living room. The meeting we held was not part of the conference, but simply a gathering of those members who felt strongly about the war. I made the announcement that those who believed that our participation was a mistake were invited to meet in our living room after the day's business was concluded. Not to debate the war and our policies, but to discuss whether or not there was anything that we could do to express our feelings regarding the war. Those who did not share our beliefs were invited to make themselves at home in any other part of the house that they chose, to have coffee in the kitchen, or library, or whatever.

Even so, there were hard feelings about the meeting, and needless to say, the reverberations about the ads have not yet ceased. Not all members of the conference attended that meeting, and not all signed the subsequent statement. Some, in fact, signed the alternate statement that appeared. But, I'll return to this.

What I want to state publicly at this time is that I ended up with a surplus of about two hundred dollars. Not

from the initial letter inviting S.F.W.A. members to participate, but from later donations that came in mostly from fans. There were single dollar bills, and there were checks, and even postal money orders. In some instances there were names and addresses, in many there were none.

A second pair of opposing ads really seemed pointless, and there wasn't enough money anyway. When I saw the Moratorium ads in the papers in early October, I knew there was finally the cause that I could send that money to in good conscience, and I did. Two hundred sixteen dollars. Thank all of you who contributed. I think it was a worthwhile effort. This leads me directly into the area of Labels and Such.

What I find curiouser and curiouser is the way meanings of words get scrambled, and the emotional charge that attaches to words. Suddenly those of us who detest this war in Viet Nam and see no hope for a victory either on the battlefield or through the play with words going on now—Vietnamization! we're the ones prolonging the war. It's like, if you drag your heels when a rapist is trying to hustle you into an alley, you're prolonging your own agony.

If you kick and scream and attract attention, you make it harder for the attacker to carry out his intentions, sure. But maybe enough people will notice the commotion to stop long enough to ask, what's going on? They may even get involved enough to try to understand it and put a stop to it. So you scream over more and more escalations, of men, of arms, of bombings, and people do start asking, what's going on, and you have prolonged the war. The Hawks would escalate to three quarters of a million men, to bombing of harbors, maybe ships of other nations, and ultimately, when none of this won the war, would they have escalated to the use of atomic weapons, or the wholesale burning of a country, a la Dresden? In this sense they would, if left alone without protesters, bring the war to a halt. You bet they would. So they are the real doves, and we, the ones who won't be dragged around the corner without making a fuss, we're the hawks.

And those who say let's fight now, so we won't have to fight later, they seem to forget that what usually happens is that we fight now and later. How many wars have there been to end war? How about not fighting at all, now or later? For a thousand years there's been a Viet Nam, and for all but about forty of those years the country's been divided, and at a state of war, or near war. So this is not a brand new Communist menace, but rather a tradition with them.

**BY KATE WILHELM**



And I say it's none of our business.

So the Doves are really the Hawks, and the Hawks, because they actually want to end the war—their way—are the Doves.

When I began to think about the substance of my speech, I didn't believe there was a way to integrate the various things on my mind into one coherent pattern, but gradually I came around to viewing these separate apparently disparate subjects as one overall theme. Labels. Names. It is no longer true that, "By their fruits you shall know them." Now it's, by their names you shall know them. Once you start questioning labels, there's no end. Take science fiction. Fiction about science of scientists. Mystery fiction about a mystery. Automotive fiction properly would be about automobiles. Rural fiction. Mountain. And so on right into the absurd. If we stick to this method and throw out whatever doesn't fit the label, science fiction, we lose most of what has been written in this field over the past years. And almost everything being written in it today.

Most of science fiction is not fiction about science. Little of it has anything to do with science even peripherally. And lots and lots of it has much to do with mumbo jumbo, magic, sleight of hand tricks, technology, and backyard mechanics. It will surprise many people to hear that technology is not science. Engineering isn't science, any more than typing is writing.

What has happened, I think, is that years ago, when Goddard was out there in the desert shooting off his rockets without the support of the government, being laughed at and scorned by scientists, then to write about space travel and such was daring and innovative. Possibly even visionary, although that might be arguable. To write of the same things today is fine, but then one must not try to pass them off as daring or bold, or visionary—with certain exceptions—like in 2001 where the concept of space travel as tedious and boring is real vision.

Can you imagine writing or reading stories today about

War Aces today, in their supersonic jets, with remote controlled rockets and such? No, once any field of enquiry has passed over into the realm of engineering and mass production, it has lost its glamor, and its mystery. It's awfully hard to get misty-eyed, or tremulous, about the millionth crossing of the Queen Elizabeth, no matter if the liner is docking in New York, or on some distant planet. And if it's a gun boat on the Yangtze, or a Federation Ship on a mission to Procyon III, these are more alike and more like historical romance, than like the early science fiction. Throwing in pages of physics, or of technical engineering details that add nothing except the facade of authenticity doesn't change that: it is still historical fiction, or adventure fiction, or engineering fiction.

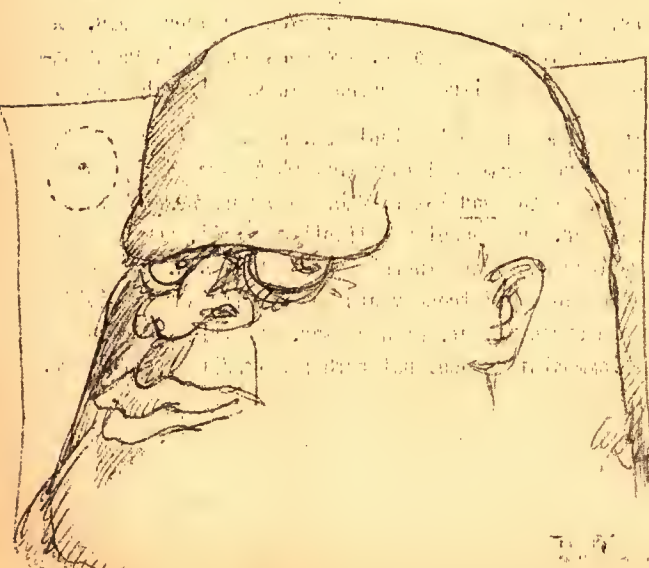
To my knowledge no one has ever defined science fiction in a way that was universally accepted. Or even accepted by everyone in one fan club. So when you talk about it with three other people, there will be four definitions at work. It's that way with most words; personal connotations, politics, childhood training, God knows what else color words to make them mean different things to different people, and we only assume that when we speak, the other person will have the same definition in mind. This accounts for the highly specialized language of the people in highly specialized fields.

The good social scientist coins words, or carefully defines words as he goes so that you will have a more precise knowledge of what he means when he says something like "family." You think you know what family means? Parents and offspring. That's one. Parents, grandparents and offspring. Parents, all first cousins and all the offspring of all of them. In the deep south you mean anyone who can trace a common ancestor, no matter how remote the connection might be. Or you could mean any group of people living together for an indefinite period of time. Or a group of well organized criminals who operate out of a single community. And so on. So the whole bit with semantics is not easy.

And it becomes more difficult when people start making statements to the effect that something or other is polluting the pure stream of anything.

Nothing is pure. No race. No science. No field of art, including literature. Science fiction pure? It's a laughable statement for openers. We don't even know what science fiction is to our mutual agreement. I don't know what its boundaries are, or what its limitations are or who belongs inside and who outside. And I don't know who decides these things.

I said nothing is pure, but I lied. We have pure strains of pedigreed dogs, cats, livestock, flowers, fish. Take the Boston bull terrier, or a red setter. If you know anything about dogs, you know instantly what I'm talking about. There may be very minor variations, and they'd better be minor, or don't try to breed it and sell its offspring. But there must be the recognizable characteristics that are judged at shows by experts who know exactly how much the ears should bend, or how much the tail should tilt, or not tilt. Now if I have a red setter that I cross breed with a mongrel and someone says





to me that I am polluting the breed, I have the beginnings of an understanding about what he means. But when you use the same words with something like science fiction, then I pause to wonder: Does anyone want that kind of purity? A John Campbell pedigreed story, as predictable and recognizable as a Boston bull terrier?

Keep science fiction pure. That's a strange thing to say if you really think about it. Teller states that physicists are the only scientists. So his definition would mean fiction about physicists or physics. Each and every time.

Some of the other words and classifications and names that confuse me terribly are optimist and pessimist, hero and anti-hero. The optimistic science fiction with real heroes, that's something else that I keep hearing about. Men who can do things, and do them, and change the universe. Make it better. A typical hero is superman. Fine, we need fiction about superhuman heroes. Like the mongrel pool of genes, fiction also needs its pool of genes, or ideas on which to draw. But when I begin to think about the fiction of optimism I start to stumble again. It seems largely to mean that the end, which is good, justifies whatever means needed to attain the end. And usually the means in themselves are rather bad. Fights. Killings. Wars. Deceptions. Betrayals. And so on.

But the hero perseveres, and in the end he is lily white and has won another victory. That's the theme of countless fairy tales, by the way. And James Bond movies. And comic books. And it is romantic and fun to fantasize about when you're twelve. But in life if a man, even a moderately super man, is beset by ten thugs with tire chains, he's going to get his brains scrambled and his ribs broken, and maybe get killed, or disabled for life. And if the arm of the law falls heavy on him, he's going to have to find the five hundred or a thousand dollars for a lawyer and pony up bail money, and go to trial, maybe more than once if there's an appeal, or a mistrial, and when it's over, if he wins, he's going to be much poorer and older. And in jail, if he loses.

He isn't going to march into the halls of Congress and rewrite the laws that did him in. He isn't going to run for president or senator and not only halt the momentum of the country, but turn it one hundred eighty degrees to make it go in his preferred direction. Because if that is realism, then the next man to face what he considers an injustice will do the same thing, and the next and the next. The machinery of society simply can't be that malleable. Its inertia is such that twenty years is a short time for any real change to take place.

Now, the hero method of change is change by force. My arm is stronger than your arm. My magic is more powerful than your magic. My duplicity is greater than your duplicity. By closing their eyes to the actual problems of change, the romantic hero writers are not displaying any kind of optimism, but rather the darkest pessimism. Refusal, or inability to see the danger doesn't make one a hero. Put our



hero on the top of a skyscraper and let an arsonist start a fire below him and it isn't really optimism that leads our hero to say, "Boy, I'll jump out the window and when I land, I'll find that bloody arsonist and beat him to a pulp." That's not optimism. That's stupidity.

On the other hand, the anti-hero, pessimistic fiction seems to be mislabeled. A functional blindness that doesn't allow one to see the dangers in getting from here to there, with there the future, seems to be much more pessimistic than looking about with eyes wide open and in full awareness of the pitfalls and the hazards. Just acknowledging the dangers shows more optimism than ignoring them. Optimism without mentation equals ignorance. Pessimism, on the other side of the coin, that shows the darkest perils, even if its hero, or anti-hero, then succumbs, has taken the first step toward the real future. Always the first step in problem solving is identifying the problem.

The optimists in the accepted usage of the word write about the elitists who are able to rise above illusory difficulties to win shining victories. The pessimists write about the other 99.99 % of humanity, the ones who don't have that much courage, or egotism, or luck. The guy who just plain doesn't know where to put his hands on a spaceship to whisk him off to Alpha Centauri, and if he did get his hands on one, you know he couldn't make it go anywhere.

Then, too, the problems of tosay aren't the Indians over the next hill, or the pirate swarms coming up over the horizon. Overpopulation. Pollution. Nuclear warfare. Chemical warfare. Police riots, and/or activists' riots. Heroin addiction in children. Slums. I can't see our hero going out to shoot



a couple of pregnant women every day. Now our gutsy hero-writers know those things as well as you and I, but, also, they know that we are a technocratic, bureaucratic, managerial society in which it is not possible for an individual to correct those problems singlehandedly. And if he works away at them from any kind of an inside position, it would be too boring to relate in fiction. So the best thing to do is ignore those problems, assume that at some future time science will have solved them all, and off we can go to a distant galaxy and save the known universe from the invasion of the three-toed mudwumps.

I say that this isn't optimism, but the worst kind of pessimism. The pessimism that doesn't dare to look for fear of what it will see and the fear of being forced to agree that there is a chance that any of those things could spell the end of mankind.

What I've been talking about is sheer escape fantasy. And it's fun sometimes. I loved Tarzan when I was very young. This is good for children, powerless, to identify with an all-powerful hero. They thrive on escape fantasy. But adults? As a steady diet? I mean, how long can you exist on cotton candy?

Ask most people descriptive words to use in connection with the word Science, and they'll come up with cold-blooded, methodical, statistical, detached. And yet, when you read of the discoveries that changed the course of science: the Copernican Theory, Einstein's Theories, Pasteur's theory of bacterial infection, and others, you'll find that again and again the approach was as intuitive as that of a poet, or an artist. Here is a creative process. The final vision, or solution came first in a dream, or while walking and thinking of something else, or in some other mysterious fashion. First the intuitive leap across the known into the unknown, then a lifetime spent in proving the theory. First the dream, then the laboratory techniques to prove or disprove the dream. And the dream has to do with Mystery. Not the whodunit variety, but the bigger Mystery of life, creation, of beginnings and endings. The Mystery of the meaning in life. These are religious ideas, poetic ideas, philosophical ideas. And they are the very basis of science. And all the hardware statistical detailing of countless experiments working on the minutiae of detail, these are the technicians at work.

I know that it was Science as Mystery that drew me to science fiction in the first place, not the hardware, the technology, the mumbo jumbo about time warps and space warps. Now and again there was a story about the Mystery, or that touched on the Mystery obliquely, and those were the satisfying ones that kept me reading and looking for more. And the Mystery is inward. It has to do with the questions: what is man, why is he here, where is he going? These are the questions that you find in religions, in philosophies, and in science. And you find them in the fiction that I think of as science fiction. So for me Science as Mystery is more exciting than Science as a demonstration of the scientific method. The mystery of dreaming about a snake biting its tail, and leaping from that to benzene rings, the mystery of Einstein's statement that he experienced his theories kinesthetically. Inward.

The exploration of the boundaries of man himself, why he is like he is, what his limitations and potentials are. Nothing you find "out there" is going to have much meaning until you know more about what is going on inside. What we find, how we go about finding it, what we do with it afterward, all those are irrelevant questions unless you know more about man himself.

And this brings us right back to the problem of new and old waves in science fiction. As probably we all knew it would eventually. A company town is a relatively new thing on earth. There was no need for them until the industrial revolution came along making it necessary to have a certain number of workers on hand to produce a certain number of products, whatever they might be. And it was an original, even exciting concept, probably. Especially to those who didn't have to live there. You know what I mean. You see them in Pennsylvania—mining towns, gray houses, all identical, squalid and depressing. Now you could vary the inside with a lot of ingenuity and if you had the wherewithal, if you were rich enough, or inventive enough. But if you had that kind of wealth or inventiveness, why would you be there? Now to people who hadn't been out much an English Tudor might look new and strange and ugly if it sprang up in the midst of the company town. The fact that it predated the surroundings by centuries would be ignored because in this place and time it looked new. In fact there isn't anything that could be brought into the company town, no matter how widely accepted outside, that wouldn't look strange and new.

And this has happened in our field. Science fiction had the tendency to become like the company town, predictable, and not very rich any more. The fiction of technology is relatively new, as new as the technology. And now mixing with it are the older fictional structures that look strange and out of place. And they are called New Wave, and the quite new thing, technological fiction, is called the Old Wave.

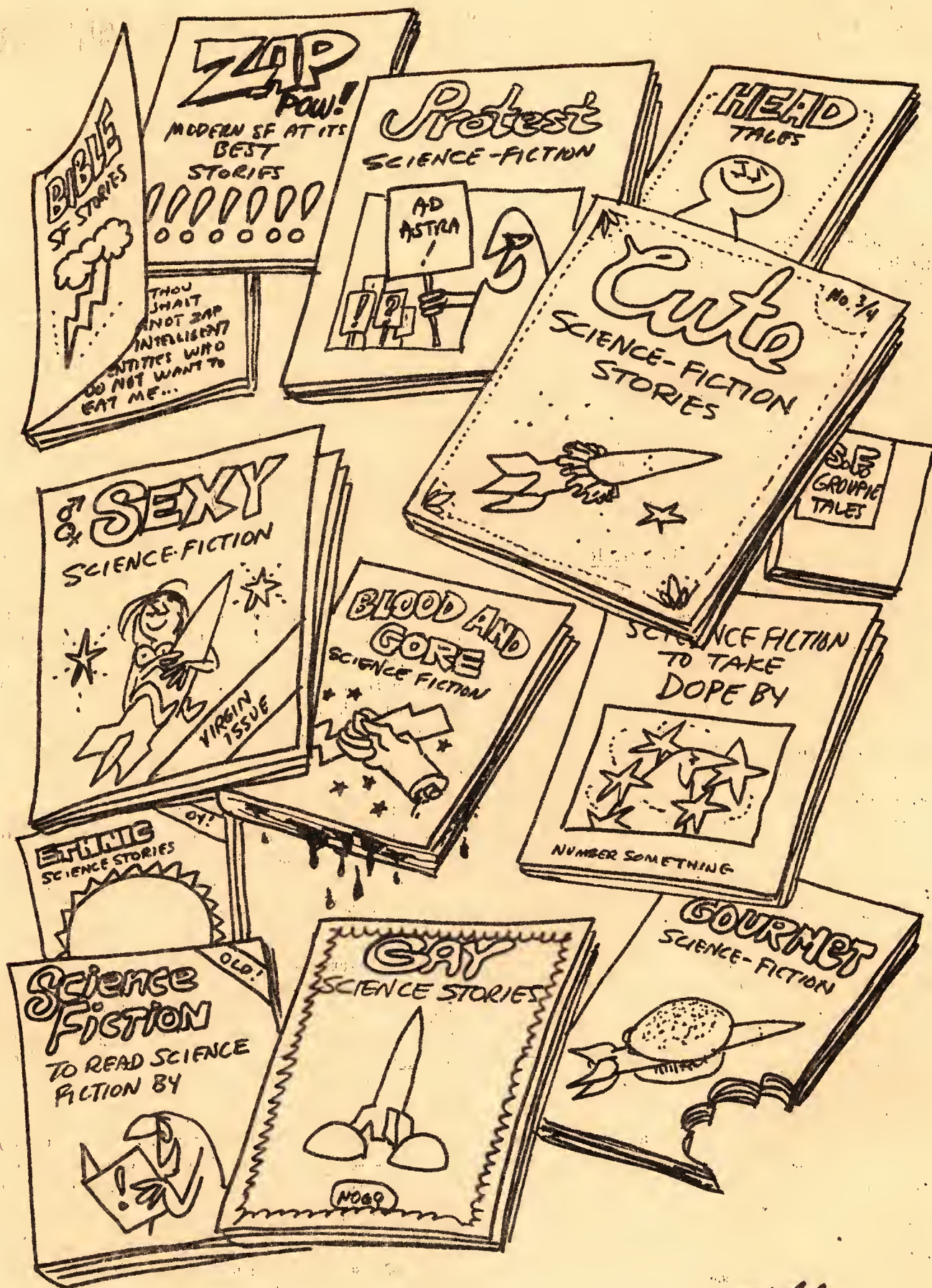
Some years ago the field of mystery writing was shaken to its foundations by innovators like Agatha Christie, who broke all the rules. It was well known that mysteries had to be deductive puzzles—Ellery Queen, Sherlock Holmes, S.S. Van Dine. Anything else was a grotesque fake. The purists fought a losing battle, and the entire field is richer for it.

They always lose the battles in the end, because you cannot keep anything pure, unless you kill it and embalm it and seal it away from all outside influences. The new always becomes the old and is superceded by the newer. It isn't always better, but it has to be tried.

Sometimes you hear of the many scientists who were first interested in a particular science because of a particular kind of science fiction. Maybe if the writers start to explore Science as Mystery again, in the next decade there will be those who will be guided into a more human kind of research rather than the technological sort that seems inevitably to lead to hardware for bigger and better munitions.

But, of course, it doesn't matter a damn bit what one hopes for in any field of art. The artist will paint what he will. The writer will write what he will. The dream will always lead, and the technicians follow. And that says it all. Thank you.





rtb



# NOISE LEVEL • john brunner

## a column

#4 ON LIVING IN THE PLOT  
OF A BAD SOAP-OPERA

Never again—never—will I scoff at a tear-jerking film or agonising serial, not even if it's stamped from the classic mould: "If Dottie sells her honour will the food she can buy give her the energy to lace up her widowed mother's straitjacket?"

You see, I had confidently expected that 1970 was going to be by far the best year I'd had since starting in business as a free-lance writer. I began it by acquiring a commission for an ambitious and complex novel with a record advance (for me) tied to its tail. The year is halfway through and I am just about climbing the wall. 1970 is terrible.

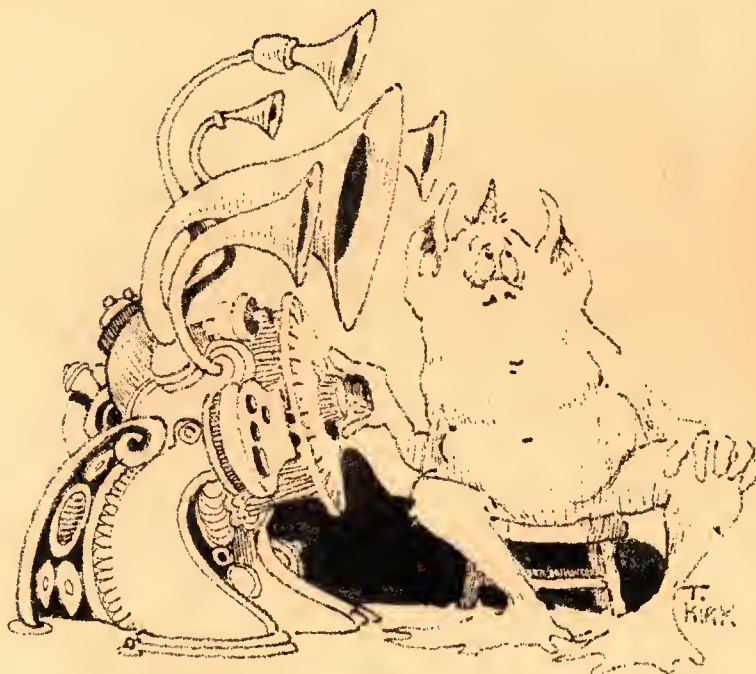
Now for me a prerequisite of tackling a book on the scale of the one I was envisaging—not quite in the Stand On Zanzibar class, but around 200,000 words—is absolute and uninterrupted concentration. At least once, if only for a brief moment, I must have the totality of the book in my mind, in a sort of flash of satori during which my mind expands to encompass every last corner of the imaginary world I'm working in. Sometimes it comes on me if its own accord; more often I have to create circumstances which I know to be conducive to it. In the latter situation, my grip on the material is tenuous, and an outside interruption which keeps me from my desk for even a single day can often utterly destroy the mood I'm after. Once upon a time Judy Merrill was sitting on the fur rug in our living-room at Frognaal, and made the cardinal error of claiming that she had more unpublished work than anyone else in the trade. I took her in the study and showed her a filing-cabinet containing twenty-three abandoned novels...

It just escalated to 25. The current abortion went to 240 pages of its first draft before I realized it wasn't good enough, and started over. The next draft went to 510 pages before I decided it was over-wordy and needed trimming. The third draft went over 500 pages also, and the fourth and ought-to-have-been final was around 130 when I finally quit.

Why?

Because that archetypal soap-opera can happen in real life. I know because it's happening to me.

Among the many and various reasons why we moved from



our former apartment, where we were very contented, to this 10-roomed house on the edge of Hampstead Heath, was the fact that Marjorie's mother was stuck down in the south coast town where her husband had retired. Since his death she'd lived there alone, she was rather deaf, and going blind with cataracts in both eyes. So we invited her to live with us. We wanted her to end her days somewhere pleasanter than a geriatric ward.

She is now lying comatose (thank goodness) in our downstairs front room suffering the nastiest possible effects of an acute abdominal cancer which has begun to ulcerate to the exterior. Most of the time she has to be kept heavily sedated, because she's awake only to endure pain, so I've become a dab hand with a hypodermic.

Now at exactly this time I—somehow, heaven knows how—contrive to rupture the Achilles tendon in my left leg. The orthopaedic surgeon orders me to wear a high heel on my shoe, and not to walk more than I can possibly help. He warns me that unless I do as he says I can expect either a major operation or a life-long limp.

So I have to do as I'm told... which means I can't even help Marjorie by going shopping for her. I'm not totally housebound—I can drive, provided I'm going to a place where I can park the car right up close to my eventual goal. Naturally, though, in London there's no way to guarantee a parking-space. Accordingly I'm effectively stuck at home.

To make sure the old lady didn't lie there helpless and unable to call us, I rigged up a battery-operated doorbell outside her room, with the push screwed to a block of wood on



her bedside table. Result: we get accustomed to not relying on a night's unbroken sleep. She rings at one, three, five o'clock in the morning, thinking it's afternoon...

And then, just about at the point when we're looking forward to a merciful release for her, my mother calls up to say my father has just had a stroke and is not expected to survive.

Want to pile on the trivia? There are lots of them, as many as you could wish for. Marjorie has a weak back; the trouble started when she worked in an office where she sat in a draught, and developed lumbago, and then it was exacerbated by helping me to push-start a horrible car we once had which kept breaking down. The effort of lifting her mother to change the bed—she's incontinent as well as everything else—has brought it on again. She has incredible energy, but there are limits.

And The Little Mecatina comes in season just at the time when we can't escort her for the walks on the Heath she usually takes by herself, and beat off the eager suitors. A litter of pups on top of our other troubles we do not relish.

(Why didn't we ship the old lady off to a hospital? Well, two chief reasons: first, hospitals are for curing people, and we think it wrong to waste a valuable bed on someone for whom even the doctor says there's no hope; and second, it's surely better to leave this world surrounded by friends and relatives than in the sterile impersonal environment of a strange hospital ward. We have a nurse who comes in twice a day, and she says Marjorie's nursing is keeping her mother in better condition than most of the geriatric cases she attends.)

And... Oh, hell. Even as I write it down it strikes me as absurd, but it is true. My oldest friend is in a mental home—again—and we ought to go see him and we can't. My mother doesn't drive; two days before his stroke my father spent the price of a car to replace the one they'd been running for about six or eight years, and the cheque went through about the time he was taken to hospital, and he will almost certainly never drive again even if he does leave the hospital alive. And so on, and so on.

And of course because I took stake money off a publisher for this book which I have simply been unable to complete owing to the tremendous emotional pressure all these disasters have generated, I now owe \$2000. You can't sell a book you haven't finished. At least, I can't. Some people have the knack of publishing "work in progress". I'd better look into that idea.

All of which explains why there will be no Brunner opus to justify the passage of January-June 1970. See you again next year. With luck. Do I need it!

Postscript, believe-it-or-not type. After finishing this column but before posting it, I go to give my mother-in-law another shot of pethidine. The phial breaks in my hand as I'm about to snap the top off, and the contents, and bits of the glass, fly into my left eye... I wonder what other nasty little shocks are in store. +++

#### MONOLOG CONTINUED

I applaud this effort. Bob Shaw is a Good Man and a good fan and a very good writer of science fiction as those of you who have read his work can attest.

To help Further The Cause I offer the following: any fan who sends me a check for thirty dollars made out to Richard Brown will receive a LIFETIME SUBSCRIPTION TO SFR! If any of you out there think SFR will last another 60 issues at least, this is a good deal.

+ Speaking of the lifetime of SFR...many of you have noticed the continuing increase in circulation...about fifty copies per issue...and are astounded (as am I) that I can manage to do all the production work.

It has come to the point where it takes four full days to mimeograph an issue, even on the wonderful electric Gestetner 466 at a full 120 copies per minute most of the time... and it takes three full days and often nights, too, to collate the mother-fu—the adorable magazine. Followed by a full day whomping the stapler and enveloping the completed copies. Then a day addressing the envelopes...another day or two sorting and preparing for the post office....

It can easily take two weeks to produce SFR this way, after stenciling.

And that is a mere 1200 copies. What of the future? Will I be spending a month, sometime next winter, running off, collating, stapling, etc. a print run of 2000 copies?

You can bet a spoiled banana I won't!

There is in mimeography, a point of diminishing returns. I'm just about there now.

I have about 3000 9 x 12 SFR envelopes, about five quires of stencils, a goodly supply of artwork already electro-stenciled. Envelopes, stencils, artwork enough to carry SFR through issue #42. Also 50 tubes of ink!

So, with a heartfelt sigh, I hope that income, subscriptions and advertising will allow me to go half-size photo-offset, again (as per SFR 28-29-30). Probably with a 1500 copy order. That production grind is Wearing.

We shall see. (Hell, truth is, when those supplies run out I'll go photo-offset regardless, even at a steady 1200 copies...but there are some ads upcoming in GALAXY and IF which I have high hopes for.) (Re production costs: photo-offset ups the per-copy cost a lot, but less weight and size makes for savings in postage and envelopes.)

Artists can look forward to better interior reproduction.

I can look forward to more free time.

The Gestetner I will keep for small jobs, FAPA, etc.

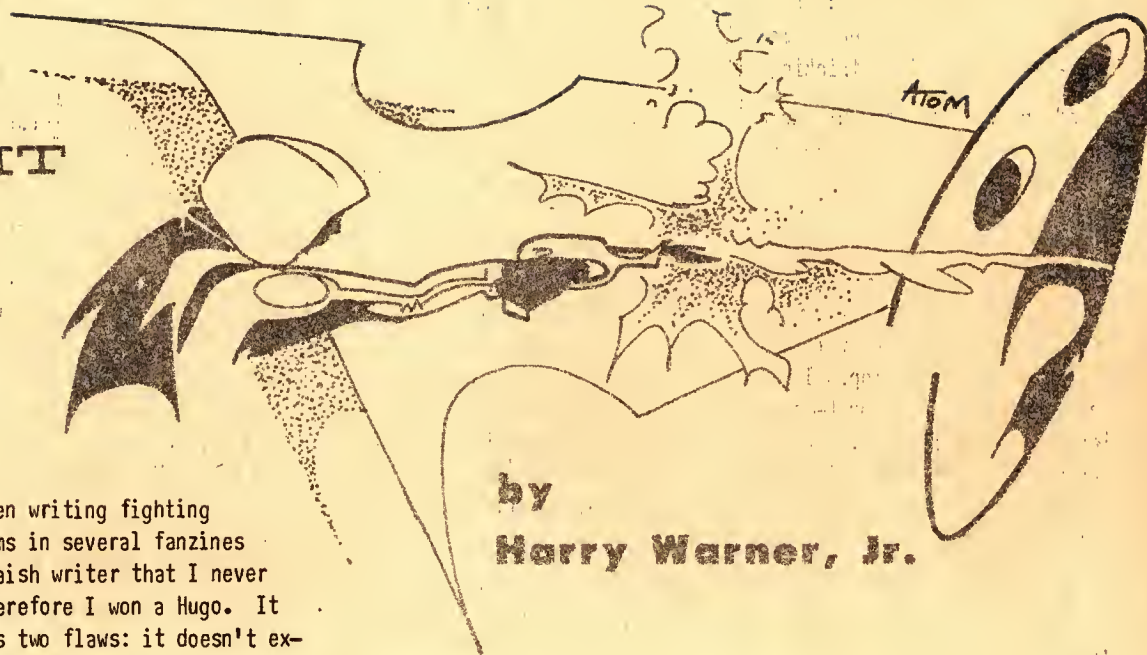
+ As of now (9-16-70) it looks as if the line-up for next issue will be an article by Norman Spinrad ("FIAWOL"—the put-down of sf fans that appeared in KNIGHT some months ago), "Scientist & Shaman" by Greg Benford, a carpentered column by Ted White, "The Warlords of Krishna" by John Boardman, possibly (if room) a funny piece by Greg Benford, reviews, Alter-ego, possibly Piers Anthony's column, and the fibre-tint jungle that is the letter column. A cover by Grant Canfield.



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ATTN SFMA "AUXILIARY": EXECUTE PLAN A. JUDY PIERCE.  
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# HOW I FOUGHT FOR A HUGO



by  
**Harry Warner, Jr.**

Piers Anthony has been writing fighting words about me. He claims in several fanzines that I'm such a Pollyannaish writer that I never make anyone angry and therefore I won a Hugo. It sounds logical but it has two flaws: it doesn't explain how Ted White won a Hugo and it isn't true.

But fandom has grown so large and has lasted so long and has so many nooks and crannies these days that hardly anyone knows all its current manifestations and the details of its history. My feuding and fighting have been scattered over the years and sometimes confined to a specialized part of fandom. So a lot of fans undoubtedly feel much as Piers does, and this is quite hard on me. It leaves me reluctant to write anything less than unstinted praise, because even the mildest criticism might be taken as a first-time-ever cross word by the unsophisticated fan who is its subject.

It's something like the problem that some fans have unwittingly created by publishing statements that I always write a loc (letter-of-comment) on every fanzine I receive. I don't, but some editors of the dozens of issues I fail to loc each year assume that my silence about their pride and joy is the first time in the history of fandom that I've failed to write a loc and therefore they've somehow done something to rip asunder the very fabric of fandom's finest old traditions.

So, not with any intent to reawaken old somnolent spirits of discord, but in the interest of picturing myself as the plainspoken, peevish and incautious person that I frequently am, I'd like to set the record straight.

For instance, there's the nastiness that I've kept alive in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association for eight years. Most FAPA members are so inactive in general fandom that the Edgar Allan Martin affair has never been described in detail outside the elephant's graveyard of fandom. Martin was a FAPA member on and off for a quarter-century. He never published anything of particular value, and he wasn't a genuine fan, but rather an enthusiast for the mundane amateur press associations who had somehow wandered into FAPA at its start. FAPA requires eight pages of activity credit, either publishing or writing, every year.

In 1962 Martin was dropped from membership on the grounds that the activity that would have permitted him to retain membership was a reprint, and therefore not activity as defined by the FAPA constitution. There was a big fuss within the organization because the questioned material really was original, little stories whose punch lines were familiar jokes. The officials refused to reinstate Martin on the grounds that he hadn't gone about his complaints in the manner required by FAPA law.

This made me furious.

I've never laid eyes on Martin, had never corresponded with him, hadn't read most of his FAPA contributions. But this was a clear case of discrimination against a FAPA member simply because he wasn't a member of the FAPA establishment; formalities would have been waived and instant reinstatement would have occurred for any well-known fan whose credentials had been unfairly rejected.

I took up for him more loudly and in stronger language than any of his other supporters in FAPA. The fuss left wounds that rankle to this very day and may even have helped to guide FAPA down the gutter to its present status of sluggish disinterest. I wanted to resign membership in protest, but couldn't accomplish this feat for while because I broke a hip at a crucial time and was unable to write a letter of resignation; by the time I was back to the typewriter, enough members had urged me not to cop out that I decided on a different course of action.

The people who had wanted Martin out of FAPA were going to see more of him in the future than in the past. I started to reprint Martin prose in every issue of my FAPA publication. I haven't missed a quarterly mailing since then. I've reprinted virtually everything Martin contributed to FAPA mailings as a member, some of his writings for mundane apas, and a couple of times when I didn't have opportunity to dig out some Martin publications, I wrote a page or two in his style myself and





nobody ever noticed the difference. I'd guess that twice as much Martin material has appeared in FAPA since 1963 as in any seven-year period before that. Unless someone can lend me some more of his mundane apa publications or some of his professional writings, I'm going to have to start re-reprinting.

You'd be surprised how often the Martin reprints are the first things people mention to me when they encounter me at a con. Sometimes they don't speak to me again for the entire con.

The biggest mess I ever got in as a fan was unintentional on my part. Moreover, it almost had the most painful conclusion. I'd like to invite all the SFR readers to hear about the episode, in full detail and from my own lips, at the last major con before the arrival of the 21st century.

This is not the right time to tell all about it because it is a mixture of tragedy and comedy and I'm not certain yet how it all came out for some of the principals.

But I can describe exactly how I became aware of the situation. I received a telephone call one lovely Saturday morning from Washington, D. C. Someone I had never heard of asked me if I'd be home for the next couple of hours, and when I told him I would, he explained that he was on his way to Hagerstown to beat me up.

I knew it isn't polite to be inquisitive to a total stranger, but I forgot my manners long enough to ask why. I'd said something about him in a fanzine that justly merited a thrashing, he replied. He pronounced zine to rhyme with line or mine, making me even more puzzled. I tried to keep him talking from that distance long enough to figure out what was happening, finally got a rough notion of his complaint, and partly guessed the source of the difficulty: he thought that "fanac" was a synonym for a certain form of immorality.

Maybe it is, but not in the sense that he thought. I didn't succeed in pleading a very good case for my innocence. With a final reminder that I would be expected to provide hospitality, he hung up.

I didn't know quite what to do; sight unseen, he was about 95% sure to be bigger and stronger than me, considering my physique. I felt particular distress about a baseball game I'd planned to watch on television that afternoon, and didn't feel much consolation out of the knowledge that I'd still be able to hear the audio if my eyes were swollen shut. I thought of asking someone to act as my second, then realized that this would entail explaining fandom to that individual, and it seemed easier to take my medicine.

Then when it was almost time for his arrival, the telephone rang again. He was still in Washington, where his wife had persuaded him not to go away this weekend, and besides, he'd decided that I was a pretty reasonable sort of person from the way I'd talked and he knew that I'd go along with his new course of action. He told me to be sure to be in Washington the following Monday and go with him to tell the CIA all about fandom.

As I've said, I can't give details. He had had an unfortunate experience with a friend of a fan. This had given him just the barest of experience with fanzines. By the awfulest of coincidences, I'd written something in a loc which he'd seen and taken as a slur at himself, under the mistaken assumption that all fandom was aware of his experience and somehow conspiring against him. It would have been absurd if it weren't for the fact that his experience had quite possibly had a very adverse effect on his livelihood.

We kept in contact for another month or so, as I continued to try to explain my complete ignorance of his existence before that telephone call and he kept on striving to convert me to his belief that fandom is a communist conspiracy. I've lost track of him, and I hope that his misfortunes have been rectified by now and that he never again encounters anyone who is even the slightest acquaintance of a fan.

I also seem to have a mysterious skill at infuriating people with remarks that I don't intend as criticism at all.

A year or two ago, I got a smouldering letter from a celebrated pro over a sentence in a loc. I'd tried to say that his general subject matter and writing style hadn't changed much from the start of his long career as an author to the present and he took this to mean that I didn't think he had learned anything about writing from his first to his last story. This problem, fortunately, was patched up without breaking into the public prints with explanations on both sides. I got into trouble with Baltimore's fandom by a few sentences I wrote to express my dislike for their city of residence. Baltimore was actively seeking a worldcon at the time and I was accused of sabotaging it. This was particularly unfortunate, because I've always tried to remain neutral on worldcon site fights, principally because nobody has ever satisfactorily explained to me why anyone would want to take on all the abuse and work that goes with sponsoring a worldcon. I still don't like Baltimore, either when it seeks a worldcon or when it doesn't, but I like most of the fans who reside there.

To the best of my knowledge, I said the strongest things



that appeared in print about bloc voting and its evils, after ERBDCM won a Best Amateur Magazine Hugo. I felt that a genuine outpouring of spontaneous liking for this publication would have created a more consistent record of nominations for the fanzine Hugo over the years, and moreover I considered it on the very verge of semi-professional status. A lot of Burroughs fans still consider me one of the reasons Tarzan was uncomfortable whenever he paid a visit to civilization.

I haven't said much about bloc voting since but I will break with some good friends if the Cabell fanzine, KALKI, should win a Hugo as a result of the current campaign to get it nominated by an organized campaign.

Normally, I don't get very angry in these fusses. One exception occurred in FAPA when an elderly Seattle fan, Mrs. G. M. Carr, accused me of anti-semitism. We slugged it out for a while but bad luck shoved this fight into the verge of obscurity when Mrs. Carr took on much bigger game at just about the same time, Walt Willis, when she claimed that his celebrated remarks on "snog in the fog" were evidence of anti-Americanism.

Sam Moskowitz retaliated for some unkind things I said about The Immortal Storm by revealing to all fandom that I used to be a member of the Futurian Federation of the World. In recent years, I've been doing some professional translating into English for publications like INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION, but the memory of the enormity of Sam's revelation has kept me firm in my determination not to offer my translating services for The Immortal Storm.

Maybe the supreme tribute to the potency of a belligerent temperament comes when a person finds himself in squabbles that were going on long before he was aware that people were fighting over him. This happened to me just recently when I suddenly found myself center of a storm in Australian fandom's apa, where one member was determined to send me free mailings, honoris causa, and another member was equally determined to do nothing of the sort, and sides were being chosen up. I'm not quite sure how much I was cause and how much I was victim of the complex hostilities that centered around the NFFF elections last winter. All I did was count votes, in the way I considered it my honest duty to do, but the things that went on will form the perfect climax to the final volume of my fan history, since the election tally was finally completed early on the evening of last December 31, and therefore became the last big thing to happen in fandom during the 1960's.

Let's see: Justin St. John wrote me an angry letter in response to my less than enthusiastic comments on the first issue of THE GREENTOWN REVIEW; and Ray Palmer took a blast at him so much to heart that he reprinted my article in one of his prozines on the theory that it would cause all his fans to write consoling letters to him over such an unwarranted attack; and the very first thing I ever did in fanzine fandom, the founding of SPACEWAYS, was marred by disorder and early sorrow that caused my theoretic co-editor to be of no help at all during the four years

and thirty issues that fanzine survived; and Ossie Train is hopping mad because I claimed in All Our Yesterdays that Philly fans used to meet in the Baltadonis family tavern when they actually met in a room in the same building that housed the tavern....and I once achieved the feat that nobody else has ever accomplished, making Forry Ackerman angry over an article telling how he had been No. One fan for so long until turning pro. It turned out that Forry still considered himself No. One fan.

But if anyone prefers to agree with Piers that I'm a friendly, pacific person who would never ruffle anyone's feelings and has won a Hugo through default because nobody ever gets mad at me, I won't risk angering him by contradicting him. He could be right. Maybe that's how fans win fan writing Hugos—me and Ted White.



Harry Warner, Jr.'s book of fan history, All Our Yesterdays, is available from Advent: Publishers, Inc., P.O. Box 9228, Chicago, Ill. 60690. Clothbound, \$7.50.



#### MONOLOG CONTINUED

- + SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB February selections are:  
Best Science Fiction Stories of Clifford D. Simak—\$1.49  
Our Friends From Frolix 8 by Philip K. Dick—\$1.49
- + There is a San Diego sf fan club name of HEADQUARTERS FOR ALL FANNISH ACTIVITIES IN SAN DIEGO. Meetings are held the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 1 pm at members' homes. Information from Roger Freedman, 8479 Scarf Pl., San Diego, Cal. 92119. Phone: 714-469-4280
- + Time now for an extra added attraction: a review of Philip Jose Farmer's Love Song, just released (after long confinement) by Brandon House (but originally written for Essex House).

It is not science fiction. It is the story of a man who becomes sexually involved with a look-alike mother and daughter. The scene shifts from cruise ship to the women's haunted house overlooking a cliff above the sea.

The supernatural element becomes interesting and provocative in the final third of the book, but Phil abandons it as he ends the novel with a revelation of incest and murder.

The porno in the book is weak and uncertain, with the sex scenes often incomplete and abortive.

This one is for completists and the curious. (Brandon House 98H-6134, \$1.95)

- + A 'Bob Shaw Fund' has been started by rich brown and Arnie Katz, publishers of FOCAL POINT, a lively newszine. The aim is to collect enough money to bring Bob over from Ireland to the next Worldcon to be held in Boston next September.

MONOLOG CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



# inside conspiracy

BY  
J. ANTHONY  
PIERCE

Forget the Milford Mafia and the New Wave for a moment, if you can, and try to approach the question with a fresh mind. The question:

What obviously organized, homogeneous group has in recent years virtually taken over science fiction, including giving itself more and more of the awards, writing more and more of the influential criticism, taking more and more offices in SFWA directly or indirectly, creating new movements, showing up increasingly as guests of honor, spearheading the new society of s-f exiles from the U.S., founding new literary agencies, designing new awards, editing more anthologies, snubbing more newcomers ...do I have to go on? If the answer has not already come to you, you are blind indeed.

Still no takers? All right. The answer:

Women.

The New Wave itself is a perfect case in point. Anybody who has ever seen Mike Moorcock, read his writings or his magazine, or watched his behavior at conventions, has felt instinctively that he cannot have been born, but must have been invented by somebody with a rather defective understanding of what a Great Literary Figure ought to be like, probably derived from Charles Morgan's Sparkenbroke, or maybe Atlas Shrugged. Once you assume that the inventor was a woman, the whole thing becomes clear instantly; and who is the most international, parasitic, imprecisely critical, uncritically enthusiastic, sentimental, half-educated, weather-cocking, and monomaniacally anthologising woman in our field—the only one capable of conceiving Mike Moorcock and the New Wave at one and the same time? And who was, in addition, one of the three founders of the Milford Conference?

Or observe that though there have been many attempts to found an organization of s-f professionals, some of them headed by people as important as Fletcher Pratt, the only one to succeed was created by Damon Knight after he married Kate Wilhelm, who took great pains to see to it that the organization had a W in it. (I am reliably informed that the final name of this group, after a series of gradual transformations like those which eventually produced ANALOG, will be Strong Fierce Women Activists.) Is it only a coincidence that the Nebula Award was conceived by Kate Wilhelm, and designed by Judith Ann Lawrence? Is it only a coincidence that SFWA is now utterly dominated by Anne McCaffrey, a client of Virginia Kidd's, and who is also hauling down awards all over the place and getting love letters disguised as interviews published in fan maga-

zines? Is it only a coincidence that when Judith Merrill started missing deadlines on book reviews at F&SF, she was filled in for by...Joanna Russ, who now teaches s-f at Cornell? Is it only a coincidence that after Ivor Rogers founded the Secondary Universe Conference and ran it for two years, control should be wrested from him, and from his college by...Virginia Carew? Is it, furthermore, only a coincidence that though there really are very few women in s-f still, those few have managed to be married to virtually every male author and editor you can think of? Is it only a coincidence that both of James Blish's wives are now alleged to have collaborated with him?

And there is more. When the GALAXY string changed hands, who alone of the previous staff survived, despite virtually no previous experience? And do you really think that these magazines are now being run by a man whose only previous achievement in s-f was rejecting Surface Tension because he thought it was 33% too long? No, we know the power behind the throne at UPD, and are fatally charmed by it.

Who is the darling of the New, Old and Standing Waves alike? Ursula LeGuin; even PLAYBOY has succumbed to her. Whom does the Milford Conference admire most, year after year after year? Carol Emshwiller. Whom does the Milford Conference next most admire? Sonya Dorman.

Even old feuds, which we all cherish, are yielding to these new powers. Observe, at any recent convention, Elsie Wellheim and Judy Blish chatting busily. What are they plotting? Look out, Don and Jim! Observe Marjorie Brunner refusing to hold a grudge on behalf of her husband for more than ten minutes. Beware, John! Observe Chris Moskowitz busily mending SaM's many broken fences. Habe Acht, SaM!





Who do you think it is who carefully inserts an apostrophe into every "it's" at ANALOG? Why did virtually all important editorial operations there, except that of actually telling writers what to write, break down while Miss Tarrant was ill?

Who supported Piers Anthony while he was biting his first brick?

Was there ever a Terry Carr before there was a Carol Carr?

Why are all those women trying to marry Harlan Ellison, and frequently succeeding?

Didn't all this dirty sex come into s-f almost entirely from authors who are married to women?

Is there really an Edmond Hamilton at all? Is it conceivable that a man could write like that?

How did Idris Seabright ever get published?

What sneaky change in critical temper allows Doris Pittkin Buck to get better and better and better without even pretending that her architect husband is really doing the work?

What is the real sex of writers like Lafferty who are hiding it behind initials?

Why does Isaac Asimov never let anybody talk to Gittel? Who really could write 100 books without help?

Is it a coincidence that Dr. Robert Franke, the European Guest of Honor at the Heicon, though utterly unknown to most s-f readers in England and America, is the husband of the German translator of F&SF and GALAXY?

Did Barbara Silverberg blow her cover when she co-signed an ANALOG story with Bob?

What is the reason behind the Mona Lisa smile of Rosa Bova (and note the similarity of names)?

How did the management of Doubleday's s-f line pass out of the experienced hands of Larry Ashmead and Mark Haefle to...Diane Cleaver?

How did Zenna Henderson ever get published?

What on Earth has Georgette Heyer to do with s-f?

Why doesn't Poul Anderson care that everyone wants to kiss Karen?

How did it happen that AMAZING got sold to Sol Cohen and went on downhill from there, the instant Cele Goldsmith relinquished control?

Why is everyone pretending that Faith Lincoln was really a man?

What really goes on in Lee Hoffman's basement?

Why are so many first novels or collections by male s-f authors dedicated "To my Mother"?

How did Andre Norton become the most published s-f author in paperback without the benefit of any critical

notice?

I think the evidence is inarguable; but these are all simply small details. The question is, who is the real secret mistress of fandom? I do not know; but I call your attention to the fact—and it is a fact—that there is a suspiciously high number of Judys in all this: for example, Judy-lynn Benjamin, Judy Blish, Judy Merrill, Judy Zelazny. Laugh that off, Mr. Male Supremacist.

The time has come to stamp out this pernicious influence, ruthlessly, with hobnailed boots. As the great philosopher Fred Nitshy said, I am told by Perry Chapdelaine: "Thou goest to women? Do not forget thy whip!"

I give you an anthem for this crusade, from the pen of the immortal poet Rudolf Tummel:

"Give me some men who are stout-hearted men  
Who will fight for the right they adore!"



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READ THE NEW ELLIPTIC! The New Elliptic is a tempest in a teapot, twenty-odd pages bi-monthly that probe, write and review SF. No, it didn't win the Hugo. But all it costs is twenty cents, which about equals the cost of mailing it to you. The upcoming issue may ring with familiarity, for it will include a poem by Ray Bradbury, an offering by Perry Chapdelaine, and a sheaf of amateur SF by the editors who like to see their names in print. Are we a fanzine? Just barely — To find out write publisher Mike Glyer, 14974 Osceola Street, Sylmar, California 91342.

\*\*\*\*\*  
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# ••BOOK REVIEWS••

THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME Edited by Robert Silverberg—Doubleday, \$7.95

Reviewed by Paul Walker

This book is an historical event. In 1966 the Science Fiction Writers of America awarded the first Nebulas. A year later, under Robert Silverberg's aegis, it was suggested that members vote for the best stories published up to December 31, 1964. No awards would be given, but the stories would be reprinted in a series of volumes, each representative of a category. This first volume is for short stories and novelets up to 15,000 words. It covers a period of thirty-six years, in twenty-six stories, ranging from Stanley Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey" to Roger Zelazny's "A Rose for Ecclesiastes." It is 558 fat pages of prose, comprising at once the most definitive and the most exciting anthology of science fiction in the history of the genre.

Any reader who assumes this work is unnecessary to his SF education is missing a breath-taking experience. Not since the Healey/McComas anthology has any single volume presented the scope of SF so completely and in such depth. I'm sure most long-time fans have read every story here, but never in quite this way. Most often it is a story here, a story there; but collected and arrayed in all their grandeur they present an unforgettable experience.

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What makes Silverberg's anthology great is its near-perfection of form. The editor has taken some liberties, adding authors who were unjustly excluded, and including some stories the authors preferred to those chosen. It is all very complicated, and Silverberg explains it in his introduction. But the final product is the best anthology I have ever seen. In a field where the anthology is significant, this deserves comment.

The fact that different people read anthologies differently is no help to the anthologist. There are novel-readers who insist on reading the last page first. Still, the writer or editor has to begin at the beginning. The novelist is almost always more successful though he may have a lot less to work with. Yet the novel and the anthology attain their ultimate effect in the same manner.

It may sound odd, but an anthology has a beginning, middle and end, just like a novel, and its success depends on the "same" cumulative effect. The difference is that the anthology has no climax. It is a snowball that is set in motion from the introduction and rolls on, until it stops on the last page. Unlike the novel, there is no conclusion. The reader is left with his tongue hanging out. At least theoretically.

What is true of both, but more true of the anthology, is that few fans care how it all comes out. Climaxes and conclusions are the fetish of the short story. The novel is process, the strength of which is the beginning. To become involved with an idea, or cast of characters, is the novel buyer's desire. What happens ultimately is of lesser interest. I think I can say this boldly because if it were otherwise few SF novels would see print.

The anthology is similar. Aside from browsers, I doubt many fans read to the end of an anthology. And, if they do, if the stories are weaker than the ones at the beginning, they will still love the book. In contradiction of this, most anthologists stuff their minor stories at the beginning, losing their readers immediately. They think the anthology will build, short-story-wise, but it does not work that way.

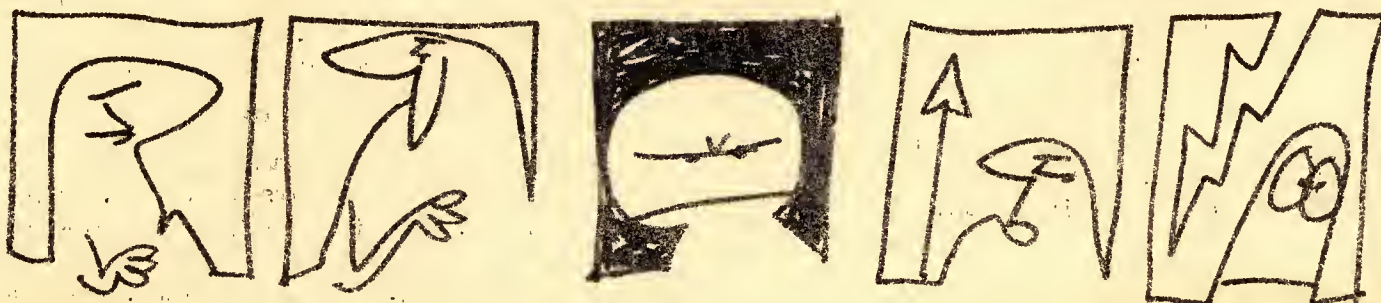
The effectiveness of an anthology is mass times the "mood" of the material squared. It is "mood" (a poor word) which unifies, and unity which enhances. The reader leaves with a feeling he has gotten his money's worth. And mood must be ruthlessly maintained. It was Harlan Ellison's generosity toward mood(s) that prevented his Dangerous Visions from igniting the revolution it intended. In The Science Fiction Hall of Fame Silverberg has maintained the mood.

The book progresses decades without bewildering the reader by diversity. The momentum builds, history unfolds, and story blends into story, preparing and reinforcing. It is all a literary experience can be and more—it is like some great documentary in which the reader is swept through 36 years of events to Zelazny's "A Rose for Ecclesiastes."

Silverberg's sense of the anthology is keen. The effect is cumulative, the reading compulsive.

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Speaking of editorial success—perhaps that is the great





untold story of this anthology. Despite all the hoopla over the Hugo Novel, we are a pulp medium. It is the humble prozine that nourishes and burps the stars, that tolerates their awkward adolescence, and endures their rebellions to see them wander off to better markets. It is the prozine which supports the gropings, and announces the discoveries that will mark SF for another decade. And it is the prozine that receives the ultimate credit, the mind behind it remembered fondly for trivial feuds and eccentricities.

Writers like to think they generate the field all by themselves. Theirs is an uphill battle against the Establishment. But I wonder. I run my finger down this table of contents—ASTOUNDING, ASTOUNDING, ASTOUNDING...FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION...GALAXY... and so on and on—and I wonder who generates what!

A prozine is an organism, agnostically speaking. That is, it has a mind and a body of its own, arms and legs, acne and dandruff—a soul much more real than ours. It is an alive entity, which escapes us when we look for it, but which is there. It is an entity which is born, grows and dies, and often rises again. It is an object to model a career upon; to inspire frustration; to involve people in an aspect of the world; and to make a place where failure more-than-once before success is okay.

The prozine is not a machine. It is an individual. It is a personal vision that clears a jungle of disorder to provide planting room for more memorable talents. It is one guy who made it all happen.

The names John W. Campbell, Anthony Boucher, and Fredrik Pohl mean different things to different people. There are other names, H.L. Gold, Hans Stefan Santesson, that might mean even less today. But it is the first three whose impact on SF this anthology defines. The scope of that impact would be better discussed by someone more familiar with past history than myself. But it should be discussed. Thirteen of these stories, from 1934 to 1954, are from Campbell's ASTOUNDING; six from Boucher's F&SF; and two from Pohl's classic anthology Star Science Fiction #1 (which if it is not a classic should be, along with #2 and #3).

Boucher was not editor of F&SF during that whole six story period, but it was his vision that made F&SF. It was Pohl's that made the Star series. It was Campbell's that made ASTOUNDING. How much talent—how many fine stories—did their "peculiar tastes" inspire?

There is only one story here from GALAXY (Blish's "Surface Tension"). It has always seemed to me that noble magazine exists in the limbo between the two "giants," never having assumed a forcible personality of its own; yet there is a "GALAXY story" and Blish's is it.

In justice to the noble accomplishment of this anthology, I believe it should be seen as much a tribute to the "founding fathers" as to their "progeny."

Yes, I know, you've read them all. But this time it's different. This is a special pleasure of reading: re-discovery. You remember, when you first "discovered" Sturgeon all by yourself, and you ran out to tell the world to find the world already knew, and it was reassuring, after the disappointment faded, to know the world was sane, after all. Well, this is the same kind of thing, perhaps better. It is reassuring yourself that that once-upon-a-time you was saner than you recall. That all your wild enthusiasm was justified. And you can do it all over again.

Take Asimov's "Nightfall." The sub-plot of that gem is the story of Asimov's defeat at the hands of an idea possessed by genius. There is a poet in him somewhere for whom he has not the time nor inclination. He is so absorbed in his teaching-teaching he rarely throws more than a crumb to his characters. In "Nightfall," I imagine a combat between the "Professor" and the "Poet". The one rambling on at the other's expense, filling pages with very-very interesting observations on the behavior of things which go ta-pocketa-tapocketa in the night; while the "Poet" feels what it might have been about. Those gutsy crackpots trying to snap their photos while a mob stormed their sanctuary. That pathetic true believer, fighting to hold his faith while he goes mad. I know what they felt like before the end, and it reminds me of some yesterdays in which similar innocents described "walls of water" descending on their homes..."pillars of black dust clouds." No one has quite put the horror of men confronted with the inevitability of a natural catastrophe better than Asimov. And he did it despite all that has made him famous.

Another startling vision is John Campbell's "Twilight." It is a portrait of the end of man. It is quite unlike my image of Campbell. There is a deep compassion in the protagonist—a man of science who lives for science's fulfillment of man—and lives to see that science wasted and mankind fade out meaninglessly. It is an unforgettable vision, terrifyingly valid today.

Among my re-discoveries is Richard Matheson's "Born of Man and Woman." My memories of Matheson are strong but, without the story in my hand, it is hard to believe anyone could do so much, so easily, so real. He makes a monster and makes us feel for it, then sends it out to kill—and we are left with an inescapable horror.

It is easy to like the stories here—Bixby's nightmare "It's a Good Life," that express better than most all others the secret fear we adults have to children. And "Surface Tension," in which I again learn the merit of James Blish. He does honest-to-God science fiction so lucidly conceived it reads like S&S fantasy. He can make a ludicrous situation everyday. An impossible character, a next-door neighbor. And he does it without pretentious stylizing or phony devices.

But there were stories I did not like.

Zelazny's "A Rose for Ecclesiastes," for instance. I suppose this is revolutionary in one sense, the style. It is beautifully written. But, like "Doors/Lamps," it seems shallow to me. There is not the substance or character or theme to carry it as long as it is. And the style, today, seems cramped



in comparison with Z's recent work. Lord of Light and Creatures of Light and Darkness may be flawed in many ways, but they represent a Zelazny (at least, to me) that is more human and just plain likeable than "Ecclesiastes" or "The Dream Master."

Another item of dislike is "Fondly Fahrenheit." Bester lost me a long while back. He writes fine and does most everything as well, but he cannot hold my interest. He is a technician, not a writer. He is less interested in how his people feel than in form. You finish Bester very impressed and feeling intellectual, but you have nothing to take to bed at night. Matheson's simple little "Bowmaw" is so much better.

A final hassle is Keyes' "Flowers for Algernon." This is such a moving piece it is hard to disparage—but what does it all mean? The hero comes and goes, and we weep: end of story! Is this a finger-wagging at cold-hearted science? Well, the hero had a ball! And he was a bit of a bastard as time went on. But quite simply I do not believe Keyes had anything in mind but a tear-jerker. He did it so well it sold. I could not get halfway through it before I stopped. I spent over 600 pages with Solzhenitsyn in the First Circle, suffering with Stalin's political prisoners, but their suffering had some significance. It was a novel of protest and courage; of endurance and corruption. Keyes' is no such story. The hero suffers meaninglessly, and dies as meaninglessly and even the meaninglessness of it all is meaningless!

It would be a crime to end this review on a negative note. I will praise one more story, one I did not care for when I read it but which has grown on me since: Damon Knight's "The Country of the Kind."



What makes this such an effective story is I was left wondering who to root for. The anti-hero here is the ultimate anti-hero. I mean, he's a bad-awful-stinkorotten SOB! He is stuck in a world where everyone is kind to one another. A world without prisons or police. A world in which little old ladies from Pasadena would drive their cars every day of the week. And it drives him out of his mind!

Can we blame him? Is he misjudged? Is he sane? Is his death good for everybody concerned? This story is so out of SF tradition, while at the same time being so in it, it is ghoulish. Read it!



THE COMPLEAT WEREWOLF AND OTHER STORIES OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION by Anthony Boucher—Simon and Shuster, \$6.50

Reviewed by J. R. Christopher

Fourteen years is a long time to wait for the second Boucher collection—since Far and Away (Ballantine, 1955). And unfortunately two stories are duplicated between the volumes, "Snulbug" and "They Bite." But at least some interest is being shown in Boucher's fiction, and perhaps eventually we will have something like a complete collection available of his f&sf (note the small letters).

Let's begin with the three pieces of science fiction. "Expedition" is a first-meeting story, one of Boucher's regular themes. (One thinks of "Conquest," "Balaam," "The Ambassadors," and "The Star Dummy.") This was one of Boucher's ASTOUNDING stories (all the stories in this volume date from his pulp-fiction period of 1941-1945), with some of the details that made that Golden Age. Boucher works out a psychological study of a Martian insect race which is interesting—and worth fuller development than this short story allows. The conclusion of the story, an attempt at O. Henry, is outdated by our Moon shots, but that does not seem to have bothered Simon and Shuster.

The other two science fiction stories are one-half of Boucher's Future History: "Q.U.R.," "Robinc," "Secret of the House," and "The Quest for St. Aquin."

The third of these stories (in all its Woman's Fiction glory) appeared in Boucher's first collection; the fourth story (in my opinion the best piece of fiction which Boucher ever wrote) has been multivariouly reprinted. The first two stories, in this volume are the interrelated tale of how Quinby's Usuform Robots (Q.U.R.) overcame the monopolistic Robots Incorporated (Robinc). The basic usuform point has been outdated by computers, but Boucher's anti-corporation bias is interesting.

Two other stories are also part of one of Boucher's series—his stories of Fergus O'Brien, a Los Angeles detective. Part of the series are straight mysteries; so I will add labels:

The Case of the Crumpled Knave (mystery novel)  
The Case of the Baker Street Irregulars (mystery novel)  
The Case of the Solid Key (mystery novel)  
The Case of the Seven Sneezes (mystery novel)



"The Compleat Werewolf" (fantasy novelet)  
 "Elsewhen" (science fiction novelet, collected in Far and Away)  
 "The Pink Caterpillar" (fantasy short story)  
 "The Last Hand" (mystery short story)  
 "The Chronokinesis of Jonathan Hull" (science fiction short story)  
 "Gandolphus" (science fiction short story)  
 "The Ultimate Clue" (mystery short-short)

The two stories here reprinted are the volume's title story (without Boucher's paragraph introduction which appeared in UNKNOWN) and "The Pink Caterpillar" (the original version, not the unfortunate updating which appeared in F&SF in 1958). "The Compleat Werewolf" is a lively, amusing fantasy involving a professor of German at the University of California (Berkeley) who appears naked in front of his class, a Nazi spy ring, and a white magician named Ozymandias the Great (who also appears in "Sriberdegibit" in Far and Away). "The Pink Caterpillar" is a Gothic story about a piece of somebody's body out to seek Revenge—like William Faulkner's "The Leg" (yes, the same Faulkner who wrote a fictional history of Mississippi). I wish I could remember the author and title of the classic tale of this type—"The Flayed Hand" or "The Fatal Hand," I think.

The other stories are non-series. Often they are variants on time travel, although all fantasies. The time-travel stories: "The Pink Caterpillar" (mentioned above), "Snulbug" (a pact with a demon), "Mr. Lupescu" (mainly a murder story, but "Time is funny"), "We print the Truth" (a wish from a fairy), and "The Ghost of Me" (where the ghost is the somewhat confused time traveller). Two of these stories are humorous, two are Gothic, and "We Print the Truth" is, as Poul Anderson once pointed out, a parable about free will.

The remaining story in the volume, "They Bite," is an American south-west Gothic about ogres on the desert. (By the way, most readers will disagree about "Mr. Lupescu" being tossed into the time-travel category; it's a highly polished story with a nice use of a child's point of view in the second section, anyway.)

This collection does not have Boucher's best story and it could have used a better balance of science fiction—"Nine-Finger Jack," "Conquest," "The Quest for St. Aquin," or some of his lesser sf. But it is welcome anyway—and I envy any young fan with a sense of humor and an enjoyment of pace his first reading of "The Compleat Werewolf."



LAND OF UNREASON by Fletcher Pratt & L. Sprague de Camp—  
 Ballantine 01814, 95¢

Reviewed by Ted Pauls

Adult fairy tales have an enduring, timeless appeal that even the most case-hardened proponents of realistic SF find irresistible. I am primarily a science fiction

rather than a fantasy fan; Conan and his ilk interest me not at all, sword-&-sorcery stories I take in great moderation, and Tolkien cultists I view with the same jaundiced eye as STAR TREK cultists and other fringe enthusiasts.

However, there is a certain type of light fantasy, based on ancient and frequently darkly direful myth, but owing its tone more to Carroll's Alice in Wonderland than to pre-Christian European superstitions, that I invariably enjoy reading. Such stories are like chocolate milkshakes; you wouldn't want a steady diet of them, but sometimes they can satisfy like nothing else a certain kind of thirst. When one thinks of such adult fairy tales, one thinks of a number of the stories of Fletcher Pratt & L. Sprague de Camp, Poul Anderson's "Three Hearts & Three Lions," some of Fritz Leiber's better work—and, curiously enough, of novels which, while technically straight science fiction, owe a good deal of their appeal to the same fairy tale atmosphere (e.g., Stasheff's The Warlock in Spite of Himself, Kurland's The Unicorn Girl, etc.).

Land of Unreason was first published in book form in 1942 and was not subsequently re-issued until this January, when Lin Carter selected it as the latest in Ballantine's Adult Fantasy Series. It is, as Lin observes in his introduction, "far and away the best thing Pratt and de Camp's collaboration ever produced."

The Harold Shea stories, which utilize the same plot concept (contemporary man yanked into fantasy world), always seemed to me to be in some degree clumsy, both conceptually and stylistically. This story, however, is much more smoothly





spun. That fact, together with the strong parallels between Land of Unreason and de Camp's solo novel of the same period, Lest Darkness Fall, leads me to suspect that there was rather more de Camp than Pratt in this combined effort, as compared to the Shea stories.

The plot is standard: a normal chap, in this case a young diplomat named Fred Barber, is transported into Fairyland and finds himself chosen by Fate or whatnot to deal with a dreadful peril against which the world's inhabitants, for all their magicking, are powerless. Except as a place to hang things, this plot is unimportant. So, too, are the allusions and parables to events in our world which Pratt & de Camp sprinkled liberally through the novel. The reader may take note of them or not, as he pleases. What is really important in Land of Unreason is the creatures inhabiting it—kobolds and wood sprites and ogres and ice-men and elves and winged fairies and cartwheeling philosophers. The authors created a fascinating, enchanting and, most of all, immensely fun world, and described it in a smooth, clear prose style that stays out of the way of the reader's enjoyment of the surrounding landscape. It's one of those novels that transports the reader into such an interesting, enjoyable environment that, when he reaches the final page, he nearly succumbs to the temptation to start all over again on page one so that the experience will not end just yet.



THE SHATTERED RING—Science Fiction and the Quest for Meaning by Lois and Stephen Rose—John Knox Press, \$3.50

Reviewed by Richard Delap

Non-fictional discussions of the field of science-fiction and fantasy, by their very scarcity, are usually most welcome and treasured for years to come by true buffs. Even those books accused of unreasonable bias, distortion of facts, and questionable scholarship have easily become 'must-have' items over the years. Among the more respected works in the field are such hard-to-find items as R. Bretnor's Modern Science Fiction, de Camp's Science Fiction Handbook, Lovecraft's Supernatural Horror in Literature, and Damon Knight's classic entertainment, In Search of Wonder.\*

The Rose book does not seem destined to join this distinguished company.

John Knox Press is noted specifically for publishing books of a religious slant, so I can't help but wonder if the authors' approach is dictated solely by their joint conscience as much as by the need to make concessions to get the thing in print. Their references to Christian theology sometimes manage to meld into the discussion quite readily (understandably in the pages devoted to the work of C. S. Lewis and Walter M. Miller's A Canticle for Leibowitz), yet the repeated ties to Christian thought and ethics are more annoying for their constant application to no discernable effect. They are extremely careful about this, however, never moving far enough into their analogies to become

\*still available from Advent: Publishers

trapped in dangerous, unjustified correlations. I would respect the authors far more if they carried their thoughts past superficialities of tiresome preaching—"Our problem in the future will be to recognize that a dynamic conception of man and God is reconcilable, even consistent with, past understandings." (p. 65) — and muddled half-thoughts of egotistical concepts—"Imagine a coin. On one side is space, on the other, time. Encircling it on the narrow rim is human consciousness...but if one accepts the coin as an apt analogy of an actual relationship, history can hardly be ignored." (p. 87)

In discussing H.G. Wells and his failure to find a means of reform—"Wells illuminates the predicament of man's impotence but does not solve it." (p. 35) — the authors suddenly find that successful science fiction is in actuality more concerned with questions than answers: "Theologically, as in sf, the paradox is never quite resolved....We know for certain only that some change will be necessary to convert today's precarious idealism into tomorrow's reality." (p. 38). Whichever way one turns this conclusion, it still doesn't emerge as very original, satisfying or thoughtful.

They persistently make a point of an author's assumptions (specifically, Lewis' one about the nature of perfection), yet retaliate with ones of their own, viz., "He fails to see that redemption can never be the same thing as unfallen innocence." (p. 67, authors' italics). One might accept such close-mindedness when such allegiance is openly professed as the purpose of a dissertation, but in a work of this nature the authors merely end up sounding pristine and ignorant, completely unaware of the vast scope which is the real basis of science-fiction.

The book ends with a discussion of Delany, Zelazny, and other newer writers who seem to use "myth as a dimension of the newer sf." There is an enthusiasm in this final chapter that is definitely lacking in the preceding chapters of pedantry, but even here the conclusions are drawn from half-truths and bias: "Folktale and myth combine in a new synthesis—new unless one accepts the assertion of Christianity that myth and folktale have already coalesced to break the circle of impotence."

The book is cheap both in price and content, probably a suitable gift for that little old maiden aunt of yours who masturbates nightly while reading her Bible, thereby proving to herself that she really is a modernite. You may call me Scrooge if you like, but I say, Bah! Humbug!

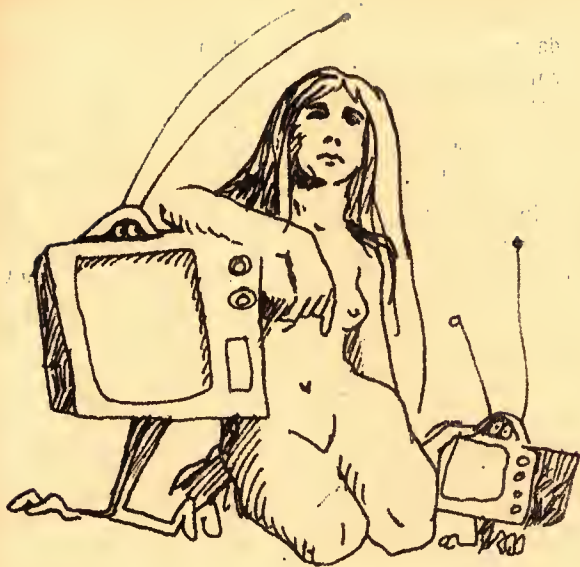


FIVE TO TWELVE by Edmund Cooper—Hodder 10904

Reviewed by Wayne Connelly

Lingerie advertisements in the London Tube have been embellished of late with paste-on stickers saying: "You earn more as a whore."—another blow has been struck in the increasingly militant feminist revolution. All of us men have long suspected and feared the covert move toward feminism, but now the damn females are getting 'pushy'. The gentler sex claim that the goal of their new chauvinism is equality, the





end of male dominance. But we SF males know better; we've all read John Wyndham's "Consider Her Ways." And now we have another timely expose of feminine designs in Edmund Cooper's novel, Five to Twelve.

In the twenty-first century utopia has arrived. War and over-population, the corollaries of male hegemony, have been eliminated under the female suzerainty of the Doms. Freed from the slavery of child bearing, women have become superior to men both in physique and numbers. Those men that still survive are entertainers and chattels—things for female dalliance.

Taking a neuter position for the moment, I suppose I should acknowledge that the proper comparison is not Wyndham's long short story, but rather in intent at least Philip Wylie's novel The Disappearance. In one sense, of course, Cooper's book is using an 'inverting' technique and is supporting the feminist cause against male dominance. However, his basic argument is that any position of imbalance is a perversion of natural order.

Our hero, Dion Quern, is a troubadour who tires of his loose life and determines to bring about the downfall of the feminararchy. The plotting of the novel involves his wild and unsuccessful attempts at insurrection. In the end, however, there is a suggestion that perhaps he does accomplish his goal, but in a quite unexpected although quite natural manner.

Aside from its overall concept the great merit of Five to Twelve is its language. The stylized speech, the slang and puns of an extrapolated future, is both inventive and enjoyable; and it is also the most effective element in Cooper's creation of his feminararchy. And if I must find a fault, it is not a literary one but philosophic. The Reproductive Cycle is offered as man's *raison d'être* and in the context it works. Perhaps it's just my male paranoia again, but I find this ethic of the broody hen somewhat unsatisfactory and in its own way as perverse to nature and evolution as the concept of sexual superiority.

Five to Twelve is a Hodder paperback and you may have

to wait until it is reprinted by an American publisher. But remember it—it's a very good book—a feminine dystopia graced with amusement and with a hint or two of truth.



DARK STARS edited by Robert Silverberg—Ballantine 01796, 95¢  
Reviewed by Bruce R. Gillespie

Brian Aldiss has said:

There is probably an essay to be written on the difference between the American and the English outlook; I would say that on the whole, Americans were still romantic, whereas over here we prefer the ironic.

And yet there is at least one field of science fiction in which Americans and English share remarkably similar outlooks: in the "disaster story". No group of writers has so consistently stripped the world of rain, wood, dry land, metal, children and assorted "necessities" as the English group has. On the other side of the Atlantic most writers have found irresistible the possibilities of a world depopulated by the nuclear bomb or other catastrophes.

But do writers or readers of disaster stories like to be warned...or merely shocked? Both emotions may be pleasureable, and both may be equally valid in a good story both before and after Earth Day. Now Robert Silverberg has made a collection of personal, national and cosmic disaster stories that will take some beating. Silverberg himself says in his Introduction:

By measuring the fiction "1963" of 1938 against the real 1963, sf writers have of necessity suffered a darkening of the vision. ... Here, then, is a book of dark dreams for a dark time.

1970 is perhaps not as bad as that, but is certainly a great deal worse than it could be—which is the point which this collection shows superbly.

The stories that best typify the mood and quality of the whole collection are possibly C.M. Kornbluth's and Brian Aldiss' contributions.

In "Shark Ship" Kornbluth displays an elegance of expression that most British writers might envy:

Through the silver ocean of the swarming the Convoy scudded and tacked in great controlled zigs and zags, reaping the silver of the sea in the endlessly reeling nets each ship payed out behind.

He can't keep this up for the whole story, of course—but a lot of the writing in this collection is nearly as good as this.

Wise citizens in Kornbluth's future stay at sea and never, never go on land. One of the sea society's huge self-contained ships loses its fishing nets, and the citizens expect to starve. An intrepid band decide that it is better to risk death on land than starve for certain at sea. They do not find the overpopulation they expect, but... Well, you must read the story for yourself. Kornbluth makes a strange ironic



comment on man in his madder moments, and only spoils the story with a kind of Good Seafolk—Monstrous Landsmen mentality which pervades the last half.

More thoughtful, more satirical in the 17th-century tradition, is Brian Aldiss' "Heresies of a Huge God." The disaster in this story is not the interstellar bug that crawls over the Earth, flattening it, but the psychologically disastrous way in which Earth's inhabitants adapt themselves to this continuous catastrophe:

In the churches of the world, the Huge God was asked to give a sign that he had witnessed the great victory over the American unbelievers. All who opposed this enlightened act were destroyed. He answered the prayers in 297 by moving swiftly forward only a comparatively Small Amount and lying Mainly in the Pacific Ocean.... Purified by famine, plague, gigantic earth tremors and other natural disorders, the population (of America) could now better accept the words of the priests, all becoming converted to a man.

There aren't many of them left by this stage, of course—and unfortunately I cannot see humanity acting in any other way if attacked by such a strange disaster.

The very best stories in the volume, however, are not stories of humanity's collective disasters and foibles, but more delicate stories (by both American and English writers) about personal disasters that have some universal significance as well. The best story in the book is J.G. Ballard's "The Cage of Sand," a story of very private emotions as well as spectacular imagery.

Three people live out lonely lives on sands brought back as ballast from Mars, and now built into dunes along the American Gulf Stream coast. The sands have infected Terrestrial vegetation, so mysterious "warders" seek to chase these people from the flimsy ruins of former resorts on these now deadly sands.

The main character, Bridgman, "immolates himself in a world of perpetual twilight" and seeks to forget the more obvious tragedy of Louise Woodward, making her invariable evening ascent to the roof ten storeys above. Bridgman glanced to the timetable pinned to the wall. Only two of the satellites would be visible, between 12:25 and 12:35 a.m., at an elevation of 62 degrees in the southwest, passing through Cetus and Eridanus, neither of them containing her husband. Although the sitting was two hours away, she was already taking up her position, and would remain there until dawn.

A story of entirely private gestures? Perhaps. But the lonely sands do become the centre of a cosmology whose only planets and stars contain dead astronauts. As the warders close in, Louise fulfills her wish to rejoin her husband, as he comes to her in truly spectacular fashion; in an orgy of destruction:

As Bridgman shielded his eyes, (the long lane of light) suddenly erupted in a trem-

endous explosion of detonating sand. A huge curtain of white dust lifted into the air and fell slowly to the ground. The sounds of the impact rolled against the hotel, mounting in a sustained crescendo.... All over the desert fires flickered briefly where fragments of the capsule had been scattered.

The story resolves its complex conflict of emotions and observations in a splendid last line. The microcosm lies shattered, but the characters, and certainly the readers, may have fun picking up the pieces.

The same may be said about the rest of the stories. Brunner's brilliant "The Totally Rich," Damon Knight's "Masks," and Blish and Kidd's "On the Wall of the Ledge" are my special favorites from the collection, but you'll find a large number for yourself—memorable pieces of speculative drama, balanced precariously around all of man's contradictions.

This is the best anthology I have read for a long time. When Knight or Ellison turn in something like this, then we really can talk about a new Golden Age.



CITIES IN FLIGHT by James Blish—Avon W187, \$1.25

Reviewed by Fred Patten

For those of you who don't already have Blish's "Cities in Flight" series, here's a real bargain: all four novels under one attractive cover for only 5¢ more than two volumes alone would cost you, with the special addition of a critical essay on the Spenglerian influence in the series (revised from RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY) and a chronological chart.

This is Blish's own Future History series, the famous Spindizzy stories, in which technological advances in force fields and space drive allows individual cities of Earth to englobe themselves and buzz off into space to escape the wasted and repressive conditions of our planet.

The first volume is They Shall Have Stars, in which scientists work in secrecy and haste to develop the Spindizzy concept under a new era of political extremism turning the U.S. into a monolithic dictatorship, and as the fall of the

"I first came to this country  
as a mere seed, but I prospered...."





Western Bloc to Communism becomes increasingly inevitable and imminent.

The second, A Life for the Stars, describes a teenager's experience on one of the first cities to go Spindizzy and secede from Earth.

Volume 3, Earthman, Come Home, was the original collection of Okie stories, describing the adventures of New York City under Mayor John Amalfi as it adjusts to its new life roaming the galaxy, fighting aliens and renegade cities and helping to establish a new social structure among the free cities. This book is a collection of short novels that appeared in ASTOUNDING in the late '40's and early '50's, and is generally considered the best.

The final volume, The Triumph of Time, tells how new life is suddenly cut short by the impending end of the Universe, and of Amalfi's mad fight to reverse the basic laws of space and time themselves. The books as individual stories shouldn't be missed; in this attractive package and with the addition of the essay and chart, it's a volume that everybody should read. \$1.25 may look expensive, but that's for over 600 pages.

This is the sort of paperback original that really deserves a hard-cover edition for greater permanence. And if Avon can fit the four Spindizzy books under one paperback cover like this, there's no reason they can't do the same with the other big series under their imprint: Asimov's Foundation trilogy.



ORBIT 6 edited by Damon Knight  
—Putnam, \$4.95

Reviewed by Richard Delap

The Orbit series has never been designed to appeal to one particular type of reader, viz. Old or New Wave supporters, but has included some of the best examples of both as well as sometimes startling hybrids. The sharp drop in quality of Orbit 5 was disappointing but fortunately seems to have been only a temporary hiatus since the new Orbit has a particularly greedy share of very fine stories, more than enough to make any fan worthy of the name beat a fast path to the bookstore.

Several stories are not only good but extraordinarily so, any one (or all) of which should be in the awards running next year.

While Joanna Russ' "The Second Inquisition" owes homage to predecessors as varied as Wells, Leiber and Murdoch, it owes nothing for the ice-cube-down-the-back direction in which Russ takes it. It is peculiarly its own, the sf element (time travel) so intricately entwined with the characterizations that even the most reality-oriented reader (should

one accidentally get hold of this book) would be hard-pressed to offer objections. The setting is an expertly recreated 1925, and the story is a warning to all people who believe successful temporal adjustment is an end of the means. To those people: Look Out!, for Russ is pulling the rug out from under you.

R.A. Lafferty seems to be a sort of mod Lovecraft, again and again insisting that all we are and all we know rests against an invisible wall of darker forces. "Entire and Perfect Chrysolite" seems an adjunct to the novel Fourth Mansions (soundly rapped and usually misunderstood by many critics) and tells of three couples who create/discover an African world, a psychedelic "vision" where nothing is what it seems—except death. I am firmly convinced that Lafferty is the most interesting and, more importantly, consistently good American sf writer today. His chronic, pointed satire doesn't mask his real concern for people, a refreshing quality lacking in all too much of modern literature.

If you've read Kraft-Ebbing, if you think you know—or at least academically understand—what fetishism is all about, better read James Sallis' excellent little extravaganza, "The Creation of Benny Good," and find out what perversion really is... and who practices it.

Shearing plot to the bone, "The Asian Shore" seems an oft-written story of a man caught in a different place, unable to relate to the strangers who accept him as a familiar acquaintance. But Thomas M. Disch does some very weird, very moving speculation on the effects of cultural custom and change, his setting appropriately the polyglot environs of Istanbul, pictured with Camus-like descriptive forces. It's a difficult

story, probably will be disliked by readers unwilling to do a little self-examination, and is the best thing to my knowledge that Disch has yet written.

If nothing else quite measures up to the preceding four stories, several are still quite good. Avram Davidson's "Goslin Day" is completely and utterly insane, funny and, wow, scary. "The Chosen" by Kate Wilhelm follows time-travelers from a noisy, overcrowded world into a distant future where beautiful silence reigns supreme...and if it sounds like a set-up, you're right, but you'll have to be sharp to foresee the horror Wilhelm has in mind. It's difficult to say anything about Carol Emshwiller's "Debut" without being vague or in danger of revealing the story's punch; suffice then to say that it seems written for a nonexistent WEIRD TALES circa 1970 and lesbians will love it. The first man to make the initial interstellar voyage is, we believe, guaranteed unlimited fame, the one thing that may see him through a long, lonely trip.





Jean Cox's "Fame" has a caprice up its sleeve, however, and a good one.

There is a fairytale quality to Ursula K. Le Guin's "The End," an evocative tale of the last man, woman and child in a small town at the ocean's edge. It made me uncomfortable, more from the fact that I couldn't really understand the enigmatic final sentence than from the enigma itself, but it's a quality that may fascinate as well. There are two stories by Gene Wolfe, neither of which I wholly approve yet both of which are tantalizing in their not-quite-success. In "Remembrance to Come," the reader shares the confusion of a teacher whose classroom in a future underground (literally) college is invaded by a mysterious figure in black. It made me feel like my head had been screwed on backwards, so don't expect me to clarify its meaning. "How the Whip Came Back" is a cross-section glimpse of a world where America is no longer a leader, the Catholic church is a barely warm corpse, and a woman in love is still far more crafty than the most twisted of politicians. Again, interesting, but obscurity hangs over it like a stormcloud.

"Maybe Jean-Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, Chevalier de Lamarck, Was a Little Bit Right" by Robin Scott is only a distillation of human drama rather than the whole drama itself. (Just a little bit wrong, Jean-Baptiste?) Kate Wilhelm's "A Cold Dark Night With Snow," concerned with contrasting values in a world where personal and scientific principles seem more tenuously connected with each passing day, is told in a smoothly edited but out-of-sequence series of events that move right along over a familiar route. Roderick Thorp moves in from the wrong angle in "Sunburst," as panic explodes from the pressures of modern life, and ends his story on a note of personal tragedy for the hero, not realizing that the real horror lies with the buildup.

The only really awful story in the collection is Gardner R. Dozois' "Where No Sun Shines," which exploits bigotry in a vulgar manner while basically having nothing at all to say.

The varied philosophies, techniques and, especially, exciting methods of breaking the back of convention in this collection would be enough to keep any magazine a topic of conversation for months, and it's so much more convenient to get your money's worth in one volume. With 15 new stories, *Orbit 6* is one of the better buys you're likely to find this year and you shouldn't pass it up.



TONIGHT WE STEAL THE STARS by John Jakes  
THE WAGERED WORLD by Laurence M. Janifer and S.J. Treibich  
—Ace 81680, 75¢  
Reviewed by Paul Walker

I did not read *The Wagered World*. It seems to be some kind of private joke between two strangers. The humor did not include me, so I don't feel qualified to express an opinion.

John Jakes' entry, *Tonight We steal the Stars* is remarkable. The first few chapters reminded me so much of Dean Koontz's work that I was tempted to ask if he was using a pen name. The similarity is striking almost all the way through.

Jakes is concerned with social issues, but far more with human relationships. Primarily, he is an sf adventure writer and his tale of *II Galaxy* (of which this is the third novel) is impossible to put down. His hero Wolf Dragonard is not a superman, but not quite an anti-hero, either. As in Koontz's early work, he is mourning a lost love, disillusioned with life, hardened, embittered by his lot and his loss. He is facing dismissal from the Regulators, the *II Galaxy* cops, who wage war on rioting students and other dissents against the omnipotent Lords of the Exchange.

Dragonard drinks too much. His nerves are worn. He is given a leave and, during it, is drugged.

He returns to his home base with a hallucinogenic beauty who warns him against the theft of the priceless Seven Stars, the seven gems of Lord Genmo. Realizing his deception, he embarks on a search for the real thieves and becomes involved with the plot as the mastermind.

His nemesis is Conrad Vodamm, a ruthless Interrogator for the Regulators. Vodamm's face contains three metal plates and his soul is as cold.

Melodrama? Yes! Glorious space opera with real people and loathsome villains and breathless suspense. Fine detail and uncluttered prose. In every way, a gem.

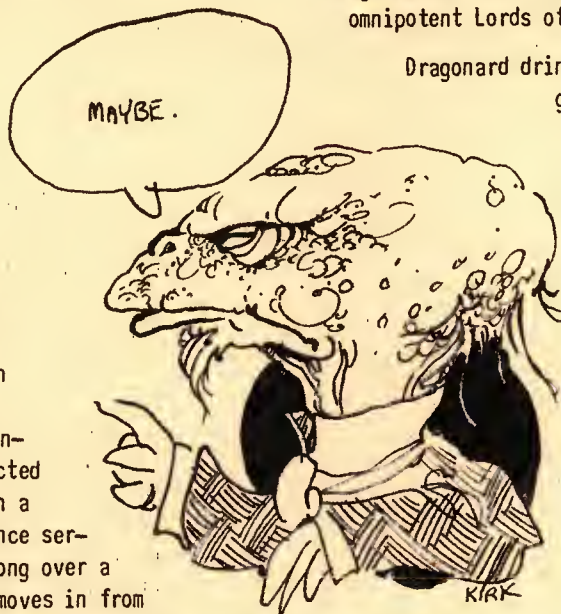


SHELLBREAK by J.W. Groves—Paperback Library 63-293, 60¢  
Reviewed by Wayne Connelly

The name 'J.W. Groves' is not one that I was previously familiar with. It is now, however! And the next time my browsing turns it up there won't be any need to dally over the blurb. *Shellbreak* is one of the most enjoyable new SF novels that I've read in the past few months.

The book has flaws: too often we are told the story, instead of experiencing it; and the initial appearance of characters is marred by strained attempts to make them 'real'. Still, I don't claim that *Shellbreak* is a contemporary classic.

Ostensibly, the story is simple. Lenoir, the inventor of





an impenetrable shell which was conceived as a defense against nuclear attack, is kidnapped and brought forward in time by the Freedom Party to a city-civilization that has been imprisoned under his protective dome for more than four hundred years. The shell has become the 'instrument' of a bread & circuses style dictatorship. If Lenoir wishes to return to his time, he must sabotage the shell. There are obstacles, however—not just the tyrants and their police, but also underworld czars, warring freedom factions, and Lenoir's own fears and uncertainties.

These are only the rudiments; from here the plot goes on to twist and eventually turn itself inside out. Plot machinations for their own sake are, of course, of little value, but here they are integral to the central mystery of the novel—and Shellbreak is essentially a mystery. The clues are numerous. But I must confess that, although aware of a sense of unease, the clues only became apparent to me in retrospect. Once revealed, however, they mesh together convincingly.

As a protagonist, Lenoir is both engaging and refreshing. He reacts typically, after a tour of the society his shell has created, by misquoting Housman: "I, a stranger and afraid, in a world I damn well made." (I find it easy to identify with a hero who has a penchant for bad jokes.)

Mr. Groves' world of the future is both credible and vibrant, and more than simply an exotic setting. It is premised upon the philosophic notion of a "closed society." The physical symbol of the restricting dome is carried through into the sociological and political aspects of the society. Isolated and turned in upon itself the city—with-in-its-shell has become ultra-conservative and neurotic, characterized by such institutions as the "satisfied vote" and the "games." The closed society of Shellbreak is not a jack-booted totalitarianism; it wears slippers, but it is just as pernicious to individual freedom.

I'd best stop. The last thing I'd want to do is suggest that Shellbreak is political allegory. It's an entertainment, and that's the level on which I enjoyed it.



WORLDS OF WONDER edited by Harry Harrison—Doubleday, \$4.50  
13 GREAT STORIES OF SCIENCE-FICTION edited by Groff Conklin—Gold Medal T2174, 75¢

14 GREAT TALES OF ESP edited by Idella Purnell Stone & John W. Campbell—Gold Medal T2164, 75¢

NINE TOMORROWS by Isaac Asimov—Fawcett Crest T1944, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

Have you ever seen four cruddier titles for anthologies? Have you any conception what it means to read 52 short stories...in four days?

Have you any idea how it makes you feel when the best one of them is by the only author you ever publicly dismissed as "irrelevant"?

Anyway— — — — —

Harry Harrison's attempt at "SF-for-people-who-do-not-like-SF" is a total success. I guarantee that in years to come a few young fans will refer back to this book as what sold them on the genre. And their contributions to fandom will more than justify Harrison's existence.

No, this is not a wild rave. Books like Harrison's have been making fans for a long time. There were better ones. There will be better ones. But anthologies that aim at young fans, that encourage browsers to read on and introduce them to the SF spectrum deserve some credit. Harrison has done a fine, unpretentious job.

Starring are (in my opinion) Jack Vance ("The Howling Bounders" A Gas!) and Robert Silverberg (he puts a new twist on the Milky Way). All the others are worth mentioning and quoting. Hard reading fans may have encountered most of them, but the Harrison intro is worth the price of the book itself: "...Jack Vance lives in the hills outside of San Francisco, in a place guaranteeing privacy—because the only way in is up a twisting, unpaved, vertical deathtrap of a road....He approaches at top speed with the car skidding around turns and clawing at the slippery surface to arrive and shudder to a stop, brakes locked, with the radiator almost touching the front door. Strong men grow pale..."

The jacket is worthy of the book.

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Groff Conklin's candidate for "Great SF" does not quite make it. Unless you are taken with "pleasant diversions," this will not interest you. For the most part it is SF humor. Very light, very unexciting. Some are better than others. None are outstanding. But the book will satisfy the insatiable fan.

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Campbell's introduction to 14 Great Tales of ESP is as good as the stories. "Good science-fiction seeks to work out in fiction, the meanings and probable consequences of new ideas—before the same new ideas slap us in the face as reality." "Fantasy is the product of an undisciplined imagination. In fantasy, anything goes—there are no limitations of logic or law. Not only does the author make up his menaces as he goes along but he is free to change them, and to change the laws regarding them, as suits him...the sort of scene-and-character shifting that goes on in mince-pie nightmares. — Science fiction is not of that order. It takes a known fact and extends it; or it introduces one new postulate and studies the resultant world."

It is unfair, I suddenly realize, to quote Campbell out of context. His introduction is about psi stories and the psi stories in this anthology are all far above average. This book, with most of the stories unfamiliar to me, is a success in that its material is indeed "great" and as engrossing as it is pleasurable.

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There is much to knock about Asimov. His use of dialogue is excessive. His plot structure is almost constant from story to story. His characters are two-dimensional. His prose is



unexciting. But most of all, he fails to imbue in his stories, and consequently in his readers, any sense of the warmth of the man himself. But his brief introductions to his science-fact articles are excellent—simple, hilariously egotistical, and likeably warm. He is one of those "real human beings" that is rarer than you might think. Only... this does not come through in his stories.

What does come through is a pure, absorbing science-fiction mentality. Asimov diqs ideas. He explains them clearly and unpretentiously. It is the idea that makes the story worth reading and keeps the reader going. It is the idea that makes the final satisfaction.

Asimov's Nine Tomorrows is the best thing I've read by him. It kept me going from cover to cover. (Despite myself, I might add.)



SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CINEMA by John Baxter—A.S. Barnes,  
\$2.45

Reviewed by Fred Patten

"Throughout the history of science fiction it has been an article of faith among its readers that filmed sf was an abomination, that it degraded the field and provided nothing of interest to the serious mind."

This opening sentence sets Baxter's thesis, to which he returns often, that cinematic s-f is more closely related to the comic strip than to literary s-f.

He makes a good case. "Written sf is usually radical in politics and philosophy; sf cinema, like the comic strips, endorses the political and moral climate of its day."

And as evidence, Baxter relates a number of films to their social periods: the magician, Melies, using the cinema to present a better class of vaudeville stage illusion at the turn of the century; METROPOLIS and its socialistic message in the politically chaotic Germany of the 1920's; the blending of American gadgeteering and Germanic literature and folklore in the mad-scientist, demonic-knowledge horror films of the early '30's and after (and he cites the first known use of the line, "There are some things Man is not meant to know."); THINGS TO COME and its promise of technocratic utopia to the Depression-ridden and war-fearing late '30's; the atomic fear flicks of that late '40's and early '50's; RED PLANET MARS rising from the McCarthy Red scare of the early Eisenhower administration; PANIC IN YEAR ZERO and DR. STRANGELOVE, children of the bomb shelter craze of the early '60's and the fear that the possibility of nuclear war had now passed beyond the abilities of governments to control; and 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY ushered in by the Space Race of the '60's.

The book is designed for the literary fan with a casual interest in s-f cinema, giving a brief but thorough coverage of the general field including all the important names and dates, and going into depth for the more important films.

There is a wealth of interesting detail, such as the fact the "Disney" credit for special effects in FORBIDDEN PLANET was for Joshua Meador, the man who among other things created the "Rite of Spring" sequence in FANTASIA.

There are separate chapters on the cinema's comic strip, the serial; and on American and British s-f TV series. The book is superbly illustrated with particularly well-chosen stills; one on almost every other page. (The stills often seem to have been chosen to illustrate specific points in the text, rather than having simply been pulled from a stack at random.)

Baxter refers knowledgeably to the literature from which many of the films were taken, quoting from Damon Knight's reviews and giving credit to Ray Bradbury, Richard Matheson, Harry Bates, and others where it's due. (He speaks particularly highly of Harlan Ellison's OUTER LIMITS scripts.)

The book closes with an extensive bibliography and filmography. Almost everything is here. All in all, the book is of extremely high quality and is particularly recommended to the general s-f fan who might otherwise think it's for the monster movie lover but not for him.



THE MERCY MEN by Alan E. Nourse—Ace 52560, 60¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

If I was to tell you Alan E. Nourse is one of the finest writers who ever lived, you would not believe me. It's because of people like you that men like Nourse remain unheralded.

In 1955, he published a modest half of an Ace Double, A Man Obsessed, which I acquired for the major half. Whatever that was, the Nourse novel became my first aesthetic exper-





ience. I still retain the time-improved images of its horror and beauty, and it was an experience that prepared me for larger experiences later on. But, because it was the first, Nourse is my secret Dostoevski.

A Man Obsessed has been reissued in hardcover by David McKay, a selection of the SF Book Club, and is now in paperback from Ace, expanded to 60,000 words, retitled The Mercy Men. I do not urge you to read it. If you should, you will read it from cover to cover without breathing then toss it aside with a "wow." But, when asked, you will yawn and say, "It seems to me I skimmed that." HYPOCRITE.

The plot is unimportant. It is predictable. The padding is repetitious. In fact, the entire expanded version is shamefully unrealized. But still—no one, in my estimation, depicts the atmosphere of nightmare more accurately than Nourse. If much of The Mercy Men is easily forgettable, some of it is haunting. Read it. Who knows...Nourse may become your secret Dostoevski.



TOMORROW'S WORLDS edited by Robert Silverberg—Meredith Press, \$4.95  
Reviewed by Richard Delap

"The ten stories gathered in this book follow a simple scheme: one is laid in each of the nine known worlds of our solar system, with a tenth story set on our moon for good measure."

So Mr. Silverberg states in his introduction, and we begin on the innermost planet with one of the editor's own stories. Outdated scientifically with the discovery that Mercury does rotate on its axis, "Sunrise on Mercury" is dramatically unaffected as a suspenseful tale of an expedition out to set up a radar tower in Mercury's "Twilight Belt," a goal that becomes thwarted as members of the crew discover an alien intelligence that is deadly-helpful.

When exploring the polar regions of Venus, two men find a moving blanket of plant-like life and incidentally effect the development of the entire planet in a way never wished for. Arthur C. Clarke's "Before Eden" takes a good questioning look at the relevance of intrinsic good and evil.

In "Seeds of the Dusk," Raymond Z. Gallun creates a far-future Earth where the Children of Man work feverishly to build rockets to Venus; meanwhile, an intelligent plant-growth from dying Mars is working equally dilligently to take over the Earth. The author mixes them together, along with intelligent birds, in a melodramatic goulash that suffers from overseasoning.

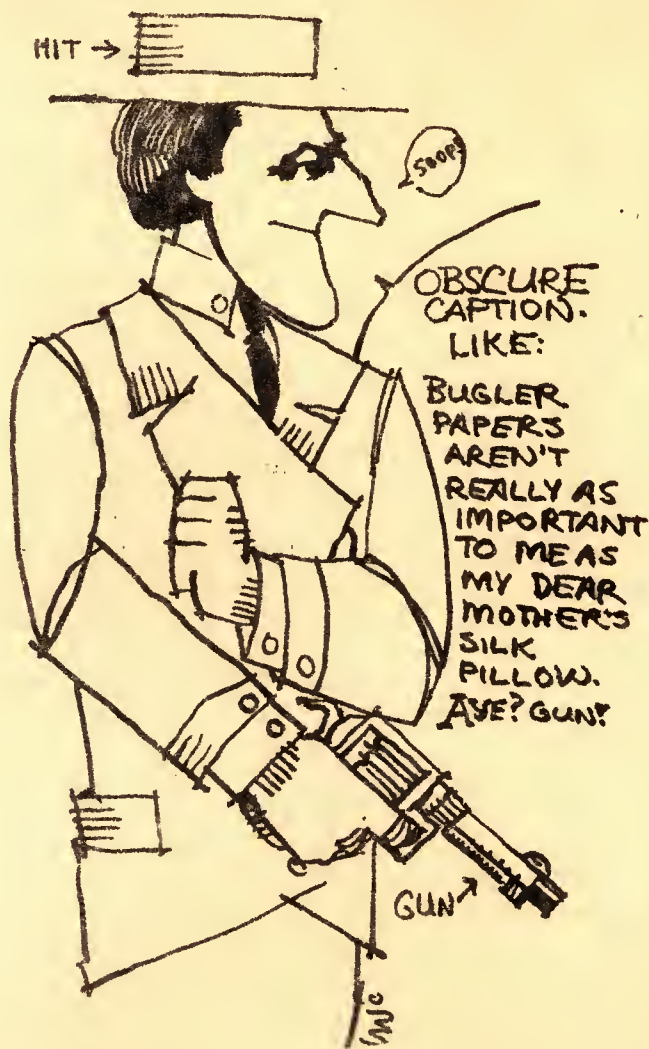
The story of a family visiting the moon, "The Black Pits of Luna," is very minor Robert A. Heinlein. Originally published in the now defunct SATURDAY EVENING POST, it moves stock characters through stock situations that read exactly like the mass audience's idea of sf.

Some may think that "Crucifixus Etiam" is already outdated in every sense (including theologically), but it is

hard to deny that Walter M. Miller's story of men working on the Red Planet, destroying their health all the while, is a moving tribute to the goals that hopefully can withstand the pressures of the technological age.

Silverberg calls "Desertion" the "fourth and finest" story in Clifford D. Simak's book, City; he may well be quite right. I've read it several times and am still impressed with the quiet emotional sureness of Simak's confidence in Man's eventual ability to convert himself to a lifeform suitable to another planet, here Jupiter.

Harry Harrison's "Pressure" is a depressing tale of examining the surface of Saturn. Its short length gives little



chance for the characters to break away from stereotype, and the "hard science" is really only a clever plastic disguise. An interesting note is that the story appears in the current (at this writing) issue of ANALOG, with an alternate "upbeat" ending which makes it much worse than it is here.

Hopelessly outdated—an expedition to Uranus financed by the Smithsonian, juvenile lecturous dialogue, etc.—Stanley G. Weinbaum's "The Planet of Doubt" tells of some "animated links of sausages" that get Terran explorers into all sorts of trouble. (Maybe it was included for laughs; maybe it was the



only story about Uranus the editor could find?)

The best stories are by two of the newer, brightest, talents in the field. Alexei Panshin's "One Sunday in Neptune" is a decidedly cute (but only in the very nicest sense) and freshly amusing story of the first two men to land "in" Neptune. In 10 pages, Panshin creates the most solid characters you're ever likely to meet in a short story, and, being a new story, it should be remembered at awards time next year. An unimaginable, cold, lifeless waste, as well as death, awaits the first two men to land on Pluto in Larry Niven's "Wait It Out." But to Niven, it's not unimaginable, nor is it completely lifeless...and is it really death? Quite a good story.

Not a remarkable collection to be sure, but pleasant and readable enough to satisfy all but the most demanding readership.



FINAL WAR by K.M. O'Donnell/TREASURE OF TAU CETI by John Rackham—Ace 23775, 75¢  
DANGER—HUMAN by Gordon R. Dickson—Doubleday, \$4.95  
CRIME PREVENTION IN THE 30th CENTURY edited by Hans Stefan Santesson—Walker, \$5.95  
THE LITTLE MONSTERS edited by Roger Elwood & Vic Ghidalia—Macfadden 75-282, 75¢  
BEYOND TOMORROW edited by Damon Knight—Gold Medal T2081, 75¢  
Reviewed by Paul Walker

In his introduction to Final War, K.M. O'Donnell writes: "I am more than grateful (to SF) because the interesting irony is that like so many repressed, slightly didactic, over-intellectualized adolescents, I came out of science-fiction in the first place, learned to read and love the field in my early teens and then left it (ingrate that I was) for the higher pretensions and larger disasters of the literary marketplace, only returning in disrepair for the aforementioned reasons ("...(SF) is...probably the only consistent, paying market left for serious fiction.") a few years ago. In a sense, I combine the best of both worlds."

This is painfully familiar. Fortunately for Mr. O'Donnell he is more talented than I ever was. But even that does not save him.

From these stories a number of things are apparent. 1) K.M. O'Donnell is very talented. 2) He combines SF and mainstream with some success. And 3) He is years late.

Final War is Catch-22. I mean, it is somewhat better than the latter, but it is still from the same mould. And the idea just has not that much steam. Heller used it up and O'Donnell is left holding a damp rag. The same holds true of the rest of the stories—they are tired ideas not even a Silverberg could save. And Mr. O'Donnell presents them with such fervent relish that their tiredness is accentuated.

I'm sure this opinion will be actively, if not bitterly, opposed (O'Donnell lost the Nebula by 6 votes) but he is

still as "repressed, as didactic, as over-intellectualized" as he ever was. Perhaps moreso. And his popularity undoubtedly rests on the number of fans and writers who are as likewise as he is.

Personally, I found John Rackham's Treasure of Tau Ceti more enjoyable. While hardly memorable, it is pleasantly, respectfully, diverting.

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A case in the opposite direction seems to be Gordon R. Dickson. His Danger—Human, a collection of stories published between 1952 and 1964, exhibit a talent that apparently does not appreciate itself.

All of these stories concern man's contact with other forms of life, alien, porpoise, and subconscious. As a theme it is interesting and Dickson has a nice approach to it. I found only two of the stories tough going, and the others progressively readable.

Their worst problem is structure. Dickson spends far too long getting to his point. And, even when he does, he does not exploit it for anything like maximum effect. The characterizations are too simple. The backgrounds often are sloppily described and the pace is plodding.

Dickson could have used some of O'Donnell's literary pretensions. With far more attention to craft and style, these stories might have been fine ones. Even so, the book is worth reading. I suggest reading from back to front, but it is a book worthy of being read.

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Hans Stefan Santesson's Crime Prevention in the 30th Century and Roger Elwood's and Vic Ghidalia's The Little Monsters are not worthy.

Santesson's book is a contrived idea, but the stories are not even up to that.

The Little Monsters is even less of a success. In this kind of context, even the best of stories could not survive.

++

Damon Knight's Beyond Tomorrow is another matter. Individually, the stories are fine. Alan E. Nourse's "Brightside Crossing" is as fine a read on the fourth trip as it was on the first. Bradbury's "Million Year Picnic" and Asimov's "Night-fall," Clarke's "Deep Range" and Wilhelm's "Mile-Long Spaceship." All of them winners. Yet, oddly, the anthology does not hold them together. It lacks a unifying theme and/or the cohesive presence of Damon Knight. But it does give new readers, and old, an excellent opportunity to sample part of the cream of the crop.



The ACE BOOKS order form mailed with most copies of this issue is for SFR readers to use. Ignore the minimum order. Include payment plus 10¢ per book handling fee as usual.



# And Then I Read....

by.....the.....editor

Perry Chapdelaine sent me a review of Robert Moore Williams' Love Is Forever—We Are For Tonight (Modern Literary Editions Publishing Co. 123-06101, 60¢) But it seemed incomplete. I asked for more. He rewrote it to four full pages and I still was confused and puzzled. I wrote him again and—

Dear Dick:

You and Perry Chapdelaine are about to drive me out of my skull (I drive easily), you demanding of Perry the story line of Love Is Forever—We Are For Tonight—this for his review of the book—whether it is SF or Fantasy—and Perry demanding that I write a paragraph of hard story line showing the SF element for insertion in the body of the review.

On the front cover, this book is called a science fiction novel, on the back cover I am said to be insane. I am nuts, of course, but I am NOT responsible for what is on the covers. I have said it until I am getting sick of repeating it: THIS IS MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY, possibly the first one ever published by a writer in the field of SF and fantasy. It is a collection of some of my semi-mystical experiences tied together on the only possible theme for such a collection—the higher love. My interpretations are my own and may be in error. My reporting is accurate. What is the higher love? Well, it is NOT the thrust of the penis higher into the vagina, as some of your readers may suspect, instead it is—Read the book and find out. Even after you have read the book, you won't believe that I am describing true experiences and true events and that there is such a thing as the higher love.

Let me say again, I AM REPORTING ACCURATELY and that something that I have called the higher love is real, does exist, and is an experience that at least some humans can have—possibly more, if they will work at it. It is not often that anybody can get me to stand up in public and say I BEAR WITNESS but in this case, I will.

Perry tells me he has nominated this for a Nebula. While I appreciate the flattery, this is sheer and utter nonsense. If I wrote the best book ever done in the field of SF or fantasy, that group of wonderful people that I have called the assholes who talk from the inside out would stand up in a body in the forum and turn thumbs down. And I wouldn't blame them for doing it!

Here's a copy of the book. Read it and make up your own mind. If you wish, junk Perry's review. Throw this letter away if you feel like it. Make like you never saw the book. It's all one to me.

All the best,

Robert Moore Williams

So I read the book.

And I'll review in the form of an open letter: Bob, as an autobiography the book is very thin—but revealing—and it indicates that the shock of your wife leaving you and taking your daughter sent you into an emotional breakdown of sorts; you tried facing the obvious basic problem, a strong subconscious love-hate hang-up over your mother, and failed. You fled by way of psychosomatic ailments and distance from the psychologist who could have helped you. You experimented with Dianetics, with inhaling a "high"-producing mixture of gases in the desert. You tried some cults in California, but you never faced Mother.

Along the way you had some hallucinatory experiences which you sincerely believe were genuinely psychic or psi in nature and you are convinced that something which you call LOVE, a force for good, exists in man and nature.

From what you say about it I think you refer to the force of life itself as it struggles to continue, to keep going in the face of inevitable death and nothingness.

The book is a religious tract, a pressing upon the reader of your discoveries and Belief. The book is also a masked ego-trip and a plea for help.

You may very well be slightly mad.

Perry reviewed the book as a novel and nominated it for a Nebula as a novel. As a work of non-fiction your book does not qualify.

There are definite elements of paranoia in your personality, Bob. And your shouting anal-oriented references constantly repeated in letters and articles in the fan press show a distorted perception of the real world ("the real world"—how you must hate that phrase) and a distorted response-pattern of behavior as well as possibly an anal-compulsive element of character.

I admire your courage in writing and selling the book; you must have known you would get reviews like this. You may have a piece of genuine truth to impart, Bob. I really hope so. The LOVE force you describe would be a good thing for everyone.

+++



When I reviewed Creatures of Light and Darkness by Roger Zelazny after reading the Doubleday edition I said:

Using Egyptian mythology and gods as roles and identities, a small group of...men?...superbeings? ...struggle for dominance on a galaxy-wide stage with superpowers based on incredibly developed psi abilities and superscience.

It is all unbelievable but also engaging, suspenseful and well-told. Zelazny's skill and art can make the most absurd plot and background suffice.

Avon has published the book in paperback (Avon V2362, 75¢) and I would suggest that you not miss this one if you like Zelazny.

+++

Bantam Books has reprinted Third From the Sun, a Richard Matheson collection of stories abridged from his larger collection, Born of Man and Woman. This is a fine group of tales, worthy of anyone's library. The titles here are:

"Born of Man and Woman," "Third From the Sun," "Lover When You're Near Me," "SRL Ad," "Mad House," "F---," "Dear Diary," "To Fit the Crime," "Dress of White Silk," "Disappearing Act," "The Wedding," "Shipshape Home," and "The Traveller."

This printing has a stunning cover. (Bantam H5548, 60¢)

+++

Some science fiction goes on forever, seeing reprint after reprint. It is a convincing argument for taking your time and doing your very best work as a writer; it pays-off again and again. God knows Isaac Asimov could testify to that dictum; now his I, Robot, long a Doubleday book, has been issued with text complete by Fawcett in its Crest line (Fawcett 449-01453, 75¢).

These stories are about robots built to observe the Three Laws of Robotics (as given by the 56th Edition, Handbook of Robotics, 2058 A.D.):

1. A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

They sound foolproof, don't they? Asimov in these stories says, "Yes, but—"

The stories: "Robbie," "Runaround," "Reason," "Catch That Rabbit," "Liar!," "Little Lost Robot," "Escape!," "Evidence," and "The Evitable Conflict."

+++

Bantam has issued #52 of their reprinted Doc Savage series by Kenneth Robeson: The Vanisher (Bantam H5536, 60¢).

+++ And Ace has issued Edgar Rice Burroughs' The Wizard of Venus with a previously unpublished Burroughs short novel, "Pirate Blood" occupying the final two-thirds of the book. The cover, by Roy G. Krenkel, Jr., is a lovely piece of work and makes me wish full-size prints were available.

+++

A.E. Van Vogt's recent new novel, Quest For the Future, was a disappointment. Van Vogt has become rusty or did not care to put first-class planning and effort into this book.

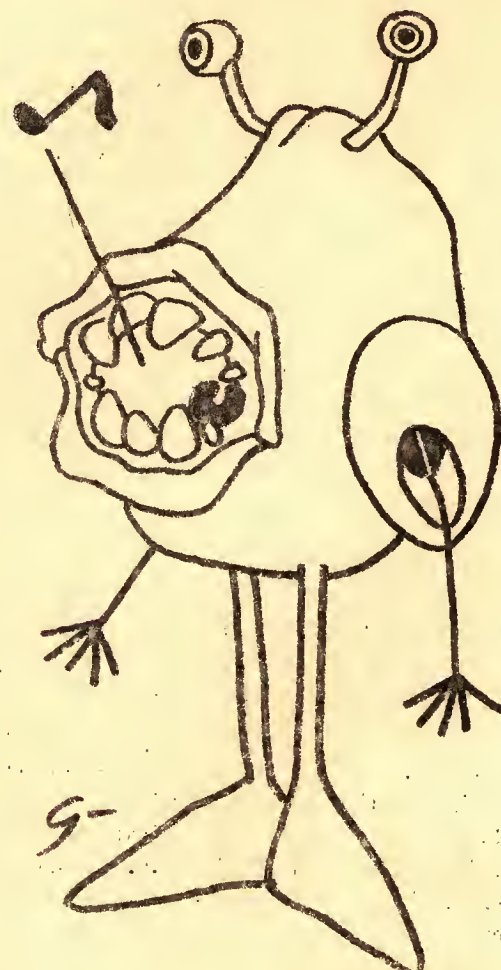
There are flashes of power and eye-opening Van Vogtian concepts in Quest for the Future, but they are mishandled and neglected in a confusing series of massive time-jumps by disagreeable, paranoid hero Peter Caxton, who is determined to attain immortality.

The Palace of Immortality is one such concept; along with the Possessors, who guard the probability worlds; and the end of time, Nov. 14, 9812 A.D.

During the story time paradoxes become complicated and the events' connections confused. The pace is swift and characterization adequate, but the manipulations are too easy; the adjustments to different eras too swift and superficial. In a word the story is finally incredible. (Ace 69700, 95¢)

+++

The Twilight Man by Michael Moorcock (Berkley S1820, 75¢)





was also a disappointment. I suppose Behold the Man has spoiled me for Moorcock's ordinary science fiction.

This novel is the story of a future Earth ideal society's disintegration into continual partying, hysteria, dictatorship, religious fanaticism, pogroms...as a result of fear and social-cultural shock when it is finally realized that there will be no more children.

It is an interesting case-history worked out under special conditions: alien Raiders had caused the planet to stop rotating, to that half the world is forever daylight, half forever night. It slowly dawns on man that lingering alien-caused radiation has also caused mass sterility.

I found Moorcock's introduction to the book more interesting than the novel itself.

+++

Keith Laumer...Keith Laumer...what are we to do with him? He writes so well and yet so often uses his talent and skill to write frivolous sf Juveniles such as The World Shuffler (Putnam, \$4.95).

In this one he inflicts upon the reader the mock serious mis-adventures of an idiot-hero, Lafayette O'Leary, in a helter-skelter alternate-worlds story complicated by three different O'Learys in the same alternate world, evil villains scheming to exploit the natural resources of these alternate Earths, and a plot that relentlessly brings O'Leary-primo to the point of death (execution, torture, revenge, escape) every fifteen pages or so.

I have no right to putdown Laumer for Retief and books like this. I only feel cheated that he doesn't do more adult science fiction. And sneering at Juveniles is so easy and satisfying and difficult to resist.

+++

I shouldn't like Sea Horse in the Sky by Edmund Cooper (Putnam, \$4.95), but I do. It is good, pedestrian SF.

The people-isolated-in-limbo-by-aliens-for-study story has been done too often. Cooper's strength is in unobtrusive, real, involving characterization. The reader cares for the individuals involved and is caught by the continuing suspense and need to find out who the aliens are and why the experiment was started.

+++

I used to think slightly of heroic fantasy (otherwise known as sword-&-sorcery) but since reading the anthology edited by L. Sprague de Camp, Warlocks and Warriors (Putnam, \$4.95) I am a changed man.

I have discovered that in good hands the form can be as well-written, sophisticated, and worthy-of-respect as any other kind of writing. In this volume I personally thought little of the more simplistic stories: "Torutal" by Ray Capella, "The Valley of Spiders" by H.G. Wells, and "Thunder in the Dawn" by Henry Kuttner, and "The Hills of the Dead" by Robert E. Howard.

There are two short fables: "Chu-Bu and Sheemish" by Lord Dunsany, and "The Gods of Niom Parma" by Lin Carter. Both mocking and ironic.

Fritz Leiber's "Thieves' House" is a very good Fafhrd and Gray Mouser story, incredibly the first one I have read. I am busily reading more.

The two finest stories in this genre sampler are C.L. Moore's "Black God's Kiss" which is chillingly fantastic and real, and "The Bells of Shoredan" by Roger Zelazny, who can command rapt attention and give entertainment in any fiction.

The sword-&-sorcery tale can be more than mighty thews, thrusting blades and morbid incantations; this mixture of stories gives a wide variety. They all show marvelous imagination. The old sense-of-wonder that was claimed for SF may now reside in the house of heroic fantasy, which obviously has many rooms.

+++

The idea that a people's language determines the society and culture is intriguing—different type of language equals different type of civilization.

In The Languages of Pao (Ace 47401, 60¢) Jack Vance imposes three new languages on portions of a passive, stagnant planet in the form of a masked conquest by a super social scientist from another planet whose home language in turn has determined its austere, egocentric, male-dominant culture.

The hero is a child ruler, a victim of palace intrigue, who is educated and trained in both cultures and who upsets a lot of carefully laid plans in reclaiming and keeping his throne.

If language determines culture, what determines language? The basic environment of the planet, obviously: slight differences of atmosphere makeup, gravity, flora and fauna, proportion of land to sea... So, would the artificial injection of an "alien" language eventually be rejected—by the planet?

+++

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THE CALL OF NATURE: A NOTE ON "THE CALL OF CTHULHU"  
BY HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT

By Arthur Jean Cox

The imagery of Lovecraft's fiction (our eye parenthetically notes as we read) is seldom sexual. A story that is curiously suggestive—and at first, perhaps, rather puzzling—is the "classic" tale, "The Call of Cthulhu" (1928).

A few jottings from the story:

One Henry Anthony Wilcox has had "an unprecedented dream of great Cyclopean cities of Titan blocks and sky-flung monoliths, all dripping with green ooze...

...and from some undetermined point below had come a voice that was not a voice; a chaotic sensation which only fancy could transmute into sound, but which he attempted to render by the almost unpronounceable jumble of letters, "Cthulhu Fhtagn."

This awakens echoes. Haven't we all heard, somewhere or somehow, that voice that is not a voice...a voice seemingly striving inarticulately for expression...from some point below? I think so.

Less ambiguous than the above is the subsequent description of a mysterious statuette, or "idol," forcibly seized by Inspector Legrasse from some Squatters in the swamps south of New Orleans. The sculpture is of a strange creature "of a somewhat bloated corpulence" depicted in a side-view as seated—"squatted," says the author—on a pedestal, "the croucher's elevated knees" clasped by huge forepaws. (One of a group of scholars examining the object finds that it has for him a "bizarre familiarity." Strange.) The material of which this "fetish" is carved is in itself mysterious: "a soapy greenish-black stone with ...golden or iridescent flecks or striations," resembling



FANDOM, WILL  
YOU LET THEM  
GET AWAY  
WITH THAT?



N'GI! LOOK  
AT THIS STUFF

"nothing familiar to geology or minerology."

The climax of the story tells how the ill-fated Johansen and his crew land on an ooze-covered island, a crazy jumble of rocks, newly projected above the waters of the sea. They come upon a huge door, a door whose precise position or angle cannot be determined and that opens in no ordinary fashion:

In this fantasy of prismatic distortion it moved anomalously in a diagonal way, so that all the rules of matter and perspective seemed upset... The odor arising from the newly opened depths was intolerable, and at length the quick-eared Hawks thought he heard a nasty slopping sound down there. Everyone listened, and everyone was listening still when it lumbered slobberingly into sight and gropingly squeezed its gelatinous green immensity through the black doorway into the tainted outside air of that poison city of madness.

It is, of course, Cthulhu, Himself, "ravening for delight." "A mountain walked or stumbled. God!" Only two of the men, one of them Johansen, make it back to the boat. Cthulhu swims vigorously after the fleeing yacht, but Johansen reverses the wheel and rams "the pursuing jelly."

There was a mighty eddying and foaming in the noisome brine... There was a bursting as of an exploding bladder, a slushy nastiness as of a cloven sunfish, a stench as of a thousand opened graves, and a sound that the chronicler would not put on paper. For an instant the ship was befouled by an acrid and blinding green cloud, and then there was only a venomous seething astern...

But Cthulhu's "scattered plasticity...nebulously" recombines. It returns to its recess and the island fortuitously sinks.

O Dread and Mighty Cthulhu, thou art but a turd flushed down the toilet!

What Lovecraft has done here is to dignify the act of defecation by investing its products with gigantic size and a "cosmic" menace —

But, stop, ambitious Muse, in time;  
Nor dwell on Subjects too sublime.  
— Swift





# P.O. BOX 3116



WALTER BREEN  
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Staten Island,  
New York 10312

I'm now more sorry than ever that I failed to keep handy the copy of SFR you sent me in Berkeley when I was just on the point of moving. It helps to make up for the disappearance of WARHOON; there

just isn't that much good material written about SF in the other fanzines I've lately seen. Not that these have been too numerous; editing SYBIL LEEK'S ASTROLOGY JOURNAL (nominally under Sybil, who does nothing but write a few editorials which have to be thoroughly rewritten, and submit a few marginally usable things from her friends, and not so nominally under Hans Santesson, who is just recovering from a heart attack) takes far too much time, and all correspondence has suffered.

I wish Perry Chapdelaine had specified why SF dealing with the bloke born about 20 years from now is hardest to write. Extrapolation to social and technological conditions of that time is in some ways easier by sheer logic than for later periods. Or is it that one's extrapolations become obsolete by the time your story gets to the editor?

That's what happened to one of Marion Zimmer Bradley's best books, Window On the Night, back around 1956-7. It was being considered for publication—and then was promptly rendered obsolete by Sputnik and other developments largely having to do with the (then very acute) problem of

the thermal barrier in atmosphere re-entry. I know that this kind of extrapolation has sounded easier than it possibly may be owing to efforts like Stand On Zanzibar; but I would have appreciated hearing just what difficulties Chapdelaine had in mind. Are they objective for all SF writers who have tried a present + 2 generations mise-en-scene, or are they a matter of where Chapdelaine's own head is at? From the excerpt you printed ("Story At Bay" SFR 37), it appears that the second person voice (always a difficult technique to carry off successfully) has inhibited him.

Pornography is, I suppose, mainly a way of making a living. If you can't get other writing assignments during a particular slack period and you have no savings to live and pay taxes on, you write sex novels, you write confessions (if you can manage to identify with the lowerclass female viewpoint), you write astrological or other hack stuff, you write spicy bits for the pornzines, or for the underground press, and like at least three writers I could name (but won't), you hope to God nobody deciphers your pseudonyms or makes a shrewd guess as to the writing style of some of the rawer bits. I know: I've been there too. Piers Anthony evidently has had a somewhat atypical experience with it. NYC is just as much the genitalia (surely, more the anus) of the publishing world; California may perhaps be the end of its monstrous phallus but no more than that. If he needed another market for his porno,



he could try first Olympia Press, which is in NYC now that DeGaulle made Paris too hot for Girodias, then Grove Press, then Earl Kemp's publishing house (Corinth Press) under any of its various avatars. (Bedside, Nightstand, etc., etc.) Of these only Kemp operates out of California, and San Diego at that rather than LA. Piers evidently is unacquainted with the underground; David Meltzer is a many-times-published poet dating from the beat generation, which is not to say that his poetry was much good to start with... (whom Piers unaccountably finds praiseworthy). "Michael Perkins" sounds as though he were trying to emulate Guillaume Apollinaire's The Debauched Hospodar, which is full of that kind of crud, and was actually written on a barroom bet as to who could create the most lubriciously far-out piece of fiction. And it is true that most pornography appears to lack point aside from the allegedly erotic effect of the scenes described therein, which is its major limitation as a literary genre. Which is where Burroughs, Genet, Henry Miller and a few, a very few, others have managed to succeed in the face of the failure of thousands of others. They write fiction which happens to have pornographic elements as part of the plot. Run-of-the-gutter pornographers write erotic scenes which occasionally manage to include some plot elements. I note, incidentally, that Brian Aldiss has joined PJ Farmer in the new genre; The Hand-Reared Boy is his contribution. I can't judge its quality even as Milleresque autobiographical fantasy; I have not seen the book, merely a couple of reviews. It sounds as though he had been listening to Ray Nelson's famous comment "Masturbation is the last frontier"—the context being that, after all, most pornography (aside from that of explicit violent sadism) is aimed at masturbation fantasy instead of overt interpersonal action.

The other major limitation in pornography, as Avram Davidson pointed out at the Chicon, is anatomical; the performances described therein place it firmly into the category of fantasy, which is perhaps why discussions of the genre so often find their way into fanzines. Now fantasy should be good, and believable, even if impossible; but so much pornography is neither good nor believable, and some of its younger or more naive readers tend to think it possible, on the basis of their own limited or null experience. This is not an argument for abolishing the genre—merely for improving it. From all available evidence, Bill Rotsler has been living a role out of an unwritten sex novel; yet his nonfiction accounts are at least believable, even when coincidental elements make them into the truth that remains stranger than fiction.

((The commercial sex novel is dead, having suffered the same fate in America as it did in Denmark when pictorial porno was made legal. Partly, too, this is due to millions of bad books published by fly-by-night publishers. There has been a huge glut of porno novels and so many readers have been burned so often by unbelievably badly written, overpriced books that they are simply turned off, and the few book books are ignored, too.

Agreed, good porno is fantasy...and there is no substitute for good writing; a description of bodies going through

erotic motions is the most dull, boring reading there is after ten or twelve pages. Only if the bodies are people, individuals, with whom the reader identifies or cares about or is involved with, does the sex become effective. The effectiveness of the erotic writing is the measure of a porno book, and by that yardstick 99% of the porno books written are failures, and their authors are failures. Thus the sex book field has had to keep escalating into new areas of sex to keep the readers buying badly written erotic material. The end of the line has been reached—there are no more new areas of sex to exploit. The same sequence will follow in the pictorial area. For a while sex can be exploited and people will pay exorbitant prices to see and read "forbidden" material, but not for long...not for long...))

Andrew Offutt is presumably addressing SF editors in your audience when he asks what is an editor's job; yet the question is obviously relevant to all other kinds of editing, from fanzines on up or down. I will answer from my experience in editing numismatic tradezines and this astrology journal which now takes up so much of my time.

(1) Trying to persuade pros to send in acceptable copy to balance the flood of utter rubbish in the slushpile.

(2) "Copy-editing" per se—preparing mss. for press, in some cases deleting repetitions, correcting typos, clearing up occasional obscurities. The best submissions nearly always need very little of this; the average require a great deal. The public encountering a non-copy-edited contribution in its original sloppy state will often fail to finish reading it owing to distraction by too many typos of the kind that obscure the meaning or from too many sentences whose unclarity of grammar or semantics renders their intent doubtful. Fanzines all too often suffer from a lack of copy-editing, either from editorial unwillingness to disturb the distinctive style of contributors or from—perhaps less often—laziness. (I am not now alluding to expunging Snearyisms. Rick's spelling is phonetic, like that of any Elizabethan cavalier.) On the other hand, changing metaphors or altering the point of a contribution to conform with magazine policy is less defensible. It would be more honest to announce that contributions do not necessarily represent editorial views. The Virgo issue of the astrology journal includes a vitriolic piece of anti-astrological polemic by Ivan Sanderson, the biologist who heads the Society for Investigation of the Unexplained; yet I ran it almost untouched, contenting myself with a rebuttal, since it came in as one side of a debate. Brad Steiger's interview with Paul Twitchell was edited only enough to correct typos; Steiger's writing is excellent, and Twitchell appears even less sensible and less believable on tape than he does in his paperbacks, a fact which will show through plainly enough without editorial comments or alterations.

And then we get the other extreme. Corinth deliberately added a crudely written sex scene to chapter one of a certain paperback novel, adding an extra (and gratuitous) narrative hook for the one-handed reader, but totally destroying the point of the book, which was the change in outlook of a naive virgin after she stops being either one. A naive virgin behaving in a taxicab like a commonplace prostitute? Tell it



to the bloody 'Orse Marines. Which is what makes some part of the difference between conscientious editing and the other kind.

I deliberately wrote the above before reading Ted White's contribution to the editor's task question; independent confirmation should mean something here.



JOHN J. PIERCE SFR 37 leaves me completely flab-  
275 McMane Av. ergasted. I mean, I open up the 'zine,  
Berkeley Hts., and here's a Dialog by you saying what  
New Jersey 07922 a lousy book Koontz' The Dark Symphony  
is. Then I read on, and I see you're  
one of the first guys besides myself to notice that Vonne-  
gut's Slaughterhouse Five is really a justification of war  
instead of a protest against it. Then along comes Richard  
Delap to put down the so-called sexy science fiction novels,  
and I'll be damned if his opinions of the ones I have al-  
ready read aren't in virtually 100% agreement with mine.

Good grief, Geis, what's happening out there? Are you  
beginning to (shudder!) go sane? I'm starting to read  
Wilson Tucker's The Year of the Quiet Sun as I write this  
letter and (who knows?), I may even find that Anthony  
agrees with me. Of course, Ted Pauls has to make his rep-  
utation by playing Asimov but, what the hell, there'll al-  
ways be guys like him.

((You have died and gone to heaven, John.))

Re: Farmer's "The Lovers." No, it isn't "daring" any-  
more, but if people were sane, it wouldn't have been in  
1952, either. The only thing that made it a classic was  
that it was a beautiful story, which it still is, which is  
the only thing that's really relevant anyway. By the way,  
Joanna Russ made an important point recently: a book that  
has as its only claim to merit the fact that it is suppos-  
ed to be "shocking" really has a vested interest in the  
"taboos" it allegedly breaks—if the "taboos" didn't ex-  
ist, the book would have no basis. That's the trouble  
with the worst Essex House stuff, and it is precisely the  
trap that Farmer's best blends of sex and sf like "The  
Lovers," Flesh, "Open to Me, My Sister" and others avoid  
through use of strong themes that transcend the transitory  
"shock" value.



TED PAULS Concerning Dr. Asimov's letter in  
1448 Meridene Dr. SFR 38, I must say that in large part  
Baltimore, Md. it is an excellent example of the very  
21212 attitude for which I was criticizing  
him in the review. All he manages to  
say in seven paragraphs is that his writing is commercial-  
ly successful, which has never been at issue. My review  
was concerned with things like creativity, sensitivity and  
literary merit; that Nightfall & Other Stories has sold  
9000 copies is beside and slightly to the rear of the point.

DON THOMPSON "Story at Bay" ((SFR 37)) is inter-  
8786 Hendricks Rd. esting and perhaps illustrative of a  
Mentor, Ohio 44060 longfelt belief of mine that you should-  
n't show any unpublished writings of  
any kind to anyone who isn't prepared to back up an opinion  
with money. To say to critics, "You guys all said this was  
lousy but Editor X paid me x cents a word for it so nyaaaah!"  
is no better than to write to an editor and say, "How could  
you reject "War of the Doom Zombies" when all my friends say  
it is the best thing they have ever read?"

The only pre-publication opinion worth anything is the  
opinion of the man who will pay money for it—take that back  
and revise it to include the agent who will sell it for you;  
if it doesn't apply to any agent you possess, get another  
agent. The author's opinion is worthless, because it is too  
subjective.

See any of those anthologies of authors' choices of their  
best and see how many you agree with. Most pick the story  
that was the least trouble to write and/or sell. How sub-  
jective can you get? ((How do you know what you claim is  
true? Have you delved into the minds of 'most' writers?))

The part of "Someday You'll be Rich" appended at the end  
of the article I found unreadable, but how much of that is due  
to the preconditioning of the article I don't know—every  
flaw pointed out by the critics glared back from the page when  
I tried to read the story.

Harlan's comic book analogy is the first truly accurate  
analogy to the comics I have seen. "Comic-book writing" is a  
convenient pejorative used by people who haven't read any  
comic books in years. Harlan's comparison of the over-and-  
over repetition of the title phrase in the story with Sgt.  
Rock of Easy Co. in Our Army at War is most apt. That grat-  
ing habit is a trademark of a comic-book writer named Robert  
Kanigher.

But a lot of comic-book writing these days is taken from  
hack novels, not the other way around. There has been an at-  
tempt to write BATMAN in the style of the old action pulps,  
an above-average comic-book writer named Denny O'Neil has  
been lifting ideas from sf and style from Harlan (see his  
laudable attempts to put social significance in comic books  
in GREEN LANTERN - GREEN ARROW for Ellison-type writing.  
These books are not as strong as they should be, but they are  
as strong as they can be and still get printed in comic books,  
and they deal with slum landlords, company towns, indian op-  
pression, race hatreds and other stuff not touched in comics  
since EC was foully murdered in the early 50's. And better a  
wattered-down version of real life than no version of real  
life at all).

If I hadn't actually read most of the Essex House books  
Piers Anthony discusses I'd have put the whole piece down as  
a put-on. I agree with you, Geis, that the sex-cum-sf novel  
is not a viable artform, but I found your book the most suc-  
cessful of the lot I've read. You made the two work togeth-  
er—the science fiction explains the idealized sex life of  
the porno book and the porno provides a different type of  
future world.



I mean, Raw Meat wasn't great, but it was good and the sex scenes were believable because they were fantasies created by the machines.

Farmer's porny stuff has been crap. I am appalled at the people who see all sorts of great significance in them and I can only assume they are blinded by the "daring" of Farmer's sex scenes.

Take, for example, Image of the Beast. Trim out all the sexual and scatological padding. What is left? A novelet from Horace Gold's BEYOND—FANTASY FICTION. Nothing more. Look up some of those old lead stories in BEYOND, including "The God Business" by Farmer, and compare.

Farmer is permitted to get away with stuff no author should be allowed to perpetuate. For instance, in Image, the hero is twice saved when an attacker slips. Twice! Great slabs of datenut bread! As one who has been around a while, I recall the furor when Murray Leinster had his villain trip and fall on his own knife (or raygun or whatever) in a THRILLING WONDER story, "The White Spot."

But Farmer saves his hero twice within a few pages by having an attacker slip. No one (in any review I have seen) hollered "Deus ex machina," or "lazy author," or "hack" or anything else.

Why? Well, the first attacker slipped on the hero's sperm and the second slipped on a turd. Daring imagery hides even the most glaring of faults.

One thing I have discovered in the often unrewarding newspaper business is that you can judge the accuracy of your reporting by the pettiness of the response. If I write, say, that Mayor Harold Q. Jones, 46, is pocketing 50% of the city treasury to buy little boys for homosexual use, and Jones stands up at a Council meeting and screams about the inaccuracy of the story and stresses that he is 47, not 46, I can be completely assured that the real charge is dead on.

In the same way, when a writer responds to a bad review by saying that the reviewer is a mere fan, or by correcting him on a minor point of inconsequential fact ("Character X did not fall off a chair, he fell off a stool, you unperceptive ass of a nitpicker!") one can feel certain enough of the reviewer's assessment to skip buying the book in dispute.

If Farmer doesn't want people to think real people are being depicted in his books, he should stop depicting real people, such as Le Ackerman, in his books. (Or, more to the point, he should avoid cruel and obvious caricatures such as Woolston Heepish which make it necessary to put Forry in the next book to show that he really didn't mean Heepish to be Forry after all.)

Incidentally, Forry is not and never has been editor of VAMPIRELLA, as Farmer says in Blown. Forry created the name and character of the "Vampirella" stories which appeared in the first two issues of the magazine, but the editor at the time Farmer wrote the book was Bill Parente.

Publisher James Warren now claims to be the editor.



VIRGINIA KIDD  
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#37 was fascinating. My recollection of the events recounted by Perry Chapdelaine differs somewhat from his version ((in "Story at Bay" SFR 37)). I did tell him (which is true) that I consider "To Serve the Masters" a fine example of a first-person story, and asked his permission to cite it, on occasion, to tyros. As I recall, he asked me what I meant by a first-person story, and in the course of the conversation, second-person stories got mentioned. I probably instanced Sturgeon, but I rather doubt that I suggested that Perry try anything so difficult. I don't remember the conversation word-for-word, but I probably told him (what I believe) that second-person narration is (a) exceedingly difficult and (b) (always excepting Sturgeon) not worth doing. Later he sent me some stories. After reading "We Fused Ones" (which, to give it its due, has strengths, among which its clumsy viewpoint-shifting is not one) I quietly decided not to cite a Chapdelaine story to any beginner, because the excellence of "To Serve the Masters" was obviously a fluke. I fear that my mention of any 'person' at all may have initiated these various attempts, but I categorically deny ever having suggested that anybody—especially a beginner—write a second-person story. I wish people wouldn't.

I find it interesting, and faintly ironical, that all this discussion of which-person narration eventuated in "IITYOU", which I thought beautifully consistent and very funny indeed, until we got to the multiplicity of justifications at the end. When I say 'eventuated', the time sequence rests in Perry's having sent me "Story at Bay" before I read "IITYOU"—and without my having been able to pluck the flower, courtesy, out of this nettle, boredom; so I never said boo to him in reply; also I had some fear of being misunderstood, misquoted, and/or quoted out of context if I replied direct. I preferred to straighten out the record over my own signature if the piece appeared. From internal evidence (including the palpable pseudonym) I'd assume that "IITYOU" was Chapdelaine's, representing all his talents as well as all his drawbacks at their quintessential. Only Perry would have pulled the cork on a good story (which "IITYOU" was, up to "God let it rest!") with eight outpourings; heavyhanded, dull, and above all, overdone.

The Book Reviews were unusually good. Ted Pauls' assessment of Asimov percipient and just, so much so that in a burst of enthusiasm I listed him as Best Fan Writer on my Heicon ballot.



JEFF SMITH  
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Maybe also Philip Jose Farmer wrote you about this, but he told me Sketches Among the Ruins of My Mind was his original title for Blown, but when Brian Kirby expressed disapproval he changed it—and now



wishes he had picked something else.

James Blish mentioned that de Camp is "one of the best living historical novelists." He's right, and I hesitate to pass this on, but here's a note from my PHANTASMICOM #1 that nobody ever saw: "The Golden Wind...is my fifth historical novel and I suspect may be the last, not because I couldn't write more but because the genre seems to be out of fashion." I hope he reconsiders.

((I hope the book-buying public reconsiders.))

I don't think Piers Anthony should have revealed the end of Bob Tucker's novel—despite the fact that I agree that Tucker wrote it wrong. But, Tucker wrote it the way he wrote it, and I feel the reader should have the opportunity to read it that way. Tucker was wrong, but so was Anthony. (Incidentally, I consider The Year of the Quiet Sun the best novel published so far this year. Last year by this time three or four superb novels had been published. This year seems kind of slow.)

I'm not sure Ted White really knows what a cop-out is, because despite his criticisms of a couple things as "cop-outs," his novel By Furies Possessed is really just one beautiful cop-out. I loved the book, because it's a lot of fun and does occasionally dip into some very deep subjects very nicely, but the ending is a cop-out. It really is, Ted; it's magic.

Ted complained about a STAR TREK episode in which an alien-imposed peace was overcome by good old-fashioned anger and violence, so he wrote a story to refute it. When I was about two chapters from the end I thought, "He isn't really going to have it end this way, is he?" But he did, and it's a positively beautiful ending for a piece of fiction. But in relation to real life I consider it a much greater cop-out than the STAR TREK episode.

One final comment, this one on Farmer again: I personally thought A Feast Unknown was one of Farmer's best books. This might be partially because I was once a Burroughs fan, and I picked up more of the in jokes than someone not too familiar with Tarzan would (I know nothing of Doc Savage, though), but I thought the book was very well-paced, very entertaining, and quite the best thing Farmer has done since "Riders of the Purple Wage."

Delap calls the book a "spoof," and this shows Delap's most common failing: He cannot see more than one level of anything. I generally feel that when he criticizes a book on his level he is correct, but I wish he'd do a little of the work once in a while, and not expect the writer to do everything. As a mere spoof, A Feast Unknown would have become boring very quickly. But Farmer had a real story underneath the foolishness, and while that plot itself was pure hockum it was adventurous fun—with the satirical fun on top.

As for the loose ends—Farmer was leaving himself open for a sequel, and he wrote two of them. They'll be run as an Ace Double, and if no-one else is looking forward to them, I am.

BILL ROTSLER  
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SFR 39 came today and I sprawled on the sleeping silks and furs and read it and was struck by the absence of any comment on the art by any of your readers. Either you have eliminated any references or no one has commented and I'm beginning to be a bit annoyed at this.

((Rightfully so. But 99% of the fan comment is very brief and essentially not worth printing. I know I am about a year behind in cutting up letters-of-comment and forwarding same to the contributors. But I'm working on it. The "Egoboo Bonus" is not dead.))

The vast bulk of fans are not artists and are therefore more responsive to the written portions of fanzines, so perhaps I should not be surprised when there are so few comments made in fanzines about the art.

I would like, however, to stick in a few thoughts on the work of artwork and perhaps your readers—and those other, less exalted fanzines—might be more appreciative. Art, especially cartoons, always looks so easy to the non-artist. And indeed it should. But it is not always easy. There is more work in a full-page Jim Kirk cartoon or a fine Alicia Austin cover than in a lot of your columns and reviews and articles.

My own work is swiftly done, because that's how I am, and I have only minimal interest in most people's praise or condemnation of it. But there are artists in our sub-culture who put in one helluva lot of work into their artwork that goes without any praise, notice, or even apparent interest.

True, you would have to cut off both of Jim Kirk's hands to keep him from drawing and then he'd probably try something with his toes. Jack Gaughan probably has the same auto-response—blank paper is to be filled! Bjo will never stop drawing and George Barr would have to be killed to stop being an artist. So the fact that they do artwork and give it away to fanzines is obviously a labor of love, just like so much of fandom's efforts.

What I'm complaining about is that no one seems to care. Let Pierce stab someone with his pen or Piers Anthony write a letter and all hell breaks loose. Put a superb Austin cover into circulation and it sinks like a stone in silence. (Unless, of course, that Dirty Young Lady up there does something superbly erotic, then there are sniggers.) Magnificent Kirk cartoons go by with a smile and no audience reaction. The best any fan artist ever gets is in some review with "also artwork by Gilbert, Kirk, Austin, Rotsler, Lovenstein and Adkins." Big deal.

((Pierce is interested in written sf, as is Piers, and they naturally write and comment in that area. I rarely see fan artists write letters of comment on fanzine or prozine artwork. They should, though, for that is their major interest. I would welcome a column by yourself or Tim or Jack or Alicia which was devoted to comment on the art in the prozines and fanzines. For instance, I thought the covers of the November AMAZING and the October FANTASTIC were disasters; the FANTASTIC amateurish and the AMAZING too closely cropped and wrongly colored, but I







cannot give an expert, artistic opinion, and I would like very much to see a pro artist or a fan artist of professional ability pass some judgement on what is being published. If you artists don't do it, it isn't going to be done. Non-artist sf fans just do not feel qualified.

So, Bill, you've flang the gauntlet and it has been flang back.))

Now time should have no bearing on the worth of art, whether it be writing or painting or sculpture or music or anything else. But, goddamnit, fandom has some good artists, some unique ones, and no one seems to care or notice. Tim and Alicia should have Hugos. They should get some feedback. Gilbert should know that I, for instance, dig his bulky spacesuiters. Steve Stiles should be encouraged to do more. Steve Fabian might be annoyed to know that I think he ought to get out of his dated visions of s-f and do the work I think he's capable of achieving. Bjo should do more, though God knows, she's done plenty in the past. Atom should be goaded into producing. He's good & original & funny.

And so it goes. Only artists ever seem to comment on artwork. Don't the rest of you see? Or don't you care? I fully realize that not every fanzine can have a fullpage Kirk to grace its badly reproed pages, but they could find and encourage new artists.

Good reproduction is an important consideration to any fan artist. They invariably send their best work to those fanzines that reproduce it best. It's only human. I can imagine the tumult that would go up if fan writers were to have dozens of their words changed & misplaced and sentences lost or warped. That's the equivalent of the bad repro fan artists get.

Know what I'd like to see? A full book of Tim Kirks. Another filled with erotic Austins around some theme. I'd like to see "The Best of Bjo" and a portfolio of George Barr. I would love a "Gaughan's Goodies" and a collection of ATOM smashers. I fully realize that I'm sensitive and prejudiced in this area, but if I don't stand up and cry

REVOLT! who will?



BILLY H. PETTIT  
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By the way, you mentioned in an earlier issue not knowing of Al Andrews' death. I visited Al during the second week of January. About three days before he died.

It was obvious then and terribly hard to talk to him. Al introduced me to fandom; well, fan publishing, anyway. Terry Carr had an article in F&SF that put me in contact with fandom. Al and I started corresponding in 1964. A year or so later, we had a computer in Birmingham and I used to spend long hours talking with Al. Even then he was very much of an invalid. We published many fanzines together and had a small clique of open-minded fans in the SFPA. Then one of his lungs collapsed several times and he had to be moved to the rest home. He continued to fail and when I saw him just before death, he didn't have the strength to turn his head without help. I could only talk for a couple of hours because it was a big shock. I hadn't seen him for two years and the last time he had still been able to get around.

He had Muscular Dystrophy. He first contracted it as a child. If you know much about it, then you know it takes a long time to reach death. Al set a morbid sort of record in taking 38 years to die from it. It was first diagnosed at around 3 or 4; he was 41 when he died. I was always amazed by his fantastic sense of humor and open-mindedness. I don't think I could spend that long watching my body waste away without going off the deepend. He really became confined right after college. At the age when most men are at their peak and ready to take on the world, Al was unable to do any kind of work. He was completely normal in mind and outlook, but his muscles were slowly wasting away. The final stages are when the victim cannot even move his eyelids yet is completely lucid and in possession of all his senses. A real nightmarish disease. Al lost the will to live before this happened and I think that is a good thing, because that stage is not fatal and I would hate to think of him spending years as a mind locked into a body that had no way of communicating with the world around him. Al was a very wonderful person though I could never understand why he turned to religion. I would be too bitter to believe in such a spiteful, hideous god who could let people suffer as Al did. At least being an atheist allows me to forget about trying to create a meaning to being alive.

Sorry this is so long-winded, but Al in the last time I saw him mentioned your magazine and how much he enjoyed it. And he was very pleased that you accepted some of his cartoons. I doubt if anyone besides Hank Reinhardt and myself realized how hard it was for him to draw the very primitive work he did. I do think it is significant that when you printed the cartoons he was very proud of them and would have people hold SFR for him so he could read all of it.

After seeing that you did not know of his illness, I want to thank you very much for printing his work. He was always afraid people did it out of pity, and many times I assured him it wasn't so. Thanks for proving me right and giving Al some



happiness.

((There is no credit due me for using artwork I liked. I admire Al for not using his disability to get special treatment. I dislike people who play the game of "Wooden Leg" (Games People Play — Eric Berne, MD).))

This is not meant to be apologetic. I just wanted to let you know what had happened. Al died at an early age. He gave his body to the MD Foundation for research since no one else had ever had such a slow progression of the illness. Those of us who were close friends did not see the need for a lot of obituary and sob notes. From first meeting him, you knew he was going to die. It didn't seem right to shout that it had finally happened.

Another story that bears telling is all the good things that Hank Reinhardt and his wife did for Al. But that is for another time. One of these days, maybe January, I'll be through California and we can drink Coors and tell dirty jokes and other pleasureable items.



GABE EISENSTEIN  
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One comment on #38: a rebuttal is in order to Paul Walker's review of the second Prisoner book combined with his attack on the series itself. Where Paul is at

should be obvious when he writes off Beckett and Genet in a line, then sets himself above Prisoner fans who "have not seen a real absurdist play." I'd protest if I didn't know I was in the company of Bill Glass, Hank Stine and others not quite as illiterate as Paul assumes. He also cuts up Tom Disch without having read the work in question. There are now three novelizations of THE PRISONER, one of which is crap, and that happens to be the one reviewed. Disch's book was as fine a piece of SF as any that 2 of the writers in the field have done, bowing to the restrictions of the assignment almost without making that seem a task. And Hank Stine's effort, while again limited by the basic bounds of what he was doing, was a work of thoroughly enjoyable and thoughtful SF, doing far more than anyone would imagine within those bounds (while preserving, as did Disch's book, the essence and atmosphere of McGoohan's work in complete detail). It's too bad Paul read McDaniel's slapdash book (which wasn't even accurate, let alone good), but based on his other opinions in this review, it's probably just as well.



PAUL WALKER  
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I owe apologies to Philip Jose Farmer and James Schmitz. When I finished Lord Lyger, I was both impressed and confused. I had read

little of Farmer and, if there was something I should have understood (was there some satirical or symbolic gimmick?) I missed it.

The problem was to convince the reader there was some-

thing more to it (something I could not quite explain due to my ignorance of Farmer's past writings). If I argue for it as an "adult" Tarzan novel, the anti-Tarzanites would be prejudiced against it. So I felt the best approach was to appear to put it down as a Tarzan novel, then quote one or two scenes that would let the reader discover for himself the book's unique appeal. Unfortunately...

In the last reading, I realized the review was too long, and I was afraid the quotes would not be as provocative out of context as they seemed at first. (In any case, I must have forgotten my original intention of irony.) I rewrote it in haste and it reads as a comparison between Farmer and Robert E. Howard, with Farmer coming off a bad second.

Forgive me!!

Philip Jose Farmer is one of the most original and unpredictable of SF writers. His novels and stories are uniquely his, and Lord Lyger is no exception. It is not unforgettable, but it is more than "entertaining." It has a peculiar flavor, a caustic tone, a vividness that could come from no one else. Yes, it is a sort of "Tarzan novel," but unlike any Tarzan you've met before. The eroticism is wild. The danger smells of danger. The jungle itself is alive with a poetry, both beautiful and sinister. The suspense is suspenseful. The book is never dull. In short, it is a fine read.

I have done it an injustice and I apologize.

I did a similar injustice to James Schmitz's Witches of Karres. I wrote a seven page review that had little to do with the book. By my self-appointed deadline, I threw it out and hastily rewrote a very meager review of a very great book.

Witches of Karres is one of those rare moments of magic, indigenous, and so precious, to SF and fantasy. It is not a book to be discussed. It is there to be discovered. To mention its charm and enchantment is to invite misunderstanding (it is a damn good adventure yarn), but I should have done by Schmitz better than I did. If you have not read Witches of Karres, read it. If you have tried, and failed, then see your local "encounter-therapist" at once!

((I wonder if it is properly within the reviewer's purview to worry about the reactions of a particular group of readers (hypothetical at that), and to tailor a review with them in mind? Irony is a treacherous technique for a reviewer; it is all too often taken literally. I wonder, too, if calculation for possible effect isn't a bog to be avoided?))



ROBERT BLOCH  
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Congratulations on a well-deserved Hugo Award! The present issue ((#39)) is a good example of why you were honored—reviews, in particular,

being outstanding. I don't necessarily agree with them in some instances, but they always indicate that the reviewer has actually read the book and thought about it; something which isn't evident, at times, in the press and pro periodical review columns—at least not where SF is concerned.



Anyhow, I'm glad for you and for SFR. Striking cover, I must say—many zines are messy. Hoping you are the same—

Bob



AVRAM DAVIDSON  
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Must briefly correct J. Blish for quoting R. Heinlein as saying at the Pitcon that Mrs. Heinlein was getting tired of her husband's Hugos. What the man said was that she was "getting tired of dusting these things." A picayune detail? You want letters of comment, don't you? Alicia Austin's cover is lovely.

((I never dust mine. My feeling is that the dust, upon contact with the holy metal and wood, becomes itself sacred.))



CHARLES PLATT

The letter column was very enjoyable, especially because of the letter from John Campbell, Jr. providing a quiet, logical, balanced refutation of the more outrageous claims by White. So many science fiction active-fans seem to think that nothing has a chance of succeeding if they don't like it; or, conversely, you can sell anything if you have good distribution. Of course, neither is true. With the best distribution in the world, a magazine on skunk breeding would have a limited audience; the magazine itself is what determines the size of its potential readership, distribution merely being the means of reaching that readership. I feel that a magazine like FANTASTIC is so in-group in style and atmosphere, it still wouldn't be a success if copies appeared in every magazine rack in the country.

I also feel that, whereas I know from bitter personal experience with NEW WORLDS that distributors can be underhanded, inefficient and can intentionally or unintentionally ruin a small magazine, at the same time, a magazine gets the distribution it deserves. I am sure White is quite right when he says his distributors are screwing him in one way or another. But what incentive have they to go out of their way for him? Confronted with a product which they no doubt feel has very little sales appeal, what distributor is going to work hard on its behalf?

In such a way it would make more sense to sell a magazine with such limited appeal by subscription only. Cutting out the distributor can give a slightly higher profit margin to the publisher, and one needs to print only as many copies as there are readers—instead of double the number, or more as is the case with retail distribution.

I know that subscription-only magazines tend to be hard to get off the ground, extensive advertising is needed for them, and even then the proposition is rather shaky. But the alternative, traditional way of doing things is beginning to look even worse.

There is the Campbellian way of looking at things, of course: altering the product so that there will be a greater

demand for it. (If anyone still thinks it is merely good distribution that sells ANALOG, they are undoubtedly wrong; the magazine has good distribution because it sells, rather than the other way round. As Campbell says, Conde Nast are not in business to support products lacking sales appeal).

It seems to me that a science fiction magazine could do well to consider broadening its appeal. This need not necessarily be along the same lines that ANALOG has happened to choose. Anything which would make it more accessible to the interests of the general readership would help. As they stand, all the magazines are rooted in a very old concept of what an sf magazine should look like and read like. It is a very conservative genre in this respect, completely cut off from influences being followed in the rest of magazine publishing.

Talk about changing the magazines' sizes seems irrelevant to me. I could see a science-fiction-based magazine succeeding in any size or format, if it had some imagination and a wider awareness behind it.



ROGER BRYANT, JR.  
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John Campbell might be interested in seeing the enclosed page from a magazine agency's catalog.

The catalog also carried subscription prices for AMAZING, FANTASTIC, F&SF, and GALAXY (but not IF, don't ask me why).

But about ANALOG: the first column of figures is the subscription price; the same as offered in the magazine. The second column, in boldface, indicates that the salesgirl (this is a telephone outfit) gets a 90¢ commission. Then the company's central office takes off their cut, but I don't know how much that is.

Please note that there is a 'special price' period for Christmas gift promotions, and another price for school libraries. In that last column ANALOG is giving out subs and getting paid perhaps as little as \$3.00 ((for a one-year sub, which is nominally \$6.00)).

Now I'll admit that the number of subs obtained through this outfit is probably rather small (although, if they're here, are they also offered by other agencies?). But the fact that the magazine's title is in boldface indicates that the agency has a beneficial contract with the magazine. Take a look at the commission rates on some of the others; some have no commission. ANALOG's is 15%. None of the other sf magazines in the catalog are so marked.

Interesting, huh?

((Yes, indeed. To the readers: I have the page mentioned by Roger, and what he says is true. Last issue of SFR Mr. Campbell said: 'ANALOG has no—count 'em, zero!—bargain-rate subscription offers. We do not have any special school rates, or work through any of the subscription promotion houses.'

This evidence shows that statement to be untrue. Mr. Campbell appears to be misinformed.))



FRITZ LEIBER  
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Maybe I got that "Ship of Shad-  
ows" award in Germany because my  
first name is Fritz. Ought to have  
caught a few local votes.

((Ach! Ja! And Geis is a good German name.))

But it inspires me at least to try to formulate a sequel.

Thought the Paul Walker reviews in your latest issue of  
The Wanderer and The Silver Eggheads were very perceptive.  
I wonder what he'd make of my Ace 5-book saga of Fafhrd and  
the Mouser?—complete now with Swords Against Death and the  
slightly earlier Swords and Deviltry. Not that I'm through  
with those characters, but at least I have their adventures  
organized up to date.

Also admired the articles by Damon Knight on the Milford  
Mafia—a very factual account to my mind—and the stuff on  
Perry Rhodan, an interesting phenomenon.



ALEXEI PANSIN

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Perkasie, Pa. 18944

The SFWA FORUM is copyrighted  
and refuses permission to reprint,  
true enough. That's to protect those  
who want to talk privately and free-  
ly. But it also assigns material to  
the authors, and if they want it reprinted, as Phil Farmer  
does, there is no objection. It's their right and privilege.  
At least, that's the intent of the FORUM notice, which I  
drafted when I took over the editorship in the long long ago.

So Poul Anderson is anti-Jim Crow enough to run alcohol  
to the Indians. How about running peyote to the white man?  
As Poul says, "There are a few classes of law a man is duty  
bound to break, and anything that smacks of Jim Crow is  
among them."



JOHN BRUNNER

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London NW3, ENGLAND

To help me prepare an informal  
memo on organization for the benefit  
of the committee running the project-  
ed EuroCon at Trieste, 1972, I'd ap-

preciate receiving copies of any and all fanzines containing  
reports on Heicon '70.

Please pass the word about this request as widely as you  
can.



MICHAEL MOORE

25A Park Av.  
Venice, Cal. 90291

I work at the Free Press Bookstore  
over in Westwood. We also carry maga-  
zines. For over a year I have been  
fighting, pleading & even begging Sun-  
set News for science fiction magazines (& others, too) all  
to no avail. Now I must admit that I too was beginning to  
believe the conspiracy theory so ably debunked in Ted White's

October. FANTASTIC editorial. But then a couple of weeks ago  
some kid named Jerry, working his summer vacation for Sunset,  
walked in, he took our order & the log jam broke. When he came  
in the next time I asked him how he worked this seeming miracle  
& he answered simply that he had made sure the order had been  
completed, just as he had all his other orders...and there's  
the answer—no conspiracy, no evil doers, just the energy of  
a guy doing his job as well as he can.

Most distributors are monopolies and are hence bureaucratic  
& I feel that it is this inertia that is so deadly to the marg-  
inal (i.e. science fiction) publications.

The answer is obvious: that 95¢ magazine you were talking  
about—but you are overlooking that they are already here (i.e.  
Orbit, Infinity, Delany's new Quark) the paperback magazines.  
They have all the advantages over the newsstand magazines to  
make the ultimate difference: more profit. They have less pro-  
duction costs, much less costly direct distribution, offer the  
retailer more (35% as opposed to 15% newsstand) & they simply  
sell better (our shipment of Bob Silverberg's Alpha I sold out  
completely over the Labor Day weekend — 3 copies the first day  
— not even ANALOG does that well).

((It would seem that the publishers of GALAXY-IF and AMAZ-  
ING-FANTASTIC should begin dickering with the pocketbook dist-  
ributors and think seriously of a changed format and possibly  
some title changes.

The problem with pb format, though, is that the regular  
reader has a helluva time finding these specific books on the  
stands. I have yet to see a copy of Orbit or Infinity or any  
given Ace special on a rack in Santa Monica. At least with  
the magazines I know where in the local liquor store and super-  
market each new issue of ANALOG, F&SF, AMAZING and FANTASTIC  
will be, and approximately when.))



H.K. BULMER

19, Orchard Way,  
Horsmonden, Tonbridge,  
Kent, ENGLAND

On the business of SWORD & SORC-  
ERY, I'd have loved to have traded  
ads, in fact I'd done a lot along  
those lines with fantasy zines over  
here and had garnered in a couple of  
pages of quarter-sized ads. However, as you'll have already  
gathered from my use of the past tense, I'm sorry to say that  
S&S has been killed. The basic trouble I understand was that  
VISION OF TOMORROW failed, the projected line of paperbacks ran  
into problems associated with temperament, printers, distribut-  
ors, selection of titles, etc., and was abandoned and in general  
ruin S&S, through no fault of its own, was also brought down.

I am, as you may imagine, thoroughly fed up with it all.  
The zine had a great story line-up, fine illos, and good sup-  
porting material. Everything had been done ready for press and  
it needed only a printer's thumb on the button to start the  
presses rolling. I have spent a hell of a lot of time putting  
the zine together, the majority of this year, what with one  
thing and another, and am now financially a lot out of pocket,  
and there is absolutely nothing to show for all that work and



hope, except me having to go around explaining why everyone, including me, have been so badly let down. I made a lot of contacts in the fantasy world and if some enterprising paperback publisher in the US could find a slot in his schedule for a book after the fashion of Orbit or New Writings with a modern fantasy and s&s slant then I can guarantee to provide a first class collection of new stories almost by return of post. The big tragedy of it all (apart from my own current poverty) is that I believe, and a large number of knowing people in the field also believe, that the zine would have been a viable proposition and that some form of publication along the lines I worked out is badly needed and would find a large public. You mention that the stories slated for issue #1 look to be a fine lineup - and that is true. It seems to me to be wrong that such a collection should never be published.

On more genial lines you might be interested in a project George Hay and I are running for the fortnight from 17th May, 1971 in conjunction with the National Book League. This is a pretty prestigious organisation, with big names, for what they are worth, associated with it, and we are arranging an sf book exhibition and conferences which will receive the full pro treatment. I believe this will be the first time such an sf book exhibition has been held, thrusting right into the so-called 'respectable' area of literature. The NBL headquarters and exhibition hall is in London's west end and we are inviting all the top publishers here and also those in the US to show just what they have contributed to sf literature in the past and what they are doing now. There will be full press and tv coverage and like that. The title of the exhibition is 'The Best of sf'. Of course, if any perambulating stateside sf writers happen along they will be received with open arms and brimming glasses, as of right. I suppose the most interesting facet of this whole thing is the emergence of sf onto the grown-up stage of literature and its acceptance by the top-flight lit'ry people who, only a few years ago, would have turned up their noses. I'm not, personally, bothered about that angle in the sense that sf is what it is, but it is still nice to feel.

Is all. Thanks for your good wishes for S&S - I only hope that something can be saved from the wreck. Finally, all the best for Hugo winner SFR - I always get a big chuckle out of these new writers who keep sounding off about their own marvelous work - I'd think they're in line for a comic award, surely?

((As sf becomes more and more 'respectable' some fans, pros and editors and publishers are going to find some large, strange frogs jumping into their small and heretofore thought of private pond.))



A BERTRAM CHANDLER  
Cell 7, Tara St.  
Woollahra, NSW 2025  
AUSTRALIA

I found especially interesting  
Ted White's defense of Mr. Cohen, as  
I did his similar defense of that  
gentlemen in the pages of the SFWA  
FORUM. I don't mind admitting that

I was among the writers who screamed to high heaven when a couple of my stories were reprinted without payment in AMAZING. For the second of these my Agent finally managed to get a small cheque.

Ah, yes. Agents. How many of us know, insofar as short stories are concerned, just what rights have been sold by our representatives? I can say, truthfully, that the only time that I know just what I have sold is when I make a direct sale. One magazine publishing house in Sydney purchases World Rights, the words being printed on their cheques for material. Many years ago I told the then-editor of this magazine chain that this condition was unacceptable to me, and he told me that all I had to do was to strike out this clause, substituting First Australian Serial Rights. Since then there have been several editorial changes, but the agreement still holds good.

My last direct sale was to Harlan Ellison, for his third DANGEROUS VISIONS anthology. For this one I had to sign a contract, which sets down in black and white exactly what my entitlements are.

Getting back to Ted White - he certainly has improved AMAZING and FANTASTIC no end. I did go on buying them during their bad days, although I felt most strongly that I was not getting my money's worth. (I often wonder just who decides that some hunk of hopelessly dated crud is a "classic"...) Anyhow, now I can put down money for the magazines without feeling that it would have been far better spent on beer.

((Everyone seems to feel Ted has done a good job with the magazines except perhaps Charles Platt and definitely Harry Harrison. Harry (who dislikes Ted) wrote in his introduction to Best SF: 1969 (Putnam's, \$5.95): "The case of AMAZING and FANTASTIC is more tragic. After a brief attempt at quality and responsibility under former editor Barry M. Malzberg ("The Castle on the Crag," anthologized here, is from one of the last issues he edited), these magazines have sunk back to their former low-budget ways. Consisting mostly of reprinted stories from the early and bad pulp days of the magazines, interspersed with a meager handful of indifferent new stories, they are not worth serious consideration." Harry indulges in some blatant misrepresentation.))

I was intrigued by the full-page ad for VISION OF TOMORROW ((in SFR 38)), especially as I had just heard from Ron Graham, who told me that VISION dies with its October issue. And I'd been looking forward to doing a story around a Stanley Pitt cover...

((That ad bothers me, because I wonder if the subscribers' money will be refunded? I have written to Phil Harbottle, former editor, and hope to have some word for next issue of SFR.))

Don't seem to have any more whinges or comments, so will close. Sorry - I do have one more whinge (see SFR #37). The name of the sharer of my home, typewriter and ever-loving wife/secretary/chauffeuse is Whitley, not, repeat not Whitely.



DEAN R. KOONTZ

4181-E King George Dr. yet. If you can, get Charles Platt  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17109 to write more. "An Editor's Day"  
was one of the most enjoyable arti-  
cles you've had in months.

Richard Delap's reviews usually strike me as missing the point, and his review of Damnation Alley was no exception. He seems angered that a "degenerate" like Hell Tanner should be a lead character, a hero. He fails to grasp that Zelazny is not glorifying the man, but his attitude, not his individual traits, but his over-all individualism. There seems to be some point here that it is sad but true that only the violence junkies would stand up under the devastation of a nuclear war. Delap is "confused" by changes in Tanner's character. Apparently, he would prefer Tanner not to change at all, but to be the same rather punkish man he starts out to be. Delap, all of us change. By the time Tanner changes, giving the young boy the gold ring, the epic journey has forced him to reconsider himself. Finally, Delap is angered by the two-and-a-half page sentence, and exhibits his ignorance of literature by saying he can't understand how "any writer could find an excuse for carrying out one sentence at (sic) that length..." Perhaps he hasn't read Joyce? Or Dos Passos? Well, anyway, I agree with your refutation of the review in "Monolog."

((It was hardly a refutation—more a quibble.))

I just don't understand the necessity for vindictiveness on the part of a reviewer, though that seems common. To paraphrase Delap, then: "If the heavens are throwing garbage, you've got one guess as to who's making reviews from it."

Again, Mr. Delap: "Nightmare Gang" was not an updating of those old WEIRD TALES stories; I've never even seen the magazine. And it is not about a man trapped in devilish horrors, for the hero likes what he is in the end. If you can't see the parallel to present-day violence junkies, you must live in a quiet Mid-West town somewhere, out of the path of things.

Farmer makes some good points, perhaps at too great a length. Everyone, this issue, seems on to rapping White over the head. I would say I agree that both the magazines are tending to too much fannishness for the general market. Good God, the latest AMAZING editorial started with the Mid-wescon, talking about some people I don't know, even though I've rambled around fandom a few years. But I'm willing to forgive and buy the magazine anyway, despite the fact that the features are deteriorating, for I still like the things he's done there—miracles. What I'm not willing to forgive is the senseless cutting of my novel, The Crimson Witch, for FANTASTIC. Admittedly, it was a very minor story, merely an adventure. But I'd chopped the entire portion having to do with how the hero reached the alternate Earth, thus invalidating many references in the later chapters (references he could have cut but did not). So if the novel seems a bit senseless to anyone who read it, the paperback will be out next year. Minor story, as I said, but I'm rankled, nonetheless.

JOHN W. CAMPBELL

ANALOG  
420 Lexington Av.  
New York, NY 10017

I don't know whether it was that the European fans have a different attitude or what—but the Convention in Heidelberg was different, anyway.

Congratulations on winning the Fan Magazine Hugo; I don't vote at the conventions, because I feel that, as a pro, I shouldn't try to influence the fan affairs. But I've felt you've done a good job on the Review.

And this time Kelly Freas won a Hugo again. He hadn't for some years, partly because of the "antifreas movement" to keep him from getting more Hugos, whether he earned 'em or not.

Meanwhile, John Schoenherr, certainly the finest artist by far who ever worked in science fiction, got only one Hugo—because he didn't pal around and make friends at the conventions.

The reason we don't have Schoenherr artwork anymore is, as I think you know, that we can't begin to match the prices READER'S DIGEST pays, and we can't offer the "fringe benefit" of sending him on zoological expeditions as NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC does, or on zero-gravity flights, or visits to Thule, etc., that the Air Force does!

((Is a visit to Thule a benefit?))

Some group, somewhere, ought to be making awards not on the basis of "I like that guy; he's a friend of mine," but "That is a superb piece of work—even if the author is a son of a bitch."

I think science fiction could be genuinely helped if awards on the basis of merit of the work—whether done by a louse or a great guy—were made.

((That would involve a panel of artists separate from SF fandom and prodom, and a similar panel of authors and/or editors. But can SF art and writing be judged for merit without a thorough grounding and familiarity with the genre?))



GEIS HERE: Time, gentlemen. I have a letter from Richard Speer discussing women writers and the "feminine" style. I'll carry it over till next issue.

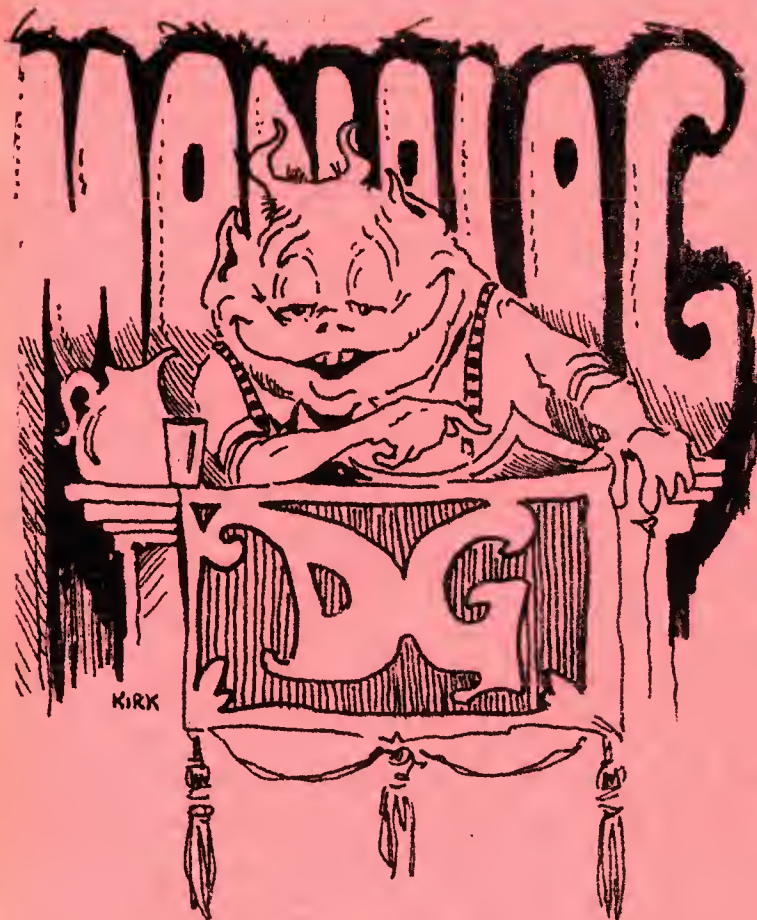
Mike Gilbert liked my 'perfect' choice of illos for the Perry Rhodan article last issue and realizes now why I keep a lot of art on hand—so that I can often match illos to text. The Rotsler full-pagers this issue are a case in point; the Kate Wilhelm speech arrived at least a month after Bill sent the lovely pages. No plan, no arrangement, just a happy mating.

So far the letters of comment on #39 have been heavy with praise for the Alicia Austin cover (Hank Stine even mentioned it on the phone a moment ago), and Poul Anderson's column, though that isn't reflected in the letters published. This happens sometimes, alas.

Thanks to all who have sent congratulations on SFR winning its second consecutive Hugo.

I see I am even short of space to list the names of letter writers. But keep them coming. +++





- + An Australian correspondent wrote that as of about mid-August, VISION OF TOMORROW had folded. The August 29, 1970 issue of LOCUS reports that VISION will cease publication with the next issue, and that VISION's projected companion magazine, SWORD & SORCERY, to have been edited by Ken Bulmer, will probably never appear.

Charles Platt, when he was in L.A. recently, mentioned that VISION had lost its distributor...or rather that the major distributor of magazines in the United Kingdom had refused to continue handling the magazine because of low sales.

There is also a report that NEW WORLDS may become a Berkley released pocketbook quarterly, to be edited by Mike Moorcock from England.

- + Norman Spinrad is working on a sf book titled Lord of the Swastika. It will be an alternate-Earth novel in which Germany won WWII and supposedly is authored by Adolph Hitler. The prospective publisher is Avon. Norman said Avon does not like the title or his idea for the cover design—a large red swastika.

- + Jeff Smith has an ad elsewhere in this issue in which he offers to pay a dollar each for a copy of the Feb. and May GALAXY, and the May AMAZING.

This puzzles me. Why do fans assume that once an issue of a prozine is off the stands it is unavailable from the circulation dept. of the magazine? I should think that, as with pocketbooks, the cover price plus 10¢ to cover handling costs would bring you a copy of an issue up to a

a year old.

- + There have been rumors that Robert A. Heinlein was ill and appeared to be deteriorating. Now LOCUS reports that he is recovering from major surgery, <sup>in</sup> Stanford University Hospital with a virus infection which is not dangerous, but painful. Heinlein is 63 years old.

- + Belmont has scheduled for December release: Power of Darkness by Doris Adams (B95-2078, 95¢) "A colorful action novel set in medieval England. A young knight fights to save a beautiful orphan girl accused of being a witch."

and—

- + Kothar and the Wizard Slayer by Gardner F. Fox (B75-2080, 75¢) "Kothar and the temptress Red Lori join forces and fight to find the killer of all the world's magicians."

- + Roger Lovin is editor and Hank Stine is Assoc. Editor of the new Now Library Press in North Hollywood. They will be publishing controversial, youth-oriented books. Their backer, Milton Luros, is trying to get Ballantine distribution.

- + Hank Stine has sold a mainstream novel to Ace. The title: Daisy Chain.

- + The Pig Society by Dean and Gerda Koontz, is reported to have sold 9 copies on the stands before being withdrawn. It was published by Aware Press, also backed by Milton Luros, but was unfortunately distributed to the porno stores and racks for sale. A sad lesson was learned: pigs won't buy anti-pig books.

- + George Hay writes, "Here's a statement I'm glad to release: 'An International SF Book Exhibition, THE BEST OF SF, will take place at the National Book League's West-End-Of London premises between the 17th and the 31st of May, 1971. It is hoped that later the Exhibition will tour the U.K., giving the British public for the first time some idea of the real spread of SF. Provisionally, a choice of around 250 books is envisaged, and a Selection Committee is now being set up to sift these out. The Committee's work will be rewarded by the gift of a strong concrete bunker in the Atlas Mountains; they'll need it, no doubt. Queries, comments and suggestions to: George Hay, c/o Environmental Consortium, 27 Nassau St., London W1N 8EQ, United Kingdom.'

"PS: If this Exhibition is laid out as I want it, there will be a fanzine section!"

- + A note from Damon Knight: "I said in the article that ORBIT had bought stories from over forty writers, & that was true in February. Now, in late August, the number is up to over sixty."

The article referred to is Damon's "Pretentious Intellectuals, Sniveling Faggots and the Milford Mafia" which appeared in SFR 39.

- + Brian Kirby, editor of the defunct Essex House, is now Managing Editor of the Los Angeles Free Press.

Beautiful word, 'defunct.' Try saying it over and over...

MONOLOG CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



