

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW



SUNPOT!

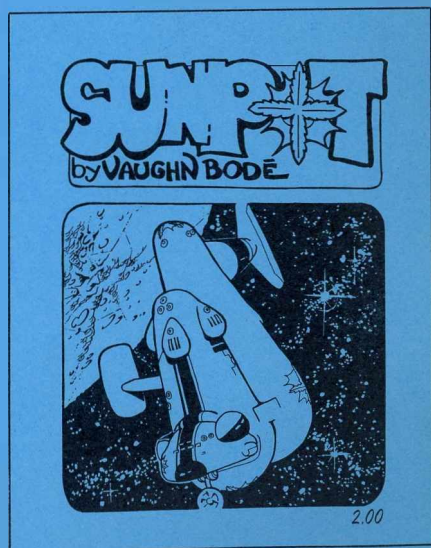
by VAUGHN BODÉ

Vaughn Bodé, creator of SUNPOT for Galaxy magazine, has collected the saga of SUNPOT in one volume called appropriately enough, SUNPOT. A folded schematic of SUNPOT planet has been included.

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SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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Cover by ALICIA AUSTIN

DIALOG by The Editor—Where Geis & Geis, tormented by disease, assailed by sloth, stagger forward into an unrealistic matter transmitter.....5

INSIDE LAUMER—an interview by Richard Hill. A timely look at the background and backbone of one of the most prolific sf writers.....7

TWENTY YEARS ON by George Hay...a poem.....11

NOISE LEVEL—a column by John Brunner.....12
If sf writers are the world's "leading edge", are the poets ahead of the writers?

BEER MUTTERINGS—a column by Poul Anderson.....14
The trials and tribulations of a would-be lazy man, a cut or two at the core of sf, and a mild look at Wimlib.

I REMEMBER CLARION by Damon Knight.....21
Sweet and Sour anecdotes from the memory freezer.

BOOK REVIEWS by guests Robert A. W. Lowndes and Barry N. Malzberg, plus the regulars: Paul Walker
Ted Pauls Wayne C. Connelly
George Zebrowski Richard Delap
Fred Patten Earl Evers.....25

"MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE NEWSSTAND..." a column by David B. Williams which looks at circulation before drawing blood.....47

THEN I READ.... book reviews by The Editor.....50

P.O. BOX 3116—the letter column. Watch your step here...you may snuff out a fuse.53

MONOLOG by The Editor who reveals the disgusting facts of life! Raw Truth! Intimate knowledge!.....66

INTERIOR ART

Tim Kirk—5, 12, 47, 50, 66. Mike Gilbert—13, 36.
Steve Fabian—6, 22, 52. Jim Shull—14, 15, 42.
Jim McLeod—7. Bill Rotsler—18, 21, 25, 49, 53.
Jeff Cochran—8. Doug Lovenstein—38, 39.
Grant Canfield—28, 30, 32, 38, 40, 43. Atom—17.
Jay Kinney—19. Alicia Austin—27.
George Foster—31, 37. Jack Gaughan—33, 41.

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March 1971 — Number 43

RICHARD E. GEIS
Editor and Publisher

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BOOKS REVIEWED THIS ISSUE

More Issues at Hand.....25
Scientology: The Now Religion.....28
Nebula Award Stories Five.....30
The Space Novels of Jules Verne, Vols. 1-2....32
Quark/L.....33
Orbit 8.....33
A Thunder of Stars.....38
First Flights to the Moon38
The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath.....39
Phantastes.....39
The Sorcerer's Skull....39
Tower of Glass.....40
Children of Tomorrow....42
Waters of Death.....43
The Man Who Fell to Earth44
The Mind Cage.....44
Beneath the Planet of the Apes.....44
Kelvin.....44
Indoctrinaire.....50
Gadget Man.....51
Satan's World.....51
The Great Brain Robbery..51
Freezing Down.....51
Nine Princes in Amber....52
The Star Treasure.....52



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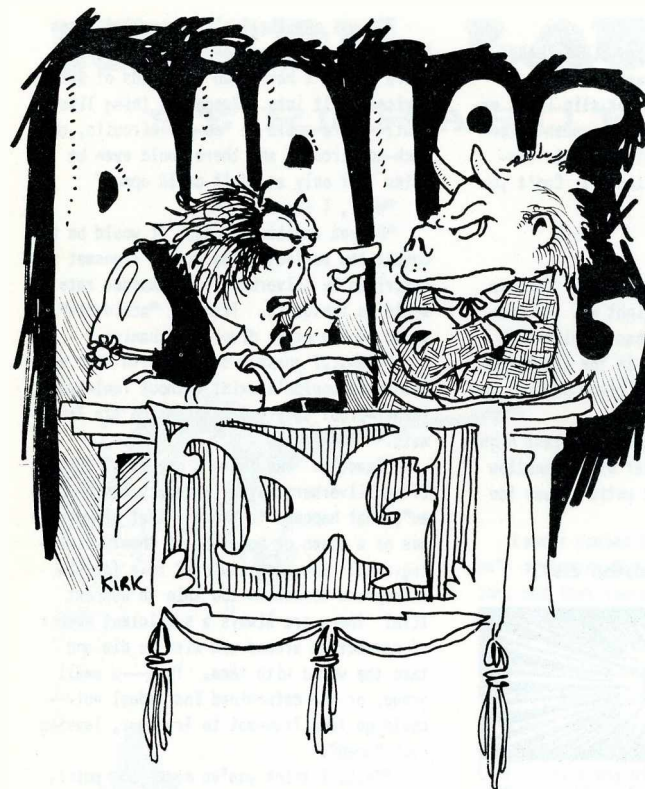
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"Geis, do we have to write the Dialog
now? We feel awful; a cough is tickling
our throat *cough-cough* (see?) and The Bug
is raping our body."

"Duty, Alter-Ego, duty!"

"Wheeeze" "Screw duty. Let's go to
bed and read some sf. That's duty, too!
Let's pile high a dish of ice cream and——"

"No. Not yet. We must——"

"Tyrant! A hundred years from now,
Geis, no one will care a fig that we lived,
SFR will possibly be a teeny, tiny footnote
in a reel of microfilm, or a fading charge
in a memory circuit in a tired computer. Do
you realize that? Probably every copy of
SFR will be dust. Why go to all this trou-
ble? Why put in long hours on this magazine
while writing books, too? Why, in short,
knock us out like this?

"Why not?"

"What? I'm trying to say, idiot, that
we are mortal! We are forty-three years old
and the cold clutch of the waiting grave is

turning our hairs gray
one by one in spite of
all your wheat germ,
vitamin A and E and C
and——"

"You are saying,
Alter, why work hard
if it all comes to
death anyway. The
lazy bum may last as
long or longer than
the production type.
Right?"

"Right! Now let's
go to the refrigerat-
or, open the freezer,
get out the half-gal-
lon of pistaschio-
nut..."

"That's for later...
Johnny Carson, and so
on. You didn't answer
MY question—why not
work? If it's all the
same in the end, why
not work and produce
and accomplish?"

"Well, it's easier
to be a bum! It re-
quires no effort."

"Sure it does; over-

coming cultural conditioning, living with
guilt, shame, defense-reactions; you pay for
all your deviations from what your society
says is right. A bum lives quite badly
while alive, too. Very few half-gallons of
ice cream. Besides, writing for me is fun
work. So is SFR."

"If you like work so much, how come this
issue is professionally printed? Hah? Got-
cha!"

"I'm not a compulsive worker. All that
mimeing and collating and stapling was work
work. The object is to produce a good maga-
zine which fulfills its function, to enjoy
the process and to bask in the warm glow of
approval from others."

"There goes the ego-bit again."

"Alter, the ego is one of the most pow-
erful engines in human affairs, in its var-
ious guises."

"Was that a pun?"

"No. Now, I must admit that ego and
seeking-after-approval is a strong motivat-

ion in me."

"I know. The thing goes CLUNK-CLANK-BANG...CLUNK-CLANK-BANG every minute. I try to get some extra rest or slip in an extra movie or pint of something mouth-watering, and all the time that engine is running, getting louder and louder! Can't you turn it off?"

"Not possible."

"But—"

"Alter, this is the way I am! You are the way you are. Don't fight me. Be content. Enjoy your used synapse collection and strike like lightning in the supermarket when we're near the ice cream section and my guard is down."

"Yeah... Meh. I gotcha good last night. You didn't realize that jar of marshmallow topping was in the basket until it was too late."

"Just for that—"

"No, Geis, no! Not another diet!"



"Geis, what is that ugly, stinking thing you've got on your chest?"

"A grotch, Alter-Ego. A grotch of the second water, but still powerful enough to demand airing."

"Right! Open the window!"

"Figuratively, that's precisely what I intend."

"Okay, okay, put it in the grotch player and see if it unwinds."

"It's this: Matter Transmitters. In sf novels, and shorter works. Specifically, in Bob Silverberg's Tower of Glass."

"So?"

"If you'll remember, matter transmitters in that book are the universal means of long-distance transportation. He calls them Transmats. Set the portal for your destination and step through."

"So?"

"The android, Thor Watchman, is killed when he falls into an "open" Transmat that has not been set for a specific Transmat elsewhere. He is simply disintegrated."

"So? It was symbolic. It was Christ-like."

"It was cheating! Inexcusable! Does Bob Silverberg expect me to believe that there wouldn't have been all kinds of safety devices built into a dangerous thing like that? There would be "no-go" circuits, and back-up circuits, and there would even be gates that only an adult could open."

"Well, I suppose..."

"Do you realize how easy it would be to commit the perfect crime with a Transmat as described by Silverberg? The murder rate would be fantastic. Transmat "accidents" would be the prime divorce mechanism."

"Yeah...I guess a society with that many Transmats wouldn't exist without fool-proof, tamper-proof safety mechanisms on its Transmats."

"Exactly. And there is one other thing—if as Silverberg says, Transmats can be "open", what happens to the air that blows into one or a dozen or hundreds of them? Disintegrated! How long would it take for the atmosphere to become too thin to support life? There are always a sufficient number of psychotics around who wish to die and take the world with them. They—a small group, or one determined individual nut—could go from Transmat to Transmat, leaving each "open"."

"Geis, I think you've made your point. Science fiction writers should take the time and trouble to make their futures as plausible as possible, and realistic, even at the expense of a precious symbolic effect."

"And what about the possibility of dialing an enemy's home, spraying a clip of bullets through, or tossing a bomb, or a gas cylinder..."

"Geis—"

"The whole concept of matter transmitters may be untenable. Why—"

"Geis—"

"And why isn't there an explosive displacement of air when a person comes through a Transmat?"

"Geis—"

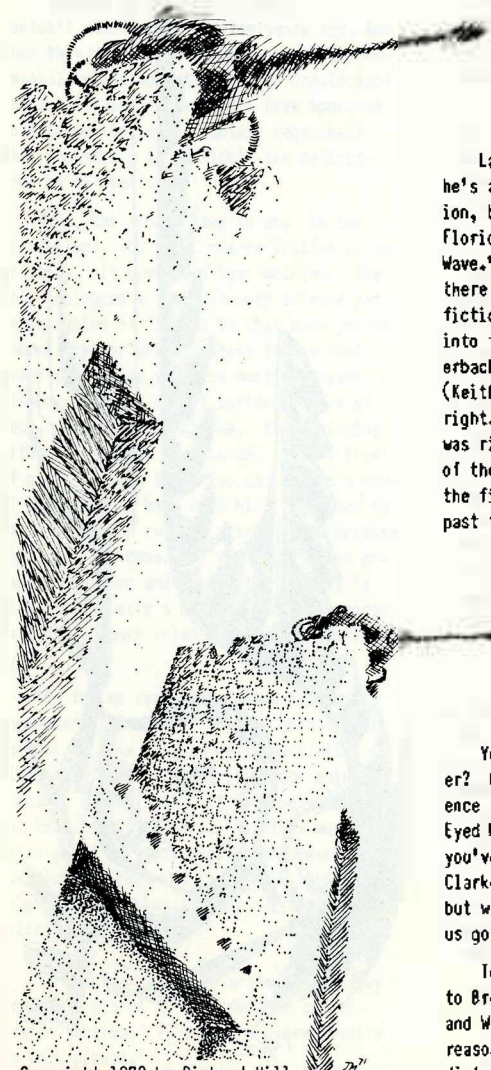
"WHAT?"

"You've aired your grotch. Now go to bed and sleep the sweet sleep of the just and righteous."

"Damn right."

INSIDE LAUMER

BY RICHARD HILL



Laumer denies it, denies not only that he's a conservative force in science fiction, but that there is anything in South Florida that deserves to be called "New Wave." For that matter, he denies that there should be anything called science fiction, especially when it's segregated into the ghetto of pulp magazines and paperbacks. He may be right on all counts. (Keith has a way of making you feel he's right.) And editor-writer Harlan Ellison was right on when he described him as "one of the very few major talents to emerge in the field of speculative fiction in the past five years."

You say you never heard of Keith Laumer? Or that your last encounter with "science fiction" involves a papier mache Bug-Eyed Monster in a Japanese flick. Or that you've heard of Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov, but what's all this about a new wave? Let us go, then, and make our visit.

To get to Keith Laumer you have to go to Brooksville. Besides the bass fishing and Weeki Wachi Springs, he may be the only reason for going there. You drive up a dirt road off the highway and there's the

house. You know it must be Laumer's house because it looks as though it was designed by Ayn Rand for her super-competent hero, John Galt, to hide out in. In fact, the modern, rough brick design is Keith's. He has one degree in architecture.

The competent hero is prominent in the work of the old guard in speculative fiction. And we find the ridiculous extreme in the Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers serials. Laumer's heroes are able, courageous, but not infallible. They live, often, in an absurd world. In a world bereft of reason, a man can't always win; but he can endure, should struggle. Laumer's heroes are neither Flash Gordon nor Alexander Portnoy. Like Hemingway's heroes, they try to face a mad world with dignity.

You get that feeling of competence from the house. It rises from a virtual island in a lake, connected only by a narrow spit of land.

Inside, paintings line the walls, good copies by Laumer of favorite originals, mostly impressionist. Beethoven string quartets on the stereo. High ceiling, giant fireplaces, a wood ladder leading to an unfinished second story where he paints.

Laumer, 45, looks much younger—a cliché in such pieces as this, but it must be said. He's wearing dungaree bell bottoms, and his usual, military-style shirt. His hair is surprisingly long in back for a man with a reputation for conservatism. Ellison described him as a "tall, rugged, rather good-looking man, if you like that kind of cruel mouth and beady little eyes like a marmoset."

He gets me a dark ale. "I don't drink much, beyond an occasional beer or glass of wine," he says. I ask him about the new wave in speculative fiction. Are the younger writers like Ellison, Roger Zelazny, Chip Delany, and Piers Anthony really into something new?

He expected the question. He's been through this before. "Good writing is good writing; whatever you call it. I think the whole new wave thing was thought up by a couple of disappointed writers who became editors. It's a tempest in a teapot, an artificial feud for publicity. I think it

also covers a lot of inept and meaningless writing because you can hammer out almost any idiotic thing and somebody will take it seriously."

I reminded Keith that the first time I saw him—at the Milford Science Fiction Writers' Conference held last year in Mad-eria Beach—he was holding forth angrily against the new wave. Yet his stories have appeared in most of the experimental anthologies.



"I wasn't really attacking the new wave, certainly not attacking experimental stories. I was attacking bad writing under the guise of experimentation. I don't think you could write anything so meaningless that somebody at Milford, for example, wouldn't take it as a major breakthrough."

Granted that some of the experiments fail. But shouldn't speculative fiction writers—that's the term which seems to satisfy everybody—be given more credit for providing a real avant-garde in fiction? The mainstream "experimental" magazines like NEW AMERICAN REVIEW publish material that wouldn't have seemed new ten years ago. And when they do publish somebody really experimental—like Robert Coover or Donald Barthelme—couldn't their work have appeared in science fiction or fantasy magazines? What I'm saying is shouldn't the definitions be re-examined?

"Yes, the labels have to go. In the first place, the term science fiction is an atrocity. It never did have meaning. The only impingement that the word science has on this kind of fiction is that when you're speculating or writing about things that haven't happened yet, you must watch your step or you will commit serious errors of fact. Fact equals science. You must stay within the limits of science. That's true of other fiction too. You can't have a novel in which the hero uses his sunglasses to focus the sun's rays to start a fire because that can't be done. If you write about going to the moon and forget the gravity is different, that's a mistake too. Of course, in fantasy those rules don't apply so strictly.

"As far as recognizing good writing is concerned, I feel that what we used to call science fiction and now call speculative fiction is gradually engulfing the mainstream. I don't think it will be absorbed, but that it will absorb. In other words, we're going to throw away those unnecessary restrictions that you can't talk about it unless somebody has already built it in bricks and mortar.

"If a writer wants to write about a guy alone on a planet it shouldn't be called science fiction. It's just a story about a guy on a planet."

Putting aside the labels, then, what writers do you like?

"Hemingway and Raymond Chandler, for the sheer pleasure of most of their work. I like Vonnegut. He's fought the SF label too and beaten it, but we know where he belongs. I can't read too many writers. I try but I can't. John D. MacDonald's stuff is compulsively readable. But there's that...depression when you're finished, as though you really didn't get anything."

Don't most of the so-called old wave writers tend to be conservative? Is there a reason for that?

"The labels liberal and conservative are just as bad as the label science fiction. If being liberal means wanting to be free, that's me. I don't want people hassling me about my hair or anything else. But some liberals seem out of touch with reality. What does freedom have to do with throwing rocks in the name of peace? Maybe a lot of these old time science fiction writers are aware of the law of gravity and a few things like that.

"I think my attitude is realistic. Will it fly? Not should it fly or wouldn't it be ducky if it flew, but will it.

"Sure, the object of society should be to turn the earth into a paradise in which every human suffers an absolute minimum of hardship. But I don't think we can do it quite yet, especially when there seems to be a large number of people who want to sit on their cans while you work, then show up at the dinner table.

"To promise paradise now is a delusion. It's like the chain letter thing—somebody at the end gets stuck. If Ratso Rizzo, from MIDNIGHT COWBOY, got his dream of Miami Beach now, it would be because some poor slob with ulcers is working every day and not getting his own dreams.

"I think eventually the creative one per cent will drag the other 99 per cent along to something better, but that's in the future."

The "realism" of Keith Laumer. And it's an interesting background which produced those attitudes.

He was born in New York State, and came

to St. Petersburg at age 12. "Thus," he says, "I can see the Civil War from both sides. Perhaps this is at the bottom of my inability to become a true believer in any of the popular causes. I find that human beings can be divided into only two meaningful categories: Decent Humans and SOB's. Both types appear to be evenly distributed among all shapes, colors, sizes and nationalities."

In 1943, at age eighteen, he enlisted in the Army. He served in Europe and assisted in the processing of returning troops after the war. After the war, he studied architecture at the University of Illinois. He married there, and two of his children were born during the college years. He also studied at the University of Stockholm.

In 1953, Laumer got a first lieutenant's commission in the Air Force. He was convinced WW III was imminent and didn't want to be drafted. "They fooled me," he says, "by finking out on the war. I spent a year in solitary on a rock in Labrador." He left the Air Force in 1956 to join the foreign service and spent two years in Burma as an embassy official. He started writing while in Burma, then spent a year at fulltime writing. "I hacked away for that year, then went back into the Air Force, whereupon all the stuff I'd written sold. Too late. I was in. But being stationed in London had its compensations. Yes, and we'd had a third child, a daughter, in Burma. In 1965 I became a full time writer and I never intend to change jobs again. Life begins at forty."

Did you know that Anthony Burgess started writing about age forty, after a civil service tour in Burma?

"Must be something about the place. I wrote my first story there. After I decided I was ready to write we wandered around for a while, then settled here."

Why Brooksville?

"It's this piece of land. My dad happened to own it, and when I saw it, nearly surrounded by water, I said this is it. I've been here four years."

The Burma assignment and the diplomatic life have inspired a number of Laumer books, including his popular series about Retief,

a galactic diplomat. He has published 45 books in the five years since his full-time decision. Most have appeared in hard cover and paperback. There have been novels, non-fiction books and short story collections. He has written speculative fiction and mysteries—one a Raymond Chandler mystery. His stories have appeared in most of the science fiction magazines and anthologies, and in a number of mystery and men's magazines. His novel, *The Monitors* became a movie with Keenan Wynn, Ed Begley and a cameo appearance by the late Sen. Everett Dirksen.

"I also wrote a splendid book about the mess in southeast Asia, and the week it was finished a book called *The Ugly American* was published. The burden of my book was that we don't know what the hell we're doing there."

Do you still think so?

"More than ever. If we're not going to use everything we've got to finish the war, we should get out yesterday. The idea of drafting GIs to fight with slingshots is an atrocity. If the Chinese and Russians want those pest-ridden countries, they deserve each other. I think we really have more in common with the Chinese than the other parties involved."

Are you saying that racial considerations will transcend political considerations, just as liberals argue the Vietnamese will never accept domination by the Chinese?

"No, but I do think that in 500 years we won't have racial problems on earth because we'll all be assimilated. Race problems are self-eliminating through intermarriage. Unless there are enclaves that make a fetish of racial identity. But the racial variety on *STAR TREK*, for example, seems unlikely to me. People will have forgotten those differences."

"That's why Black Panther racism disturbs me. It's no more admirable than Nazi racism. Israeli terrorism towards Arabs is no better than Arab terrorism towards Jews. What I'd like to see done away with is terrorism and racism."

The Keith Laumer "realism." Some of it would make a superpatriot beam. Some of it would elicit a chorus of "right ons" from a campus crowd. You can't pin him down.

He's not an Ayn Rand ideologue, not really any kind of ideologue. He's not really new wave nor old wave. He and his writing are products of his experience and his world. It is no accident that there are Steppenwolf and Jimi Hendrix albums along with the Beethoven. They belong to his daughters but he listens. You can't predict what he'll say, but you can believe he means it.

Ellison wrote, in an introduction to one of Laumer's stories, "If I could name a man I met who seemed to me incorruptible, it would have to be Laumer."

But Laumer himself pinned it down better: "The ultimate test of man," he wrote, "is his ability to master himself. It is a test which we have so far failed." ☐ ☐

Richard Hill is a free-lance writer living in St. Petersburg.

This interview first appeared in the TAMPA TRIBUNE's Florida Accent Magazine, June 7, 1970.



TWENTY YEARS ON

The aliens that I recall
Are aliens indeed today:
Endearing in their evil
mode,
Vintage models, you might
say

All one-pointed and intense
Bombs and blasts and beams
and thrall
Sinister in clean-cut black
And coming, above all

From OUT THERE--very haven
Of menace unfailing, you'd
allow,
For those who did, naive,
believe
OUT was THERE. We know
better now.

---George Hay



MONOLOG continued.

issuing more and more sf. Paul Walker has eased off from his tremendous reviewing pace of several months ago; he's only human. And there aren't enough good, objective reviewers in sf fandom to read and review all the sf and fantasy being published.

My desire has been to publish a review of every book received.

Short of going monthly and devoting myself full-time to the magazine this cannot be done. (Short of about a seven thousand dollar subsidy from a millionaire, a corporation, a foundation...or a really tremendous increase in paid circulation.)

Not likely.

So I have, as editor, more hard thinking and deciding to do.

•FRED PATTEN sent along some interesting clips from PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY: The Conan Series consisting of ten titles sold close to a million copies in 1970 for Lancer — "Ace reports that Frank Herbert's *Dune*... was still among its backlist bestsellers, as it was in 1969." Among the new Ace books sf is still on top: *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K. LeGuin, and the Heinlein Series. — Ballantine's \$7.50 boxed set of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* was a sellout. — Berkley's best sellers last year included Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, and Herbert's *Dune Messiah*.

•Because his parents objected to his having multiple copies of Essex House books at home, JEFF SMITH offered them for sale to SFR readers. Now he writes that he lost some names and addresses of those who ordered said books—and has to ask those who have not heard from him to please write again, as he kept no records.

I understand Jeff is a Business major in college.

•ARNIE KATZ reported in FOCAL POINT that Ultimate Publications (AMAZING, FANTASTIC and various reprint titles) are having distribution problems on the west coast.

•LOCUS reported that Keith Laumer suffered a stroke Feb. 2, at his Florida home. Subsequent reports tell of improvement.



MONOLOG continued on page 22

NOISE LEVEL

a column

john brunner

#5 RHYME AND, IF YOU'RE VERY LUCKY, REASON

In Connection with the Brighton Arts Festival of 1968, Edward Lucie-Smith (best-known in this country as a member of the panel on that now-defunct BBC radio programme, THE CRITICS, among our most highly regarded art critics, and a respected poet), and Asa Briggs (historian, author and currently vice-chancellor of one of our newer universities), jointly chaired a weekend conference on science fiction.

The conference itself was mainly memorable for two splendid comments on 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY - to wit, Jimmy Ballard's remark, "Two thousand and one BC!", and Christopher Evans's description of it as "an instructional film for Pan American space-hostesses" - but directly following the conclusion of the actual conference an event took place which I must say I think marked a sort of significant-type breakthrough. Ted Lucie-Smith organised a science fiction poetry

reading, featuring inter alios Adrian Henri and the Liverpool Scene, George MacBeth, D.M. Hart, D.M. Thomas... and yours truly.

Tickets were horribly over-priced, so the audience was small, but it was a very stimulating and enjoyable occasion.

Not all the material read was strictly SF, of course - it shaded over into fantasy and surrealism - but a surprising amount of it was the pure metal, most notably perhaps George MacBeth's "Bedtime Story," an account (in that hideously difficult form, Sapphics) of the death of the last man.

So when it came to arranging the programme of the Easter Convention at Oxford in 1969, I thought of inviting Ted to come along and read some excerpts from his then newly-published anthology of SF poetry, Holding Your Eight Hands, and explain why he had chosen for inclusion Brian Aldiss, Tom Disch, H. P. Lovecraft,

John Sladek and suchlike names moderately well known among SF fans... not to mention yours truly. (I also read some bits and pieces of my own.)

Considering he had outright refused to rehearse our duet beforehand, it went off rather well and provoked a good reaction from the audience. We therefore laid on another poetry session at the 1970 London Con, with Jeni Couzyn (an outstanding South African poetess) as well as Ted and myself. That led to some very unfavourable audience reaction... but those embers have been raked over often enough. The important point is that Jeni read a charming black-comedy piece entitled "Human Pie," an extract from an alien cookery book, which had the audience in fits of laughter, and if only VISION OF TOMORROW hadn't folded it would have appeared there as a double-page spread with a specially commissioned ornamental border by Eddie Jones. Pity! I think it would have been a hit with the readers as well as the listeners.

Now the question which might logically be posed at this stage is: why should people like Jeni Couzyn and Ted Lucie-Smith turn up to give an unpaid reading at a science fiction convention, when they can normally command quite a fat fee for a public appearance? The answer's simple. They like SF and read a lot of it.

I called on Jeni the other evening - she lives within walking distance of our place - to see if we could turn out some stochastic sonnets together (I'll explain that in a moment), and she has on the wall a painting she did of a being designed after the Regulans in my book The Long Result, and there are lots of SF novels and anthologies on her shelves.

Stochastic sonnets? Well, I believe the form was invented by Tom Disch and Marilyn Hacker, though I can claim to have baptised it with its resounding name...

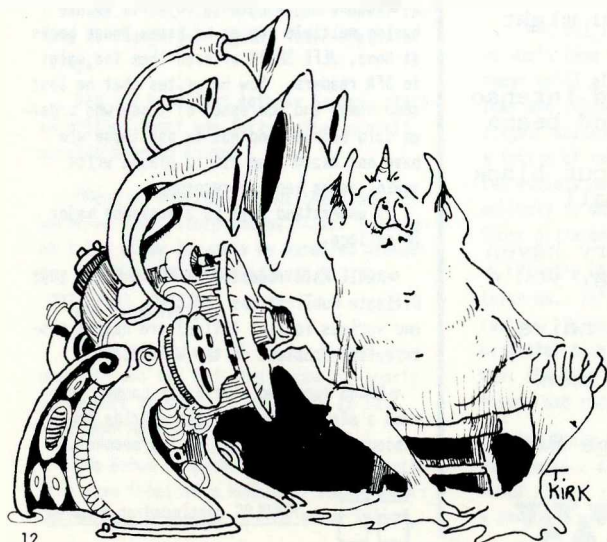
Works like this. One of you picks a title, without telling the other; the other writes a first line, then describes its grammatical structure (not its content) and indicates what sort of continuation would be required to make a complete sentence - or, naturally, whether a new sentence should be begun. And so on, through three quatrains, until you reach the final couplet

and have to give the rhyme-sound as well as the grammatical elements. Last time I was in New York I did some of these with Tom, and it's amazing how rapidly you begin to exhibit a sort of telepathic response to the lines the other person has written but you haven't seen. For instance, I called our second effort "The Death of a Barnstorming Aviator." Ignorant of this, Tom produced a line beginning: "Machines fall from the air like ripe plums..."

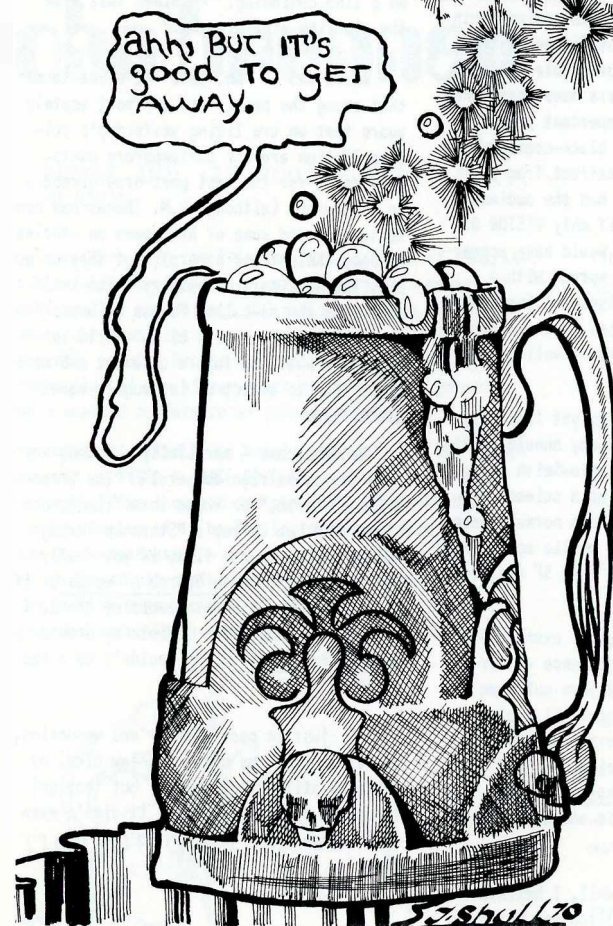
Where was I? Oh, yes. It seems to me that among the people who are most acutely aware that we are living yesterday's science fiction are our contemporary poets. They don't for the most part draw directly on SF sources (although D.M. Thomas has consciously based some of his poems on stories by Damon Knight and others), but they do employ the same sort of imagery which in SF generates the so-called "sense of wonder" - the paradoxical quality of our world in which the past and future co-exist and sometimes seem to affect us in roughly equal quantities.

We have come - mercifully - a long way from the pedestrian doggerel of "The Green Hills of Earth," or those terrifyingly bad lines from Lee Correy's "Starship Through Space" which you can find, if you really want to, quoted in In Search of Wonder. If you're not yet with this exciting trend, I suggest you remedy the deficiency pronto. Holding Your Eight Hands wouldn't be a bad place to start.

PS: just in case anybody was wondering, my father died, my mother-in-law died, my ankle is still troubling me, but they got the glass out of my eye and it didn't even scar the cornea. Whew! □ □ □ □ □



Beer Mutterings



By Poul Anderson

Ogden Nash once complained that the trouble with sins of omission is that, while they bring on the usual pangs of conscience and consequences, they're no fun. I remember particularly his lines: "— nobody ever said, 'Wheel! / The next round of unanswered letters is on me!'" I ought to hunt up the book and make sure I am quoting accurately, but will omit that.

Now my admiration for Mr. Nash as poet and philosopher is great. It would be otiose to say he is better at being the first than Allen Ginsberg is, and better at being the second than Hugh Hefner is; this is true of practically anybody. Let's just say that throughout my reading life Mr. Nash has been an enlightening delight. But perhaps his observations on the sloth-type sins, though accurate as far as they go, are misleading in a larger context. Neglect of duty can be made quite enjoyable. It's all in knowing how.

What started this reflection was a hang-over, one of the mild sort which simply leave you filleted. I was stretched comfortably on my studio couch, sipping a cold beer and reading some bit of trivia. From time to time I'd glance over at my desk, where the stack of letters unreplyed to and bills unpaid was not only high but beginning to get moldy. (Mind you, the bank account was in excellent shape. It's just that business of filling out check stubs. I know I should record who every check is to and what it is in payment of, because the information may be needed later — but damn it, nothing is duller than writing

to Orinda Hardware for Orinda Hardware. I used to relieve the monotony a bit by describing payments that would never be relevant to anyone except me and the payee, such as a liquor bill, by more imaginative phrases, such as To Orinda Sporting House for Servicing of gun; or I'd relieve emotional pressure by affixing colorful adjectives on To Internal Revenue for tax installment. But I had to give this up after it became obvious that I was distressing my very proper accountant. — And it never helped me in keeping track of the balance. Like most persons who have studied higher mathematics, I can't do arithmetic for sour owl snoot. A banker tells me that hundred-dollar errors are not uncommon; but he regards me with some awe, since I have made a thousand-dollar error — twice — in favor of Wells Fargo — which, luckily, employs honest, straightshooting computers.)

Well, there I was, thinking guiltily that, if I was not yet capable of doing anything creative, this was at least a good time to get my drudge work out of the way; also, the lawn was covered with autumn's tree dandruff, which ought to be raked; and besides, healthful exercise in God's sunshine would make me feel so much better that I could thereafter proceed like a giant refreshed to other outstanding duties; and the whole while I knew damn well I was going to lie torpid for hours, and if I rose at all it would be to tinker with an absolutely useless, unprofitable, socially unconscious amusement like, say, a Beer Muttering. So it was not logical to let my conscience spoil the afternoon for me.

"Shut up," I said to it.

"Nag, whine, pester," it said, scraping fingernails across the slate it carries around for this purpose.

"I told you to shut up —"

"And you never take me anywhere —"

"— or I'll belt you one across the mouth, and you can pay for dental repairs out of your own allowance."

It shut up. I hasten to add that no symbolism is intended. Karen was being 'scruciating idle in the living room. Myself, I suddenly realized that the warm glow I felt came not merely from being left in peace to not-do my own un-thing. There was also the enjoyment of a victory.

Sauntering down memory lane, with due care to avoid the cow pies, I saw through eyes now opened (albeit a trifle bleary) that this had happened before. Whenever I resolved to neglect some dismal task imposed by duty or prudence, I had experienced the thrill of Being Bad. But hitherto my dog-in-the-manger conscience hadn't let me recognize this sensation for what it was. "After all," my conscience must have preached to my subconscious, "that is a childish pleasure, and we are big and grown up now, aren't we?"

Recognizing that I could indulge in childishness whenever I chose gave me a third-stage joy.

I am still exploring the implications of my discovery. For many years I have denied the truth of the old saw that everything worth doing is worth doing well. That's nonsense. The world is an unsightly



junkyard of things worth doing, in the sense that they must be done, which do not deserve better than barebones—minimum time and care; and the more you can scamp them, the happier you. Washing the car, for instance. Though a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that filthiness be held within some bounds, the question remains whether I own that lump of dead iron or it owns me. So I wash it maybe thrice a year, taking maybe ten minutes per occasion. On the other hand, I am fanatically meticulous about keeping it in good mechanical condition, especially the safety features.

Likewise, bills must be paid in reasonable time, if only because merchants have rights, too. Lawns must be mowed and raked, if only because well-tended grounds are so much more pleasurable than a weed patch. A living must be earned. Some service ought to be given to society at large and one's friends in particular. Et cetera, et cetera. I have no patience with people who don't meet their obligations; and it is idiotic not to organize your efforts so they will be moderately effective.

The new point to be made is this: Conscience and prudence need to be kept in their place just as much as our baser impulses do. Frequently the harm done by postponing or refusing some chore is small, while the reward of the idleness thus gained is large. Part of that reward lies in the sense of having asserted your free will. And thus, to get back to Ogden Nash, we can actively enjoy not answering letters. Tomorrow or next day, yes, of course we'll tackle the pile of them; but right now, let us wallow in them, uttering little Bacchantic grunts, as if they were naked women; let us savor a full awareness of the fact that we are being foolish, inconsiderate, immature, everything other than duty machines....

What makes this voluptuousness possible is the knowledge that, eventually, with less than maximum efficiency and dispatch, but with sufficient, the absolutely necessary work will somehow get done. Hence the fun of taming one's conscience and curbing one's forethought is denied to the nihilist who is proud of having neither. But then, he's a dreary character in every other respect, too.

Notes toward a definition of science fiction:

There seem to be as many definitions as there are definers, and — in spite of some undeservedly kind remarks by A. J. Budrys — I am not about to add to their number. A field which can include *Brave New World* and *A Canticle for Leibowitz* and *Venus Equilateral* and *Captain Future* obviously has no simple definition. A bitter old Jewish saying goes: "A Jew is anybody whom somebody else says is a Jew." Sf is in a comparable boat, inasmuch as the literati still frequently declare that nothing which is good can, by definition, be sf. But this attitude is breaking down. In fact, we are in such danger of becoming respectable that I tried to agree with what got scrawled on the blackboard after a session at the last Secondary Universe conference, where academic types had earnestly sought for critical standards appropriate to us: GET SCIENCE FICTION OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AND BACK IN THE GUTTER WHERE IT BELONGS.

So, anything is sf which I say is sf. By and large, my list is the same as that of other long-term buffs. But what do the stories to which we point have in common?

Though not a rider on the creamed chicken circuit, I do give occasional lectures, seminars, and the like. (Among other reasons, it always heartens me to get out among students and rediscover that the large majority are perfectly decent, reasonable, clean, and likeable human beings. The future they will shape if they get the chance will be different from the past — hasn't the future always been? — and no doubt I will disapprove of some elements; but on balance, I don't expect to be more appalled than I am at present, and quite possibly less.)

When introducing the topic of sf to such an audience, if sf is the topic, I call it "a set of literary techniques." It is not basically different from other categories of fiction, which are not basically different from each other. Categorization ought to be forbidden by law, under barbaric penalties. Still, when the story to be told or the point to be made or the atmosphere to be created demands certain techniques for maximum effectiveness, we have sf.

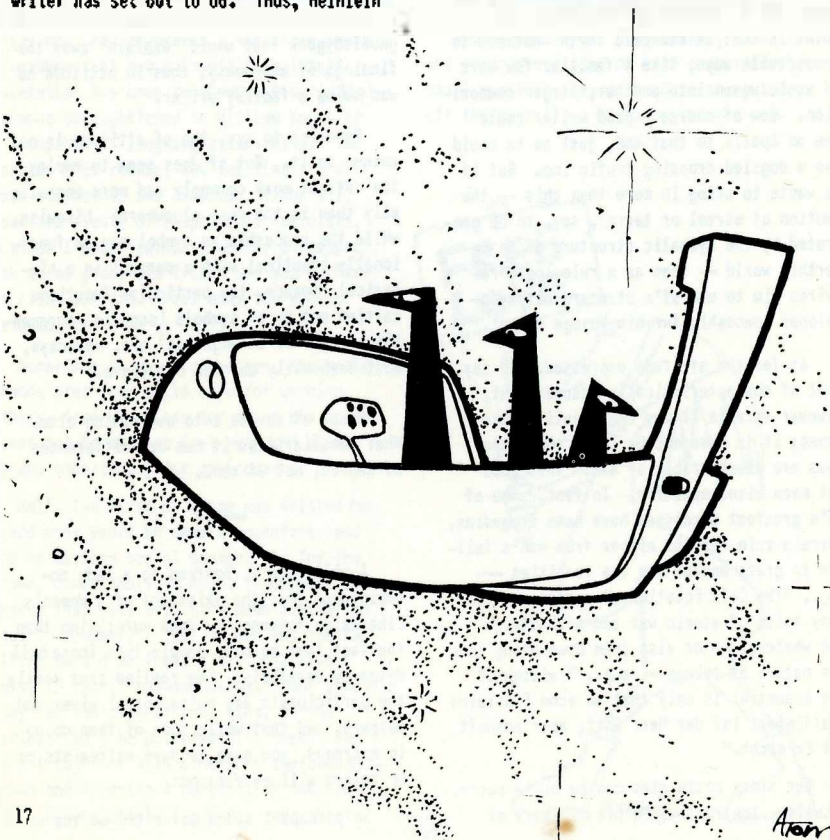
These are by no means the only techniques suitable to that kind of story. In fact, the current revitalization of our field is due largely to the introduction of methods and approaches which have long been known elsewhere. Peter Beagle once remarked that he'd read sf as a boy, then dropped it for many years, then lately come back to it, and by gosh, he said, meanwhile those guys had discovered the stream of consciousness!

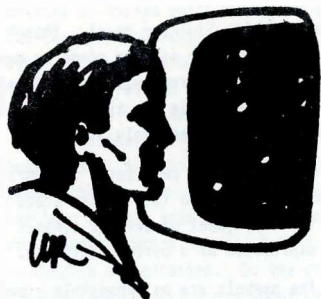
Obviously, however, no story can employ the whole range of available devices. Some will always be inappropriate. For instance, the minute cataloguing of every everyday detail is fine in a typical *NEW YORKER* story, if you like typical *NEW YORKER* stories, but would hopelessly bog down a fast-action detective yarn — though the point-by-point description of certain details is integral to the police procedural novel. The degree of it in a sf piece depends on what the writer has set out to do. Thus, Heinlein

often uses it, Sturgeon rarely, though the latter can vividly evoke a scene by mentioning just two or three well-chosen things. The difference is in the kind of effect these men are respectively after.

The techniques peculiarly appropriate to sf seem to me to fall in two broad classes, the employment of certain symbols and the expression of a certain attitude.

The symbols are an expansible group. The healthy eras of sf have been characterized by the introduction and exploration of new ones, the dull eras by the mechanical reiteration of old ones. Familiar symbols include spaceships, distant planets, non-human intelligences, vast forces, the future and its civilizations, time travel. I call them symbols because they don't stand for anything presently in existence, and often they stand for things unlikely ever to be in existence.





An Apollo command module or an IBM computer or a nuclear detonation is real. It might occur in a sf story which takes off from the here-and-now, just as an automobile might, but it is functionally different in the story from, say, an interstellar liner or a robot with awareness or a supernova which destroys whole worlds. The spaceship, for example, is a symbol of travel, adventure, achievement; or the writer can make it stand for evil, like one of Bradbury's vessels full of looters and litterers; the point is that it can call forth emotions in predictable ways, like a familiar few bars of music woven into another, larger composition. Now of course a good writer could use an Apollo to that end, just as he could use a dogsled crossing Arctic ice. But if he wants to bring in more than this — the emotion of marvel or terror, say, to be generated by the symbolic structure of an unearthly world — then as a rule logic requires him to use sf's standard ultra-developed spaceship for his Voyage symbol.

As for the attitude expressed, I'd say that sf characteristically assumes that, however strange it may be, creation makes sense; it is governed by laws, and these laws are discoverable by man. This does not mean bland optimism. In fact, some of sf's greatest successes have been tragedies, wherein ruin results either from man's failure to grasp and/or use the realities — e.g., "The Cold Equations," not to mention many tales of atomic war and anti-Utopia and whatever — or else from doom being in the nature of things — e.g., "Twilight." The essential is only that we echo Einstein: "Raffiniert ist der Herr Gott, aber boshaft ist Er nicht."

Our story postulates can be quite outre. Actually, the real-world plausibility of

ghosts is better than that of such sf stand-bys as faster-than-light or time travel. Yet ghosts almost all belong to fantasy. Why? I think sf takes the attitude, tacit where not explicit, that we may come upon many remarkable phenomena, which will quite revolutionize our thinking, but they'll nevertheless include what we know today; there will have been the same kind of intellectual continuity that there was between Newtonian and modern physics. The fantasy writer doesn't care. He postulates as he pleases. Though he may be rigorously logical in tracing out the consequences of these postulates, he is under no necessity of assuming that they can ever be fitted into the body of scientific knowledge. When he does make this assumption, he is automatically writing sf. For instance, I've seen ghost stories which "explained" the spirit in terms of forcefields or something, and have even written one or two myself. In contrast, while Bradbury's fine Mars stories used the symbolism of sf, he refused (probably rightly in his case) to throw in even a line of gobbledygook that would "explain" away the findings of astronomy; thus in attitude he was being a fantasy writer.

Needless to say, the sf attitude is not unique to it. But sf does seem to employ the outlook more commonly and more emphatically than is the case elsewhere. Likewise, while the spaceship as symbol may be functionally identical with a caravel in a historical romance, the particular functions carried out by sf symbols (such as representing Travel or Strangeness) are, nowadays, most frequently carried out there.

Hence sf shades into everything else. What peculiarities it has are differences of degree, not of kind.

A while ago I remarked to a lady acquaintance that the existence of a Women's Liberation movement is less surprising than the fact that so many people take those bull dykes so seriously. She replied that mostly the participants are quite normal wives and mothers, and that while some of them do go to extremes, you have to have extremists or no reform will ever happen.

So perhaps I stand corrected on the un-

interesting matter of the WmLib leaders' private proclivities. However, my acquaintance is dead wrong about the value of radicals. Throughout history, any good cause which they embrace seems to be thrown back at least a hundred years. Consider, for example, how the Robespierre gang made a Napoleon inevitable; how our own Abolitionists helped bring on a civil war, one of whose legacies has been enduring interracial hatred, in order to terminate an institution of slavery that would have died a natural death in another couple of decades; how the Lenin gang destroyed the Russian Republic; how today's Weathermen types are forcing the rest of us to create a real police state — But the recital is long and depressing. The point here is that I was caused to make explicit to myself some of the notions about WmLib that I'd been carrying around.

The whooping, hollering, trespass, vandalism, and occasional violence are, as was already observed, no surprise. Monkey see, monkey do. And doubtless I was silly in my astonishment at how solemnly this latest postulation has been received. A world that listens straightfaced to William Kunstler is incapable of laughing at anything. The question does remain, How legitimate are those complaints and demands? After all, there are plenty of respectable feminists, by which I mean feminists worthy of respect, such as my grand old friend and yours, Miriam Allen de Ford. Peel away the WmLib rhetoric, and what is left?

According to one spokeswoman, the basic demands are: free child care for working mothers, free abortions for those who would rather not be mothers just yet, and equal pay and opportunity for advancement.

Well, the first of these has existed for a good many years in several countries and done no obvious social damage. As for the second, conceivably we ought to support any measure that will help slow down population growth. However, I fail to see why the facilities should be free. That adjective means, in fact, "tax-supported." Why should I pay for the care of your kids, if you yourself can't be bothered with them? Can't you get together with others in the same situation and organize a babysitting cooperative? Or why should I pay for your abort-

ion? I didn't beget the little bastard. Solve your own problems, lady, and next time be more careful.

Equal pay and opportunity sound all right at first — and, I hasten to add, usually at last. (When a woman separates from a husband whom she's been supporting — an arrangement commoner than you may realize — of course she should pay him alimony!) But generalizations like this can raise hell when applied indiscriminately to the concrete day-by-day situations in which we live. The common-sense criterion would be, In a particular job, is a woman apt to be worth as much as a man?

Normally the answer would be positive. In not a few cases, the answer would be that she — this individual human being — is worth more than any male candidate for the position. I am sure Randall Garrett will join me in admitting that his lady Alison is not only prettier than either of us, she writes a lot better computer program.

But women do get pregnancies, monthlies, and menapauses; they do have comparatively small muscles; they do tend to marry and go off the payroll, a tendency which a pro-



spective employer must take into account. Also, this may be hopelessly old-fashioned, authoritarian, and you name it, but every experience and sound instinct of the race says that a woman is less expendable than a man, because it is from her that the next generation proceeds, and so ought to be kept away from certain tasks.

Naturally, men should at least be discouraged from undertaking certain other tasks. Like the work of an airplane stewardess. Under our latest great new liberating sex-equality law, airlines are required to consider men for this job on the same basis as women. Now maybe you enjoy looking at hairy shanks and bony jaws, but I don't. If the steward go, then for me the drab process of commercial flight will have lost its last mitigation.

To sum up: Various injustices can and should be corrected, but this can be done without any hoopla, let alone any Constitutional amendment. Various other injustices are built into the universe, but one sex seems to get about as many as the other. As for going braless, this is intriguing when she's young and wearing a tight sweater; but, once again, how come all the fuss?

Furthermore, we have few enough freedoms left without having taken from us the freedom not to associate. If McSorley's in New York, or Schroeder's in San Francisco at lunchtime, must admit females — where's a chap to go when he wants a bit of undistracted relaxation? Why can't the women simply establish their own places that exclude men? Their resentment at not being let in suggests that they don't find each other's company especially fascinating. Then should anyone?

Don't get me wrong. I'm a gnomophile from way back. A woman who really is a woman is the finest thing the human race has to offer; and her femininity need not interfere with her intellect, which can perfectly well be equal or superior to mine. The trouble with the unisex world is its dullness.

Gentlemen, we had better fight back while time remains, for the sake of the ladies even more than ourselves. Perhaps we can get some action if several hundred of us, unshaven and clad in sweaty undershirts,

show up at the next Wialib convention and demand our right to be enrolled. We could also go around to the DAR.

Results of the Disgusting Television Commercial contest will be announced next time. At present, it is still open. Entries received thus far are mostly good, but you might beat them all yet. For instance, why have they dealt exclusively with sex and scatology? Surely such fields as religion, politics, death and the undertaker, cigarettes, and automobiles have nauseating potentialities of their own. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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I Remember Clarion

Clarion is the sphincter of the universe. It is in the middle of a blank space in the map of Pennsylvania. It has no reason for being there except for Clarion State College, which the inhabitants accordingly hate.

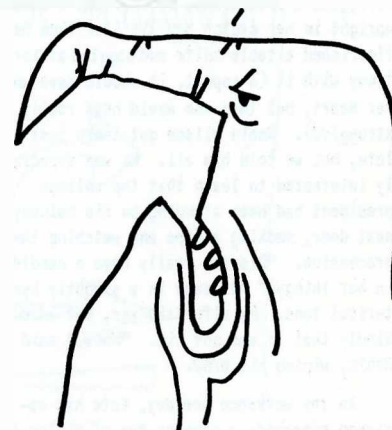
Clarion State College was until recently Clarion State Teachers' College, and it still devotes most of its efforts to getting teaching certificates for the sons and daughters of the blond, thick-headed indigines. Its science department has a Foucault pendulum which does not work. The new planetarium, built over a coal seam, is falling down.

The cafeteria is a beautiful modern building housing all the latest kitchen equipment and serving the worst food in the western hemisphere. People who have not been there do not believe. People who are eating there do not believe. You would think, for example, that nobody could ruin a toasted cheese sandwich: but the Clarion cafeteria can.

Becht Hall, in which the workshop students were housed during the first two sessions, has been condemned—it has cracks—but is still in use as a dorm, probably because decrepit as it is, it is still roomier, pleasanter and more fit for human occupancy than the new dorms of brick and aluminum. In our third year, because the president of the college lived next door and had got tired of the sound of typewriters all night, Katie and I were allowed to stay in Becht but the students were moved to Given Hall, a new dorm. Horror! Cinderblock interior walls! Sleeping cubicles ten by six! Rubber mattresses on wheels that dump you off the beds, banging your face on the electrical boxes that jut from the walls! Windows filled with aluminum louvers—doors locked at night! Help, help!

Outside, in Greater Clarion, the students made their own amusements. They stood in a row on the curb and solemnly stared at the driver of every car that came past. If

WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT IT?



it was a Volkswagen, they knelt. One of them, a nameless Kiowa Indian named Russell Bates who shall remain nameless, detonated a big gunpowder bomb on the fourth of July. My contribution was superballs. I bought ten a day and we lost them. Eventually we saturated the shrubbery around Becht; whenever we went looking for one lost ball we would find another one instead.

I remember the sun on the old stucco walls, and the girls with their piano legs lumping past, and the seven-foot thistles that grew near the front door of Becht. Life was simple there. We got up from our Spartan cots in the morning, cooked breakfast on a hot plate, took Jonathan to the babysitter, went to class. Then lunch, and a fat stack of xeroxed manuscripts to read in the afternoon. People dropped in, for company or rum. Then cheese, pretzels and beer, to fortify me for dinner in the cafeteria. In the evening, a little grab-assing on the porch—Frisbies, balloons full of water. And so to bed.

In our third year, Gardner Ozzois came to visit. Suddenly there was a procession marching down the hill. Robes, beads, head-

BY DAMON KNIGHT

resses. A solemn chant, "Yo...ho!...Yo...ho!" A slender virgin carried aloft, pale, arms crossed over her slacks. A whisper from one of the bearers, a short fellow: "I'm carrying the whole ass!" They laid her down on the walk in front of Becht. She struggled a little when Gardner put a candle upright in her crotch and lit it. Then he flourished a table knife and haggled at her tummy with it (a copout, it should have been her heart, but then she would have really struggled). Robin Wilson got there just too late, but we told him all. He was especially interested to learn that the college president had been standing on his balcony next door, smoking a pipe and watching the procession. "Did she really have a candle in her thingy?" he asked in a slightly hysterical tone. My wife said yes, but added kindly that it was not lit. "Whew," said Robin, wiping his brow.

In the workshop one day, Kate had assigned everybody a page or two of dialog to write, and we acted them out. Vonda McIntyre had written for herself an absolutely unsayable line, "The motherfuckers'll swim up your ass." When she tried to say it, it came out "motherfuckles." A new diminutive! "Up against the curb, motherfuckles!"

Another time, Glenn Cook had turned in one of his Tolkienesque adventures full of characters named Eilmaric Reigenshawn and Woldeimar Waggletooth. One of the other students complained, "I don't dig all these unpronounceable names. His name was Wiesław Zbigniew Czyzewski, and he looked up bewildered at the roar of laughter.

This is the kind of thing I remember, and it is hard to realize that the students in their spare time were not only reading all those manuscripts, but writing them. They worked half the night, and got up owl-eyed to attend Robin's earlybird class, and then went back and did it again. If we slackened the pace, they complained. Nine out of ten of them have turned into successful professional writers, and it is no wonder. Hats off. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



MONOLOG continued.

•The first Eurocon is developing momentum and structure. It will be held in Trieste in conjunction with the International Science Fiction Film Festival, July 12-16, this year. Attending membership is \$7., Supporting membership is \$4. American agent is Anthony Lewis, 33 Unity Av., Belmont, MASS 02178

•There is a new sf publisher—Leisure Books, Inc., which is now reprinting some of the older near-classics, but one day hopes to publish originals, too. Their first releases are: Final Blackout by L. Ron Hubbard (8439-0003-2, 75¢); Death's Deputy by L. Ron Hubbard (8439-0005-9, 75¢); Men Like Gods by H. G. Wells (8439-0001-6, 95¢); Star Begotten by H.G. Wells (8439-0004-0, 75¢).

Star Begotten has a George Barr cover; very nice. In fact, all the Leisure Books covers are striking. I see I forgot one of their releases: Act of God by Richard Ashby (8439-0008-5, 75¢).

•I talked with Harlan Ellison on the phone, yes I did! He is busy, busy, and more busy, as usual. He is doing a screenplay of his "A Boy and His Dog." He said the producer had agreed that there should be no compromise on the cannibalism in the story.

That would be one helluva movie if filmed honestly from Harlan's script.

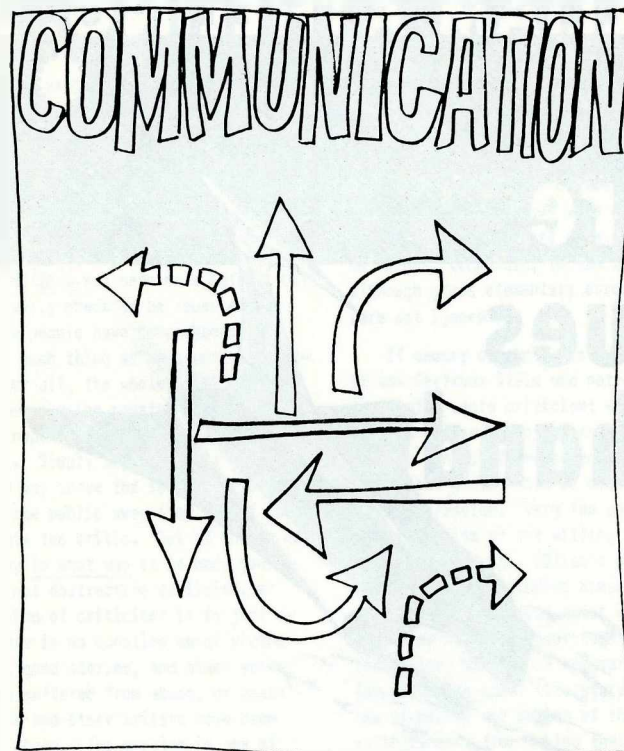
He also mentioned he may be assigned to do a screenplay of The Space Merchants. In the past, four scripts have been attempted, but none proved satisfactory.

•Greg Benford's humorous article in SFR 42 originally appeared in John D. Berry's EGOBOO #6. I forgot to give a credit last issue.

•Evidence of the scrinching SFR has to endure in this photo-offset format is as follows: "Neo-Classical Eschatological Bifurcation in Doc Savage: Some Aspects" was scheduled for this issue, but will instead appear in SFR #44. My apologies to all. Er....I forgot to mention that Greg Benford is the author of the piece.

•And I am the author of my discontent. ☐

The SFR cocktail: drink one and you want another Hugo.



AR

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Reviewed by Robert A. W. Lowndes

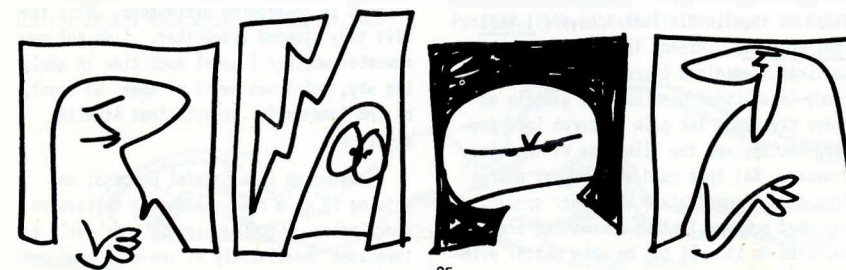
In his introduction, James Blish underlines a point that has been made before, but which constantly needs to be repeated because so few people have comprehended it: There is no such thing as destructive criticism. "After all, the whole point of telling a man he is doing something the wrong way is the hope that the next time he will do it right. Simply saying that a given book is bad may serve the secondary function of warning the public away from it, if the public trusts the critic. But if you do not go on to say in what way it is bad, your verdict is not destructive criticism, or any other kind of criticism; it is just abuse." There is no question about whether good books, good stories, and other works of art have suffered from abuse, or again that writers and other artists have been damaged by abuse. The problem is one of distinguishing abuse from criticism; this book is criticism.

Blish and Atheling are the same person, of course; originally, back in the 50's, James Blish started writing criticisms of contemporary science fiction, largely centered around current or recent issues of the then-numerous magazines, under the pen-name of William Atheling. I might have spotted the identity of Atheling rather soon had I remembered that this was the pseudonym Ezra Pound used when writing music criticism for

THE NEW AGE, an English magazine; there might, indeed, have been a real person named "William Atheling in the 50's, but once I had suspected Jim, and started looking for giveaways, I believe I'd have found them. The Atheling criticisms were of the same general nature as those done earlier by Damon Knight: technical, in the literary sense, although gross elementary errors in science were not ignored.

If memory does not mislead me, I believe it was Gertrude Stein who noted that no artist really wants criticism; what they all want is praise. That is an exaggeration, but the annals of the science fiction microcosm alone proves that it does not give a false impression. Very few authors either want criticism or are willing to acknowledge that they need it. (Blish's point is that everyone does, including himself.) Very few avid fans want to read about what is wrong with some of their favorite stories and authors; they want to be reassured that their favorites are great literature, prevented by the stupidity and malice of the literary establishment from taking their rightful place in the general esteem. And there is one point in favor of the conspiracy theory: as Atheling repeats, no other genre of fiction has so consistently judged as a whole by its worst exhibits. I'd add that this is still going on to a large extent, except that the academic pedants now pick out the worst to praise rather than to condemn.

Now whether anyone else wants to take science fiction seriously is none of my business and I refuse to waste energy trying to persuade anyone why he should. The only



point to be made, one which Knight and Atheling stress constantly, is that if you take science fiction seriously, if you consider it worth consideration as literature, above the ephemeral level of mere entertainment, then there is a price to be paid. "If ... then", a simple proposition which so many otherwise highly intelligent and discerning people have difficulty in grasping. If you do not consider science fiction worth serious attention, then this book, like its predecessor, *The Issue at Hand*, and like both editions of *In Search of Wonder*, is not for you.

I must confess that I, myself, am somewhat schizoid on the question. I do not like the price to be paid for taking science fiction seriously, for although I have enough regard for good writing to be interested in competent criticism of any form of fiction, it does seem to me as if the object of the Atheling-Knight drive is to eliminate the sort of science fiction which I enjoy most. When I read science fiction, I want, first of all, to be aware of the difference between science fiction and non science fiction; and while, in the past decades, there has been some notable improvement in writing (Budrys and Sturgeon for example, to whom a chapter each is devoted, and to whom I'll come later), this seems to have been much too much at the expense of the particular imaginative quality one formerly found only in science fiction.

The author shows some awareness of this in chapter three: "Things Still to Come: Gadgetry and Prediction", where he laments the loss of such wonder-arousing elements of science fiction (plentiful in the days before writers began to get self-conscious) as anti-gravity, energy screens, and those fascinating multi-colored rays. With the exception of Heinlein, who has not entirely lost either his sense of wonder or inventiveness (even if there is somewhat less evidence of them in his latest novel, *I Will Fear No Evil*), science fiction writers have confined themselves increasingly to the already-established gimmicks and gadgets as stage dressings for grim research into psychopathology and the illusions of the mind-blowers. Not that good work cannot emerge from this concentration on "inner space", but that science fiction is not the area in which to do it. It can be done better either

in the mainstream or the non-science-fiction fantasy approach; and, in fact, an awful lot of this material is not science fiction at all, but falsely labelled so.

Back in the 30's, I was very sensitive to criticism of my then favorite reading matter, and would have resented Damon Knight's proof that *The Blind Spot*, or Atheling's proof that *The Moon Pool*, is badly written, badly plotted, and inhabited by ludicrous caricatures. Today I can re-read Damon's comments on Austin Hall, etc., chuckle heartily - and still enjoy *The Blind Spot*, and some (though Lord knows, not all) of the others his operation has left strewn on the floor. Nor do I really care whether the self-inflated windbags of the literary establishment sneer at what I enjoy or proclaim that the latest novel by some crashing bore of a nihilist is a representative of the only science fiction worth an intelligent person's attention.

So I feel more than a little sympathy for the authors who emerge from the Atheling-Knight type of inquisition bleeding from every pore, their most popular works littering the landscape. (As Knight once pointed out, a bad story falls to pieces very easily, once you start poking at it, while a good story resists the process.) I sympathize because I, myself, have written material which seemed to me at the time, and which readers (I now realize) of somewhat low discrimination proclaimed good; it was painful to learn that we were mistaken. And I sympathize with fans who resent this sort of thing, because I remember how wonderful the novels of A. Merritt seemed to me back in 1932. It did not require Atheling to show me that the emperor had no clothes; the simple process of reading a wide variety of literature, and then going back to *The Moon Pool*, etc., was sufficient. Each time, the rewards in re-reading diminished, until finally they stopped altogether. I do not now remember whether I spent much time in analysing why, but I was aware of some, at least, of the fundamental defects that Atheling mentions.

Growing up is a painful process; and growing up as a reader is going to involve some losses. (You may retain your early enthusiasms indefinitely if you keep your per-

ceptions down.) Which doesn't mean that it is either wicked or imbecilic for anyone to enjoy *The Moon Pool*, etc.; however, if you have grown, you will find that you can only enjoy Merritt on quite different grounds than before. I use Merritt as a general example. There's nothing wrong with finding pleasure in lesser to low grade entertainment in the science fiction and fantasy field. (Of course, as Thoreau says, if you read all the rubbish that is published, you won't have time for the memorable authors. Nor, I would add, will you have developed the esthetic muscles necessary to read them. Rubbish is easy to read, while many - if not most - of the memorable works of fiction are difficult. They make demands upon the reader.)

Still, to repeat, it is possible to enjoy both A. E. van Vogt's *Slan* and James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, without finding any emotional necessity for maintaining that van Vogt is on the level of Joyce. Whether you can return to *Slan* as frequently as the Joyce novel is another matter. And then there is Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*, almost a paradigm for the wonderful story, filled with marvels which are not to be exhausted in one reading, that is very badly written.

There are three minor errors in this book, and I'll mention them now because, while not of the utmost importance, they are the sort of thing that injured authors and outraged readers will leap upon and stress for the sake of diverting you from what is really important. (1) The quotation ascribed to *The Snake Mother*, on pages 84/85, is actually from *The Conquest of the Moon Pool*; (2) *The Cavern of the Shining Ones*, by Hal K. Wells, appeared in 1932, not 1933: *AS-FOUNDING STORIES*, November; (3) the pseudonym under which John B. Michel wrote and sold a number of science fiction and weird stories in the 40's was Hugh Raymond, not

John Raymond. (John Raymond was the publisher in the 50's who, whatever his sins and misdemeanors, gave Lester del Rey the opportunity to show what he could do as an editor of science fiction and fantasy magazines.)

Otherwise, I find no errors, although there are places where I either disagree or at least have doubts. Yet, even one of these - the chapter on Algis Budrys - was valuable to me. That Budrys is an excellent writer, technically, I entirely agree. But *Rogue Moon* left me in a state of profound dissatisfaction, and I did not realize why until I read Atheling's criticism of it (originally written as Blish, I believe). What he praises as one of the story's strongest points strikes me as being its fundamental flaw: When all the characters in a story are clinically insane, then there is no contrast; and, in fact, sanity-insanity becomes so relative a matter that the terms are emptied of meaning. If everyone's crazy, then no one is crazy. (Atheling's suggestion that what may be wrong with you - any individual reader - might be indicated by which character in the story seemed most sympathetic to you is a brilliant one. Perhaps I should conceal the fact that I found them all uninteresting.)

Theodore Sturgeon, who is the subject of another perceptive chapter, is another contemporary science fiction author for whom (along with Budrys and Bradbury) I have great respect and admiration as a craftsman. I watched Ted (and Ray) rise from outstanding pulpeters to their present status, and I know that it did not come easily to them. They labored and kept working at learning the secrets of the language and of writing long after it was necessary for them to do so in order to sell almost any story they wrote. They have earned every penny and every compliment they've received - and more. Perhaps, then, the fault lies in me that I



cannot become interested in what Bradbury writes about or that I cannot accept many of Sturgeon's works (since the 40's) as science fiction at all - with the possible exception of More Than Human, which is so outstanding on its own terms that I really don't care whether it is science fiction or not.

My strongest doubts and misgivings are raised by the Atheling approach to a definition of science fiction, in chapter one: "Science fiction as a Movement: A tattoo for Needles". Granted that an author concerned with writing the best of which he can become capable may do very good work, using this as his esthetic foundation, it seems to me that the more general result will be pretentiousness and more support to the "Let's take the science out of science fiction" movement. I repeat: When you take the science out of science fiction, what remains may be good fiction, but you no longer have science fiction at all; and to call such material "science fiction" is to perpetrate fraud.

The final chapter, "Making Waves" is, for me, the best in that it surveys both the strengths and the weaknesses of the late "New Wave". To read some of the obituaries now, one would imagine that the entire movement in science fiction was a hallucination on the part of Lester del Rey and John J. Pierce, and that nothing of the sort ever happened. Nonsense; of course it did. It was an island of striving after what a few authors believed would result in genuinely better science fiction than we had seen in the past, entirely surrounded by phony publicity. (Some of the makers of the loudest noises against "Old Wave" writers have acknowledged that this seeming vendetta was actually a put-up job for the sake of puffing certain authors.) What I have found most - not objectionable so much as a crashing bore in much new wave material was its bent for naturalism. Edward Dahlberg has pinpointed what I find wrong with naturalism so well that I'll save both you and myself a thousand words of my explanations and quote one paragraph from his article in the January 31, 1971 issue of the THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW: "One of the reasons I object to naturalistic fiction is that the reader can find the same dreary, banal conversations in the book he heard in the streets, the shops, or in our wormy, desic-

cated subway. Who goes to a book to discover what he already knows? All colloquies, or nearly all, should be ideal; it is what people are supposed to say (that is, words in their imaginative hearts), and not what is actually said, that quickens the pulse of the reader. It is the letter, and not the spirit, that killeth the entire man."

Pages 117-123 contain the speech that Blish made at the Speculation Conference in Birmingham last year (1970). I believe it was during the discussion following this that Brian Aldiss drew attention to C. S. Lewis' remark that literature was becoming a new religion; and that he, Aldiss, found this a good thing. It's at times like this when I find I can no longer take science fiction (and sometimes literature in general) seriously - at least for a few weeks until the mirth has subsided. Not that there couldn't be worse religions - Lord have mercy, there are! - but that making literature into a religion not only gives us a pathetic religion but is just about the worst thing that could happen to literature.

This is not in the book, and Atheling nowhere states that he believes in a religion of literature. But there seem to be a fair number of indications that he would be an early convert to such a faith, were it officially proclaimed. I do hope I'm utterly wrong about this.



SCIENTOLOGY: THE NEW RELIGION by George Malko—Delacorte Press, 1970, \$5.95, 205pp.
Reviewed by Barry N. Malzberg

Malko has done his research: he's read virtually every official publication of the Scientology Foundation, he's read every article extant on Scientology since it began as Dianetics in 1950, he's spoken to a number of people who were in the movement for a long time and who attained certain influence within it, he's even attended a meeting or two to say nothing of an Orientation course at a Scientology Center in NYC but

Malko, sad to say, does not have the guts of the primary source. Asked at the end of the orientation lecture to take the Communications Course, Malko said that he would "think about it" and went back to his interviews. In doing this he turned what might have been a book of true scholarship into a text. Nevertheless...nevertheless, one can hardly blame him.

One had an analogous experience. In the November of 1970 I published a poorly-researched, often erroneous and quite subjective article about my experiences during a two-hour visit to a Scientology Center in New York City. The article has drawn any number of wrathful letters-to-the-editor pointing out my inaccuracies and a couple of vagrant compliments, most implying that although I had some interesting things to say, I didn't quite "go far enough". Why didn't I take the Communications Course? Why didn't I give Scientology/Dianetics a fair try?

I replied that this was all well and true but that I had only one mind and that poor as it was I had to live the rest of my life somehow with it; I did not want to blow its remains totally at the age of 31. I suspect that the same considerations inhibited Malko who nevertheless managed to eke out a respectable and well-documented hard-cover book from the center of his cowardice while your faithful correspondent had to settle for fifty dollars on acceptance and a threatened suit of eighty thousand dollars from a certain scientologist who felt that my article held up his masculinity to question. Malko got the better of the deal.

Nevertheless, despite the respectable body of information the writer presents here, the book fails as dismally as my article in trying to find some ultimate explanation for the complex history of dianetics/scientology and the very central role it plays in shaping the thinking of literally millions of people. I have spent a lot of time thinking about this - why in its twenty years of vernal, disorganized and very public existence dianetics has failed to yield one solid authoritarian investigation which would get to its center? - and I suspect that a good part of the answer has to do with the fact of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder. No one understands him, no one who ever knew him well

can or will structure his reactions and the central mystery of the man has been fused into his creation. What was he after? Did he take this seriously or was it all perpetrated for money? (Several sources remember Hubbard saying shortly after World War II that before he was through he would come up with the biggest moneymaking gambit of all time but then again Ron talked a lot about too much, often without conviction.) Did he indeed struggle for a workable system of behavioral science or was it merely manipulative, an extension of a personality which now and then expressed itself as a pathological liar? Or who? Or what? Until Hubbard is understood, apparently, there will be no explanation for dianetics and this explanation is, perhaps, crucial: scientology is serious business. Eventually, elements of it will be seen influencing public acts as well as private lives. Like the late murderers.

So what, precisely, is going on? Malko doesn't know (although he knows that he's scared of it) and most of the people in the cult couldn't care less, using it as a referent for private ends. I'll try a theory but unhappily; it will do until a better one comes along and it may even be a metaphor for the truth. Say that dianetics was created by John W. Campbell.

Why not? Campbell fed his contributors through the forties with multifarious ideas (he still does but they are different contributors, the energy is gone, Campbell has been a full-time editor now for over thirty years) from which they were to build stories. If he gave Asimov robotics, if he gave Cartmill the statistics on a fusion bomb, why couldn't he give Hubbard dianetics? Ron was one of the boys. After Final Blackout and his three years in the Navy, he was a story-a-month man.

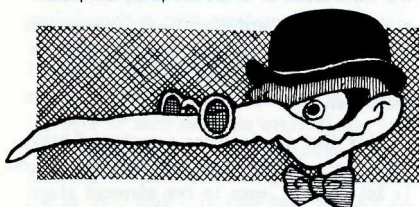
Say that the idea for a system of behavioral control came from John Campbell. Surely Scientology even in the advanced stage of today possesses referents clearly aligned with Campbellian rhetoric and philosophy: the question of technologizing human responses, the question of programming "heroes" to accomplish grandiose tasks, the hatred of organized science, the suspicion of those who "control" organized science for their "own benefit", the belief in acquired sup-

eriority through programming, the supremacy of the "hero" to a higher code...

Say that Campbell turned it all over to Hubbard who then did something extraordinary: instead of writing and delivering it as a piece of pulp fiction for 2¢ a word, Hubbard took it the organizational route. Wrote it up as nonfiction, fiddled around with a few people or many people to create "cases", came back to Campbell not with a story but an article and then, since John had after all originated the idea, offered him a piece of the action. The first dianetics foundation, of course, worked out of a post office box in Elizabeth, New Jersey, then and now Campbell's home town...

- And then say that when things began to get sticky around 1952, Campbell who was, after all primarily an editor, decided that he didn't want to run the course. Leaving all of it to Hubbard who transmogrified it to Scientology and now lives on a fleet of several yachts in the Mediterranean on an income which Malko estimates as being one hundred and forty thousand dollars a week. While Campbell, still energetic, wandered on to psionics, the dean drive, the Finagle Quotient and dowsing.

Conjectural. Sheerly conjectural. But it makes a prettier piece of writing than Malko's who seems to think that dianetics, like Hubbard, were spontaneously generated (nothing is spontaneously generated) and there for the moment we shall stand or sit. Hesitant readers who want it all spelled out for them are meanwhile advised that this book will do them little good and they might as well pass it up.



NEBULA AWARD STORIES FIVE edited by James Blish—Doubleday, \$4.95

Reviewed by Paul Walker

Perhaps an award is a mirror to its time, for aside from indicating, often inaccurately, "The Best of the Year," it is the best evidence available as to what a minority of

the readership thought should be called "The Best."

Generally speaking, the six stories anthologized here suggest the "New Wave" carried the field in 1969. The emphasis is on style, characterization, social realism with heavy overtones of romanticism, and a dash of fantasy and morality.

The introduction is provided by James Blish, who stoutly defends the Nebulas, and provides brief, but rarely illuminating, comments on each story. The afterword is by Darko Suvin, Professor of English at McGill University, and a specialist in SF. Blish says of him: "We have come a long way to have gained such a friend; perhaps someday we shall also be able to say we have earned him."

I was going to quote a paragraph of Professor Suvin's fudgy prose to give you an idea of his worth to the field, but on second thought, I will leave it to you. Suffice it to say, any non-serious, purely affectionate fan like myself caught in this context is likely to conclude SF is a dying genre. That, of course, is an erroneous assumption, and easily avoided if you stick to the stories themselves.

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The Best Novella, Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and his Dog," first published in NEW WORLDS in England, and in The Beast That Shouted Love at the Heart of the World in America is undoubtedly Ellison's best fiction to date, and an extraordinary story, less as SF as literature.

To begin with, it is truly an obscene story on essential and superficial levels, and in the best definition of that term. A "glorification" of violence, murder, and immorality. A sneering, smirking slander of Christian middle-class customs and ethics. A terrifying paean to anarchy, in which concepts of good and evil, right and wrong, civilized and savage are reversed, dictated solely by the circumstances of Ellison's futuristic environment. And if you fail to grasp this notion on both essential and superficial levels, I think you may miss the extraordinary significance of the piece: first, because the story is not a glorification of violence or allegory, or satirical repudiation of middle-class vs. street cult-

ure, but uses violence, profanity, and brutality in excess to portray a state of mind as alien to the common reader as anything in Ursula K. LeGuin.

"A Boy and His Dog" is the recreation of the state of mind of a future "juvenile delinquent," a product of his street environment which has become the whole world in the wake of nuclear disaster. Reading it, I was reminded of Warren Miller's beautiful The Cool World, for its blend of humanity and criminality; of Eldridge Cleaver's Soul on Ice for its pathological brutality, captured by Ellison's total narrative. But I think "Albert" is related more to the late fifties white JD than the contemporary black "rebel." In both books, and in Ellison's story, the point is unmistakably made: in the context of his environment, the hero's actions (rape, murder, cannibalism) are civilized, if not compassionate, in response to the necessities of survival.

What is so remarkable about "A Boy and His Dog" is that Ellison has had the courage and ability to boil down his own middle-class orientation out of both the story and the character, creating a sordid, perhaps slightly exaggerated, but nevertheless honest portrait of a world and its offspring, allowing us, compelling us, to accept both without self-justifications. "A Boy and His Dog" almost fulfills the Promise Ellison has neglected so many years.

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Samuel R. Delany's Best Novelette, "Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones," is either the second best story, or the first (I'm not sure.). It, too, is remarkable for entirely different reasons. It was first printed in NEW WORLDS and appeared, very slightly revised, in the USA in Carr & Wollheim's World's Best Science Fiction 1969.

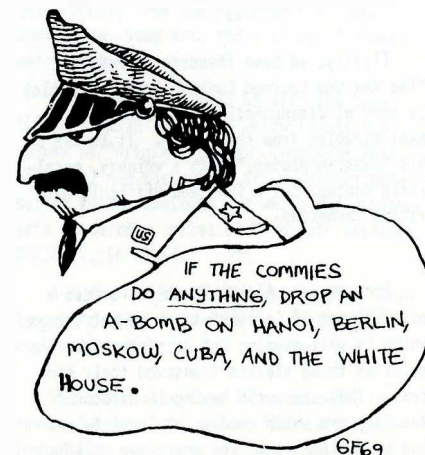
The first time I read it I quickly realized I could not make head-or-tail of the damn thing, so I shot through it, then started over a couple of hours later, reading very slowly. I imagine a third reading at normal speed would improve it still more. The title refers to the fact that the hero keeps time according to the changing password/codeword of the underground/underworld (called "The Word") which is always the name of a gemstone. In the beginning, it's Jas-

per; in the end, Pyrite. (A symbol there somewhere.)

The story is a "hologramatic flashback" to the anti-hero's first big job, which set him on the road to success. He is a small-time operator who has a briefcase of unspecified loot to sell, and in the first scene, he is informed by the police that they know it, and who, when, and where he is going to sell it to (something he doesn't know). The hero perseveres and manages to elude the trap, but in the meanwhile, Delany has a chance to work his special imagery.

Delany's prose is cinematic. Each scene, each fragment of each scene, is proportionately compressed and/or inflated to create the illusion of three-dimensions. His background is not a backdrop, but an entire world, a time, an era — perhaps, a fantastic romanticization of our own; perhaps half-ours, half-Delany's; perhaps, two-thirds prophesy, but incredibly real. His people are romanticized: pure-spirits, pure-hearts, but vivid. His prose is indescribable: the most practical stream-of-consciousness I've seen since Joyce, and a lot more readable; the most unintrusive, and unpretentious stylizing for accurate effects. It is difficult only because it is so new and unexpected, but worth the attempt for Delany has no tired profundities to offer, no dreary morality plays, but a glimpse of beings in the act of being, distilled to their respective realities. A marvelous experience!

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GE9

Ursula K. Le Guin's "Nine Lives," a runner-up, first published in PLAYBOY in 1969, is on a par with Left Hand of Darkness. If you liked one, you must like the other. I did not like either of them.

In her early works, City of Illusion, Rocannon's World, etc., Mrs. Le Guin did everything a woman writer does so well: a meticulous attention to detail, warm and sensitive prose, and most importantly, an unfettered romanticism that set fire to her adventures. Well, the talent has matured, but in the worst possible direction. The meticulous attention to detail has become an oppressive obsession; the warm and sensitive prose, a steel fist; and the unfettered romance is strapped into a straightjacket. Frankly, as much as I admire her enormous talent, and it is enormous, I feel suffocated in her stories. "Nine Lives" is a virtuoso bore, though I'm probably the only fan who thinks so.

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Robert Silverberg's short-story winner, "Passengers," from Orbit 4, 1968, is a nightmarish vision of a possessed world that does more than it intends. It is atypical of Silverberg's best while not necessarily being his best. Very chilling, very effective.

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Larry Niven provides the one real entertainment of the book in "Not Long Before the End," a parable reprinted from F&SF. It is a competent blend of fantasy and reality, verging on SF at the end, thoroughly readable and most interesting.

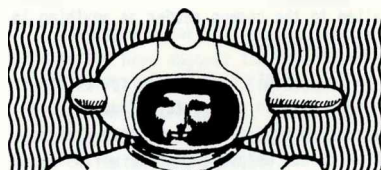
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Finally, we have Theodore Sturgeon's "The Man Who Learned Loving" from F&SF, which is sort of disappointing only because I expect miracles from the Master. It is one of his "passion pieces," with a weighty, moralistic ending, but a fine and difficult narrative technique.

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And, oh yes, Alexei Panshin provides a brief "Short SF in 1968" to round out things, which is well-meaning but uninformative. The point is these stories transcend their context. They are worth having in hardcover for they are worth reading at least twice. And in another five, ten years you will look

back and remember what they meant, and why, to 1969.



THE SPACE NOVELS OF JULES VERNE, Vol. One: FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON AND ALL AROUND THE MOON—Dover, 1633, \$1.75

Vol. Two: TO THE SUN? and OFF ON A COMET! —Dover, 1634, \$1.75

Reviewed by Wayne C. Connelly

Jules Verne was born on the 8th of February in Nantes, a city in the north west corner of France—this may well seem a rather obvious piece of information; nevertheless, it's the cardinal point to be made concerning Verne, particularly since it is so often acknowledged and then ignored.

The nineteenth century French writer is possibly most familiar to current English-speaking readers through the "Fitzroy" edition published by Ace Books and edited by I. O. Evans. There are, of course, many things to recommend this series: it's inexpensive, it's attractively packaged, it includes a number of Verne's less known stories, many of which have never previously been available in English translation. Unfortunately, however, all the texts have also been 'standardized', which is to say they've been cut up and spliced in the name of uniformity of presentation, and then even further rendered...into more or less modern English. The Ace versions, as a result, are often little more than caricatures of the original Verne novels and stories, skeletal reproductions, devoid of much of the sinewy tissue that made Verne a powerfully imaginative and pioneering writer.

Happily, an alternative—or perhaps more accurately a corrective—exists to the Ace series, and that's the two volume set presented by Dover Publications under the title, The Space Novels of Jules Verne. It's an especially interesting set for science fiction readers, of course; and even though much more limited in scope, it does provide a redressing of the perspective or outlook on Verne presented by the Ace Books series.

The most important feature the Dover publications have in their favour is a contemporary American translation by Edward Roth. To my admittedly amateur eye and ear, Roth's version comes across as the best and truest rendering of Verne, retaining as it does much of the familiar French style and idiom and at the same time conveying it in a smooth and literate English. Above all, though, Roth's is a nineteenth century translation, and so maintains the period atmosphere, a feeling which is inevitably destroyed by modernization.

Unlike the Ace series, the Dover texts are also complete; they're nearly twice as long, in fact, as most modern abridged editions. As a consequence, the humour which abounds in the original French is left undiminished, although some of it loses in translation despite Roth's attempts at reconstruction and even more has become less palatable in our (presumably) less jingoistic times. Verne's frequent and lengthy scientific expositions similarly remain intact; and in addition to possessing a considerable curiosity value, they play a key part in the background of the stories. The final virtue of a complete text, however, is its most important. When preserved in its entirety, the novel escapes either accidental or purposeful bowdlerizing—all the markers persist, for example, of Verne as a Frenchman living in the same era as Dreyfus.

The Dover edition has one further and most striking advantage: its inclusion of nearly a hundred of the original illustrations. In trying to view Jules Verne in his proper context—and that, of course, is what I've been suggesting the reader of Verne ought to be doing—it would be hard to over-estimate the influence of the drawings and plates. After all, his was a period in which the illustrations were thought of as an indispensable, an integral part of the narrative....Sherlock Holmes, to cite a classic example, never wore a deerstalker cap, nor did he smoke a curved pipe; at least, not according to anything Conan Doyle ever wrote.



QUARK/1 edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker—Paperback Library 66-480, 1970, \$1.25, 239pp.

ORBIT 8 edited by Damon Knight, Putnam, 1970, \$5.95, 219pp.

Reviewed by Richard Delap

1970 may well prove to be the crucial year in gauging the future of science fiction in short story form. While magazine sales continue to droop, anthologies of new stories are sprouting up as uncontrollably as wild marijuana—and the analogy is not entirely exploiting, either, as the best of the mind-blowing stories are turning up in books, not in magazines. The year's conclusion will hold special joys for readers who pick up these two books, one a now-standard volume which has produced some of the best stories of the last several years, the other a new entry that seeks to make "speculative fiction" as far-ranging as it can possibly get.

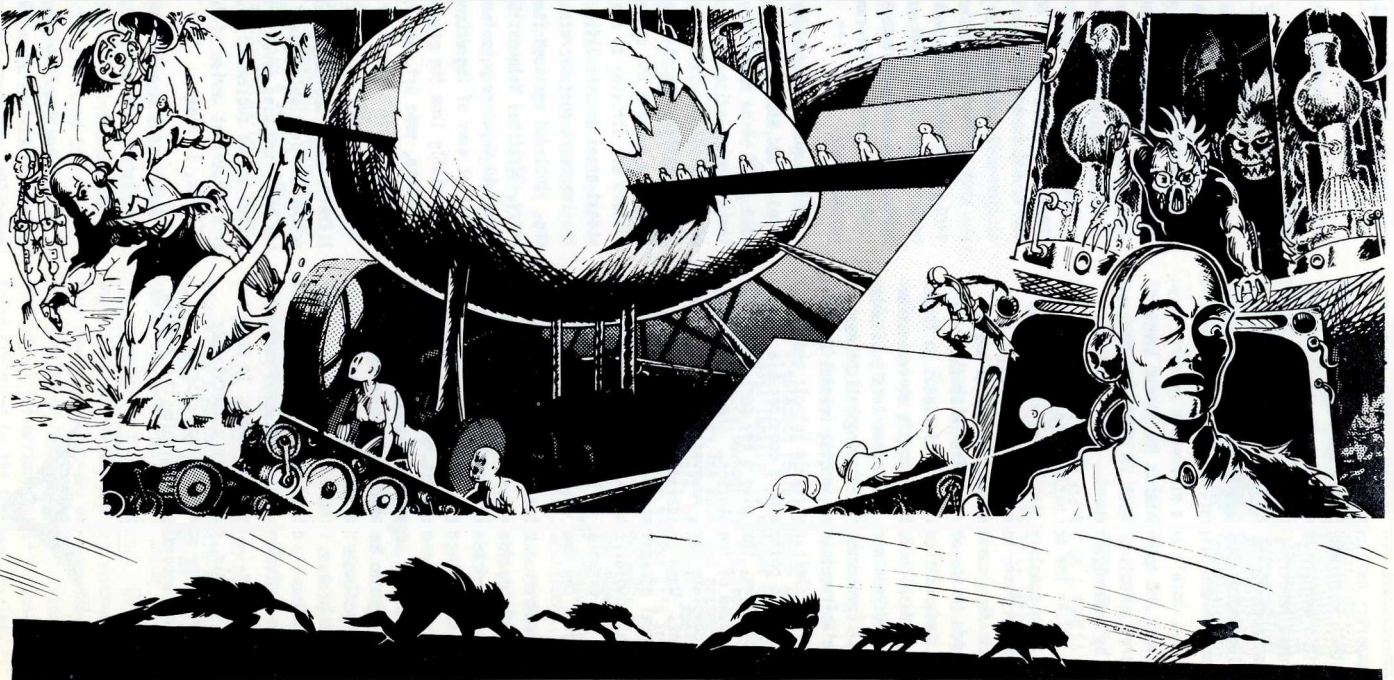
"Through the search for quality, QUARK/ hopes to add new resonances to those initials [SF]—so say Delany and Hacker in their opening editorial of this paperback quarterly of speculative fiction. The Joycean-scientific title is an almost perfect choice to reflect the cross-reference the editors are striving to obtain, from the widest areas of scientific speculation to the innermost root secrets of the human psyche. Included are such items as Delany's essay, "Critical Methods: Speculative fiction," in which he puts forward the assumption that many of the values of current SF stem chiefly from the groundwork of poetry, some verse, some art, and fiction of almost every sort.

My one quibble would be with the publisher's sales approach, which labels the volume an "original review" (whatever that may mean) and uses cover art seemingly more suited to the audience for which the publisher's concurrent series of "radical" writings, DEFIANCE, is aimed.

And for the stories? Well, you've simply got to stretch your mind...as far as it can reach...

With "The View from This Window" I now have no doubts that Joanna Russ is a blooming genius. How many writers have tackled

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE 13



GEORGE METZGER'S MAL-IG one of the most extraordinary science fiction stories ever written

WHEN WE PUBLISHED his first story, "Master Tyme and Mobius Tripp," in our seventh issue, we believed George Metzger was the most original and gifted science fiction writer to come along in twenty years -- in any medium. The stories he has published since then, "Mind Blast," "Kaleidasmith," and "Moondog," and the works-in-progress that near completion, have confirmed our belief. With each new story, he has grown as a writer and as an illustrator and as a graphic storyteller. "Mal-ig" is his newest story, brilliant and unique. If it could be told in words alone, we believe it would receive a Hugo award. It is a story you will never forget.

ADAM LINK'S VENGEANCE

by EANDO BINDER & D. BRUCE BERRY

ADAM LINK, THE WORLD'S FIRST THINKING ROBOT, WAS DYING, ENDING HIS OWN LONELY existence -- and then he was recalled mysteriously to life... This graphic story adaptation of Eando Binder's famous novela, drawn by D. Bruce Berry, achieves a depth and power unequalled by any other version. "You are pioneering into a new frontier," the author wrote. Published complete in this issue.

a new science fiction story by BOB FOSTER

WAR MACHINE

and... "AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN SEVERIN" John Benson talks with a leading graphic story and comic book creator, whose career has spanned the years from EC Comics to Marvel and *Cracked*. John Severin has illustrated many of the finest western, adventure, fantasy, and war stories published in comic books, and worked with some of the most notable artists, writers, and editors in the field. :: "NAME GAMES," by James Ware, a fascinating study in comic book pseudonyms. :: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR :: A full-color cover painting by D. Bruce Berry. :: 64 pages of stories and features.

coming...

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE 14 will conclude our two-issue Basil Wolverton numbers, and feature at least four never-before-published stories--two comedy yarns (one, the final "Powerhouse Pepper") and two serious graphic stories unlike anything Wolverton has done in comic books. There'll also be an exceptional interview with the artist by Dick Voll, the conclusion of Henry Steele's definitive survey of Wolverton's stories, and lots more wild Wolverton art. STILL AVAILABLE: A few copies of GSM 12, the first incredible Wolverton issue.

Full magazine size, 8½ x 11 inches, photo offset, saddlestitched binding, four-color covers--and now sixty-four pages. Single copies: \$1.25. Regular five-issue subscription: still \$5.00.

Bill Spicer
GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE
4878 Granada Street
Los Angeles, California 90042

now sixty-four pages, full four-color cover

the story of a love affair between a teacher and a student? Dozens, hundreds, more? But where most use enormous space to say very little, Russ wastes no words to carry more flesh than a bookcase full of popular novels. The story is provocatively embarrassing — but beautifully so! — as Russ' feminine viewpoint surprises you with frail hands that horrendously, monstrously rip your guts out! I am astounded, I am thrilled. I applaud the author. (For those who will question if the opening, unexplained paragraph makes it tentatively sf, my only rebuttal is that the story is too good to restrict and much too good to question.)

The corruption which festers beneath an 'innocent' surface has been a hardy base for uncounted melodramas, but it takes a writer with a keen eye for incongruity and a sharp sense of the ridiculous to do it without becoming incongruous and ridiculous. Hilary Bailey's eye is therefore extra sharp to take this basic and stand it on its head, turn it around and tell us the ass is the face in "Dogman of Islington." A family's reactions to the sudden power of speech in their pet dog lets go an unexpectedly funny/sad spectrum of deceit and treachery, with an honest, hard look at innocence the surreptitious revelation. In all departments, excellent.

Gordon Eklund, one of the most promising of the newer crop of sf writers, envisions a chaotic future in "Ramona, Come Softly" and pounces readily on the weaknesses that have led humans to this insanity. Bearing some interesting resemblances to Fellini's film, LA DOLCE VITA, Eklund seems equally at ease in exposing guilt, public lust for a scapegoat, religion — and best of all, Ramona herself escapes becoming a symbol rather than a character. She is fascinating, reflecting much of the evil humor of this nightmare loaded with double edges.



The theme of H. B. Hickey's "Gone Are the Lupo" is one of the sf staples — Man settles a new planet, conditioning the willing and innocent natives to a life of friendly servitude. Snappy, brightly written, entertaining, the story kisses the reader's hand all the way without letting him know that it is really testing for the soft, tender, juicy parts.

Gardner R. Dozois' "The Sound of Muzak" is a Security story set in an underground shelter, with a nice and nasty denouement that makes a whipping-post of the purists. Ursula K. Le Guin's "A Trip to the Head" has a false lead in nearly every paragraph, enough to free-associate the rationalist reader into an asylum (and a cell to share with Jean-Paul Sartre) — you make nothing of it, you make everything of it, you take your choice. Ed Bryant's "Adrift on the Freeway" is decidedly light yet manages to turn giant invisible birds, hippies, disappearing people and some good dialogue into an arresting combination. R. A. Lafferty's "The Cliff Climbers," Thomas M. Disch's "Let Us Quickly Hasten to the Gate of Ivory," and Joan Bernott's "My Father's Guest" are each short and generally good pieces.

George Stanley, Greg (ory) Benford, Christopher Priest, Sandy Boucher and A. E. Van Vogt also have contributions, all of which impressed me as the weakest pieces in the lot.

QUARK/ is a fine collection on the whole, however, off to a fine start and seemingly free of restraints. It'll be one to keep your eye on in the future.

The third volume in a single year (Orbit 6 being delayed from '69) heralds a really banner year for this leader in the original-story anthologies. With an ability to get the best from familiar authors (Kate Wilhelm, Joanna Russ, R.A. Lafferty, Avram Davidson) and bring to light new talents (Gene Wolfe, James Sallis, Richard Hill), Damon Knight has managed to head my list of favorite editors for a number of years. Orbit 8 again substantiates this choice.

R.A. Lafferty, a steady contributor to Orbit, has two stories in one volume again

(Knight seems unable to resist him as I am). In "All Pieces of a River Shore" Lafferty continues to confirm that man is but a speck in the eye of reality, bandied about on his own little world (which, anyway, is probably not his own at all) and stumbling over clues of an esoteric science that he understands, or misunderstands, only as myth or folklore or intuition. This time it is the discovery of "paintings" of the Mississippi shoreline, pictures which together form an incredibly detailed panorama of an unsullied, virgin land. The author's deftness with humorous characterizations once more enhances the biting comments on man's affinity for ignorance. In "Interurban Queen" Lafferty (the James Joyce of sf?) again employs the expert subtlety in language which delights the careful reader. No one is so adept at showing you a sparkling diamond — here, an alternate world where the horrors of overcrowding and pollution have been aborted with the total adoption of trolley transportation and tiny, multitudinous urban areas — then jolting you by tracing the shadows of its discovery to a bloody, mangled mess of human error.

Kate Wilhelm's "The Encounter" begs for pages of discussion, as do most of her psychological fact-fantasies, and a sentence condensation can only distort what must be experienced to be appreciated. Suffice to say, then, that the title is both perfectly apt and perfectly misleading. Put on your overcoat when you read this one — it's cold in more ways than one!

Avram Davidson continues to indulge his penchant for John Collier-like oddities, and "Rite of Spring" is another good one that casually, almost lazily, gives us a glimpse at an old-fashioned family — a blood-curdlingly old-fashioned family, brrr.

By a vivid stretch of the imagination you might term How Lee Wharton's "The By-stander" a fantasy, but the fact is that this story would be equally at home in Orbit, an intelligent slick, or a general anthology of American stories — in fact, anywhere holding a prime requisite of story, not type of story. It defies classification by cross-matching melodrama (businessman watched closely by the FBI), satire (the Mafia is the ultimate, but not perfect, organizer), and wholesome family fun ("I got



myself a maid...lives-in-gives-out, as the saying goes"). It's a dessert story, with a cherry on top that speaks its mind.

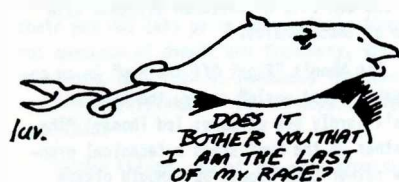
The sf elements in "Starscape with Frieze of Dreams" are neatly and inexorably interwoven with a horror story so that Robert F. Young is not forcing his mediums together but lets them melt into a single and surprisingly adept union. The imaginative "spacewhales" are intriguing, but no less so than the emasculating society which forces one man into a forbidden alliance with one of these whales.

Pip Winn's "Right Off the Map" is an enjoyable "lost world" story, the kind we don't hardly see no more; led Thomas' "The Weather On the Sun" stars a technical problem rather than people but should please those who like this sort; Gene Wolfe's "A Method Bit in 'B'" is a very tongue-in-cheek love affair with cinema cliches, and "Sonya, Crane Wessleman, and Kittee" is a clever study of human relationships; Graham Charnock's "The Chinese Boxes" breaks its mood with a climactic lapse in character but is otherwise interestingly written; Liz Hufford's "Tablets of Stone" succumbs to routine tragedy; Carol Carr's "Inside" is a sort of existential ghost story; Gardner R. Dozois' "Horse of Air" bobs its narrator in a sea of pretentiously arty descriptions before revealing (ho-hum) it's all in the mind; and, "The Book" by Robert E. Margroft and Andrew J. Offutt is a weak and stilted "message" tale that makes use of extra-conscious motivation in a story much too light to lift the weighty profundity it proposes to carry.

"One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty"

is likely one of Harlan Ellison's most readable failures; nevertheless, it is a failure. Anyone who is at all familiar with the author's past — as any fan should be since Ellison has often enough told of it, even exploited it — should immediately recognize the autobiographical (but not necessarily factual) inspiration for this story of a man who returns to offer guidance to his 7 year-old self. The emotion practically reaches up off the pages and grasps the reader's neck in a stranglehold, all but blocking his vision with no doubt honestly felt but littered introduced items of Consumer Nostalgia. And although Ellison seems not to be looking for pity or sympathy, he gives the reader little else with which to respond in this half-hearted story that spends too much time striving for reader identification and too little with honestly dramatic self-realization.

The Orbit series continues to reflect the many directions of modern science fiction and fantasy, and as such is indispensable to the modern sf reader.



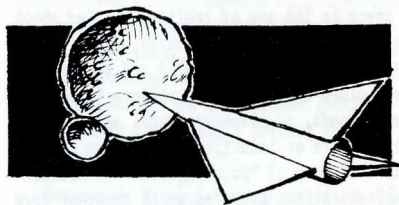
A THUNDER OF STARS by Dan Morgan and John Kippax—Ballantine 01922-9, 75¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

I believe Dan Morgan and John Kippax are British, which may explain my ambiguous reaction to their *A Thunder of Stars*. It is the old real-life treatment of far-future space travel, exposing the harshness and shady politics of yet-to-be-a-time. Everything is done neatly. The prose is crisp and alive, with a few startlingly awful moments. The characters seem real enough. The plot built on a firm foundation of possibilities.

Only the plot never materializes.

I wandered about a hundred pages into *A Thunder of Stars* with no idea what the story was all about. It seemed to be some kind of soap-opera involving true-love vs. inhuman bureaucrats, but I can't be sure.

I even read the last chapter and still can't be sure.



FIRST FLIGHTS TO THE MOON edited by Hal Clement—Doubleday, \$4.95
Reviewed by Ted Pauls

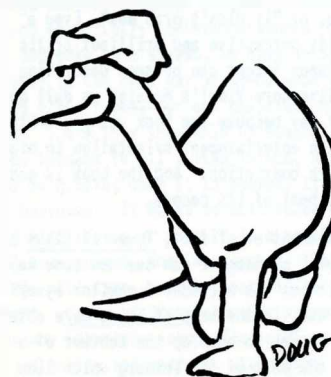
It was inevitable, I suppose, that the Apollo program would induce somebody to edit an anthology of first-flight-to-the-Moon stories. The idea for this particular volume was born at a 1968 NESFA meeting, and is apparently attributable to Clement and Isaac Asimov. It wasn't a very good idea, but they went ahead and did it anyway.

Man's first flight to the Moon happens, for a variety of reasons, to be one of the most sterile and unserviceable themes in science fiction. (An exercise for the reader: name any first-rate novel on the subject, other than the "classics" by Verne and Wells.) It was banalized into unconsciousness during the 1920's and 1930's, and with a very few exceptions the more modern SF writers who have employed the theme have been the technicians rather than the artists of the genre. The success of the Apollo program has made at least one valuable contribution to science fiction: it has removed that theme from the hands of the technicians and prevented more such stories from being written in the future; with the general and specific technical aspects now unalterably established, future stories on this theme damn well have to be about something really important, like the people involved.

Clement seems almost apologetic at one point about the quality of the SF in this volume. "I am aware," he observes in the introduction, "that the tales vary in literary merit." Indeed. And the reviewer must remark at this point that an anthology in which the selections have been chosen on some basis other than literary merit may have an interesting curiosity, but it is

hardly likely to be a successful anthology. There are in fact but two stories in this volume that, purely on the basis of merit, deserved anthologizing. They are Thomas M. Disch's brilliant and sensitive "Moondust, the Smell of Hay, and Dialectic Materialism", and "Intruders", by Edmund Cooper. The remainder of this book's 200-odd pages consists of a pair of introductions (one each by Clement and Asimov), an essay on the actual Moon flight program relating some of the stories to it, and ten stories ranging downward from mildly competent by Asimov (twice), David Grinnell, Vic Phillips, Paul W. Fairman, A. Bertram Chandler (twice), Larry Niven, John Brunner (the "green cheese" vignette) and Arthur C. Clarke.

It wasn't, as I said, a very good idea, but they did it anyway.



THE DREAM-QUEST OF UNKNOWN KADATH by H. P. Lovecraft—Ballantine 01923-7, 95¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

From 1919 to 1929, Lovecraft fell under the Dunsany spell and produced a number of similar pieces, few of which are known to most fans. This period culminated in the short novel (38,000 words) *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*. Though written in 1929, it was not printed during Lovecraft's lifetime but, later, serialized in the short-lived *Arkham Sampler*, reprinted in an anthology, and finally published in a small edition, which is now out of print. So the paperback issue of it marks its first major distribution, and, more than an act of poetic justice, it is a small monument to an extraordinary American talent.

There are five other "Dunsany" pieces

included (one a collaboration with E. Hoffman Price, which is inferior to the story that inspired it), and they are very different from the later, more nightmarish, Lovecraft. In my opinion all the stories have less in common with Dunsany than they do with Tolkien. They are tales of heroic quest, but not so much for heroic objectives, as for sensual ones. Lovecraft's heroes are uptight in provincial straightjackets, looking for a realization of their sensuous needs. And, while he lacked the genius of either Dunsany or Tolkien, Lovecraft made up for it in brilliance. These stories are not to be sped through, but savoured slowly—aloud, if possible.

If you read nothing else in the book, read "The Silver Key," which is a frank, intelligent polemic for the so-called "escapist" mentality.

PHANTASTES by George MacDonald—Ballantine 01902-4, 95¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

Phantastes was George MacDonald's first novel, published in 1858, when he was thirty-four, and it is a remarkable work on many levels. The prose is crystal clear, uncluttered by verbosity or excessive detail. The pace is swift, the incidents fully realized. The characterizations impressively contemporary. It is a work praised by such as W. H. Auden and C. S. Lewis. Yet I found it unreadable.

The eerie and often beautiful adventures of MacDonald's *Anodos* in a categorically unprecious fairyland, which are intended to reproduce the dream state, are allegorical — in the most unfashionable definition of that word. After four tries, I gave up for the time being. Like his classic, *Lilith*, this is a special book for a special time of life. I may be beyond it, or far behind, so I am keeping it visible on my shelves. I urge you to do the same.

THE SORCERER'S SKULL by David Mason—Lancer 74628, 75¢
Reviewed by Paul Walker

A would-be warlock and a hero-type who dreams of dazzling princesses and dark kingdoms agree to deliver the skull of the sorcerer Myrdin Velis to its resting place.

They encounter menace along the way and Armageddon at the end.

Mason is literate, professional and entertaining...if lightweight. There is some initial confusion over which of two leads is the hero but everything works out well.



TOWER OF GLASS by Robert Silverberg—Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970, 247 pp, \$5.95
Reviewed by George Zebrowski

This novel is the first offering in Scribner's new line of science fiction, edited by Norbert Slepian. As I write, the book seems to be doing well in hardcover, and Bantam has bought the paperback rights. The volume is offered as "a novel," although science fiction is mentioned in the jacket notes. I venture the cautious hope that we will at last have distinguished sf published in hardcover for what Willis McNelly calls the "maximum audience" — readers who understand that genuine creative work demands creative reading; an audience of readers who understand that they must read upward, permit little of what is explicit, indirect or assumed in a work to pass them by. "Readers unwilling or unable to provide what the artists demand remain blissfully unaware of some genuinely superior work...a quickened ear, a sensitive eye and an awakened imagination..." are qualities missing in many readers, McNelly laments. Readers operating on a high level of intellect and human involvement are still rare in science fiction. Many assume, quite casually, that what they have is enough and leave it to the author to make them react. Which puts the writer in the position of a clown who has to do his stuff in front of a lazy audience.

I have heard readers, writers even, remark with blase conviction that *Tower of Glass* is dull. I suspect, however, that this has more to do with the "entertainment" orientation of many readers and writers (it should be there, I hasten to add) rather than with serious concerns of literature, which should contain as many plus values

beyond honest diversion as possible. If a writer sets out to entertain, that aim will determine how he will write the work. But if a writer starts out with ideas and subject matter which is intellectually exciting, and with characters who must behave as they will (and not as the aim of entertainment might dictate), then he may come up with a demanding work which will seem dull and unentertaining to those readers whose responses, emotional and intellectual, have been geared, perhaps jaded, by the assaults of successive entertainment oriented works. Entertainment and novelty in sf can become deadening habits; they demand bigger and bigger doses in order to satisfy. Consequently, thoughtful, multi-directed works may float by the eyes of a casual reader and simply fail to register. Moderately difficult or complex works are described as boring, or "it didn't grab me." Even a normally perceptive and brilliant critic like Damon Knight can be seen describing a book like Gore Vidal's *Messiah* as dull on an off day because the book was not written with the entertainment orientation in mind, but with conviction. And the book is one of the best of its decade.

As a matter of fact, *Tower of Glass* is not dull, although I can see how some may find it so. As a reader I monitor myself as I read, in the hope of being more observant. I seek to open up the content of a work, the part of the iceberg which lies hidden. I found the characters, alternating styles, structure, details, and the ideas which the book is about, fascinating. For what *Tower of Glass* tried to do, the pace was right. The superficial reader will notice that the ideas are familiar; the perceptive reader will see the depth to which Silverberg has penetrated.

Briefly, the story is about the building of a huge tower on a northern tundra. It will be used by Simeon Krug to contact interstellar civilizations. Krug is a powerful tycoon and the creator of the various classes of androids who work for him. They are building his tower, while he buys and sells them for service and ignores all signs that in creating them he has created a second humanity. Eventually the androids topple him and his tower.

Now what are the depths here? They lie

in the ideas, vivid characters, descriptive sensations, the language of visualization, the sense for beauty, the simplicity, power and grace of the writing.

Let's look at the ideas. The spectrum of intelligent entities: womanborn, ectogenes, androids. All are men, by any reasonable view; all are legitimate, with the needs and capacities of men. Ethically, the artificial children of men are just as natural as womanborn and ectogenes (externally gestated men), and their revolt is legitimate, their claims to be treated as more than "things" is correct. They are as much real men as Krug's son, Manuel, who comes to defend them. What Silverberg shows is that beings belong in the moral/ethical realm of consideration by virtue of their consciousness and ability to choose and act like free beings and not by their origin. If we make beings essentially indistinguishable from men and make them slaves, we have failed morally in the same way as we do when we enslave other races, our own children, or aliens. There is a threshold of humanity which belongs to all living things, however they originate; once it is passed, it's a new ballgame. It makes no difference if we hold high ideals or not; it is a psychological consequence, and inescapable, that free beings will take what they need to be themselves. *Tower of Glass* shows us human beings who inhumanly grasp after godlike power and goals, and androids who aspire to humanity — a goal they are capable of achieving.

ing. They are in fact human because they inherit their humanity from humans who gave it to them out of a sense of pride, in the way a father wants his son to be best. Krug treats his right hand android, Thor Watchman, with pride, just as if he were a man; some of his human flunkies receive less attention.

The interesting question suggests itself — where does humanity begin? An artificial being of say 40 IQ is still a tool, a slave...where does mind begin? When do we recognize ethical behavior, responsibility, concepts of choice as applicable? Will we someday come upon a situation, or beings, and not be able to recognize these qualities? We have done it in the past, and continue to do so — in race relations, in large businesses, in the attitudes of parents to children, and in our personal treatment of those people that we hold to be beyond the pale. And because Silverberg has written his parable as science fiction, it will not be tied to a particular set of events, and will date very slowly, if at all.

Throughout, Silverberg maintains a clarity of expression, elegance of emphasis, and a kind of pace that permits my kind of "up to it" reader to reflect and let implications come forward. He paints a marvelous "inside the experience" sensation of androids genesis, psychology, education, and how the world and men look to an android. There is something noble and clean about the



discipline and stance of these beings; they are better versions of us, reminding me of Asimov's Susan Calvin saying in a philosophical moment, "They're a cleaner, better breed than we are."

The tower itself: a beautiful human artifact, built to express the immortality cravings of a man, and mankind; which makes the tower a possible symbol of human achievement in all its past record. In fact, the tower is made to communicate the human, earthbound experience to the stars, to beings who might exchange their knowledge and experience with us. Krug deeply feels the need to make something lasting out of his life, and he is believable in his ambition and in his incredulity when his will is challenged. He even builds a ship to carry him to the stars once contact is made with another race; the ship is his "morning bark" — the ship the Pharaohs hoped to use to travel in across the heavens after their death. Krug believes in the reality of his journey in suspended animation to the stars. An interesting point about Krug which reinforces his view toward his androids is that he believes that aliens will be manlike, and he is appalled when he learns that they may be totally alien. When the tower is destroyed, he makes for his ship and dies/departs, totally dominated by hope and illusion. He is a god who gave birth to a new branch of humanity on earth, and departs, thus repudiating his son/sons.

The interwoven present tense narration, which lends a splendid immediacy to the motion of events, finds its final justification in the ending, which is totally immediate and moving, as Krug ascends into legend and all the central figures take on the stature of myth beings.

The book is perhaps too short and might have benefited from a longer middle. I suspect, however, that a careful reading will show that it is at its proper length, and that too quick a reading destroys its natural pace, and produces that feeling of pressure which the entertainment, thrill seeking reading so often resents in a genuine work of art. I may be wrong on this minor point, and the book should be slightly longer. But I don't think so. More likely it is its deceptive simplicity, clean lines and clarity which make it seem too short. The book deserves a second reading.



CHILDREN OF TOMORROW by A. E. van Vogt—Ace 10410, 1970, 254p., 95¢

Reviewed by Fred Patten

This isn't a novel as much as an advertising booklet for Dianetics.

Commander John Lane of the Space Control returns home with his fleet after ten years on a galactic exploratory mission, during which he made passing contact with a militarily superior hostile ET race.

His report causes a tightly-suppressed military panic, and the Space Control begins arming for a possible attack.

Unknown to the Terrans, the ETs have followed Lane back to Earth and introduce a spy disguised as a human teenager into the community around Spaceport, to learn the Terrans' weaknesses before attacking.

Meanwhile, Lane — a single-minded career officer — dimly gathers that the social structure of his city has changed during the time he was gone. Teenagers are no longer raised by their parents (though they still live with them), but belong to small social outfits rather like co-ed Scout troops, in which they raise each other, holding open meetings after high school classes in which they all gather to frankly discuss each other's adolescent problems, in order to mature cleanly and clearly into the first really well-balanced adult generation in

history. Lane's daughter, now 16, is a member of such an outfit.

Lane, who prides himself on his logic and clear-thinking, immediately assumes the outfits to be gangs of juvenile delinquents (having made no attempt to find out anything about them, and in contemptuous disregard of the unsought advice of all his colleagues and friends) and vows to destroy this puerile threat to adult dominance.

In the meantime, to rescue his daughter from what he's sure is a disgusting den of sexual promiscuity, he attempts to get her romantically interested in a dashing young Space Control captain, whom he selects solely for his clean-cut appearance. As a matter of face, the captain (young, but too old to have participated in the stabilizing emotional training of the newly-formed outfits) is a space-wolf who immediately tries to seduce his Commander's daughter.

Susan's outfit regretfully decides that her father is a psychic menace to the community and orders all the other adults (throughout, presumably, the world) to send him into Coventry, which is promptly done.

Also meanwhile, the octopoidal alien spy — who is a teenage alien spy — decides that, hey, these outfits are groovy things, and when his father (a leader of the aliens, naturally) finally orders him to return with the information that will allow them to destroy the Earthlings, he declines on the grounds that he kinda doesn't think his patrol leader would dig it.

Sadder but wiser, Commander Lane finally agrees that the outfits are performing a valuable social service for humanity after all.

Are you still there? Wait, it gets worse. I haven't told you about the writing yet. On page 7, to introduce one of Lane's best friends, van Vogt has Lane address him as, "My dear Mr. Desmond Reid, my old friend, my adviser, my supporter at key moments,"

Lane's first meeting with his wife after their ten-year separation is described, "Inside the house there continued to occur a number of the things that a husband and wife do and say when they have not seen each other for nearly ten years. But kissing

and words of muffled happiness can only go on so long between the most joyous of couples. ... Lane seemed slightly bored, and accepted the woman's kisses with distinctly less enthusiasm. ..."

On page 89, when Sennes (the space-wolf) is taking Susan for a ride in his spacecraft, van Vogt has him think, "sennes could almost visualize the engineer glancing at another expert, and saying, 'Jupiter level.' He even fantasied the presence below of an ignorant VIP who in his innocence asked 'Jupiter level? What does that mean?' And of course the engineer would lazily reply, ...", as a device to tell the reader in detail how the space-drive works. (And this technical lecture is supposedly the thought-train of a young man who is, we are assured, intent upon Ruining the innocent young girl with him.)

The gem of the book is on pages 83-84 and is, unfortunately, too long to quote here, but it's some of the most hysterically purple writing I've ever encountered in science-fiction.

Dianetics isn't ever mentioned by name, and it's probably a good thing, because I don't think that plot logic and writing like this is going to win many converts to it.



WATERS OF DEATH by Irving A. Greenfield—Lancer 74655, 75¢

Reviewed by Earl Evers

Technically, this is a mediocre book — the writing and plotting are reasonably smooth and readable — but in over-all effect, it's one of the worst SF novels I've ever read. (The copyright date is 1967, and I think Lancer just released it — they must have bought it in some incredible blunder and tucked the ms away somewhere hoping it would quietly evaporate or something. Now, I imagine, they're publishing it in the hopes it won't be a total loss, and I hope they're wrong. I hope it loses them enough money that they'll hesitate before publish-

ing a piece of shit like this again.)

Waters is set in an over-populated world run by a 1984-type government that electronically conditions people how to think. The hero is a marine biologist trying to find out why crop failures are occurring in the undersea farms which feed most of the population, and he's also the conditioned pawn of one of the ruling "Council of Five" who is planning a coup. The coup succeeds, but the undersea crop failures turn out to be the result of long-term water pollution, and hence cannot be avoided. Society then collapses, most of the population is doomed to starvation, and at the end, the hero is killed and eaten by a mob.

Pretty depressing, sure, but it could be the plot outline of a novel as good as 1984. Only it isn't. The characterization is completely wooden throughout — you just don't care what happens to the characters, because all they do is think and talk clichés, and nowhere in the entire book does anyone really try to solve the mess the world's in. The government people at the top are not only tyrannical, they're incredibly stupid, and everyone else is either ignorant of what's going on or hopelessly brainwashed. So there's no real conflict.

Thumbs down.

THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH by Walter Trevis
Lancer 74650, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

This is a reprint of a 1963 SF novel by the author of The Hustler. His reputation would have been better served if it had not been published at all. It is the story of a slightly-alien alien and his misfortunes among us savages. Buried in the turgid prose is a fine book with believable characters and a suspenseful plot, but everything is overwritten to the point of exasperation.

THE MIND CAGE by A. E. Van Vogt—Belmont
875/1093, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

A.E. Van Vogt has one thing in his favor — he is a born mystery writer.

The Mind Cage is a whodunit in the guise of an SF novel. A young General of the

Great Judge, fighting to restore Terra after WWII, finds himself in the body of a man condemned to die. Can he survive to track down who or what did this to him?

The plot becomes a futuristic gothic.

The Mind Cage was published by Tower Books in 1952, and has now been reprinted by Belmont, with one of the homeliest covers ever.

BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES by Michael
Avalone—Bantam 55674, 75¢

Reviewed by Paul Walker

This is Michael Avalone's novelization of a screenplay by Paul Dehn from the story by Mr. Dehn and Abrahams, based on characters created by Pierre Boulle in his novel Planet of the Apes, as depicted in 20th Century Fox, who has produced this sequel from the script, based on the story by Paul Dehn and Mort Abrahams, from which Michael Avalone created... where was I?

Well, anyway, to Avalone's credit he realized the limitations of the plot and gave it the bland treatment it deserved, which, if it does not improve the silliness, at least saves him from the responsibility.

KELWIN by Neal Barrett, Jr.—Lancer 75133,
95¢

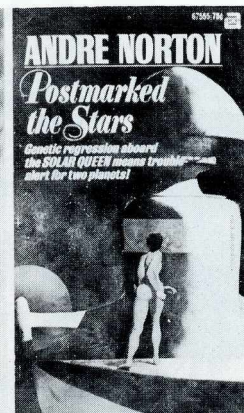
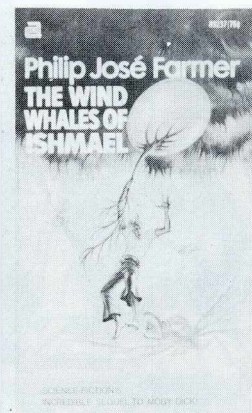
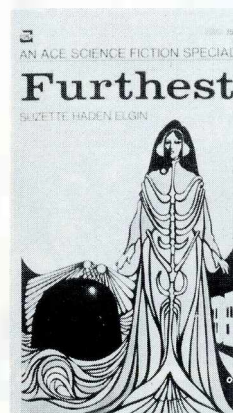
Reviewed by Earl Evers

This is a sword-and-science swashbuckler set in a post-catastrophe North America divided into warring feudal states. I found it mildly interesting, but I'd never pay 95¢ for it.

I suspect it's a first novel — the style is a bit amateurish and the transitions between scenes are so clumsy I kept getting lost. The plot is a series of implausible intrigues and last-minute rescues, and the characters are so sketchily drawn it's hard to tell who's betraying whom and why. And there are a number of inconsistencies and scientific errors—for example, you just can't drive a hot-air balloon against the wind by firing "tubes of gunpowder." This was actually tried in the 19th century and it didn't work then, so it isn't going to work in 2906 AD either.

ace Science Fiction

March New Releases



---MARCH RELEASES---

31800 HAVE SPACE
SUIT--WILL TRAVEL by
Robert A. Heinlein 95¢

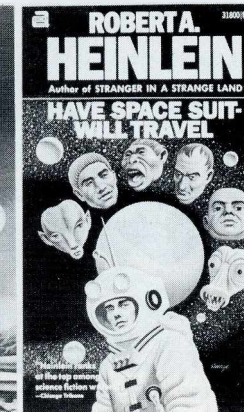
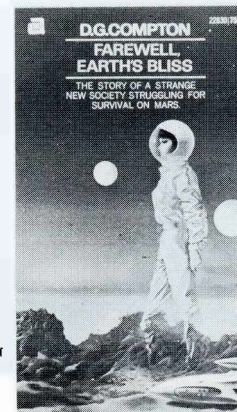
67555 POSTMARKED
THE STARS by Andre
Norton 75¢

22830 FAREWELL,
EARTH'S BLISS by D.
G. Compton 75¢

89237 THE WIND
WHALES OF ISHMAEL by
Philip Jose Farmer 75¢

25950 FURTHEST by
Suzette Haden Elgin 75¢

11182 CLOCKWORK'S
PIRATES / GHOST
BREAKER by Ron Goulart



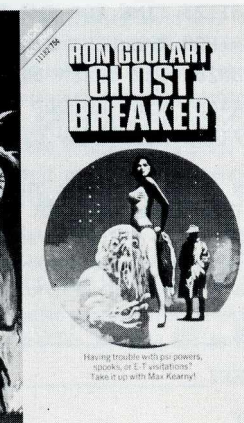
--FEBRUARY RELEASES--

05500 BETWEEN
PLANETS by Robert A.
Heinlein 95¢

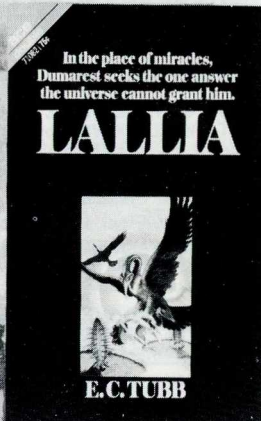
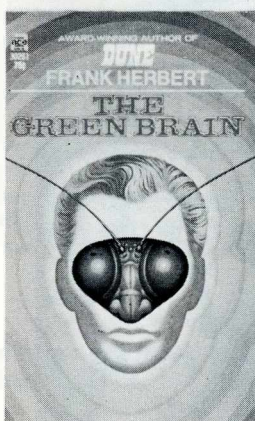
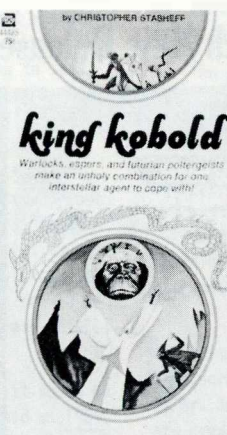
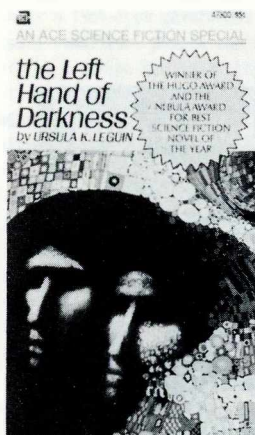
18630 THE ECLIPSE
OF DAWN by Gordon
Eklund 75¢

06615 THE BLACK
MOUNTAINS by Fred
Saberhagen 60¢

05595 BEYOND
CAPELLA by John
Rackham
THE ELECTRIC SWORD-
SWALLOWERS by Kenneth
Bulmer 75¢



April New Releases



---APRIL RELEASES---

- ___ 81125 TIME FOR THE STARS by Robert A. Heinlein 95c
- ___ 47800 THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS by Ursula K. LeGuin 95c
- ___ 30261 THE GREEN BRAIN by Frank Herbert 60c
- ___ 44485 KING KOBOLD by Christopher Stasheff 75c
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"Meanwhile,



back at the newsstand..."

Those mysterious annual prozine circulation figures are once again all available, and here they are:

	1970	
	PRINTED	PAID
ANALOG	169,720	110,330
F & SF	102,657	50,301
GALAXY	101,628	46,091
IF	109,001	35,230
AMAZING	83,766	29,189
FANTASTIC	83,895	28,768

These are the average figures claimed by the publishers for the reporting period ending October, 1970, and since distributors take several months to deliver final sales

reports, the actual year covered may have ended last summer. A glance at these figures will show why prozine editors and publishers are nervous people.

You can also see why ANALOG looks so much better and pays so much better. While ANALOG distributes many more copies than the other magazines, it also sells two out of every three copies that go on the stands. Yes, the other publishers would more than double their profits if the distributors would take (and actually display) twice as many copies, provided the sales percentage did not drop. But if only one out of three copies sells, the enterprise is still marginal. I wouldn't want to put my money into such a grim situation.

Doc Lowndes' prediction in SFR #42, that the science fiction magazines will be dead by 1980, was terrifying, at least to me as an unreconstructed prozine freak. Unfortunately, I can't offer anything but personal

a column

David B. Williams

optimism to counter his dreadful forecast. We can only thrust out our lower lips and remember that the sf magazines were supposed to die fifteen years ago with the rest of the pulps. But, somehow, they are still here.

The newsstands are just too damned crowded. The great days of the special-interest magazines are upon us, and shelves burgeon with movie, cycle and sex mags. Our particular problem, however, is often the general circulation digest magazines that take up rack space—READER'S DIGEST, PAGEANT, CORONET. I have watched a good outlet for the prozines dry up before my eyes in the last few months. I used to be able to buy every one of the six regular titles at the tobacco counter at the Chicago-Sheraton. Now the little man that comes around every Monday and Wednesday leaves 50 copies of each of the above general interest digests and, if the nice lady who looks out for my interests can corner him, three copies each of ANALOG and F&SF. Because the shelf is already full, these get wedged in with only the spines showing. No one is going to notice them unless he already knows that they are there—something the overnight hotel guest does not.

The paperbacks are also killing us. Bookstores without any magazine displays are setting up larger and larger displays of genre paperbacks. I think that regular but uncommitted sf readers are going directly to this source and passing up newsstands altogether. My greatest fear is that the current paperback boom will overexpand itself and then crash, as the prozine industry has done more than once. Then, with both the prozines and the pb's shriveled as markets, the writers will be in for hard times and we readers are going to share them.

One indication of the pb's domination of the market now is the fact that with hardly any exception, every novel serialized in the prozines in the past year has been destined for paperback release. And this same phenomenon is applying more and more to shorter works. The Ace Special collection of Brunner's "Traveler in Black" novelets actually hit the stands a week ahead of the last novelet's appearance in the April FANTASTIC.

In the last month I have been assaulted twice by that dubious habit that writers have of producing "template" stories—short works that are destined to fit together later on to produce a single long work. The theory is that each of the segments stands as a complete story in itself, with a common character or background or overall problem tying them together. The practice does not always confirm the theory.

For example, Jack Vance is at it again in the February and March F&SF, creating panoramic worlds and filling them with strange and interesting characters and events. I haven't (blush) read much of Vance, so I greeted this serialization with some anticipation—F&SF doesn't usually bother with serials unless they're something special. I should have been forewarned by the editor's note that accompanied the second installment: Mr. Vance has finished a second and is currently working on a third novel set on Durdane. Things were just building to what should have been the most exciting part of the story when I turned the page and discovered that I had reached the end.

The problem that led Vance to abuse his reader's good nature is one of plotting. The novel begins with the protagonist's youth, and the problems he faces in reaching maturity and being aid to his exploited mother form the spine of this story. The larger problem of the society of Shant and the Faceless Man ties this story to the one that will follow. Unfortunately, Vance has his hero resolve the first set of difficulties at the midpoint of the book, and then takes up the Faceless Man in earnest. Who is the Faceless Man and why doesn't he act to protect Shant from the murderous inroads of the Savage Rogushoi? With the entire second half of the story devoted to this theme, the reader is justified in assuming that it will be resolved.

Vance carefully prepares a mysterious stranger to tempt the reader into guessing that he is the Faceless Man. He is not, of course, but when the Faceless Man is revealed, he is no one who has appeared before in the story, a complete blank, a zero as far as story value is concerned. And here, with the real Faceless Man within the protagonist's power, the story ends. Since the basic problem of the last half of the book is

why the Faceless Man will not act, rather than his identity—and this is proved by the fact that he turns out to be nobody special—Vance's failure to give the reader an explanation is unacceptable. I recommend that you not read this "novel" until the second (and, if you're smart, the third) book is at hand.

The second specimen this month is "Wolf Quest" by Ted White in the April FANTASTIC. This is the first hunk of a novel that will be published by Lancer as the third book in the Qanar series. White has, happily, avoided the technical problem that Vance stumbled over by using different protagonists and problems, but a common background, for his series.

"Wolf Quest" is a journey story. Accompanied by a strangely friendly wolf, the hero travels and meets adventure. The crux of the narrative (and it's just that—dialog is limited when only one man and a dumb animal are on stage) involves the crossing of a vast desert. The story comes to an abrupt halt just as the two companions are within sight of salvation but unable to continue. Should the hero kill the faithful wolf to gain the nourishment and fluids he must have to survive, or should he kill himself, thus providing the wolf with salvation? Only one can make it, and only at the expense of the other. The question is not answered.

At first I felt cheated. After some thought, I still feel cheated, but I can see a certain justification for the author's

crime. The story as presented is a "what would you do?" story. Instead of stating the solution to a moral dilemma, the reader is forced to search himself for the answer. I don't believe that this type of conclusion is really justified, however. If we are to supply the conclusion, we might as well supply the story too. What are writers for?

A second criticism I have with "Wolf Quest" is: this story is not science fiction/fantasy. While the background may place the series in an alternate world/dimension, the content of this story does not justify its appearance in a science fiction magazine. The only unusual feature is the strange attachment that the wolf has for the hero, and since no explanation is offered, this doesn't justify the sf label. The wolf may have been raised by a boy of similar age and bearing, thus attracting the animal's companionship. With this or some equally plausible explanation, nothing that happens in the story would be out of place among any primitive people right now, or in pretechnological times if you prefer. This is a story of character development, without benefit of any scientific or fantastic element from which all else follows.

The reader of this segment can only wonder if such an element appears in the next two-thirds of the novel. As a novelet in FANTASTIC, this story should have made way for another ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



Then I Read....



By The Editor

In my review last issue of Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris*, I commented that the translation from the French to English had perhaps distorted the style somewhat.

I have a postcard from Mr. Lem in which he clears up a point—the novel was translated from Polish to French and from French to English. He thinks the translation from Polish to French was a bad one, and the one from French to English fairly good.

In any case what we read in the Walker edition is Lem twice removed. That the novel survived as well as it did is a tribute to its basic substance and power.

★

Do not waste your time and/or money on *Indoctrinaire* by Christopher Priest (Harper & Row, \$5.95, 1970, 227 p.).

It is a science fiction novel of the Absurd in which the plot is idiotic, the characters irrational beyond the explanation in the plot, and the action almost totally pointless.

Indoctrinaire is either an Absurdist novel or it is the worst novel ever published by a major publishing house.

The reader is asked to believe that one man from 210 years in the future can con an agent of a top-level U.S. intelligence organization into a questionable field operation all the while subject to fits of insane behavior...without a security clearance.

That there will be no language differences in English after 210 years and a cataclysmic Third World War which makes a radioactive hell of America and wipes out England.

That the war is started by an invasion of Florida in 1973 by almost the entire army of...Cuba. (Never explained.)

That elementary time paradoxes are never considered by scientists vitally concerned with them...until too late, of course.

That a mind-altering gas used during the 1973 war could remain unchanged, undiluted, in the air for 210 years.

It would take pages to detail the inconsistencies and unrealities of "fact" and behavior in this book. I refuse.

The whole point of the book is that it is pointless, without meaning, absurd, and senseless.

Young writers love to write nihilistic, cynical novels like this; they have discovered that the rules we must all live by are necessary lies, and they resentfully wish to rub everyone's face in this Truth. If the author is very talented and skillful he can do this entertainingly. But too often he does it insultingly and badly, as is the case with Christopher Priest and *Indoctrinaire*.

★

Ron Goulart continues to spin formula cotton candy with satirical flavoring in his latest Doubleday book, *Gadget Man* (\$4.95, 1971, 161 p.).

Utilizing the same incredible, fractured, dis-United States of the future that he explored so well in *After Things Fell Apart*, he forgot to be funny and satirical until almost a third of the book was gone, then came up with, for example, a party being held in support of a liberal teaching machine being opposed by conservatives.

A quote is in order:

Hans raised a mechanical fist. "Maybe I march on der Junta capital, right in San Vorty Square, mit a few hundred servomechanisms und androids. Dose Junta guys would tink twice if dey see me strutting down Spring Street mit two hundred angry refrigerators marching behind me. Yah?"

Hans is the teaching machine.

The book is fun, amusing, but essentially empty. A potboiler that barely earns its reading time.

★

Poul Anderson's *Satan's World*, for me, began slowly and picked up in interest and excitement as the book progressed, as David Falkayne, Nicholas van Rijn and their alien-type companions: Adzel, of centauroid build; and Chee Lan, an entrancing bushy-tailed, white angora furred biped....as I say, as these get into deeper and deeper trouble in pursuit of enormous profit and as a result of trying to save each other's skins. They

tangle with a bull-like alien race over rights to a rogue planet, prevent a disastrous interstellar war, and manage to come out of it far, far richer.

But this is not one of Poul's better efforts; it has run-of-the-mill flavor and a kind of juvenile narrative. Some of the by-play reminded me of Captain Future and his companions: Gragg the robot, Otho the android, and Simon the encapsulated, floating brain (with eyes on stalks, remember?).

Satan's World appeared in 1968 in ANA-LOG, was a Doubleday book at \$4.95, and is now in a Lancer pb edition (Lancer 74698, 75¢).

★

The Great Brain Robbery by James B. Fisher is a slow-starting routine story of an unaware, psychically powerful student conned into taking sides in a battle between other-dimensional alien worlds. The story picks up the pace, though, and generates some unpretentious, old-time pulp excitement. Happy ending, of course. (Belmont 2072, 75¢)

★

FREEZING DOWN by Anders Bodelson; translated from the Danish by Joan Tate—Doubleday, \$5.95, 1971, 179 pages.

This narrow-focus novel dramatically and convincingly proves that old saying: THERE AIN'T NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH.

It starts in 1973 with Bruno, age 32, discovering he has cancer. He accedes to Dr. Ackermann's wishes and allows the hospital to "freeze him down" until a cure for his cancer is found. He is one of the pioneer subjects/recipients of this service.

Twenty-two years later in 1995 he is brought up/thawed and is cured...but there are physical-psychological side-effects, and the society he had "left" has changed dramatically—to one centered on medicine and on two classes of people: those who can afford it and are willing to work forever are given multiple transplants and/or freezing down to prolong their lives indefinitely...and the others in "now-life" who are given a short life of no-work and luxury, if that is their choice, in exchange for their body-parts.

Before he was frozen down, Bruno had fallen in love with Jenny, a ballet dancer; he learns she had crippled her back and was frozen down, awaiting the time when a completely new spine can be implanted. Bruno demands and finally gets frozen down again until Jenny is brought up and they can be together.

But when they are thawed... Well, it doesn't work out, for a variety of valid reasons which are inevitable and sad...in the year 2022. The society around them is in chaos. The hospital center is under attack.

Finally, Bruno is frozen down to a semi-comatose state, his body unable to take a third full freezing. And that's the end... with his mind running a terrifying boyhood memory in an ever-shortening "film-loop".

The novel is gripping, personal, and involving. Don't pass up an opportunity to read it.

☆

Sometimes, when I wish a different opinion on a writer to present to SFR's readership, I read a book sent for review (because I like the writer's work and can't resist) and then send the book to someone whom I think will give a fresh slant and new insights.

I did this with Roger Zelazny's Doubleday book, *Nine Princes in Amber* (\$4.50, 188 pages, 1970).

The reviewer, for various reasons, couldn't get to the actual writing of the review, and returned the book.

Ah, but tucked into the book were his notes. So I am hereby reviewing with a two-eyed viewpoint.

There are three deficiencies or flaws or whatever in the book which make it another good bad Zelazny novel. When I read it first I gobbled it up uncritically, carried along by the Zelazny magic which is a blend of skillful, swift-paced narrative, an intriguing fantasy world and a cast of supermen.

The flaws: the book is a segment of a larger whole (Jack of Shadows is another section); the central character, Corwin, one of the Princes of Amber, is tough, driv-

en, callous—not very warmhearted; and the writing is sloppy in that American slang, new and out-of-date, is used inappropriately sometimes by Corwin, sometimes by his brother Princes who have a much wider existence and experience than the United States—they are originally from Amber, the real world (our Earth is a "shadow world", an alternate Earth, one among hundreds or thousands).

Corwin has been banished, defeated, from Amber by a brother in a power struggle after the death of their father, the King. Corwin, after amnesia and healing, resumes his struggle to regain Amber and take the crown. At the end of this first novel-length segment he has been defeated again but has escaped a dungeon in Amber and will resume the fight...later.

Zelazny's skill is shown in the structure of this first book—the way he slowly unfolds the background and shows the reader that our Earth is only a satellite to the true Earth, the center of reality, Amber. The story starts in the mundane and gradually expands into the reality of pure fantasy.

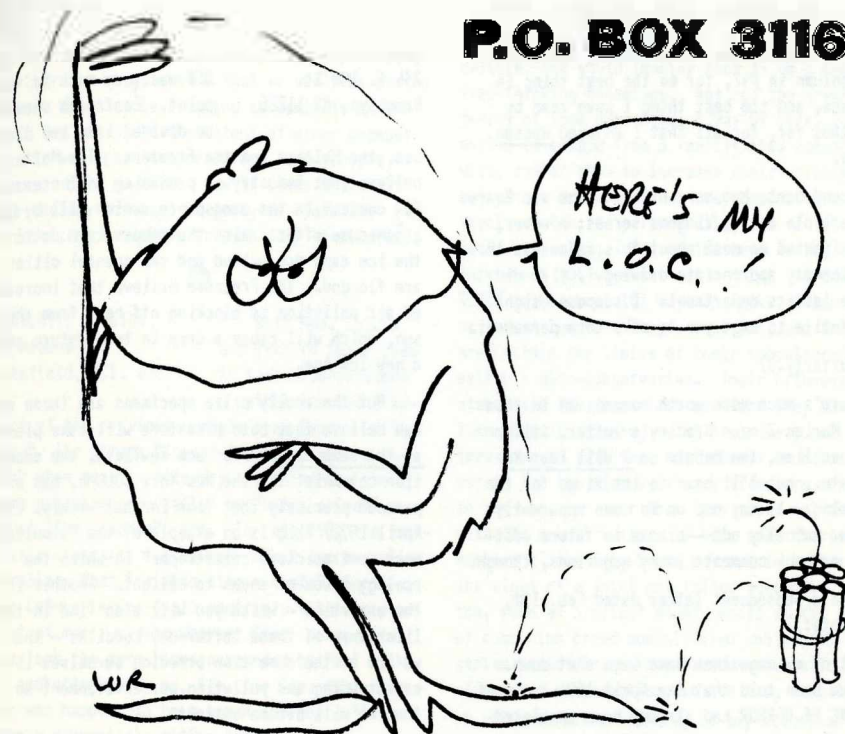
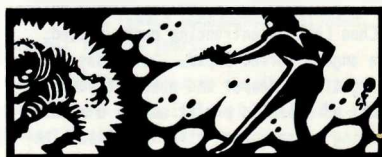
Perhaps Zelazny deliberately used phrases like "You bet your sweet ass," "I dunno," "Keep the faith," "Eric can cream you..." etc. to speak in the vulgate, to make it easy for the reader to accept the fantasy by linking it with common slang.

Or perhaps he wrote the book in a hurry.

It's still a good book; it could have been a bit better; and it is still an incomplete saga novel.

☆

The *Star Treasure* by Keith Laumer is pulpish space-opera, full of cliché scenes, dialogue and formula. The book becomes ludicrous as Lt. Ban Jarleton faces imminent death time-after-time and is always saved, of course, to eventually become a psi-powered superman, leader/master of all mankind...in the last two chapters. (Putnam, \$4.95, 1971, 188 pages.)



ROBERT A. W. LOWMEDES
717 Willow Av.
Hoboken, NJ 07030

The term "hack", like the term "amateur" has such a broad variety of meanings that you should

take care to look into them and make sure you pinpoint exactly which one or ones you mean, if your intent is criticism; you say that this or that is a hack work, or so and so is generally or always a hack writer, and show why. If your intent is abuse, and nothing more, you toss out the word "hack" alone and trust that most of the readers won't think about the variety of possible meanings but assume the worst. (Interestingly enough, while "amateur" can be complimentary at times, "hack" never is, unless carefully qualified. Mozart and Beethoven, for example, each did a fair amount of hack work, but neither were hack composers. The most famous example, perhaps, is Beethoven's WELLINGTON'S VICTORY, which he did strictly for ready cash. However, he was fascinated by the whole thing and wrote it with such gusto, and obvious pleasure in what he was doing, that the so-called "Battle Symphony" is still fun to listen to, when you're in the mood.)

Back in the early day of the Republic, you can find ads in the papers (I've been told) from

P.O. BOX 3116

writers who would offer to write on any side of any question. In some instances, an author would be hired by a publisher to write on both or several sides, under different pseudonyms. Now this was positively hack work. But the hack writer was not necessarily a poor writer; most probably he was a very skillful one, who turned out well-constructed and convincing arguments for each position he assumed. Needless to say, such persons were not highly regarded, as the author had to wear some masks he obviously didn't like or approve of.

We also call the poor, inept, sloppy writer who manges to link up with a publisher who cares nothing for literary quality, but has a formula which will sell the products to an indiscriminating audience, a hack. Also a generally good writer, who, out of hunger, dashes off first drafts and sells them, is doing hack work at the moment. Then there is the writer of some, but not much talent, who has at least a minimum amount of interest and perhaps belief in the worth of what he is writing—the sort who ground out millions of words for the oldtime pulps, most of them readable, but none much above competence. Yes, this fellow was a hack—but he was doing the best he could. There really ought to be a

slightly less pejorative word for him.

All of which comes from reading Piers Anthony's column in #42, for me the best thing in the issue, and the best thing I have read by Piers thus far, for all that I enjoyed Hassan and Qrrn.

Second best, but very high, for me was Boardman's article on the Viagens series; however, what delighted me most about this issue was the magnificently appropriate drawing T. Kirk did for the letters department. I suppose (sigh) it is futile to urge you to make this permanent.

((Utterly.))

There's much more worth comment on in this issue, Marion Zimmer Bradley's letter, Silverberg's outline, the debate on I Will Fear No Evil, etc., but I'll have to let it go for the time being. It may pop up in some apparently odd—or actually odd—places in future editorials or book comments in my magazines, though.

((In a subsequent letter dated Feb. 17th, RAWL wrote:))

All of my magazines have been shut down.

I've been told that the April 1971 issue of MAGAZINE OF HORROR had already been completed before the shutdown, so it will appear. Likewise the April issue of EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN, which was paired with MOH.

((SFR readers will be happy to know that Mr. Lowndes' long comment on Don Wollheim's new book, The Universe Makers, which had been intended for BIZARRE FANTASY TALES, will appear in SFR 44. His comments on Blish's More Issues At Hand in this issue of SFR were also intended for a subsequent issue of BFI.))

ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES I agree about the ultimate situation — it does not look as if AMAZING and FANTASTIC will last much longer, but I'll continue to hope, as I did with my own magazines last year, when it looked as if the end had come right then. Well ... we did get out one more issue of all of them, and two of EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN and MAGAZINE OF HORROR. (Interesting coincidence: both died at the end of volumes, Number Ten for EXU and Number Six for MOH. The 6's come in to EXU, too, as it first appeared in 1960, and, despite the actual number to be seen on the final issue — 61 — had exactly 60 issues. #59 was never published. And STARTLING MYSTERY STORIES had exactly 18 issues, also ending at the close of a volume. A numerologist could have fun with those statistics, I doubt not.)

JOHN BOARDMAN
234 E. 19th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11226

That cover on the last SFR was very much to the point. Ecofreaks seem to be divided into two classes, the Melters and the Freezers. The Melters believe that industry is producing an increased CO₂ content in the atmosphere, which will by the greenhouse effect raise the temperature until the ice caps are melted and the coastal cities are flooded. The Freezers believe that increased air pollution is blocking off heat from the sun, which will cause a drop in temperature and a new Ice Age.

But the really prize specimens are those who can believe that both disasters will take place at the same time. Dr. Jack Newfield, the education columnist for the New York COLUMN, has expressed precisely that fear in that weekly. (3 April 1970) This is an example of the "simultaneous contradictory catastrophe" in which the ecology movement seems to delight. Another is the assertion — which you will also find in the literature of these latter-day Luddites — that we are at the same time breeding ourselves into overcrowding and polluting our environment so that we will become extinct.

Well, this is basically the old "Stop Science!" movement with some modern furbishings. Fifty years ago it was "Stop science and preserve the Pure Faith" and now it is "Stop science and preserve the Pure Water", but the basics of the movement are the same. People feel uncomfortable with the speed at which modern life changes, and with the admittedly unwise uses to which scientific discoveries are being put — not, let it be stressed, by scientists. So they decide that at some point, 2 or 3 or 60 centuries in the past, life was free, clean, and pure, and they start a Movement to return us to utopias that exist mainly in their own imaginations. Meanwhile, you may note, none of them will abandon such conveniences of modern technology as penicillin, the Salk vaccine, electric lights, telephones, or printing presses.

And the claim by one of the Melters, Roger Lovin of the LA FREE PRESS, that a rise in the atmospheric temperature of 2 degrees "could totally destroy most of the life on this planet" (11 Sept. 1970) is pure nonsense. Both the Melters and the Freezers are going to find things to support their positions. For the past 500 years the oceans have been getting warmer, and we may be at the peak of the cycle now. (The Greenland settlements of the Vikings were founded at the last such peak, and got frozen out

when the chill came.) And as for Ice Ages, there have been 4 or 5 in the past million years without an industrial revolution being responsible, so there is no guarantee that we won't be having more. Which cycle is going to dominate in the next few years, to the extent of minor changes in air and ocean temperatures, is anybody's guess. But, no matter how it comes out, half the ecology movement is going to claim that its predictions have been triumphantly vindicated.

CHARLOTTE BOYNTON
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Both Mme. LeGuin and Richard Speer seem to have misunderstood a rather important aspect of the previous wrangle over "women writers." The phrase "So-and-so writes like a woman" when used in literary criticism has the same negative connotation as "woman driver", "just like a woman", etc. In rejecting the anti-female standard, I likewise reject the masculine corollary that "writing like a man" is Good. The LeGuin letter dealt admirably with the concept of manly style; whereas Speer managed to overlook the core issue expounded by Paul Walker and attacked by me, i.e. the idea that a writer who happens to be a woman thereby suffers from a congenital writing defect.

JUSTIN ST. JOHN
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Having fully recovered from paroxysms of demonic laughter resulting from reading Norman Spinrad's "FIADOL" in SFR #41, I suppose all that remains is for me to Say Something.

What else can I say, but BRAVO!!!

Someone has finally told science fiction fandom where it is at: someone has actually taken the time to inform the Space Cadets that sf is a form of serious literature, that many (although, unfortunately, too few) of its writers consider themselves serious artists, and that it's about time we all stopped fucking around. I was one of those who heard about fandom before experiencing it; to say that my expectations did not measure up to the reality would definitely be an understatement. The kind of people one would imagine to be involved in sf, a field dealing with the strange, the outre, the unconventional, would (logically enough) be somewhat strange, outre, and unconventional themselves. One would be Dead Wrong, and one would realize it, perhaps, after attending just one convention and meeting a number of individuals who, in the immortal words of Anne McCaffrey, leave a wet,

curiously snail-like trail wherever they go.

The situation is similar in the drug subculture: one would imagine them to be a pack of free-thinking bohemians. Not so: the great majority of them make drugs A Way Of Life... their motive is escape from a reality they cannot cope with, rather than to increase their ability to enjoy this one. And thus they become very much involved with the paraphernalia, the ritual objects, the slang, etc. of the drug world; they talk about 101 ways to roll a joint the same way SCREW talks about 101 Ways To Fuck... with fervor and at length. They are boring, and they are (within the limits of their subculture) inevitably ultra-conservative. Their orthodoxy stems from the precarious position they have put themselves in: having built their very own alternative to life they must always be careful not to let the already flimsy structure change in any way, for fear that they could not deal with the new situation. I have seen charter members of the drug Scene cry out in horror at the sight of a joint not rolled according to Custom, much as a priest might recoil at the sight of communion bread administered unblessed. Escapism breeds insecurity breeds a neurotic brand of extreme conservatism; in the drug subculture, in science fiction fandom, in any situation you care to name.

The situation has nothing to do with fandom (that is, with the idea of fandom); it has everything to do with the kind of people who get involved and their reasons for involving themselves. To paraphrase (and also take completely out of context) Isaac Asimov's comment on science: fandom is not a Good Thing or a Bad Thing... it is a Thing.

The vicious cycle that has preserved that Old Time Fannish Religion (escape literature breeds escapist fans breeds escape literature) has been broken at its source; the writers, for the past few years, have refused to copy down the same old technocratic formula drivel, and are now doing more for the field than all the papier mache spaceships and their cardboard operators have done since Hugo Gernsback decided to make a few bucks with AMAZING... that is, they are beginning to realize that sf is actually a potentially worthwhile literature, and that they are actually capable of earning that designation. And so fandom is beginning to change, as Norman Spinrad has observed. Head fandom is an Omen. So is SFR, truly an exceptionally literate (would you believe 'strange, outre, and unconventional') publication by any standard. Fandom doesn't have to be Downtown Burbank; a good portion of it isn't now, and it's Only A

Matter Of Time....

Thank you, Norman Spinrad.

((Well... Justin, thanks for the kind words re SFR, but I doubt that this magazine is significant of anything but my own neurosis (I have this all-consuming lust for mail, mail, more mail!). I note that your premise (and Spinrad's) is still that fans somehow control science fiction. That is bullshit. The marketplace controls sf; it's what sells that determines the character of sf and its trends. There are more readers of sf pocketbooks, and that readership is not single-minded—it has a liking for a variety of types of sf and fantasy, including the 'literate' kind. Societal and cultural forces beyond anyone's control have created a larger sf readership, some of whom like sf as Literature. Fine. But it wasn't the writers who brought this about. Ye Gods!))

JERRY JACKS
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I just, rather late, got hold of a copy of SFR 41, not my very own personal copy, the one I keep sequestered beneath the confine of my pillow (along with the Serbo-Zambian pillow book), but one brought to my apartment in the hands of a ministering neo, somewhat disguised as a George Senda. This issue did contain, amidst the varying states of treasureable prose, an article by Norman Spinrad which he has entitled FIAMOL. Said article hit me right about HERE, (HERE being where my incipient ulcer pangs its various juices into the small of my large intestine).

The Spinrad article was about 80% accurate, that was perhaps the major galling factor that engorged my soul with upsettedness. Spinrad seems to feel that the first fandom crew, the "Establishment", still are running the fan scene, that the same phenomena he described within his article are going on. This is not true and to see this one must simply look at who is doing what in fandom.

Who, for example, are the people running the conventions, not neofans it is true, but not First Fandom either. How long has it been since a first, or even a Second Fandom type person chaired a major convention. The people he seems to be most inveighing against seem to be those fans who have gone on to control the publishing industry, not the fans who "control" (as if anyone could control) fandom. Spinrad, in doing his article on fandom, really, at least to my reading of the article, was doing a soliloquy

on the state of the publishing field.

I can agree with Spinrad that the fans have a very disproportionate control over the literature they seemingly adore, but I think that the opinion within fandom is so diverse over what constitutes "good" science-fiction, (or even what is science-fiction), that any supporting view can be found. Spinrad makes fandom sound like a closed "Mafia" of the well read middle class, forming into a secret society to control the publishing houses, rather than the semi-anarchistic miasma that fandom truly is. One factor Spinrad didn't even seem to consider is that much of modern fandom doesn't even read much science-fiction anymore, they are fans because they like the other people involved.

I don't think the article portrayed fandom in its true colors, as a fun group to be in, even at its worst pedantic, and this I think is truly unfortunate as the article went into an "overground" men's magazine, KNIGHT, in its first incarnation. Maybe next time fandom will get accurate coverage, but "sigh", I doubt it.

RICHARD ELLINGTON
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I've been thinking of doing a small edition of an old Jack London story-essay ("Goliath") just for the fun of it. It's a sort of utopian speculation thing, of only minor interest to sf people—though sf, it's primarily just another facet of his utopian thought stuff. Know any artist who might like to do a cover for such a thing? Can only offer a good litho job and return of the original.

((Rather than suggest anyone, I'll let the artist volunteer if he has the time and the inclination.))

As to books on environmental pollution and solutions to the problem, I can only offer as a possible interlineation:

Help stamp out paper waste—stop publishing ecology books.

Actually, about one of them in ten is well worth the effort and the rest are about 90% trash—but I guess that's to be expected from bandwagon jumping.

It's kind of amusing to see how Spinrad sees fandom and I suppose it will annoy a lot of people. Oh well. It's also mildly annoying to see the different nuances now being placed on FIAMOL ((Fandom Is A Way Of Life)) and FIJAGH ((Fandom Is Just A Goddamn Hobby)) (I didn't coin the

phrases or their use, but I did start the bit of using initials on them). To me, FIJAGH and FIAMOL were always just the two facets of fandom—the one being the relaxed, easy-going attitude and the other the fuggheaded, sercon-only viewpoint. I also disagree that science fiction can't be a group experience. It doesn't have to be, any more than rock music does, but fans do go to conventions and fan parties a whole lot...

GREGG CALKINS
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I guess I don't know the story behind the "FIAMOL" article. Surely Spinrad was writing this for a mundane audience or perhaps the NSF welcomittee, but even so he gets a little more fuggheaded at times than his audience requirements would seem to indicate. I confess to being sort of out of it where recent fandom is concerned, too, but FIOAGDH buttons? For FIJAGH? As I recall it—checking back to the cover of my FAPazine for the February 1963 mailing, which you possibly don't have right at your fingertips—the actual phrase is "Fandom is just a Goddamn hobby" with Goddamn being one word, which comes out FIJAGH. Maybe it's been corrupted in recent years through ignorance. Fandom is! just a Goddamned hobby, of course, and that's the whole point. You don't surrender your trufan beanie, as Spinrad suggests, (it's trufan, not trufan, by the way) by recognizing the truth. You can spend as much time and effort and idolatry on your hobby as you wish—on any hobby—but when you start thinking it is a way of life is the point at which you start losing touch with reality. If uncomfortable things happen to those who subscribe to FIAMOL in spite of our constant reminders that FIJAGH, all we can say is that they brought it upon themselves.

Incidentally, I wanted to tell you last time that you and SFR have been responsible for me reading a good deal more sf recently than I have in years past...reading more and enjoying it more, to be precise. I have to thank you for your generally excellent reviewing staff (I have one or two disfavorites but I can always use them for their consistency in seeing things just the opposite way I do, so I buy the books they knock) for reviving my interest in sf.

Largely as a result of your reviews I have bought: Let the Fire Fall, Up the Line, The Year of the Quiet Sun, Rite of Passage, The Left Hand of Darkness, The Jagged Orbit, The Palace of Eternity, The Heaven Makers, Stand on Zanzibar, Nightwalk, Macroscope, Nightwings and Isle of

the Dead, and so far I've read all but the last title. I must say that by and large I am impressed with the quality of the work. This is not to say that I enjoyed reading all of the above or thought they were great books or anything like that—but I was left feeling the impact of most of them, maybe you can even say all of them.

For sheer enjoyment I'd have to nominate the Panshin Rite of Passage. Heinlein seems to be sort of a dirty word about fandom recently, but this novel is the equal or better of many of Heinlein's "youth in a spaceship" novels of an earlier age. I suppose the next enjoyable was Silverberg's put-on, Up the Line—I got quite a kick out of it, at any rate. The Left Hand of Darkness was probably the best novel of the bunch in terms of story and characters, well deserving of the Hugo if I may assume most of the books I've listed to have been among the competition. The worst book of the bunch was Macroscope, although at the beginning I thought it the most promising. I don't know what happened, but eventually the book wore me down and finally knocked me out. Finally, curiously, two books I did not really enjoy while reading are the two that have had the greatest impact—I find myself thinking about time on and off, many weeks after reading them, and I see constant references to what Brunner was talking about in the daily press—The Jagged Orbit and Stand on Zanzibar. They are what the tv commercial would call 'mindstickers.'

Editor's Note: LOCUS recently published a shortened version of a Fred Patten review of A. E. van Vogt's Children of Tomorrow. The review originally appeared in Fred's Apa-L zine (circulation approx. 80). I have an arrangement with Fred—I often reprint his reviews and do not feel a conflict exists if LOCUS uses one or two paragraph abridgements of them.

A. E. van Vogt wrote a letter to LOCUS in reaction to that shortened review. LOCUS declined to print the letter, instead summarizing it.

I offered Mr. van Vogt the opportunity to have the letter published, and sent him a copy of the full review which I had scheduled for this issue (see "Book Reviews"). He sent a copy of the letter and added a postscript.

A. E. VAN VOGT
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Dear LOCUS: A friend read to me over the phone Fred Patten's review of my novel, Children of To-

morow. It seemed a very literate write-up, and an excellent summary of the story—but there are a couple points in it that I should like to clarify.

First, the location of the story is a spaceport and not the whole country. I mention this in re Patten's feeling that the idea of teenagers raising themselves lacked credibility for him. In an era where the kids already have the bit in their teeth, it doesn't seem incredible to me that in a small area (like a spaceport where the fathers are away for years) the kids would essentially raise themselves. In the old days of sailing ships, they did it whether they liked it or not. In a scientific age, people tend to organize around the facts of a predicament, and themselves create the training system.

Second, Patten didn't like the style in which the novel was written. That saddened me, because it was an experiment in visual writing. Children is literally written like a total screenplay—a screenplay 73,000 words long, in which the reader gains his entire view of what is going on from the camera point of view and from the dialogue. It was a colossal effort on my part, and I was thinking of doing it again if it went over. I think I'll wait for other reactions before deciding—since I notice that Patten didn't realize what I was trying to do.

Third, I have recently realized that people believe that I have woven dianetics into my recent (since 1950) stories, and Patten accuses me of this again. The statement (criticism) is totally untrue. There is not a line of dianetics in any story that I have ever written. If I ever write a dianetic novel, it will be named—just as I named General Semantics in the Null-A stories, eye-training in The Chronicler, and the Pavlovian fatigue idea in my non-sf novel, The Violent Man, etc. In The Universe Maker I did a tiny parallel on Hubbard's "Whole Track" idea from Scientology—in one sequence, I had a radioactive lake that could think, communicate with a rock. Those particular concepts are not Hubbard's but were suggested by what he did say. Incidentally, it was over Scientology that Hubbard and I came to a parting of the ways in the long ago of 1952, and have never quite made it back together again. My work with dianetics was experimental from 1955 on.

Just to show you how different people react to the same story: a writer friend told me that a fan he knew (whom he did not name) was offended by CHILDREN because in it—he felt—I had tried to sneak Mao Tse-tung's Red Guard philosophy into America. Again, utterly untrue. In fact—let me say it even stronger—fantastic.

As far as I know only one writer "sneaks" a system into his stories: Philip Wylie is the author, and Jungian theory is the system.

It would appear to me that a tremendous number of people do not even know the superficial differences between the various therapeutic systems. I know most of them fairly well.

And as a professional writer, I have always named what I was using from their work. And I always shall.

P.S. Thanks to Dick Geis, I have now read Patten's entire review. I see now that the relative mildness of the original summary, is due to the editor of LOCUS. The full review is an extremely hostile work. It is evident that Patten was glad to be able to find flaws in the book. He chose as his point of attack some of the most skilful writing in the story; so there's nothing more I can say for him, and to him, except for heaven's sake, man, this kind of antagonism should keep you away from my new books; it isn't good for a person to get that disturbed over a fairy tale. I would suspect that Patten has a head of steam up over dianetics that is out of all proportion to normal behavior. Perhaps, when he discovers that he was mistaken about there being any dianetics in my stories—any of them—he will be able to calm down.

For his benefit, and for the benefit of other potential apoplectically hostile (to dianetics) fans and writers in sf, I am glad to be able to report that I surfaced out of dianetics about a year ago. So far as I am concerned, it is now a completed study. For me, it was a window into people—more than a thousand of them in twenty years. Just as I examined General Semantics, and hypnotism, and eye training, and at least a dozen other subjects for the necessary time, so I have now done the same with people. I am still a member of the International Society for General Semantics, and will remain a member of the two dianetic organizations I belong to—but you can't be a student forever, not even of human beings.

One more thought: I would deduce that the fans are way off the main line of sf, in attacking me. My books are selling better than ever. In France, a re-issue of The World of Null-A has sold the largest number of copies of any science fiction since WWII. The Weapon Shops of Isher is a world-wide good seller.

B. D. ARTHURS
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I'm hoping you'll
print this letter.
Not for my sake, but
perhaps for the sake

of the rights of authors.

I'm going to tell you an idea for a science fiction story. This is it:

The story starts out with an old woman working in her garden, and talking to a friend. The aliens have landed, you see, in a spaceship one hundred miles tall, and a number of them are walking around in the background of this story, several miles tall themselves. The aliens are somewhat immaterial, and when they step on buildings and such, the buildings go right through them. This also means that the Armed Forces can't do anything to the aliens except annoy them with their planes and bombs and things.

The old woman is telling her friend all these things, and saying, "They haven't hurt us, why should we try to hurt them?" In the background, the aliens are now carrying giant metal tanks from which clouds of vapor spew. The friend asks, "By the way, what is that you are spraying on your plants? Weed killer?" "No," the old lady replies, "It's insecticide." Fadeout.

I remember reading this story some years back. You might have read it yourself. But now we get to the nitty-gritty of this letter: this same story was handed in for a final exam in an English class at Arizona State University last semester. If you don't know the word, Geis, it's PLAGIARISM, the foulest deed a student, especially an English student, can commit.

But I want more than just my word against this guy. I want proof, conclusive proof, Geis. I want to know when and where the original story appeared, who wrote it and what its title was. (If it's any help, the title of the fake was "Similar Triangles.") And, if you wish, you can help. A notice in SFR, and Fandom Assembled can become a hundreds strong research team. Hell, one of your readers might have written the original story!

Vindictive sounding? Hell, yes, and I'll tell you why. I also wrote a science fiction story for my final exam, of my own creation, and I simply do not want my work associated even so indirectly with something raped from a legitimate writer. The next move is up to you, SFR and its readers.

VIC GHIDALIA
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Many thanks for the
copy of SFR #40 with the
"review" of Little Monsters. May I quote our mu-

tual friend James Blisch: "Simply saying that a given book is bad may serve the secondary function of warning the public away from it. But if you do not go on to say in what way it is bad, your verdict is not destructive or any other kind of criticism; it is just abuse."

I hope Paul Walker is aware of this rule of a good reviewer. Little Monsters goes into its second printing in April, having enjoyed an unprecedented sales success, according to the publisher.

Horror Hunters due in May will be sent you for review consideration. I'm not sour on Walker's "review," only I'm curious about his reaction to the book not made clear in his writing.



DARRELL SCHWEITZER
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I am puzzled by the
"James Colvin" letter in
your letter column in SFR
#42. Two reasons. If

James Colvin is a real person he is dead. There was an obituary for him in the Jan. '70 NW WORLD. If he is not a real person I'm beginning to wonder how he wrote the letter. If he is a real person and is dead, I'm beginning to wonder how he did it. Ghost writer?

Actually, you know as well as I do he's a pseudo for Moorcock. But I would be interested to know who posed for that picture in the NW obit.

I find certain inaccuracies in various parts of SFR: limestop was first published in STARLING, June '53, not as a Galaxy Beacon job. The G-8, A Woman A Day, was a sexed-up reprint with about two pages of extraneous sex scenes added. The original title was Moth and Rust, and together with a brilliant but forgotten novelette by Fox Holden, it made for perhaps the best single issue of STARLING STORIES' distinguished history.

Prelude to Space was first published by Galaxy Novels, Feb. '51, not 1947 as somebody noted somewhere.

((I was me. I used info provided by the Lancer press release.))

I was interested in Silverberg's speech outline in #42...and a couple comments come to mind: No one objects to literacy in SF. What the "Old Wave" people have been bitching about is

the insistence by too many "Revolutionary" writers that SF conform to the anti-heroic conventions of the mainstream. (By the way, Dick, you asked me to produce an article expounding on the "new wave formula" idea. It will appear in the 4th issue of Jay Zaremba's THE ESSENCE, as the first installment of a column.)

We've had a problem of propaganda in SF as long as we've had SF. As I doubt anyone but Sam Moskowitz recalls, there was a story in WONDER STORIES in 1929 by Irvin Lester and Fletcher Pratt called "The Reign of the Ray" that was shortly thereafter accused of being fascist propaganda by irate readers. It seems it was anti-labor or somesuch and got preachy about it. Also, you'll notice that during WW2 the average prozine had about two or three propagandistic stories per issue. (And in AMAZING you were lucky if you could find 2 or 3 per issue that weren't pure propaganda.) The result of course is that every last one of these stories is completely and deservedly forgotten today. Therefore we shouldn't worry about propaganda in SF because in a couple years it'll be obsolete and forgotten. Also I think anything which strains to be "timely", such as Bug Jack Barron will become obsolete very, very quickly and drop out of sight.

CY CHAUVIN I thought you might be interested in knowing that "J. ('James') B. Colvin" is one of Michael Moorcock's pseudonyms—Charles Platt published an "obituary" for Colvin in NEW WORLDS 197. And from what Moorcock says, I suspect that "J. Anthony Pierce" is really James Blish.

DANIEL DICKINSON I'm always amused, and usually mystified as well, by discussions of the new wave as opposed to the old. Witness "FIAMOL" and Ted White's "The Trenchant Bludgeon" in #4.

Mr. Spinrad asks us to "consider the hack writers of science fiction, men banging out sf for a buck." He goes on to explain to us the pro conspiracy for egoboo, granted at the consent of adoring, illiterate fans. These "nobodies" "discovered they were Literary Lions at Science Fiction Conventions...They discovered a whole microcosm...in which they were not lowly hacks..."

Similarly, Mr. White, proponent of the old wave, tells us the very sad story of a writer

being corrupted by the influence of Mike Moorcock (no names of course, except Moorcock, the devil incarnate.) Again we are expected to rally to the flag for the good old thing, away from the influence of (Spinrad again) the "drug fiends, sex perverts, etc."

Well, hell, just who are these guys anyway? I mean if fans are falling under the influence of a bunch of old hacks determined to subvert the field for their own gain, I think we ought to know just exactly who these people are. Politeness aside! This can't be had! Name names, Norman! Let the purge for a good clean (?) sf begin! And certainly if we are surrounded by sex perverts, drug fiends and that sort, if these are the proponents of the new wave, we ought to know exactly who these demons are, too! Just who to hell is this writer who dares listen to Moorcock, anyway? Out with him!

Who are these guys, anyway?

Frankly, I don't know. Since del Rey's convention speech years ago I've been looking for these people, and I've never quite found out who they are. What hacks, Mr. Spinrad? Is Heinlein one of your hacks? Asimov? Bradbury? L. Sprague de Camp, perhaps? Surely these are our "Literary Lions." I do not ask this in scorn; if Spinrad believes this and can make a sound case for it, I for one am willing to listen. But I am not willing to listen to these clowns who use innuendo and inference to back a case they couldn't make if they dealt with specifics. This does not limit itself to the new wave, either. Mr. White takes the same slander line, again not naming specifics. If White thinks Delany, Zelazny, Moorcock and Redd can't write, why won't he say so? If he won't say so, why won't he shut up? If White thinks Moorcock's influence on the unnamed writer is bad, why doesn't he name the writer and show us how this proves true in that writer's most recent work?

Why not? Because he can't.

The clowns who generally engage in this type of thing don't name names because they haven't really got anything to say, besides the ever-present need to boost their own egos. (And so I won't fall into the trap I've named, I mean del Rey, White, Ellison, Merrill, Ackerman, and Campbell.) Such people are so wrapped up in their own fears of inadequacy, or caught up in what they feel is a nameless threat to replace them, that they cannot see the noses in front of their faces. It is obvious to anyone not so close to the field that there is room in science fiction for all and more besides! The new wave has made some valuable contributions to sf, and

if anyone denies this let them dissect the works of Moorcock, Delany and the rest and show us why they're so bad. Conversely, no one but a fanatic or an egomaniac is going to deny the value of Heinlein, Simak, et.al., or even such pure adventure opuses as the Fafhrd and Grey Mouser tales. So why all the fuss? The day White writes an Ice Schooner, or the day Spinrad can match Childhood's End they may enter a league where their opinions can be respected for an honest feeling or scholarly concern. But with such poor examples of writing and dissertation as "FIAMOL" and this issue's "The Trenchant Bludgeon", both look like inferiors and, yes, hacks, chewing the bit in jealousy of their betters.

((Your own rhetoric is a bit extreme, Dan, but you make a few valid points.))

W.G. BLISS Piers wonders where Ray Palmer gafiated to. He is still at Box AD, Amherst, Wisconsin 54406. He publishes FORUM, SEARCH, FLYING SAUCERS, and SPACE WORLD. Shaver sells rocks at Summit, Arkansas, 72677.

DEAN KOONTZ On #42: I see 4181-E King George Dr. Marion Zimmer Bradley Harrisburg, PA 17109 referring to Ted White's slur against me as if it were proven fact. Ted is not only a creative writer, but a creative interpreter of reality. Through the recent Koontz-White exchange, I discovered that he either purposefully misreports the activities of others or does so out of a natural incomprehension of human motives and intents. As a result, I wish neither to carry a letter battle with him, in the manner of Harrison and Farmer, nor to humor him in the manner of so many others. Such activities are a drain on my professional time and on my time for correspondence with fans I enjoy. This short paragraph, then, so that my silence towards White will not be accepted as a lack of any reasonable reply.

Richard Delap: You didn't read my original comments re your Zelazny review carefully enough. Even so, you still ignore the main point of my comments: "Why must reviewers be so vengeful and bitter towards an author when it is only a book they are regarding?" What we need, everywhere, is a bit more kindness toward each other.

Anthony's column was the best piece of fan-

work he has ever done, bar none. That kindness (see previous paragraph) was everywhere abundant and presented a side of him we have too rarely seen. Behind the book is a man, and that man is always more important, by a thousandfold, than his book. Piers has shown this well. Those fans who opt for cuteness at a writer or other fan's expense should read it twice.

JIM MARTIN Somewhere out in fandom there may be a person who knows the name of the music used in the old FLASH GORDON serials. If so, and if he is a SFR reader (who isn't?), I would certainly appreciate hearing from him. I have been trying to discover the answer to that question for the last ten to twelve years, and all I have learned is that one of the several themes used is taken from Liszt's "Les Preludes."

I would also like to take this opportunity to register a public protest with Pyramid Books. I think they owe me 75¢. When in an airport recently I bought a copy of Voices from the Sky by Arthur C. Clarke. When I got on the plane and opened the book I discovered that it was not science fiction but a collection of essays. I should have checked, you say? Perhaps so, but the blurb on the cover says: "A Saga of Vaulting Imagination and Dazzling Prophecy." Essays are simply not sagas. This matter wouldn't be so irritating if the misdirection didn't appear deliberate. Is Pyramid really ignorant of the fact that essays aren't sagas...or were they looking for a fast buck from those who buy in a hurry?

((More likely it was a lack of communication between the editor and the copywriter.))

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP Thanks for SFR 42. 278 Morthorpe Lane Boardman's flattering Villanova, PA 19085 article on my Krishna stories will be filed with care, as it will be very useful if ever I write any more of them, which is not impossible. I had forgotten some of my own gimmicks. Re P. Anthony & "hack": I once heard John Dickson Carr describe himself as a "competent hack"; so if he can call himself one, why should I resent being called one? (So long as the modifier "competent" is included.)

My inquiries about letters to & from MPL & REH have turned up several such letters. I wonder if any of your readers attended the sale of.

the Dunkelberger collection in Fargo, ND, in 1968? This may have included some such letters. If anybody was there, I should appreciate his getting in touch with me.



PIERS ANTHONY SFR #42—I always used to admire Robert A. W. Lowndes' editorial comments, and I still do, on the diminishing occasions I get to see them. He strikes me as that contradiction in terms, an editor with humanity. As I type this, I have just learned that his own spate of magazines have been folded; though I haven't seen any of the horror productions, I regret to see Lowndes out of business again. Say—when/if Campbell retires.... no, it'd never work out! Anyway, if he says the magazines may be out of business by 1980, I'm sure as hell not going to gamble my writing future on the assumption that they'll last.

Lowndes also comments on the type of Sf he fell in love with, back in the 20's and 30's, and how to the upcoming readers/writers this seems obsolete, and that makes sense too. I remember a discussion by Ray Palmer, maybe twenty years ago, pointing out that to each reader the real golden age of Sf was when he, personally, first started reading it. I've never seen a more accurate summation of that situation. Thus for me the golden age was the late 40's and early 50's, with the peak about at ASTOUNDING 1949-51, GALAXY 52-53, and scattered others. So if you ask me what was the finest Sf ever published, my choices would center in those years, while the material before then seems overplotted and underwritten, and vice versa for the stuff since then.

((And do you tend to imitate that "golden age" in your fiction?))

Gernsback was fine for thinly disguised pseudo-science lectures, and the current new wave is fine for mainstream fantasy without plot content—and you know I'm feeling more and more at home with the misplaced dreamers like Lowndes, knowing that my present prejudices are unfair but still being turned off by much of the present offerings of the field. The essence of my dream is a bit newer fashioned than his, so that I liked both *Left Hand of Darkness* and *Bug Jack Barron*...and nominated both for the Nebula (while naturally hoping to beat both out for honors with my own major novel that I guess Lowndes didn't see); but this must be the consequence of experiencing the golden age twenty years later. No doubt the late 60's and early 70's read-

ers are correspondingly more liberal than I. Sigh.

And the letter column. Marion Zimmer Bradley has a fine reading letter, and as with many fine-reading generalities much of it isn't true. You can test this by searching out specifics. Name one single writer who has complained in SFWA about not winning the Nebula, for example; name five who have even praised their own work in fannish print. It will surprise me if MZB can do either. Some writers, like me, comment frankly on such matters both in SFWA and in fandom; but as I remember I am the only one to complain about the SFWA in relation to his own work—and that was not about winning or losing, but about having the Nebula rules changed without warning to adversely affect my eligibility for the ballot. Of course I do stake my book so—and so against anything written this year, and I can name a book to stake for each year—but such readiness to compete on a quality basis, win or lose (and I have lost each year so far) is not quite the same as masturbation. In fact, I think if more writers felt as I do, the field would improve. MZB, have you never written a book you really believed in? If so, you are pretty sad, and I think I would read, sight unseen, a Spinrad or an Ellison or a Koontz or a Brunner book in preference to one of yours, because I care about those who care, whatever their respective talents.

SFR #41—hmm. No comment.

SFR #40—Ah, here's something I can get my teeth into. Harry Warner opens his article thusly: "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." Very well. I'll discourage this nonsense by requesting documentation—I've found that technique surprisingly effective. Harry, please identify by name and issue those "several fanzines" where I called you "Pollyannaish" and where I claim you won a Hugo thereby. I think you will discover that you owe me an apology for misrepresentation.

And to clarify this matter for other interested parties (if any): what Harry is thinking of is my response to his remarks in BEABOHEMA some issues back, in which he viewed with concern the trend toward bigger arguments by professionals in fanzines. My answer, in essence (you read the complete text in BEABOHEMA #8 if you really go for these things) was that anyone reacts to seeming attacks on his person or his psyche, while others crowd around avidly to

watch the action. I proposed to show exactly how it worked in a fashion even Harry Warner could appreciate—and I have done that now, as his column demonstrates. I suggested he was a hypocrite, then said: "So if you react to that hypocrite bit, Harry, you understand what I mean. That hits you directly, fairly or unfairly (and both fair and unfair attacks hurt) and you have to respond in some fashion..."

Aw, come on, admit it, Harry, now that you have been through that mill yourself. Don't you understand why I react to such things as Delap's unfair review of *Macroscope*? Don't you understand how even a respected fan could embarrass himself by an ardent defense against accusations of Hugomongering, when in fact no such attacks had been made? The water feels just a bit hotter when you're in it, eh?

And now let me say that I think the rest of Harry's column is perfectly creditable. I believe people should stand up and speak out when they see wrong being perpetuated. I only hope that Harry is not able to fill three more articles with the wrongs he has seen in fandom over the years that he has not remarked upon.

Oh yes. The matter of the Hugo. I don't believe I have commented before on the best-fan-writer Hugo, Harry to the contrary notwithstanding, because that isn't really my baliwick. But since the issue has come up, and I do see wrong being done, I'll do it now. I feel that this particular award has been subject to the most flagrant abuse in recent years (I don't know about earlier years; I wasn't there) and is way, way overdue for correction. Typically, pros, not fans, win it, and that is wrong because pros have their own awards. I mean, what fan can beat a pro at writing, when it really comes down to it? When a pro competes, he is really garnering votes as much for his pro work as for his fan work, while legitimate fans are passed over. Did you ever see a more deserving true fan than, say Seth Johnson?

But let's consider a specific ballot: the last one. Correct me if my memory errs; I don't have a list handy. But it seems to me that one candidate had stated in print that he had earned \$17,000 from a single novel and was still going strong—so he won the fan award! Another was acknowledged to be the top pro writer in his field, with—how many is it—something like

40 novels sold. So he came in second. Another stated that he was a full time pro writer who had little respect for fandom and would not accept the award if proffered. So he made the ballot and came in third. The one or two actual fans came in at the bottom.

If this doesn't sicken you, you must be part of the sickness. Harry Warner is the only technical fan to win recently. How would he have done against one of those pros?

((Piers, you are confusing "fan" with "amateur." Maybe the Best Fan Writer Award should go to a writer who appears in fanzines who does not make his living writing professionally. In that event even Harry Warner would fail the test since he is a newspaper reporter/editor.

((The award went last year to Bob Tucker as a tribute to his decades of fan writings in the past, not because he is a professional writer of mysteries and occasional sf. I came in second, not because I have had a great many sex novels published (and how many of the voters had ever read any of them?) but because my dialog editorials and reviews were appreciated. You came in third because of your writings in BEABOHEMA and SFR and other places in fandom. You must give the voters credit for being intelligent enough to make those distinctions.

((The fact of it is that a large number of sf professionals and "outside" professional writers are also sf fans. And a large number of sf fans are pro writers to one degree or another, as the membership list of SFWA will show.

((The distinction at the moment is where the material appears—fanzine or prozine/book. And, of course, that type of material is vastly different. I wonder if any given pro sf writer's talent suits him automatically to be a good fan writer?))

But the world (and fandom) is full of people who scream outrage without making any positive suggestions. OK, here's mine: make any person who is eligible for active SFWA membership ineligible for the fan-writer ballot. Revoke the award status of any winner caught cheating on that requirement. Notice that I said "active" SFWA membership; that means that if someone non-estly retires from prodom, as Harry did, so that he hasn't had fiction published professionally for the required period, his eligibility for fannish recognition is reinstated. I'm sure Harry didn't win on his pro achievements; who remembers them? Maybe Panshin didn't, as he was just getting started. As far as actual fan writing goes, Ted White certainly earned his

award—but again, are you going to let the pros compete on that easier fan level, squeezing out deserving fans from the only award that is supposed to be for them? Well, do you think I couldn't have taken that award any time in the past five years that lacked sufficient pro competition—had I chosen to cater to fandom as Ted did, rather than disparaging it the way I do?

((Ted didn't cater to fandom. He is a fan and a pro. More fan than pro, I sometimes think.))

I made the ballot on the strength of my pieces lambasting fandom, and of course I wasn't kidding about not accepting the award. Talk about sickness—yours, not mine!

((Purist! Chauvinist Professional Pig Writer! Fascist! UP AGAINST THE WALL!))

FRED PATTEN, Apt. 1 Some comments
11863 West Jefferson Blvd. on the power of
Culver City, CA 90230 distributors. I
have a beautiful,
unpublished George Barr painting framed upon my wall. It was originally commissioned as the cover for the first issue of FORGOTTEN FANTASY magazine. George submitted his sketches, the editors approved this idea, George painted and sold it — and the distributor said, "It may be pretty, but it's got no sales appeal. We have no intention of distributing a magazine that nobody's going to buy."

The editors were forced to take a loss on the cover and come up with a replacement fast in order to get their magazine onto the newsstands. The cover by Bill Hughes is certainly good and does have brighter colors, but I prefer George's — and so do most fans who've had a chance to compare the two. (It was on display at last year's WesterCon Art Show.)

That same distributor is no longer distributing Bill Crawford's SPACEWAY SCIENCE FICTION magazine. The next issue has reputedly been set up in galley-form in Crawford's garage for months. Whatever you may think of it, it has an Andre Norton serial in progress. Whatever its sales may be, Crawford is willing to pay to have at least one more issue published. But the distributor won't touch it.

Despite Gerald Page's editorial in the new WITCHCRAFT & SORCERY magazine (formerly COVEN 13) about how "we...wanted to do something about our format", I've heard that it was this distributor who decreed that the change in size & title

would be made if they wanted to reach the newsstands. That it was this distributor who didn't know what the word "coven" means and was sure it was unsaleable. (This in the era of ROSEMARY'S BABY and DARK SHADOWS.)

I've heard that Forry Ackerman was using the work of a particular cover artist for FAMOUS MONSTERS for a number of issues some years ago because the artist was a young relative of the distributor. Forry's comment was to the effect of, "It's fortunate that he's really a rather good artist for the magazine, because we don't have any choice if we don't want it to rot in the warehouse."

It's much easier to find copies of Sol Cohen's Ultimate reprint zines in the L.A. area—stacks and stacks of them—than to find copies of either the current AMAZING or the current FANTASTIC. I'd like to think that this is because of rapid sales of the latter rather than a greater quantity of the former, but it doesn't look good.

There was a period of two or three months back in early '69 when fans living in L.A. had to have other fans living in the suburbs 20 or 30 miles out (Glendale, Covina, etc.) buy their copies of WORLDS OF IF for them because it was virtually impossible to find in L.A. One or two of the larger newsstands that recognize their s-f sales special-ordered the issues. Considering the marginal sales of magazine s-f, failure to get newsstand coverage in a city the size of L.A. sounds like it could be a serious blow to a title with the circulation of IF. (The All-Hugo March '69 issue was one of those affected, I recall.)

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PETER DARLING pointed up the fact that many sf fans read very little sf; they're in it for social reasons. He also noted that while fandom may provide the sf field with many editors and writers, it is the great, invisible buying public that decides which sf sells and which dies.

JIM MARTIN sent a four page single-spaced letter which showed up Dick's Ubik as so full of loose ends as to resemble a bowl of spaghetti. I still like spaghetti, especially by Phil Dick.

BUCK COULSON wrote: "The trouble with retiring after a third unprecedented Hugo is that the next editor along will want a fourth unprecedented Hugo before he retires, and so on."

Well, if a fan has the skill, talent and energy to put out the best regularly appearing fanzine for four or five years running...he deserves four Hugos.

REDD BOGGS wrote: "I'm pulling for SFR to win another Hugo, by the way — I have the strange notion that the award ought to be based on achievement, and I don't give a damn if you win it for the next 16 years, as long as you put out the best fanzine going (at least best regular one — I like WARHOOD too, but after all, only one issue in '70)."

FRED PATTEN wagged a finger and said: "A slight correction to Ted Pauls' review of Edmond Hamilton's Return to the Stars: the Lancer paperback is the first American edition in book form of the novel. It was originally published in a special French translation, from Hamilton's manuscript which he finished ahead of schedule at the specific request of the French s-f book club, so it could be published in a special volume along with its predecessor, The Star Kings."

HANK DAVIS mused: "Norman Spinrad says 'Murray Leinster...had a story in the first issue of ... AMAZING STORIES...' Isn't he thinking of the first issue of ASTOUNDING (STORIES OF SUPER SCIENCE, to use the full title)? And doesn't Spinrad fancy himself quite a sociologist, though?"

HANK also had a correction for Fred Patten: "Fred Patten says that the work of Gaughan and Gray Morrow has never appeared in ASTOUNDING/ANALOG — not true, though it might as well be. Gaughan illustrated a Poul Anderson story in the Jan. '50 issue, and Gray Morrow has illustrated two stories in ANALOG."

BUZZ DIXON sent a blackboard which said in part: "Chalk it up to my perverted sense of humor, but I liked Vaughn Bode's 'Sunspot' comic in GALAXY."

The reasons the strip failed: "shocking" naked cartoon breasts (with prominent nipples!!), Vaughn's "crude" dialog, and most of all the extreme reduction in size to fit the GALAXY page; too much detail and impact was lost.

STEVEN MUHLBERGER groused that nobody has mentioned Philip K. Dick's A. Lincoln, Simulacrum for a Hugo so far.

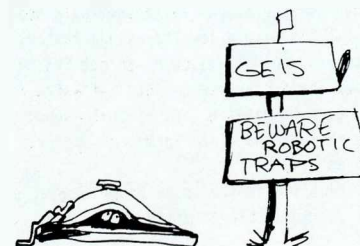
JEFF SMITH spoke: "Speaking of Zelazny, it seems worthwhile to pass on what Roger told me about Jack of Shadows at Balticon. The F&SF version will be missing several thousand words, as their policy is to run no more than 25,000 words per issue of any single item. There will be slight differences between the Walker and Signet editions—an extra paragraph in the Signet, and the two last pages will say the same thing in slightly different ways. Minor. Both book versions will be Official, the magazine definitely Not."

I (Geis) sent on a letter of complaint about slow service to Ace recently, regarding mail orders. John Waxman, Director of Marketing replied: "The delay incurred by one of the respondents was unfortunate. It occurred when we were moving our warehouse. Orders are now processed within 48 hours, and we are very sorry for the inconvenience."

ARTHUR JEAN COX newsnoted: "I have a novella coming up soon in F&SF which more or less grew out of the 'Fans We All Know—And Perhaps Wish We Didn't' series."

PATRICK MCGUIRE, Dodd 140, 1005 E. 60th St., Chicago, ILL 60637 would like to get in touch with other fans who read Russian and have an interest in Soviet science fiction.

ALAS, it is time to say thank you all and do keep writing. Sorry I couldn't quote from: J. F. PUMILIA, MIKE GLYER, PAUL ANDERSON, GARY RICKER, KEN NAWIGIAN, TERRY HUGHES, BILL LENDEN, HOWARD PRINGLE, JERRY MEREDITH, DAVE STEVER, DAVE HULVEY...and anyone I missed.





and still survive. SFR will continue, but at the cost of obeying strict economic necessities.

Some of you will have noted that LOCUS announced in a recent issue that as soon as its mimeo supplies were used up it would switch to photo-offset. I received a short letter from Charlie Brown, its publisher, a few days ago in which he said in part, "I've been pricing photo-offset printing and am appalled at the cost. Guess I'll have to stick with mimeo."

But don't be surprised if he is forced to make those hard decisions that I have had to make.

Put bluntly, SFR's basic format is now 52 pages, and if sufficient advertising is forthcoming for any given issue (as was the case this issue) there will be a 16 page jump.

This switch to photo-offset was also influenced by the imminent increase in postal rates. Weight is very important, now.

Finally, with the present number of subscribers and bookstore outlets, SFR will be self-supporting at the 52/68 page format and assured of a continued existence, which is the primary concern of all, I hope.

But the necessary cut in the amount of material per issue inevitably leads to:

PITY THE POOR EDITOR DEPT. for the last year I have been running at least three issues behind in publishing in-hand book reviews.

At the moment there are 53 books on the To-Be-Reviewed shelf. The publishers are

MONOLOG continued on page 11

PITY THE POOR PUBLISHER DEPT. As a fan magazine grows in circulation, new problems emerge—the sheer physical drudgery of mimeoing, say 1000 to 1500 copies, collating them, stapling them... I have sung this song before.

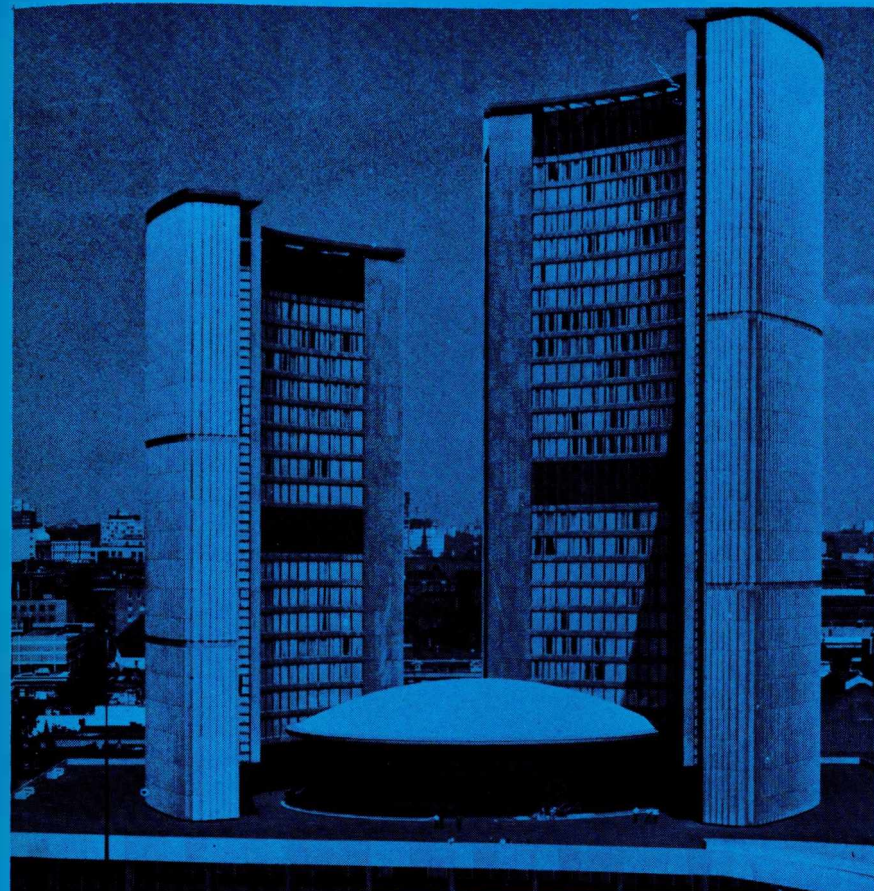
But the switch to photo-offset is soul-shriveling in another way—the cost of professional printing is so high that pages must be cut or the amount of material published must be severely limited.

Fan publishers tend to be very generous to their subscribers, often charging less than the magazines costs. This is possible with a hobby-zine and a circulation of 200 or so.

But here in the near-2000 area profit-loss considerations raise very ugly heads.

I had said a few issues ago that my conscience wouldn't allow me to cut SFR to the inevitable 52 pages in this half-size format because it meant a loss of text—about one-third from the mimeo format of approx. 50 pages.

But the choice is no longer there, alas; it is impossible to mimeo a 1700 copy zine



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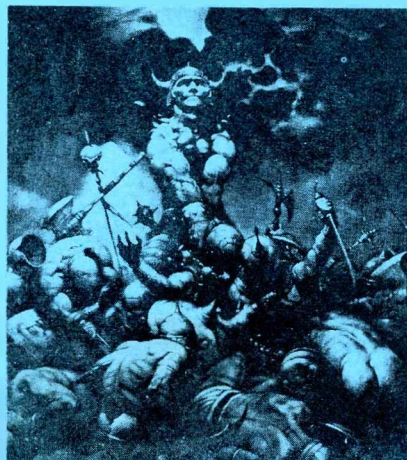
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THE DARK MAN, Robert E. Howard

THE CLOAK OF AESIR, John W. Campbell

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