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& fantasy journal

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THE ALIEN CRITIC

Number Eleven

AN INTERVIEW WITH AVRAM DAVIDSON—1973

WHAT KIND OF MAN READS SCIENCE FICTION?
(Don't Ask!)

THE FOUNDATION ON SANDS
An Article By John J. Alderson

FOOTNOTES TO FAN HISTORY
A Column By Larry Shaw





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RICHARD E. GEIS, Editor & Publisher

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ALIEN THOUGHTS

Let's just say that after three big 3000-copy mimeographed issues of TAC I felt I needed a rest...so this issue is a break in the routine. I approached Don Day about the possibility of having this issue done photo-offset and discovered he had two new employees, that the helper who had botched TAC #7 (and turned me off) was no longer with Perri Press, and that the cost would not be prohibitive.

I consulted my bank balance, ignored the ominous rumblings of a recession in the economic sky, and decided to indulge myself again.

I prefer the "freedom" of mimeo, though...there is a hard-to-pin-down joy for me in typing my thoughts on-stencil; it's as if it is truly non-professional, somehow, and I am more relaxed and informal and... Whereas with this photo-offset format— I feel subtly inhibited. I suppose I am the victim/beneficiary of the Low-Brow Syndrome. Like the up-from-the-ranks executive who is never happy in the front office and who loves to get down with the workers on the factory floor.

I am not cut out for the Big Time, I suspect. I'm a natural born prole. Got a broom?—time for me to sweep out the trenches.

What I'm saying is that TAC #12 will likely be mimeo again, about 50 pages... Okay, it'll likely run 52...or 54.... But no more monsters of 62!

I'll switch out of the cheapie Sure-Rite stencils and go to the heavy-duty long run Gestetner #6 blues. We'll see if that minimizes the stencil creasing on the bottom line of type I've been fighting for so long...though I suspect that the problem is inherent, somehow, in the dynamics of 2000 copies plus run (after 2000 copies the creasing generally begins) and the weakening of the stencil due to this 17-characters-per-inch tall micro-elite typeface. In short, good people, we'll have to live with some scrunched-up last lines...you'll have to read them, and I'll have to regret them.

A further experiment is to narrow the columns to two inches, thus reducing the weakening of the stencil, but also cutting down somewhat the wordage-per-page. Life is a series of unsatisfactory compromises.

The headings in this issue come to you courtesy of Varityper. I bought one for a price I couldn't refuse to pay, and got seven fonts in the bargain. It's an old #230 model and isn't good for anything but headings, because typing on it is a slow, frustrating process. But it dresses up the photo-offset editions of TAC, and is

worth it. Unfortunately, it can't be used to type a stencil. Headings in the mimeo issues will be done on the Sears electric Presidential pica (the alignment of which I have fixed, by the way).

And I'll take this opportunity to commiserate with those few of you (not counting librarians) who are Serious Collectors of Tac and who like to have issues accumulated bound. I know changes in size & format make you howl. Sorry.

As you may or may not know by now, IF is dead. Jim Baen called me around the middle of August to tell me. Seems he was on vacation and while he was out the powers-that-be at U.P.D. decided that the increases in circulation since his takeover didn't compensate enough for the heavy increases in the cost of paper they had suffered.

All is not lost as far as "The Alien Viewpoint" is concerned, however. My column will continue in GALAXY on a bi-monthly basis, although with a 50% cut in length.

There is some hope that as later circulation figures come in the further improvement in sales will dictate renewed life for IF.

But don't hold your breath.

And be prepared for further shocks in the s-f field.

Below I quote a letter from Mike Glyer whom I appointed Hugo Acceptor for me at DisconII.

As luck would have it, TAC and ALGOL tied for the Best Fan Magazine Hugo. Thus Andy Porter can purr with delight now that he has his coveted Hugo...and I can put Hugo #4 on the mantel and note that there is room for at least three more.

The truth is I have come to view a Hugo every year or so as my Just Desserts

—fitting punishment for my life of crime in the neighborhood of science fiction.

I await with a smug smile the outraged cries and wails and gnashings of teeth of the losers and not-nominated.

What the Convention Committee in Australia will do about the thorny question of eligibility and definitions of 'amateur' and 'fanzine' I know not. They may decide, as did the Discon II concon, to simply let the Hugo voters decide by the nominations voted as to which is what. Whatever. It's okay by me.

Mike wrote: "After you split the best fanzine Hugo with Andy Sunday night I ran upstairs and dialed Portland Information with the idea in mind of calling you (collect) to inform you that they had inflicted another of those potmetal phalli on you. (I know your den must be quite cluttered with those souvenirs by now, and who needs another, eh?) However, inasmuch as no Richard Geis is listed in Portland, and your phone number wasn't in any copy of TAC that I could scare up in the hotel, this is the first chance I've gotten to pass the word."

((A few...a very very few people in s-f know my number...and I think for a few more years I'll stay in my hidey-hole.))

"My brilliant and witty acceptance speech was preceded by the announcement of the tie, naturally. At which time Andy offutt declared you and Porter co-winners. He then stated, 'Accepting for Richard Geis is Mike Glyer. I don't know why he'd do such a thing...'

"I hurtled forward, but Porter had a headstart; probably irrelevant. My ecstatic remarks were something to the effect that, 'Geis said if I didn't get him a Hugo this year I'd be fired...I guess this means I still have the job.' Now all I need to do is work my passage to Australia, right?"

((Riiight.))

"As soon as I find a shoebox big e-

nough, I'll send along your rocket and the certificate (suitable for framing, or lining birdcages)."

((Mike... 'potmetal', 'phalli', 'souvenirs', 'lining birdcages'... you aren't showing enough respect and humbleness. Why am I in double parenthesis marks—this is the editorial!))

Actually, Jeff Levin, Portland fan and publisher of Pendragon Press called me that night and told me. (A friend at the con had called him with the award results.)

I note, too, Mike, that your letter was written on....Friends of Klingon stationery. I was not aware of your association with that traitorous group of diseased humans!

I further note your change of address to 319 Pike St., Bowling Green, OH 43403. (They finally ran you out of Los Angeles, eh? I knew they'd tumble to that earthquake machine you had in your house in Sylmar.)

My comments on the OTHER Hugo awards are off-the-cuff, "on-stencil" and very likely ill-considered, but wotthehell, I go in for a complete physical next month, they'll tell me I've got six months to live, so I don't care.

+++

1973 HUGO WINNERS

Best Novel was RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA by Arthur C. Clarke. Expected. It has a sense-of-wonder to it, is written with simplicity and care, and is of Hugo calibre...barely. Weak on characterization, but Rama is the protagonist, and it is well developed.

Second place: TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE by Robert A. Heinlein. A disappointment for most fans.

Third place: PROTECTOR by Larry Niven. Good, but not up to his Hugo-winning RING-WORLD.

Best Novella was "The Girl Who Was

Plugged In" by James Tiptree, Jr. Flashy technique and depth of emotion with social comment. Well deserved.

Second place: "The Death of Doctor Island" by Gene Wolfe. As good or better than the winner.

Third place: "Death and Designation Among the Asadi" by Michael Bishop. Brilliant. Probably appeared too early in 1973 to retain its impact on the voters.

Best Novelette is "The Deathbird" by Harlan Ellison. Pyrotechnic style, heavy content, Ellison impact.

Second place: "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand" by Vonda McIntyre. Good writing, sentimental: a "woman's" sf story.

Third place: "Love Is the Plan, the Plan Is Death" by James Tiptree, Jr. Alas, I haven't read it yet.

Best Short Story is "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" by Ursula K. Le Guin. A subtle, brutal morality tale. When you're hot, you're hot.

Second place: "With Morning Comes Mistfall" by George R. R. Martin. Fair. I wasn't all that impressed.

Third place: "Construction Shack" by Clifford D. Simak. An old-fashioned AS-FOUNDING story.

Best Dramatic is SLEEPER. Didn't see it. 2nd is GENESIS II. Eh!! 3rd is SOYLENT GREEN. Didn't see it.

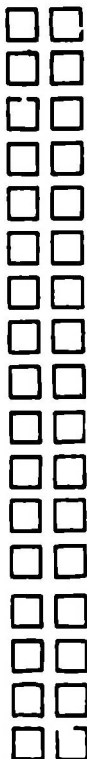
Best Professional Editor is Ben Bova. No argument. 2nd is Robert Silverberg. 3rd is Ted White.

Best Professional Artist is Frank Kelly Freas. Wot, again? 2nd is Frank Frazetta. 3rd is John Schoenherr. Good men, all.

Best Fanzine(s) are THE ALIEN CRITIC and ALGOL (tied). ALGOL has the "pro" look and TAC has the charisma. 2nd is

(continued in Alien Conclusions)

AN INTERVIEW WITH
AVRAM DAVIDSON ~ 1973



REG: Avram, you were the Student-Appointed guest lecturer in the Program In Comparative Literature at the University of California at Irvine recently. Was it a pleasant experience?

DAVIDSON: For the most part, REG, yes.

—Say, those lights are kind of bright, do you suppose you could—
Yeah. Thanks. For the most part. Of course, it was a surprise. In the way it turned out. Quite the opposite of what and how I had expected. See, the schedule was for me to teach six hours a week, and I had thought, what I had thought, I had thought to devote the entire six hours a week to what I called ASPECTS OF UNHISTORY. And which Mike Kurland, do you know Mike Kurland? which Mike Kurland called, "The sort of historical stuff which Willy Ley used to write, without the Science."

In other words, odd-ball stuff, scraped off 35 years, or nearer to 40, of omnivorous reading. Such as, like, FOOTBINDING, CANNIBALISM, EUNUCHS, THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CAMEL INTO THE U.S., MANDRAKES, THE WAILING OF THE GAULISH DEAD, THE UNICORN AND ITS POTENT HORN, and such-like and so-on. And in fact I explained to them, I very carefully explained to them, that what I did NOT wish to do while I was down there, I did NOT wish to spend six hours a week teaching about Science Fiction. I did not wish to take as as it were busman's holiday. However. Man proposes, and the Department of English and Complit at the University of California at Irvine disposes. They called me up, the EngComplit profs there, they called me up in relays. And they laid this trip on me, man, that the students there were like deMANDING a course in Sci-Fi, and

there was but no one in the Dept. who knew jack shit about it, and if the students didn't get it man, wow, they were like maybe going to blow up the Campus Branch of the B of A like they did a couple years ago. So what the Hell? Ya know? So we compromised. Three hours a week I was to teach ASPECTS OF UNHISTORY and the other three hours a week I was to teach what they the profs called and termed A READING COURSE IN SPECULATIVE FICTION. —Are you running with me, REG? —So, well, say you got any more of that Wild Turkey? No? Oh well, sure, the Seagrams will do fine, I guess. Have to. No, nevermind the styrofoam cup, I'll just pour it into the 7-Up bottle.

Yeah. Hey, not a bad place you have here, especially if you admire Alf Landon campaign posters, which I guess you do. Ha ha. Huh? Oh. Oh yeah. Yeah. Well, for one thing, they, without my understanding what in the HELL was going on, they shoved the ASPECTS OF UNHISTORY thing into a slot they called "University Studies, subtitle, "Snap Courses." Attendance limited to Frosh and Soph, except by special permission only. And the SPEC FIC they assigned as being for Juniors and Seniors only, except by special permission, eckt eckt eckt, ha ha, what? ICE cubes? Naa, what the funk I want ICE cubes for? I want ICE cubes, fa crise sakes, I'll marry an Eskimo. So, om, uh whur were we, oh yeah. YEAH. SNAP courses. So alla these kids, ya know, they must of looked at the schedule, and they said, Ah, here is this SNAP course at two p.m. in the afternoon, ziddly-six points, and likely the vibes will be better than if we sign up for the two other 2 p.m. snap courses at ziddly-six points, namely CHICANO VALUE STRUGGLES and/or AFRO-AMERICAN FINGER PAINTING, where Pale Faces are not ezzack-y welcomed. —So, ha ha! they sag into the first class, which for what I now regretfully admit was an error in strategy, stragety? no, strategy, I begin the first lecture with THE WAILING OF THE GAULISH DEAD, and a big long quotation from Prop-

copius, followed by one from Claudian, and, uh, that should be P R O C O pius, yeah, like that. And they started to fall asleep in droves. Glazed eyeballs. Some dropped out. Some never did wake up at all, I guess. Haw haw. Whereas the Spec FIC class, at from 7 to 10 pm, with a coffee break in between, and alla these juniors and seniors, well, that was a real TRIP, man. Sparkel? Sparkle plenty. Gus Hasford came a few several times, and Art Cover, and Phil Dick came once, too. So that was lotsa fun. Man.

Yeah.

So whud else ya wanna know?

REG: So, it's gunna be THAT kind of conversation, huh? Okaaay. Did they ask you to come back next year or something? What in hell did the students impress upon you? Was it all relevant/ecology thinking in relation to sf they laid on you, or were they interested in timeless sf. Did you lead the course—or were you pushed?

Stay sober. Have some lemonade. More ice?

DAVIDSON: Really, I have nought for your comfort. Evidently you are not asking the correct questions...and I don't know what they are, either. No, the students did not ask me to come back next year, or anything. The amount of money for the student-appointed faculty experiment is limited, and I'm sure that they want to spread it around. They might likely have asked Carlos Castenada to come back after the Spring trimester (or 'quarter,' if you like...you no like? tough.), but he got miffed or pissed at a something or two, and he did not show at all for the —well, what it was, it was ten weeks. What in hell the students impressed on me was not terribly much in any direction. There were no real shits among them, mind you. I did wonder how some of them got out of high school, let alone into college, let alone into the

University of California...but only some of them, mind you. And some, of course, were brilliant. I had two classes, perhaps you don't know. One was sf (as you term it—and your term is as good as any, I suppose...or as bad)—or, as the Department of English and Comparative Literature termed it in one catalogue listing as "English 198 C: Special Subjects," or something equally pishy, moving a couple of students to complain that it should have attracted many more if it had been openly labelled "Science Fiction"—but, frankly, I felt the size was sizable enough...where were we...Shenley's and 7-Up, sheest...I never did get the glass of sherry in the faculty lounge...the faculty lounge is called The University Club and serves no alcy...Ah so. And the other title was something almost like "Introduction to the Reading and Writing of Speculative Fiction," not my title, either. That one went very well. VERY well. The other, which was my own desire and idea, was "Aspects of Unhistory," oddball stuff. A very slight knowledge of history was a big help...and most of them evidently didn't have it...got glazed eyes and fell asleep...ah well. I used to say, "We are living at the end of a classical era..." Now I know that we have already passed the end of it. Mention Procopius, who was Procopius, Well he was employed at the court of Justinian... Who and when was Justinian? —not a clue... One female student had, it seemed, some slight confusion reading my THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR...she had, you better believe it, never heard of the legend of the phoenix. She thought I had made it all up. Ah well

...

How the course ran was so: I assigned four or five books, they were to read them on their own time, and we were to discuss them in class. Also we were to read and discuss any fictions written by class members. Those who submitted none had to submit a paper on each book. In other words, a book paper would substitute for a story. We had a couple of good stories

... There were about 2½ talents discovered. One needed some more practice, let us say, in literary forms; he used to turn in three page novels covering megamillions of years. Another needed only to carry on at further length. Another had little urge to finish or expand. And so on. Nothing very unusual. I had intended it to be mainly a workshop course, but it wasn't because not enough students wrote. I can certainly say that I learned at least as much from them as they from me. At least. And if I wanted LEMONade, for crise sake, I'd have brought some real lemons with me.

—But I did not emerge from the experience with renewed faith in our university system. It is still, as it was 30 to 40 years ago, still largely a waste of time. A pursuit of points, not of knowledge, not of real knowledge. Regardless of personality or political persuasion, they wanted those pints on their records. I mean, p0ints. Not pints.



I'm the one who wanted the pints, but there was no liquor store nearby.

Since I've got your ear, and your Press, I may as well get down a further bitch. Which is. That for years the Academicicians ignored SF/fy or sneered at it. Now the students are demanding it. The world at large is slowly waking up to it. So what happens? Do the colleges turn voluntarily to those of us who have for God's sake been WRITing the stuff, creating it, all of these dim years? Shit no. My own appointment came after all from the students, by a fluke. Who is TEACHing all or rather most of those 300 courses in Sf and related subjects in our colleges, universities, sometimes even high schools? Me, who has written SF? You, who have with your fellow-fans supplied a body of audience, or criticism, of awareness, etc? FUCK no. What is mostly happening is two-fold. Fold One, the Director of Curriculum sighs and says, "Oh nuts, we are asked for Science fiction classes, so whom do we have who is not teaching A full Workload* this semester...? Mmmm. Ah. Miss Muff. /Miss Muff's specialty is Provençal Farces/ —Miss Muff, please... —Ah. Miss Muff, next semester you will teach a class in, ah, Science Fiction." Fold two is perhaps even more evil. Some dunderheaded Academical Snot who has been running out of stuff to be dunderheaded about (after all, how much more can be SAID about the Holy Trinity of American Letters, viz. Melville/Hawthorne/Whitman?) and who, with his waxy ear to the ground, has become aware that Science Fiction is i-cumen In, seizes the field for himself; starts to prepare papers on A Review of Solipsistic Ontology in the Science Fiction of Stanislaw Lem, etc.—and gets the job.

REG: Yes, Ain't It Awful; we sure do live in an imperfect world. But it was

*One of the many graceful phrases which float like a vapor in the Groves of Academe.

ever thus and ever will be. Your course, "Aspects of Unhistory" intrigues me because it suggests to my fine-tuned erratic mind that you are a roundish personality in a square world—with no round niches in sight. How...did...you...get...this...way? (Assuming you are this way, of course.) A little biographical material please with shocking asides and revealing anecdotes. (The readers love things like that—and so do I.) To be directional: how come you turned out to be a writer of sf/fantasy who wants to do travel books?

Correct me if I presume too much—I remember a few remarks you made a couple years ago about your writer's frustrations.

DAVIDSON: What the hell do you mean,

'Yes, ain't it awful, we sure do live in an imperfect world?' Are you trying to be FUNny about this? There is nothing at all funny about this. Do you realize what is probably going to happen? How much of this tiresome academic bullshit do you think the kids can stand before being turned off, Oh-~~Eff~~-~~Eff~~, from Sf/fy, by Miss Mossmolar and Professor Dr. Durd?—which, of course, will make the Directors of Curriculum just as happy, and in fact, happier. Shades of Moses seeing the Promised Land, and not being allowed to enter...

And this is not only with the old esTABlished scholia, either, no. We have here in Sausalito a new college, named, for true, The New College of Sausalito. Going to get, or rather, Get, Get AWAY, man, from the Rigid Old Forms, etc. I applied for an interview to place my application, got it, was interviewed, left my Plan and Curriculum Vitae, or whatever, my track record, some call it. I assure you that I was stone cold sober and polite and all that. I was not even given the politeness of being informed, "No." Not even a rejection slip. I secured the new catalog (and, remember, this is a New college, and the catalog was made

up after, not before, my interview and application), and I observed that two, count them two, people are down for, (1) "Other Worlds," i.e. fantasy; and (2) "The Literature of Science Fiction." Okay, okay. Maybe I have bad breath or bad vibes, or maybe a study of my writings proved unsatisfactory. Okay. Is either of these two jaybirds another Sf/Fy writer?—of whom the Area has a fairly wide choice? Nix cum arowse, brother. They are niddlies of whom I have not heard, you have not heard, and the Sf/Fy World at Large has never heard. I think one of them will also teach Awareness Through Knot-tying, or something; and the other will teach The Psychedelic Cinema...or something. I think they both have MA degrees, which may have something to do with it. May I quote one of the less-appreciated figures of 18th Century Eng Lit? I may? Thank you. "Bah, humbug."

Years, in fact, lustra and decades ago, *sigh*, O My Children, one Henry Morgan, is he still around? had a radio program on which he said independent funny stuff, not gagwriting ho ho; and he said, in talking of something he had been making up, let us call it the Grandee Dugan Ding-Dong Doughnut Company; he said, "...and so finally the time came, as it comes to every American industry, for the man with the money to get rid of the man with the idea..." Ah well. Fuck it. Onward. —Or, at least, Sidewise. At an exceedingly oblique angle.

—Eh? I don't know...how...I...got...this...way. Do you think hormones would help? Believe me, if I could do something else, I would do something else. At the present time I am not even doing something not-else. I have been trying the Sit-at-the-tripewriter-and-just-keep-SITTING-and-sooner-or-later-the-bag-of-waters-will-break-and-you-will-be-delivered-of-a-fine-seven-pound-novel, School of Advice. I have written lots and lots of letters to myself. I have started a couple of more 16 to 30 pp novel starts, of which I have

one of the largest collections in private hands today. And every now and then I woop up another Letter of Application to yet another University or College, which I by and by, when I got the postage, stuff in a manilla envelope with the rest of the Hire Me Kit....

One of the finer and more inspiring experiences of the past year has been, and if I've already written this, fuck you, just tear it out and start all over, a correspondence with an instructor at what I shall term San Geronimo State University (formerly Iaco Center State Normal School), who proposed to maybe get me down to Speak. And how much would I want? I told him. And after a few more letters, he very cheerfully informed me that, as they didn't have enough money to engage me and (Very Good Sf/Fy Writer Whom I Shan't Name), both, so they were just engaging him. Well okay. And he went on, with undiminished good cheer, to say that he/they hoped to be able, real soon, to get a whole lot more money. In which case, he said, they hoped to be able to engage (Very Good British Sf/Fy Writer Whom I Shan't Name).

My reply was to the entire effect that he had no idea how much I had enjoyed corresponding with him, nor how much I regretted that our correspondence must now cease.

And he wrote back that he had somehow an idea that he had maybe offended me, but, gee....how...?

"Wants to do travel books," you ask. Well, I had been told (and told and told) by people to whom I had written from and of foreign parts, that I had a very good sense of place. Including people whom one would think knew which side was Up. And, after a decade of doing fiction fiction fiction, well, I thought I'd like to do NON-fiction. And travel books seemed a logical door to enter by. I spent a year at it. The book has, as they say, 'yet to find a publisher.'* I do not say that it is another SEA AND SARDINIA, another

ARABIA DESERTA. But it is as good as some which have found publishers. So I am puzzled.

Among other reasons. Other puzzles.

I am, I guess, simply fatigued by writing standard SF/Fy and for what at this stage of my career are sub-standard sums. Or maybe I am unsimply fatigued for other reasons. I feel like a rat in a maze. Learn to navigate the maze, yeah? Do. And then what? Then you get out? No sir. Then they change the maze pattern. The maze is not made for the rat to get out of.

Jump over? Write a mainstream novel? Bless you. I done that, too. It has yet to find a publisher. It is not the world's greatest. Again: it is certainly at least as good as some which are daily given light. I dunno. I am P for pike-staff puzzled. And fatigued.

Bitch, bitch, bitch, eh, Mr. Gibbonson?

Meanwhile, I continue to work at the Matrix for VERGIL MAGUS. Should be done (this stage, at least) within the year. I have just applied again for a Guggenfoundlingship. In the event of my getting it (ho ho HO ho ho HO)...ah well...

In every other respect, the energy does not equal the mass.

Sometimes it seems to me the only honest entrepreneurs in our society (excuse me, Our Society) are the Black pimps, in whom there is a surgeance of fashionable interest. They dress like pimps, strut like pimps, act like pimps, and never pretend to be anything but what they be: pimps. They exploit like pimps. They say to their clients, "Get out on that street corner and hump your ass." When the price of booze and fancy threads goes up, they

*It is no longer going the rounds.



raise the price of pussy up, too.

Whereas, agents and publishers and (often, not invariably) editors, all of whom exploit at the exploitation rates of 1973, are still paying the girls (and boys) at the rates of 1963. When not 1953. And being ever so prissy and starchy and finger-nail-buffy about it all. —What? You say there is a contradiction in logic there? You wish to point out that it is to an agent's interest to get the Highest Rates for his clients because— Ah yes. 'Is, tisn't it. Why, then, did one agent try to argue me into taking, about two years ago, \$1500 as an advance, when I, myself, succeeded in getting \$2000? If I knew, I would tell you. I suspect that Things are Not So Simple. Nor can I explain why one agent allowed me to languish for three months, broke, in a foreign country, when and while a publisher and a 'respected' not a shlock publisher simply did not pay the contracted money? Explanation: "Their contract girl either quit or was fired." For three months?

Nor can I explain why I, who, after all have edited three anthologies, have not been able, after years of trying, to get an agent to get me a contract for to edit an anthology. Agent simply stands on agent's head and blows smoke rings out of agent's anal orifice. And then, out of east nowhere, comes someone who racks up contract after contract for antho after antho. Agent's reply to, "HOW COME—?", viz.: "Oh, S. O. O. East Nowhere is a hustler..." Q. What is one's agent for, if not to hustle? A. Agent retreats into a fetal position and stops answering mail.

—You say the world is SQUARE? I say it is not even rhomboidal, but of a shape indescribable by my tortured knowledge of topology.

I believe that I may say that I can, if I have in my hand, a standard SF/fy novel, obtain without doubt a standard SF/fy contract

for same. I tell you, as a simple historical fact, that I can do that even with an outline. I tell you, as another simple historical fact, that I have not been able to get an agent to make an attempt to sell or try to sell anything else for me. —Ah, once, years ago, yes, I did sell a book which was not SF/fy, which was non-fiction. Dear God, I even sold it without an agent, ah ha HAH, ah hah HAH.

But sundry small shocks, and some not so small (it is, after all, rather a large shock to be stuck in another country without money), have withered my self-esteem and sapped my energy. My timing seems wrong, somehow. "Eh? Sell THAT? We can't sell THAT. Publishers are not buying THAT." And, by golly, three years later, as sure as owls shit owl stools, oh there it is: Sold and Bought. But not by and from me.

—Well. What was THAT all about? Who was making all THAT noise? And WHY? Must be some nut or something. Full of self-pity. If he doesn't like the writing game, why doesn't he try something else? Sumo wrestling, maybe. Or speculating in blue vetch seed futures. Some kind of a croaker. Say is there any more Schenley and Seven-Up?

I guess that what I really want, damn it, what I really NEED, is for some recognition in an active form that I am more than just someone writing SWORDSMAN OF SNORE or such. Dr. Johnson, a man whom I often but not always feel close to, said, denouncing people who went to sulk in the country because of lack of recognition in London, "Sir, it is not the world's task to seek a man out in order to reward him." Well, shit, piss, and corruption. It is SOMEbody's task. I want and need for SOMEone to come around and say, "You can do better than you have had the opportunity to do, and here it is, and here is what we will do for you to get you to do it..."

I want the chief editor of John Rich Publishers Sons to contact me and say, "We

have read your _____ and we believe that you can do what we want done with a Life of Chester A. Arthur, and here is a bag of gold to show that we mean it."

Or whatever.

I have had Bad Shocks. What I need is a Good Shock. see.

JOYLEG, which Ward Moore and I wrote, long ago, was rejected 24 times (24 times). I sold it, on the 25th time, myself. It has been since published three times. My last agent said he never tried anything of mine, anywhere, more than thrice; and usually no more than twice. Yes, I know, I am after all luckier than Van Gogh, who sold only one painting in his entire life, and that one to his brother Theo. To whom would you suggest that I award my ear? Right now I have several contracts which I have yet to, as we say, fulfill. I am sorry, dear and trusting publishers, who have assessed me at your lowest rates and pulp after printing, anyway, for tax write-offs; I am sorry that I am not fulfilling. I am tired. Try offering me more money, maybe. I have not delayed in hopes you would: but try. Try assuring me that, even after and if I do finish, that you will not make me wait three to five months for payment. Try persuading me that you won't shred the book a few months to a year after printing it.

What? Whassat?

"That is the way we do biz and you are no different than anybody else?" Well, fucker, maybe and in fact not maybe: sure: that IS the way you do biz. But I am different than anybody else. I am the only one of me there is. I may not be the best writer around but I am dingly damn sure one of the best around.

Or, at any rate,

I was.

8-18-74

"Dear Avram;

Here is a payment on the interview. Small, but... Such are my finances. Would you like to continue with it? As you may know, I've scheduled the interview for TAC #11 (Nov.) and will run the Q and A's I have in that issue. Would be nice to have any current thoughts on the writing scene you may have...any good news concerning your block, professional status, personal life.

"Best,
Dick."

Aug. 27/74

"Thanks. I'd forgotten. I was welcome. —Well, I broke the block this year and wrote a book, my first in 3 or 4 yrs, called THE ENQUIRIES OF DOCTOR ESZTENHAZY. My agent described it as "arcane and whimsical," a description covering most of my work, and declined to handle it...or me. I have a new agent. 'Professional status'? The SFWA, instead of just sending me a bill for dues, sent a form threatening to publish my name on a list of 'deadbeats' if I did not send a check at once. I sent the check, at once; also my resignation. So I suppose I no longer have professional status. I've been turned down for a Guggenheim Fellowship (for the second time) and won't apply again. Have applied to many colleges and universities for a job as Writer in Residence and Instructor/Lecturer. One (count them) one agreed to consider me as a candidate, and subsequently chose someone else. And, amidst all this underwhelming encouragement, work on the VERGIL MAGUS Matrix has slowly gone on. I am at present packing to move without having a place to move to or money to move with, and striving to "keep the bright mind of childhood." No changes in my personal life. And how are you? Love and Kisses,

AD"

DUX SOUP

PEREGRINE: PRIMUS

Reviewed By JOHN BOARDMAN

"Turning from an ancient historian to a medieval chronicler is like turning from a man with some stake in the world and some pride in his heritage (even if the stake is selfish and the pride narrow) to a child who knows nothing except what pleases him, what hurts him, what frightens him, and what his elders tell him."

—Archibald Robertson,
HOW TO READ HISTORY

Most science fiction deals with alternate futures. A few deal with alternate presents—histories that diverged from ours when the Battle of Tours, or the Armada, or Gettysburg had a different outcome. But the Avram Davidson Peregrine novels.... Well, I guess you could call them "alternate past."

First and foremost, they are funny. Any veteran fantasy reader can tell you that Davidson simply cannot plot. Aside from three or four leading characters, the characterizations are cardboard. But the general tone of the Peregrine books is something like that of a Marx Brothers film, of which the same criticisms could be made. There are great crashing anachronisms and irrelevancies, involuted erudite humor, and lovely hyperboles where Davidson wraps himself up in the sound of his own words and dares us to keep straight faces.

Let's try to begin at the beginning, though it makes little more sense than the governmental crisis that begins DUCK SOUP, or the academic crisis in HORSEFEATHERS. PEREGRINE: PRIMUS (and where did he get that dorky title?) begins in "the year in which Captain Dragonet, a bluff and good-hearted sea-rover with a harmless (one would think) fancy for young ladies with round bosoms, was murdered by a mercenary named George something-or-other, hired by



the Municipality of Joppa (a bargain, if that is what it was, which the Municipality would soon regret and rue)."

(By the way, if you don't get the reference hidden in that phrase, then the rest of the book will go completely over your head.)

Peregrine, son of Paladrine is the youngest bastard son of the King of Sapodilla, last pagan kingdom in Lower Europe. Peregrine is being permanently exiled as a measure for keeping the peace. His entourage consists of a scullery maid's apparently idiot son named Claud, and a rather seedy wizard named Appledore. (Yes, I know, at this point it sounds like a parody of BORED OF THE RINGS.)

But just when is all this taking place? The Roman Empire (Western, Eastern, and Central) is carved up among a number of evanescent Caesars, who get proclaimed and deposed with great speed and regularity. It is a Christian Empire, with heresy-

hunting the number two national sport. (Fornication, of course, has the primacy.)

If you're really tired of sanity, you can try to date PEREGRINE: PRIMUS by internal evidence. At one point, a retired Vestal Virgin with a shanty-Irish accent ("May Our Howly Mither Vesta peep down upon yezz favorably from Hivven!") tells how she smuggled out the Sibylline books when the Christian General Stilicho would have burned them. Okay, that took place in 405. But a few chapters later, a large lady of generous hospitality named Eudoxia tells of her childhood friend in Byzantium ("we used to feed the bears together") that she has married a Caesar's nephew. This Caesar's nephew was of course Justinian I, and he was a Caesar's nephew rather than a plain Caesar only from 518 to 527. This agrees tolerably well with the only other datable event—namely, Peregrine's friend and Ally Attila IV, Grand Hetman of the Hun Hordes, Scourge of God, King of Hun Horde Number Seventeen, who is a great-gandson of the original Attila. Since that died in 453 of an overdose of honeymoon, the early 6th century date makes about as much sense as anything does in this book.

Attila IV, incidentally, is one of the more engaging characters in the book. Readers of THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR will recall that Davidson does Huns well. Attila IV is a rapacious, slovenly rogue who speaks in a pidgin English that even Charlie Chan would be ashamed of, and his horde numbered "...a grand total of eleven men...plus three mouldy-looking yourts now lumbering into view drawn by a scrawny ox a-piece."

The plot consists of Peregrine's wanderings from Sapodilla (bounded by "Pannonia on one side and Nararre on the other, being bordered on the north by Lake Illyria and on the south by the Marches of Golconda") across several competing Roman Empires to the shores of the Euxine. His motivation in doing so is unclear. First it seems that he is just being exiled on

general principles. Then he raids a dragon-horde, which consists of a "bracelet of base metal inscribed Caius loves Marianno and....three oboli and one drachma (all stamped Sennacherib XXXII, Great King, King of Kings, King of Lower Upper South-east Central Assyria—and all of a very devalued currency)" and a curious serpent-decorated crown. He doesn't know what to make of the crown, but about the time he meets up with the Vestal Virgins, he somehow knows it's the crown of the King of the Ephts.

Then, by chance, he hears news of his older half-brother Austin who travelled the same road a few years earlier. By the end of PEREGRINE: PRIMUS his journey has suddenly become a quest, assigned by his father, to find Austin. There is an incomprehensible bit of business with the Wild Hunt, three men and a woman who may or may not be the Four Horsemen, and a sect of Ram-worshippers or something. At the end of the first book he has left Claud and Appledore, and picked up a fresh set of companions. He is then saved from a bloody death by being turned into a peregrine falcon.

We next see him in the opening chapter of PEREGRINE: SECUNDUS in the August 1973 issue of FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION, being turned back by an accidental incantation at the court of a cockney-speaking petty king in East Brythonia ("the largest island in the Black Sea"). Now, it seems, Appledore was responsible for the incantation, although in the previous book we had left him far behind in the Central Roman Empire town of Chiringirium as Augur to the Emperor P. Cato Decimus Brutus Darlangius ah-the-hell-with-it.

Okay, so the plot doesn't make any sense. But there are still all those sideshows—the wayfarer with an oar over his shoulder who tells the most amazing story about his wife—Ulrich, the used-sword dealer, awaiting all the northerners who haunt his place hoping to get the fragments of broken swords ("Dwarfs I

don't supply.")—the time Appledore was proclaimed Emperor as Julius II and then resigned in favor of a Varangian who reigned briefly as Isidore III and was canonized as St. Isidore the Insane—or the Lord High Steward of the cockney King of Alfland, "aged eight (who, having ignominiously failed his apprenticeship as kitchenboy...had been demoted)".

Reprinted from John Boardman's GRAUSTARK #296, October, 1973.

POSTCARD FROM ALAN DEAN FOSTER

8-23-74

"Issue 10 was enlightening, provoking, absorbing—especially the Lem interview, in which his self-taught English via scientific journals was sharply reflected in his own syntax, and the Tubb-type, reading of which produced a sensation not unlike *deja vu* euthanasia. Excepting a couple of pages written when under the obvious influence of what-is-the-purpose-of-it-all blues, an excellent issue. Kindly renew my subscription for two years this time and bill me soonest. Besides, what can you buy for a buck these days? (which reminds me of the time in Juarez five years ago...but I'm out of space)."

((Then there's the time in 1964 here in Portland when I bargained with a young, inexperienced prostitute for a 50¢ handjob....))

LETTER FROM DAVID GERROLD

8-21-74

"Ted Tubb's comments on reviews reminded me of something I learned in reviewing school many years ago. It was a piece of a discarded philosophy, long since discredited (I was majoring in stiletto-acidity anyway) by the more knowledgeable and experienced, but I have always wondered if there mightn't be a bit

of truth in it.

"The purpose of a review is to answer three questions: "What was the author trying to do? How well did he do it? Was it worth doing in the first place?" Anything else isn't reviewing. It's ego-strutting."

"But, of course, we all know that the purpose of a review is to chastise the author for not doing the book right. As we would have done it, if we had had the time.

"Tubb's story about the Bright Young Man and the Tired Old Author also struck familiar chords. I long ago learned that the best way to handle the situation is to say to the bym: "Look, it's probably a much better idea than I deserve. Why don't you do this (and it'll help protect you): Go home and type up a 10,000 word outline of how you think the story should be handled. If you can do that, I'll consider collaborating with you." The reason this works is that 99% of these Bym's don't have the determination to write 10,000 words. And if they do, then they say, "Hey, what do I need that old fart for—I can do this book myself and get all the money myself." Right...? Almost every fan who has ever tried to become a writer has at one point or another said to himself (or more likely aloud, and at a convention) "I can do that. And better." When he attempts it though, that's when he finds out how hard it is—and the result is a more grudging respect for other writers. (Haven't you ever noticed that authors always have far more respect for other authors—even if they can't stand their works—than fans do in the same situations?)

"Panshin's comments on Mr. Heinlein do serve to point up the isolation that Mr. Heinlein has inflicted upon himself. (I used to believe that RAH was correct in not reading reviews. I no longer believe that—I think it is more correct to read them, but to know when to not take

them seriously. Which is most of the time.)

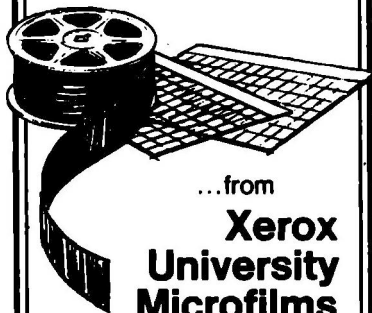
"I've torn up and discarded the page I had already written here, because it infringes on Mr. Heinlein's privacy. I will note that I think Mr. Heinlein's real gripe against Panshin is not that Alexei read his letters, but that he dared to review Heinlein and analyze him, both as an author and as a man. (And that he was correct more often than not.) Any human being has a right to order the universe the way he wants to, within the confines of his own electrified fence—but when venturing out beyond that barrier, he is subject to the same laws of objective reality as the rest of us. There are times when I think that Heinlein has such a paranoid fear of bad news that he has outlawed messengers within his own universe. (At a recent appearance, he stated that his wife, Ginny, handles all their mail. It is generally common knowledge that she keeps from him anything she thinks will displease him. (Say didn't they used to do that with Eisenhower?)

"In any case, it is probably one of the minor tragedies of science fiction that Mr. Heinlein has set himself such a strict set of standards, that he is probably incapable of living up to them himself. Mores the pity. The result is (and has been for some time) a souring of attitudes among those who have the most affection for him. But those are the ones he has most rejected.

"For my own part, I have been finishing up a TV series here in Hollywood—a subject which I will avoid commenting on for a number of very wise reasons: But I will add this, now that I'm back at work on a couple of novels. TV is a great experience for the science fiction writer—it makes you appreciate publishers all the more. (The next time someone stands up to tell a 'copyeditor' story, I'll tell him a 'network V.P.' story which will uncurl his hair.)"

***** 18

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PLEASE WRITE
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OUR FAMILY TREES HAVE WINGS?

Man, look at the pocketbook racks! All you see is von Daniken and his imitators and his detractors.

The latest I've read is Richard A. Mooney's *COLONY: EARTH* (Stein & Day, \$7.95). The title is the message, and in order to make his thesis credible Mooney has to knock down evolution and divine creation.

He argues persuasively but, I suspect superficially and with a selectivity of facts and evidence that would outrage anyone who really knows the sciences he touches on as he flits through the chapters.

He suggests, too, that a catastrophe—tilting of the Earth's axis—caused the

high civilization of our other-planetary colonists to collapse...and that we are the resurgent remnants of that colonial civilization. He cites geological and mythological evidence (or "evidence") to buttress his theory.

It would be nice to believe that humans are other-star originated. Moonney takes care of the Negroid-Caucasoid-Mongoloid problem by theorizing that the Superior Culture on that far Mother planet sent three different types of humans to colony Earth (in three parts of the globe) to see which was best adapted to the planet. Presumably that experiment has yet to be finalized.

If I may extrapolate his argument—perhaps the UFOs are Mother planet observers, reporting back on our progress after that terrible, catastrophic Event in our pre-history.

As I say, COLONY: EARTH is ego-stroking for those who desire a more noble and romantic origin for Mankind.

WHAT KIND OF MAN READS S-F?

(Don't Ask!)

"Here's a little something for your 'WHAT KIND OF MAN READS SF?' department. I found it in an old second-hand copy of SEARCH THE SKY by Pohl & Kornbluth."

—Phil Edgren

((Here follows the text of a "review" hand-written on two lined sheets of 6 1/2" x 10 1/2" blue 'Tie Slip' paper.))

'The authors of this book have the same respect and fear of women as I most certainly have. On page 4 a poor mouse of a man falls in love with a girl who nets him like he was a "sugar perch or fish". He is forced by law and her will to promise to serve her breakfast in bed, large sums of money, etc. And she can do as she likes with him. I believe that most men today—including myself are

just as helplessly geffed & netted & hooked & what's more we learn to like it! In fact when I marry Betty Ann H—— I shall sign myself over to her smallest whims or desires...lock stock & barrel without even a struggle just as the men do in this book of the future. I hope "Bett" reads this book & makes me read it to her in bed every nite to remind me of my promise & my sworn duty to her.

'Page 17 mentions everyone being naked. The authors are nudists evidently like myself. I hope Bett makes me sleep nude forever. It will be a pleasure to be kept warm by her luscious sweet body. I want to suckle Bett's breasts nightly as does the baby on page 18. If she has no milk I can suckle baby bottles half the night & her breasts for the other half. Please Bett grant me this fervent wish I pray.

'Please Betty darling allow me to read Chapter 7 thru Chapt. 9 pages 68 to 108. I am sure when you understand how I want to be treated from these pages you will be kind & generous enough to make me, Howard C. H—— (alias S——) your life-long slave to treat or mistreat as it pleases you & you only.

'At the top of page 72 the hero of the story, a full grown man, must face the fact that he is not equal to a woman or any female person of any age but is her inferior. The female is "boss" over the male, legally, thru force & orders the men & boys around, feeds them as she wills, rapes them sexually when she desires & then makes them pay for the support of the baby, without even the necessity of a marriage. On page 74 & 75 a man tells of being raped by a "lady truck driver & p.75 an air pilot." & then having to support the baby. On p.75 a "Lady Pilot" tries to rape a man who is only saved by his girl friend. On p.81 a proud looking cigar smoking woman president surrounded by sad-looking, sad-eyed men, indicates that men stay home & take care of the babies. On page 84 a woman from another

planet accidentally says "woman" in a non-complimentary tone and is almost mobbed. On page 88 a man speaks against women and is caught. He & his friend must face a woman judge to be severely punished. Men are inferior creatures on this world. & on page 92 the lady judge gave a poor man 500 whip lashes or punished him with 500 strokes of the whip for nonsupport of his wife. The woman can however be unfaithful, have babies with men other than her husband, etc. & the poor husband is thrown in jail if he can't support them. The poor fish of a man is even forced to marry by law. The poor groom cries at wedding (94) Chapter 9 page 96.

'The strutting guard - a female orders the helpless male prisoners around in the Minerva jail. The older man must mop the latrines (p. 100) 24 hours a day. A man must ask the lady guards for permission to go to the toilet. Page 102 the female guards made the male orderlies kiss their feet. The girl guards get drunk, beat up the male prisoners, rape them, etc. Some of the men are so terrified they try to kill themselves. The ladies treat them like merchandise.

'On page 152 (bottom) the women were uninhibited sexually & were pregnant most of the time. They were happy as long as no one bothered to make them think by asking sensible questions. Hilarity ruled. All people were like children born of the slums. Why?

'I am a college man with 390 chances to be a father at birth. College until 20 drops my chances of having a baby to 290. Then five years dental college leaves 230 opportunities. 10 years getting established leaves 100 chances. Ignorant, heedless, thoughtless people naturally have the most children - brainless health & sick intellect. Sterile worlds - imprisoned by ancients - indriven matriarchal custom, all divergence wiped out - earth (dichotomy due to careless childbirths. The answer hybrid living & mixing the worlds. Wildness & survival of

the fittest - wars.

'Dearest Betty the last paragraph means mostly that we can't have many babies but anyway I want you alone. Of course I wouldn't mind having children if you would encourage them to ride on my back, slap & kick me, shit all over me, etc. while you laugh in my face. Unless you allow the children to rule me & play with my prick balls ass-hole & ride my neck & back daily I wouldn't be completely happy having children (Pretty please!)



Bed sores are serious. Apply Benzonaphrilllic salve twice a day and do not use the afflicted bed until it is completely healed.

LETTER FROM PAUL NOVITSKI

8-22-74

"I think Don Redmond may have been using 'revolutionary' in less literal a sense than you took it ((in my TAC #10 editorial)) —or at least, that's how I'd have meant it had I said what he did. Revolution in the sense of active, purposeful change. The popular American 1960's referends of the word—Abbie Hoffman, Yippies, Weathermen—are not true revolutionaries in my book, because they aren't forces of change. They merely perpetuate the violence, destruction & frustration of the past.

"I think Ursula LeGuin is an sf-revolutionary, though she probably wouldn't

agree. Perhaps evolutionary would be a better word...

"I do agree with Redmond that sf 'should' promote active change in our culture—it's the only genre (by definition) that can dip into the future for solutions to today's problems. This reveals my rather idealistic, altruistic expectations for the field, rather like the Jewish mother who speaks for years of 'my son the doctor' and cannot understand why he would choose to marry a goy and become a Klein bottle manufacturer instead. Maybe my concept of what sf Should Be is way off, but I'm trying to realize the ideal through my writing.

"I think you're right when you say that sf has almost always reflected current mores, and for three reasons.

"1. Most sf writers have simply put hackneyed plots into space garb, e.g. the space opera.

"2. Even those writers with artistic integrity have found it extremely difficult to break out of the Known Universe; it's easy to find odd cultural idiosyncracies in the past & present around this world, but who the hell can say what it will be like four millenia from now on Deneb IV? Pardon me if I seem cynical, but I haven't been terribly impressed with the imaginations of 80% of the sf writers to date.

"3. Anyway, I think that social reformers (revolutionaries) in the sf field have been critiquing current mores because that is the culture they are out to change. Like GULLIVER'S TRAVELS, putting their culture into a different universe to point out those aspects which we tend to take for granted.

"Does sf have an obligation to the present or the future? Is the future distinguishable from the present?"

((Of course "sf" isn't an entity or a thing than can assume an obligation. And the future is not distinguishable from the

present. The future isn't anywhere for comparison. Jean Dixon to the contrary (and didn't she blow her rep when she appeared in print with the "prediction" that Nixon would serve out his term—in the week he resigned).))

"Now, there's certainly something to be said for science fiction which draws nothing from the present or past—perhaps that's the 'true' sf, I dunno—I can think of one story off-hand, a farmer hoeing in his field, and time stops going forward and goes sideways for a while—the farmer metamorphoses as does the sky, the field, the hoe, the critters, etc.—but, I suppose because I'm currently interested in the evolution of our 1974 culture, the sf that excites me is that involved with social change; today's social change. Maybe that's a conservative, stick-in-the-mud attitude for an sf writer to have, but as an artist it's just about the only attitude I can honestly take. I live now."

((So what we say is "sf" is now "ssf": social-science fiction...or soft-science fiction...social-speculation fiction. But of course relevant (starting from) today's faddish, fashionable, "in" media crises.—which (it goes without saying) have nothing to do with the masked forces which really operate to shape next year and next decade and next century. The easy-to-see future of today is a fraud—bet on it.

((Gee, I sure wish I were an artist. What's it like?))

"I think that Ursula LeGuin's THE DISPOSSESSED is the most important science fiction book of the past ten or twenty years. I hope you can give it some extra time and thought when you eventually review it."

((I suppose you consider THE DISPOSSESSED important because you think it relevant to now; if the philosophy of Odo is workable and not fatally flawed. Let's see if some communes are formed to test it.))



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THE FOUNDATION ON SANDS

An Article By JOHN J. ALDERSON

In a way, Isaac Asimov has a hide. He confesses to have little faith in the sociological sciences, the so-called "soft sciences" and then writes a three volume work of fiction that turns basically and wholly on the senior of the sociological sciences, history. His "Foundation" series rests on the "science" psycho-history.

Quite frankly, not only is Asimov ignorant of history, he does not even understand its principles. Which comes very well from a man who has seen fit to churn out several volumes that purport to be history.

This complete lack of understanding, not only of history, but of the ways in which history is studied is evident from



his little essays in F&SF, whilst in the several instances he has had to mention mythology or legends his dismissal of them betrays an inability to realize that they do embody facts and that these facts can be extracted and studied. Even if one allows that Asimov is a scientist as he claims (let us not inquire too deeply as to what a scientist actually is), one thing is clear. He is not an analytic scientist. He accepts facts but he cannot analyze them. Worse, argument and logic go over his head.

Asimov's world is an orderly world where every electron whizzes around exactly in its prescribed path. But show him a human being and he is lost. So while he stuck to ordinary things, simple machines like robots that obey certain defined and ordered laws, Asimov is in his element. When he puts human beings in his stories they are not human beings except in name; they too are robots doing exactly as they should at the right time according to certain and definite rules. Like Hari Seldon's crises, exactly right and exactly on time, even after centuries.

Why, with this limitation of approach Asimov should have attempted something as ambitious as "Foundation" is curious. His is an ambition akin to that of Balzac who conceived his great design of the "Comedie Humaine" (a complete picture of modern civilization). The talent he shares with Balzac is that of being the author of a prodigious number of books. He certainly has not the talent for the portrayal of character so essential to either "Comedie Humaine" or "Foundation." For the simple fact is that the fates of humanity rest on the characters of its main actors, & the collective characters of the peoples involved.

And let no one tell you that the national character of say the Greek, and the Scot are even vaguely similar, despite the Marxian theory that they ought to be; the "economic determinism" of two poor mountainous countries with bad communications.

Now this is a good point. The Foundation settled by Hari Seldon is the small, barren planet Terminous at the extreme end of the Galaxy, and the scientists settled there had to live on their brains, and to continue living on their brains they had to continue developing a superior technology. This is the very essence of Marxian "economic determinism" (I am not interested in Asimov's politics—he is probably a bloated capitalist.).

Now history has to be distorted to fit Marxist theories because the theories are wrong. Terminous being a poor planet produced some brilliant scientists, just as Scotland being a poor country produced some brilliant scientists. Now the Scots promptly put their first pay down on a ticket to a fatter land and migrated as soon as they could...because a poor country cannot pay scientists, only a rich country can do that. So when Asimov has his scientists staying on Terminous he is having them dance to the strings he is pulling. This would not and could not have happened; they would promptly have migrated to a more prosperous planet.

One may go farther. Whilst science can be investigated with makeshift apparatus made by the scientist himself, poor countries can produce scientists (who leave as mentioned above). But when science begins to need little toys like computers and 200 inch telescopes, poor countries and poor planets cannot produce them.

But to pass to the next stage. The next era was one of freelance traders between the planets (who had to introduce missionaries and atomic toys). These traders always returned to Terminous or their sphere of influence, and they sired their children there and died and were buried there. The renegade traders of later times still considered themselves "Foundation".

Consider Scotland again. They too at the appropriate time produced a lot of

traders. Tea and tobacco were their staples, and Scottish capital and Scottish ships skimmed the cream of the sea. (But note that they were importers, not exporters.) But where did those Scottish merchants sire their sons, and where did those sons go to school, and where are the descendants of those merchants today? In England, or further afield.

And the merchants of Terminous would have found a gentler and more prosperous planet on which to end their days regardless of what their creator thinks about it. This is an aspect of history that Asimov does not understand and which would have killed all the hopes of Foundation and Hari Seldon.

Within limits, history can be predicted. But far from a large population making things easier, it merely adds more variables and there comes a stage where the variables are so many that there can be no prediction. Besides, a sociological prediction, to be of any value, needs to have all the representative societies on the same sociological level of progress. As this does not happen on a small place like the Earth, how could it with the galaxy.

The point of all this is that Asimov has not heard of "cultural lag" and would not understand its implications if he had. And this alone is fatal for his trilogy.

Given that the first Julactic Galactic Empire had been in existence for some centuries, and presuming the impossible, that a state of stasis had been achieved in the capital Trantor, it would take several thousand years for that level of culture to penetrate to the fringes of the galaxy, even with instantaneous transport (which they did not have). This is cultural lag.

However, an innovation on the fringe of the galaxy would take hundreds of times as long to penetrate to Trantor. This is the other side of cultural lag. Let's explain it like this. If the girls of

Paris paint their noses red the fashion will be seen in Melbourne in a few days and the next year (despite Paris having changed the fashion) all the girls will paint their noses red. If, however, the Melbourne girls paint their ears green, it will be centuries, if ever, before the girls in Paris paint their ears green.

It would take centuries for the decay of Trantor to affect Terminus. The technology of the Foundation would take vastly longer to reach Trantor, or for that matter, anywhere in the Hub.

But Asimov is unaware of this cultural lag. Everyone has heard of foundation, as if they have become magicians.

Indeed, in the galaxy the cultural lag would be so great that a galactic empire would be impossible. There are so many stars in the galaxy that Trantor would need to be one huge computer to hold their facts...instead it is filled with bureaucrats. Such an immenseness could not be ruled as one empire. It is an impossibility.

Even now on Earth with instant communications, whilst orders may come from the centre of the empire in no time at all, news of disaffection a few hundred miles away may take years to reach the capital, and vastly longer to be dealt with. To wit: the Home Rule Movement was active for decades before the taking of the Coronation Stone but the English had not heard of it; now, two decades later, still nothing has been done.

So with Trantor, the ruling party of the galaxy would spend most of their time talking about the price of fish in Trantor, and a place as far away as Terminus would not get a mention in an unread report. One must appreciate the fact that whilst income tax papers may be sent to the furthest outposts and get there on time, the disaffected is not likely to get on the 'phone and ring up the Emperor and tell him he's not going to pay it. And if he tried he wouldn't get through...and

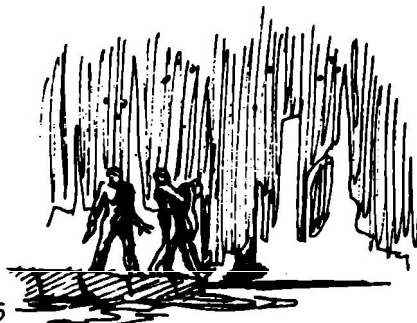
if you don't believe me, try ringing up the Prime Minister. Even Earthly empires fall to pieces in no time at all.

As Rome slowly died as an empire, the idea of being an Empire died first of all in Rome. So, long after Rome perished as an empire the Scots classed themselves as Roman citizens. It was in Scotland that Roman law survived more intact than anywhere else. One remembers the Britons sending to Rome for help long after Rome was unable to help herself. Because this sort of news travels slowly. People are loth to believe that they cannot get what they want.

Foundation has a great similarity to the Roman Empire...or rather the Galactic Empire has a great similarity to that of Rome, in some respects. It is in the essentials that they differ.

The truth is opposite to what Asimov thought. It is Asimov's ideal that the edge of the empire should crumble first. Reality is that the edge of the empire is the last to learn that the empire has fallen.

All right, the Galactic Empire has instantaneous communications and Rome did not (Though in reality Scotland lies only a few days sail from Rome, let it suffice.) But we all know the British Empire is a thing of the past...or do we? In London they do, but do they in New Zealand? Whilst we confess that Ulster is geographically close to London, psychologically they are at the ends of the earth and the Ulster (Protestants) are living in the



days before the Great War. But there are Crown Colonies with much the same idea as the Ulster Orangemen, that the Empire still survives. Or France...it was her colonial territories that demanded to become part of Metropolitan France after the World War. This attitude appears to be always so, and the Galactic Empire would have crumbled from the centre not the outside. Now I am aware that there were various revolts during the life of the Roman Empire, but almost all of the revolts were headed by men who proclaimed themselves Emperor, and sometimes succeeded in mounting the throne.

Obviously the parallel goes further. Constantine removed the capital to Constantinople, and Asimov to Neo-Trantor, but the parallel is forced. Indeed, Constantinople would stand nearer to the Foundation than anything else, being as it was a centre of art and learning. (Actually, there was another centre of learning at the other end of Europe, namely Ireland, but Ireland was never part of the Empire.) But Constantinople was not the edge of the Roman Empire; that would have been over in India or somewhere.

Certainly Constantinople was a centre of learning and certainly it could be argued that it was a bulwark against barbarianism (e.g. the Saracens) but the Sar-

acens on the other hand were defeated by the Franks, not the Irish (who admittedly may have helped with soldiers), but whose contacts with the Saracen world was sufficient to cause the Hiberno-Moorish school of art and on the other hand to influence Cormac's Chapel in Cashel. Further, all attempts to recreate the Roman Empire were centred in Central Europe (usually called the Holy Roman Empire of which the Common Market may be yet a further attempt).

Yet again whilst the Irish sent missionaries galore onto the Continent they followed the traders and centuries lapsed between them. And whilst Europe went to Ireland for learning they got it freely without religious mumbo-jumbo, and more importantly they got schools of their own in their own countries without any political or religious strings.

If Foundation is modelled in any on the aftermath of the Roman Empire then it is a distortion of historical events and ideas and the whole historical concept of post-Roman Europe suggests that the theory behind Foundation is utterly and fundamentally wrong.

Certainly there was apparently an allowance in the Hari Seldon plan for individual conquerors (the Mule) but had the Mule founded a dynasty (and a dynasty does not necessarily need to be hereditary...the great days of Ireland and Scotland saw the kings elected from the ablest of the royal clan—Uí Neill in Ireland—whilst the offices of the Celtic Church were also hereditary through a sister's son or similar relationship, and the Dutch Republic elected its leaders), the plan would have gone astray. The Plan demanded no great men and certainly allowed no succession of great men, and it is just this that alters and moulds history.

This is part of the essence of history. The Seldon Plan was for the forces of history to make great men. The reality of history is that great men make history, which is why it is such a sordid blood-



stained story. The British Empire, for instance, was made by great men (or great knaves, depending on the point of view), against the wishes of the English people and often against the wishes of the Parliament and the rulers. Nor was it the wish of the Romans to invade Gaul; that was Caesar's idea who did it to further his own personal ambitions. There was not the historical necessity.

Fundamentally, history is shaped by individuals. This raises an interesting point in the logic of Hari Seldon: if his plan called for non-presence of great men influencing history then his own plan to influence history is illogical, his actions and his plans are mutually self-destroying.

This is not to suggest that great moments of history cannot be depicted ahead, but the pathway charted by Hari Seldon is not an historical movement, it is a history. Even more impossible is his accurate timing of crises. Nothing is more problematic than how long human beings will take to do a thing...if they do it. And a galaxy full of them merely means that there will be more forced to cooperate taking a longer time.

Another fundamental requirement of the Seldon plan was that the aims and ambitions of human beings were to remain constant. Well!!! We can only sadly remark that Dr. Asimov does not know much about human beings. The Galactic Empire began decaying and atomic-powered civilizations degenerated to coal-burning societies—without changing human aims! (How were chemical-powered spaceships managed to cover the light years of space is not contemplated.)

Degeneration and decay is the order of the day. Certainly with the fall of the Roman Empire certain things fell into decay. The hypocasts immediately fell into disuse and men huddled around great fires of logs to keep warm. Wax candles went out and in came smokey tallow-burning crudies. As bridges fell to pieces

men crossed streams by means of fords. Far, however, from the arts dying out, men began writing with a vigour greater than Rome ever knew. Native workmanship was anything but barbaric. Indeed the fall of Rome released men from bondage and allowed the arts to flourish as never before. And they flourished because they had a new direction, something the Seldon plan could not accomplish. Vast improvements were made in laws, in agriculture,



in wine-making, and regrettably in war. Coupled with this was an all-pervading interest in religion...the new aim mankind obtained and which the Seldon plan could not envisage. (Don't mistake this religious ideal with the priestly mumbo-jumbo of the early Foundationists. This was real.)

One of the greatest influences on history is climate and if this did not change on Terminus, Asimov should have said so. Climate goes in large cycles, the exact plotting of which is still to be done. In Roman times the Firths of Clyde and Forths were much deeper than now and a wall between the heads of the rivers was feasible. Later, the Firth of Clyde was fordable at Dunbarton (Fort of the Britons, built to prevent "men o' the north" crossing there). In Viking times the ice of the Arctic Circle had receded so far that their seaway to Vinland, Greenland and Iceland was clear—and is now under permanent ice, and according to Tom Lethbridge, Vinland is now covered by semi-permanent snow and the Greenland settlements perished before the advance of the ice. Indeed, it is probable that the whole Viking era was caused by climatic

conditions. When talking about 1000 years of history climatic change must be taken into account and Asimov has not done so.

With the Renaissance men's aims turned again, from God to man, and humanism became the order of the day with its ever increasing trust in materialism. It is this materialism that flourishes all the way through the thousand years of Foundation history (and incidentally between now and then according to Asimov). This current materialism is unlikely to last out the century as there is already active revolt against it. But as we said before, Asimov is unaware of the real forces moulding history and how they work.

The idea behind Foundation is not only conservative, but reactionary. Of course chaos followed the end of the Roman Empire ...in the eyes of a Roman politician. The Irish look back and call it the Golden Age. The real fruit of Foundation would have been the loss of a thousand years of progress.

Far from a galaxy of people being more predictable, they would become less so. People are only predictable when in the same environment and under the same stresses. The galaxy, even more than the Earth, would have too many differences, too many imponderables, and too great a space between peoples to be in any way predictable. Any greatly different environment will make a people react sharply in a very different fashion to another. This, Asimov does not understand.

The "Foundation" of Asimov rests on the sands of social and historical ignorance. It has not and could not happen. That much is predictable.

"The Foundation On Sands" appeared first in John J. Alderson's magazine, CHAO #13, June, 1973.

THE BIBLE MADE ME DO IT

***** 28

LETTER FROM BRUCE D. ARTHURS

((Bruce is preparing a Compleat Interview With Roger Elwood for TAC. Parts of it will be published in his POWERMAD and/or GODLESS (I can't keep his fanzines straight in my mind) first. Depending on when I get the Complete Interview, it will appear in either TAC #12 or #13. By the time I get to "Alien Conclusions" this issue I should know. Anyway, this letter is a kind of appetizer.))

7-24-74

"The interview took place last weekend at Elwood's home and I've been transcribing the tapes since then. Slightly less than half through and already got 24 hand-written pages of dialogue. Plus as I've transcribed, I can see places where I should have questioned a little closer or asked additional questions; Elwood offered to answer any additional questions I came up with by telephone, so I'll have to try and figure out some way to hook up the recorder to the phone.

"In the meantime, a few interesting bits:

"Elwood is against Women's Liberation because 'there is a definite percentage of Lesbians involved in the movement.' (I haven't gotten to that point on the tape yet, but I'm fairly sure that's an accurate quote.)

"Here's another interesting tidbit: In the past four years, Elwood has gotten between two and three thousand manuscripts submitted to him. In that time he's compiled about eighty anthologies, with about ten or fifteen stories each, say 800 to 1200 stories. That seems to be an, ahem, unusual percentage of stories bought. But I don't know how many of those were as-signed stories, and it'll be one of the new questions I'll be asking.

"By the way, Elwood wants your phone number (he doesn't like correspondence and conducts almost all his work by telephone; his phone bill averages \$600 per month).

I'm willing to bet he's going to ask you to interview him. Elwood seems to be using the same techniques to corner the market on fanzine interviews as he did to corner the original anthology market.

"Consider this: Dick Lupoff had a negative review of some of Elwood's books in *ALGOL*; Elwood calls Lupoff and asks him to interview him. I have a negative review of one of Elwood's books in *GOODLESS*; Elwood calls me and asks me to interview him, and even pays my plane fare to and from New Jersey. On my way back after the interview, I change planes in Philadelphia and having a few minutes to spare, call Linda Bushyager. She had a negative review of one of Elwood's books in *KARASS*; guess who...? Also, during the same time I was at Elwood's home, he spent 25 minutes on the phone, calling Denis Quane of *NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT*; Denis had had a letter from Paul Walker in the last *NOTES* which made a few slightly critical statements about Elwood's personality.

"Elwood is apparently totally unable to just take or leave a poor review. I'm going to have to drop a card to Cy Chauvin. The last but one issue of *SELDON'S PLAN* had a poor review of an Elwood book; I wonder if Cy's been offered an interview yet?

"One more bit for your entertainment: Elwood is writing a book, which could be described as a Christian inspirational sex novel: *MAGDALENE* by title, it's about a professional prostitute who is saved from the horrors of selling her body, and fellatio, and group sex, and all that other

degrading stuff when she meets a minister and finds Christ. From what I gathered, the first parts of the book read just like a regular sex novel, excepted that Magdalene feels degraded by sex, rather than enjoying it.

"And while I was there, he came up with and sold an idea for another book: *THE BIBLE: YOUR GUIDE TO SEXUAL HAPPINESS*. You may think I'm joking, but it's quite serious. It started out as a joke, until someone mentioned that a book with a title like that would sell 200,000 copies on curiosity value alone. Look for it from Paperback Library. (Of course, since Elwood doesn't approve of pre-marital sex, the book will be slanted towards married couples.)"

((I wonder which is worse—a religious prostitute...or a prostituted religion...or someone who can't tell the difference?))

LETTER FROM JOHN BANGSUND

8-26-74

"I sent you a copy of the Campbell book, and I hope you found it of some interest. It's not the book I would like it to be, and I would go about it very differently now—but I'm sure you know that feeling. Lately I have been getting letters and all kinds of odd cheques and money orders from people who have read about the book in *THE ALIEN CRITIC*. I am sending these letters on to Space Age Books in Melbourne, since they are the sole world distributors of the book. Would you mind mentioning somewhere that the book costs A\$2.00 (=US\$3.00), plus postage (about US\$0.40), and is available only from Space Age Books? From a conversation today with someone at Space Age I gather that someone in America wants to buy all the copies left. Frankly, I don't care what happens, because the book was an act of homage, it is done, everyone I wanted to have a copy has one, and I have other things to do.



"It annoys me a bit that some people stand to make a few bucks out of a job that cost me about \$800 and countless hours of work, but that's the way the spear-mind chews, and I wouldn't have done it for money anyway.

"Space Age Books have about 100 copies left, and I have about 30. When they run out I will release my copies at A\$5.00/US\$7.50, out of sheer bastardy or something."

((The address for Space Age Books is: 305-307 Swanston St., Melbourne 3000, AUSTRALIA.

((John Bangsund's address is: P.O. Box 357, Kingston ACT 2604, AUSTRALIA.))

A CHIMP IN TIME....

Peter Dickinson's newest is *THE POISON ORACLE*, subtitled 'A Novel of Suspense' by the publisher, I suspect.

It's a bit of Strange, rather bizarre. Set in Now, in the real world, in which an English psycholinguist is working with a "genius" chimp in animal/human communication while in the employ of an oil-rich Arab ruler at the unique "castle" of the ruler.

Ingredients are a hijacked jet which lands nearby, its lovely hijackeress, a complicated relationship with the primitive nearby swamp natives, the kingdom's Arab allies, international oil politics and economics...

The plot—the "suspense"—is more the psycholinguist's survival in the swamp in the clutches of the sacrificial-minded natives than solving the puzzle of who killed the Sultan and how it was done.

The "genius" chimp is the witness and in the end points the finger.

What is superb in this book is Dickinson's creation of the marsh people, their complicated society, culture and customs, and their meticulously worked-out language

and its effect/link on/with the marsh people. Dickinson's skill in this area should turn many sf writers green with envy and admiration. He makes the natives and their culture so real...I'm still not totally sure they don't really exist. (Pantheon, \$5.95)

MALZBERG AT THE CHARGE

I read it because I'm a masochist and paranoid. I keep suspicioning that Barry Malzberg is Putting Us On, that he's playing (deliberately) the old Obscurantist/Surrealist "serious" writer's game to sucker the influential New York literateurs and editors and reviewers who LOVE this sort of relevantly bizarre incoherence—this carefully written-to-be-confusing Kafka-type fiction that almost makes sense sometimes.

It makes me feel dumb and obtuse because the True Meaning eludes my apparently sub-standard mind. (In the "serious" writer's game the big shot editors and reviewers and literateurs don't understand it either, but don't dare admit it! So they are forced to praise the book and author for fear of being exposed as 'unperceptive' and 'insensitive'.)

Of course this game of Obscurantism/Surrealism is a tricky one—the writer must actually be highly skilled and intelligent. Which Barry is. So he is getting a reputation for Depth and Art by writing novels like this one, *THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE* (Pocket Books 77696, 95¢) which make readers furious and ashamed and baffled.

More power to him; there's a fine art to deliberately fogging your meaning. Why, as I was saying to myself last year in Marienbad...is that how it's spelled? Geis, I said...or did I? There's a limit to what I'll stand for, I hope you understand that. This constant refusal to obey simple instructions.... I'm clearly going insane. This can't go on.

I am advised, at the top of their lungs, by the Be Kind To Intellectual Authors League (who are, also, at this very moment preparing to break into my cell and Take Me) that I must give some idea of the plot, and did Malzberg do as he intended, and if so, how good a job did he do?

These are difficult questions since Barry makes his intent impenetrable, and thus his skill is questionable. Ha.

The story involves a rather stupid person (male) who comes into New York (a city in quarantine) to use the 'lumpen' survivors of a social holocaust to re-enact for filming the assassination of John Kennedy. The lumpen make lousy actors and end up imprisoning the stupid person, wiring him for hallucinations, and running his mind through various and sundry famous assassinations, usually as victim, usually JFK. The stupid person is from an Institute on the outside, and there is a father figure in charge (maybe) of the Institute, and stupid person is saved at the end...I think... See, I'm doing this from memory and I resent the book, so don't expect a detailed run-down.

Maybe Barry is saying something about violence & society & the human condition.. Christ, I'm using Intellectual Reviewer terms—a cop-out. He's got me doing it! I don't know what the fuck he is saying in the book. Maybe you're supposed to take from it what you want/need. Lots of luck.

Personally, I suspect Barry Malzberg is on a one man crusade to destroy science fiction. And I, sir, am on a one man crusade to save science fiction.

"Tootle-to-too-de-toot!" CHARGE!

NO NOSE IS GOOD NOSE

By JOHN BROSMAN

(From BIG SCAB #2)

Just before I left for Australia at the beginning of this year I had a skin cancer removed from my nose. It was only

a little one and you can hardly see the scar but yesterday I went back to the hospital to have it checked.

The young Jewish specialist (he's a real riot...when he was cauterizing my nose he told me I could scream as much as I wanted to because the door was sound-proofed) examined my nose thoughtfully and said, "I think we might be able to give you a normal nose."

Now my nose is always rather red-looking and this is due, not, as some people believe, to my excessive drinking, but to a childhood accident. My pram was left out in the sun and I ended up with a badly burned nose which later became infected (I was just not designed for life in Australia). I wondered how the specialist intended to achieve this miracle.

"It's a cream which you apply every night for about six weeks."

I was relieved. It sounded quite simple.

"Unfortunately," he continued, "it will involve a certain amount of suffering."

How much suffering, I asked.

"A great deal," he admitted. "The more you apply the cream the worse it will get until finally it will become unbearable. At that point you stop applying the cream. By this time your nose will look as if it has been hit by a truck." He said all this quite cheerfully.

"Oh, yes," I said. "Then what?"

"By then the skin will start regenerating itself and you should have a normal-looking nose."

"Should have?" I asked. "There's no guarantee?"

"Oh no. But it will be an interesting experiment."

I didn't answer.

"And keep your nose out of the sun,"

he told me as he wrote out the prescription.

Now I can keep most parts of me out of the sun without any difficulty but my nose is something else again.

He agreed it wouldn't be easy.

I got the cream from the hospital dispensary but I haven't started to apply it yet. I don't fancy walking around for 2 months with a nose that will look as if its been hit by a truck. According to the pamphlet that came with the cream the pattern of response is as follows: erythema, vesiculation, erosion, ulceration, necrosis and epithelization. I don't think my nose deserves that sort of treatment. Besides, I have enough trouble pulling ing chicks as it is.

LETTER FROM PEARL

8-29-74

"I, of course, am sold on the necessity for 'stroking'—hence my weekly sessions with Gene. Both of us are aware that it's the physical contact we need perhaps more than the sex. So, I choke back my anger at him even when it's so strong it makes me sick to my stomach, bite my lip and wait for the rage to subside, knowing that without what he gives me, I'll become an embittered old woman within a time span of 7 months. And he does the same with me which is the reason, I suppose, that in over eight years we've never had an honest-to-gosh fight. Dull, but then INSURANCE never has had a reputation for being exciting.

"Aside from my encounters with Gene, I have very little contact with that swinging world out there. I made a couple of abortive attempts to go straight but found myself bored with the goings on and horrified at the expense. I just can't see paying \$2.00 admission, \$1.25 per drink for Club Soda! and 75¢ for parking to watch a bunch of gloomy people indulge in what looks like their last night on the

town before their final try at suicide.

"As an alternative, I have found a couple of fag dancehalls, the Paradise Ballroom, and Studio One which is a huge place on the site of the now defunct Factory. I make it out about once a week, dance, sweat and have a glorious time... at least until the moment when I am stunned by the realization that everyone in the place is crazy for cock. It's not too bad at the Paradise which only holds about 150 people, but at Studio One where the crowd is closer to six hundred, that moment is crushing/overwhelming and I usually leave soon afterwards feeling very strange indeed.

"Food: It's still my bete noir although after 3 meetings of Overeaters Anonymous, I managed to cut back enough to get my blood sugar into normal range; not enough however to lose any of the weight I had gained. Even after dancing my ass off one night, which is usually good for ½ pound, I didn't lose a bloody ounce.

"And then I found T*O*F*U..... Tofu, as you may or may not know, is a Japanese soybean curd cake available in the dairy case of some markets and health food stores. It is very high in protein, very low in calories (a bit more than 18 cal. per oz.), is nearly tasteless so it mixes well with all sorts of things; has the consistency of cottage pudding and within a 15/20 minute wait after gulp-down time, is nearly as satisfying as mashed potatoes.

"Dick, I lost five pounds in ten days. Squeal, squeal and light a candle at a Japanese shrine! Five pounds in ten days is miraculous for me—2½ pounds a month is my usual rate of weight loss. So now I feel like I've got it knocked, that I can eat my Hamburger Helper every Saturday without wondering whether it will still be on my frame 10 Saturdays from now along with the other 9 helpings. Have I mentioned Hamburger Helper to you before this? The Lasagne flavor, when pre-

pared with a good hamburger/protein mix, and liberally sprinkled with Borden's grated Parmesan & Romano cheese is as close to ecstasy as I care to get at the table and I've eaten at a good restaurant or two in my time. Ask your mother to fix it for you or do it yourself...it's that easy.

"Now that we've covered food, let's get back to non-food or anti-food, or what you will: Overeaters Anonymous is not what it appears to be on the surface. It wasn't until the third meeting that I picked up that it's a group of Compulsive Personalities who just happened to pick food to act out on. Until the third meeting, in fact, Compulsive Personality was just a term I'd seen in books and I had vague associations with people who constantly washed their hands or counted cracks in the sidewalk.

"But no, they are borderline psychotics who just barely manage to keep their lives in order by reading in the Big Book, quoting the serenity prayer, calling their sponsors to help them through the numbing depression they encounter when they wake up every morning, going to meetings every single night of the week, asking a higher power to keep them from further suicide attempts. One of the girls who made a particularly strong impression on me had embodied all her paranoid fears in food so that she was unable to eat meat because she was terrified of it while she gorged on fruit, yogurt and a few other things she had learned to handle. She sobbed all during the time she spoke and finally became so unmanageable, two people had to take her outside where she shrieked hysterically for ten minutes. And here I thought I'd run into a group of jolly fellow gluttons. PS: I haven't been back since.

"I love being a miser. How come those novels never tell you about the physical thrill, the kick in the ass, the chortle in the gut to be had from pinching pennies. I've got two other people on my

kick and they both shyly admit to me that it is FUN. Literature is probably as full of shit as movies—when I think of all those Freudian explanations for miserliness (the anal complex, lack of love as a child, etc.) and it's probably a healthy, animal thing. Squirrels do it (nuts), dogs do it (bones), ants do it (I'd rather not think about what ants do it to) and all down the line, animals hoard, hide away, steal from one another....Fun-lovers all. How did miserliness get such a bad reputation among humans? I shall think more on this subject.

"Still in keeping with the subject at hand, I get Tofu for 44¢ for 17 ounces. So on the days I eat Tofu, I'm eating for less than \$1.00 a day and that includes my apples and diet soft drinks.

"Thrills, weight loss and a full stomach. My life is perfect."

**IT TAKES A HEAP OF DYING TO
MAKE A CASKET A HOME**

THE ENGLISH ASSASSIN is at least a two-leveled book. Now, multi-leveled novels are tricky, especially when the author is Michael Moorcock, and more especially when the book is judiciously (warningly) subtitled: 'A Jerry Cornelius Novel'.

The unwary and ignorant book buyer might think from the title and sub-title that here from Harper & Row, for \$6.95, is a tightly-plotted suspenseful novel of intrigue and death.

Yes. It is. BUT—

It opens with a kind of coffin-package floating from the sea into an English coastal cave. It contains the body of Jerry Cornelius. It has been in the oceans for years...but, somehow...(or maybe yes...I dunno!) Jerry is "alive", his mind is gone, and he makes inhuman sounds.

The intrigued reader soon learns that the chapters are flashbacks and flashforwards showing Jerry's youth—how he got to

be an assassin, how his "death" came about, how his friends and associates cart, deliver, send, fly his coffin around England and Europe (a near-future Europe, by the way, with a strange revolutionary anarchism in the air—governments are in flux—), and how he finally totally dies... (But the reader is not fully confident, even then, that Jerry Cornelius, apparently immortal, is not capable of resurrection, because how he could survive for years in the sea and for months in that sealed coffin....)

In all this, of course, Michael Moorcock is looking at present-day mores and customs through a glass darkly, with a cynical grin.

Oh, the book is interesting and it carries built-in fascination as the reader tries to figure it out (and eventually just gives up and enjoys the ride for the remaining pages), but it cheats the reader, too, of a satisfying coherence and rationality. But that's part of Moorcock's purpose. Moorcock perhaps feels himself victimized by the world he lives in, so in revenge he artistically victimizes his readers. Thus he is part of what he hates and is warning against...and thus I warn you about him.

Necessity may be the mother of invention, but Greed is its father. (We're all ashamed of Greed, so he isn't mentioned much.)

LETTER FROM CHARLES W. RUNYON

Early Sept.

"I just referred to p.3 of TAC #9 to make sure my memory had not deceived me.

"Peter Beter hit it on the nose with his prediction of Rocky's elevation to Veep-hood. His other predictions are taking shape—creation of a national police force, etc., emasculation of both major political parties. Obviously Japan will have to do something in the next three-four years, with its consumption of 20%

of the world's oil and absolutely—almost—zero % of its production.

"On p.21 of the same issue (I'm behind in my reading) Sam Merwin Jr. refers to a zany suggestion of using orange peels as rocket fuel. It may have been zany when we had oceans of oil underground, but now we'll have to find something else.

"The orange peel rocket fuel just might work. Mexican oranges are best; thin skins are the most volatile. Try sitting before an open fire, squeeze an peel between the thumb and forefinger, watch the tiny jet of essence shoot out and ignite with a hiss of green-blue flame. (I don't get much out of the Jaffa oranges, so Isreal's still in trouble.)

"Right now the problem is mass-thrust ratio. To supply a continuing fuel source for interstellar flight, you'd need an orange grove approximately 5 mi. long and one mi. wide. I assign this problem to agronomer-engineers.

"But think of the advantages of also growing potatoes on the ship. You could eat the pulp, jistill the juice into vodka, and mix it with orange juice.

"We'll call it the screwdriver drive."

((I'll drink to that!))

"The makers of the radical movements of the Sixties experienced political repression as heathens encountered religion: with awe, resignation, and dependence. In the beginning, the State revealed its terrible, almost magical power to harass, isolate, and ultimately destroy insurgent forces. That begat the outbreaks of "paranoia" endemic to the movements in the latter years of the decade. At last, some radicals came to believe that the repression was itself a validation of their strategies and even a justification for their politics.

"Like sinners and shivers, the new subversives and their scourges were bound together in an ecology of surveillance and

security. Political groups checked their own reality by the amount of police attention they received. An organization possessed of a bona fide infiltrator found not only status in the movement but a sense of historical importance. The complementary needs of the hunter and his quarry, and the spy and his mark apply to political relationships: there's the well-known story of the exiled Bakunin and his tsarist police agent flirting, as it were, in the cafes of Switzerland and exchanging touching personal favors for many years. Upon the old anarchist's death, the lifelong agent slid into a state of deep grief and could not be consoled for his loss."

—Andrew Kopkind, NEW YORK
REVIEW Of Books, May 30, '74.

We dare not legislate out of existence so-called 'victimless crimes'—the police need the work. It protects them from armed robbers, murderers, etc. No, let us not try to force the police to endanger their lives, or reduce the Justice Establishment. Let us instead create a different set of safe crimes.... Saving money, for instance...repairing a machine so that it lasts beyond its time of built-in failure...eating less than the average yearly consumption of sugar.

URSULA MAJOR

A Minor Review of THE DISPOSSESSED

Ursula Le Guin rightfully subtitled her new novel, THE DISPOSSESSED, 'An Ambiguous Utopia.' It will spark speculations, controversies, deep personal thought, admiration, perhaps even hatred, for years.

It might even be picked up by the Youth and become a cult-book like STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND.

There may be those who might deny THE

DISPOSSESSED is in fact science fiction, but is an elaborate translation, a socio-political-economic novel of today set in the far future, in another star-system, to allow its message greater freedom to be understood and considered without current tags and labels and thought-conditioning, knee-jerk reactions, getting in the way.

THE DISPOSSESSED is superficially the story of Shevek, a brilliant young physicist of the planet Anares, who leaves to seek greater opportunities for learning and working on the sister (binary) planet Urras. Each planet is the other's moon.

Some history: The Hainish are a type of humans who came to Earth after we had finally made an unholy mess of it all; they assisted in colonizing the Ceti system binary planets Anares and Urras. The Hainish claim to be the original strain of mankind, to have originally colonized Earth millennia ago. They are Old and Wise and Tired and Mature. They feel responsible for the younger varieties of human civilizations spread (by them) through this small area of the galaxy.

The Earth colonists found Urras a rich, lovely, heaven of a planet, while Anares, the twin, was poor, bleak, dry, barren, a dustball nobody wanted to live on. A few marginal mining outfits....

So. Urras is Capitalist; busily engaged in competing nationalisms, revolutions, wars, keeping the lower classes in their place, etc., etc., etc... (As now, on Earth.)

Inevitably, a pure, rational, anti-authoritarian communist philosophy and way-of-life was developed by a philosopher-genius named Odo, a woman, on Urras, and her growing following/followers were given the option of taking their revolution and living on Anares, and STAY THERE! Which they did, thank you, and you damned, evil proprietarians and egoists LEAVE US ALONE! Which was done, ex-

cept for a near-monthly rocket carrying a few pieces of advanced machinery needed, a few letters, etc. The rocket returns to Urras loaded with valuable ores mined on Annares.

Shevek was born about 150 years after the Odonians took over Annares, and the basically anarchic-communist society has become viable, but life is a cooperative struggle, the margin of safety for food is slim, and there are disturbing elements of beaurocratic/personal power-over-people disease creeping into the system.

The novel is two-sided: it is the story of Shevek's development as a brilliant physicist, his struggle with the theoretically non-existent Annares educational establishment, his going to Urras and his life there; and it is the detailing and working of the Odonian society in theoretical and practical terms, in contrast to the Capitalist society of A-Io on Urras.

Ursula examines in passing (she never lectures...at least not too obviously or boringly) the question of human nature and "human nature"—to what extent it exists and can be changed to fit the ideal, for how long. Fascinating. Her people are real, Annares and Urras are real, their different societies are real, fully-fleshed, operative, with flaws and warts. A magnificent job of creation.

Shevek has to fight to leave his planet and society; inevitably, he is thought by many to be a traitor. On Urras, as a guest of the A-Io government and their largest university, he is (for a while unknowingly) a kept scientist, expected to produce a Unified Theory of Time which will give A-Io (a nation comparable to the U.S.A.) mastery of Urras and perhaps of the galaxy. A-Io is confusing to him as he gradually learns first hand of the strengths and weaknesses of a pure capitalist society. But he discovers his true status, joins the underground, and....

No, it isn't a formula adventure from there on. Shevek's solutions to his moral

and ethical and physical problems are his alone.

Now, true, I said the Odonian society is credible, real, functional. But it must be noted that Ursula has stacked the deck by making the A-Io economy feudal capitalism of the current South American type: the upper classes are very rich and meanly regard the extreme lower classes as useless rabble, a drain on the nation and only good for cannon fodder with which to defend A-Io's 'national honor'.



Nothing, apparently, was learned from Earth's history before the colonization of Urras.

The contrast with the "ideal" non-compulsory communist society of Annares is stark.

And Odonianism on Annares is helped by the difficult environment and lack of resources, compelling cooperation and solidarity for survival. Annares children are immersed in Odonian philosophy—selflessness, sharing, I Am My Brother's Keeper, I may do my own thing, I can not be forced (but if I want my fellows to like me I will help and share) from their earliest years, and are taught to despise 'egoizing' and 'propertarian' (that's MINE!) behavior. In short, as is pointed out in the book, the Odonians internalize their police; their social conscience is extremely strong.

Nevertheless, there are always a few malcontents, a few loafers, a few revolutionaries. They are suffered, tolerated,

ignored, ostracized, condemned, resented and extra-legally and unofficially and non-Odonianly punished. So it goes.

In THE DISPOSSESSED the Odonian society survives a terrible drought—near starvation for everyone—for two or three years. Yet the need for central planning and work assignments is shown to be gradually hardening the necessary 'democratic' beaurocracy into an actual State, while the fiction is maintained in the people's minds that they have no State...that they are truly free.

The ambiguity goes as deep as you care to think. The human animal requires a certain amount of safety and order in society, and does it matter if the force that maintains that order is inside the head or outside it? The rules always must exist and be obeyed by most people, and ultimately, happiness is acceptance of the rules, belonging to the group, and doing what you do best with the group's approval.

Except that sometimes there are, inevitably, conflicts...and higher loyalties. Shevek is a case in point. As is Ellsberg...John Mitchell...Ghandi...Hitler...Jesus Christ...Manson....

Now a few words about the LeGuin style. I noticed in THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS that Ursula is a writer who, probably by her inner nature, is more intellectual than emotional; she is discrete, restrained, in presenting violence and extreme emotion in her fiction. She underwrites, she avoids. Many events of great impact take place off-stage and are reported later in conversation, from a distance.

In THE DISPOSSESSED she writes of fundamentals in life—of love, sex, hate, greed, envy—in societies, economies, politics...but with a carefulness, a caution, a sketchiness.

There is power, there is great momentum and pressure in her work. There is emotion, but almost always emotion controlled, hinted at, icebergs in the minds 37

of her characters with only tips showing. This is good. But I am left with the impression that too many of her characters—all the major ones—are mature, controlled adults.

But I miss the essential bits of up-front, on-camera extremes of feeling, the occasional loss of all control in a character, the vivid, savage scene that is not soft-pedaled or skirted...the occasional lack of good taste...that to me marks the truly great book and the great writer. I want it ALL.

Even at her most violent, most emotional, Ursula LeGuin has Good Taste. Too much, I think. She doesn't ever let her characters get to the uncontrolled ragged edge—or go screaming over. She is a powerful writer, but also slightly tame. I wish there was about X Harlan Ellison in her.

THE DISPOSSESSED is one of the best science fiction novels of the past few years. (Harper & Row, \$7.95)

"What a dull and dreary trade is that of critic. It is so difficult to create a thing, even a mediocre thing; it is so easy to detect mediocrity."

—Diderot

LETTER FROM AVRAM DAVIDSON

9-2-74

"I have reference to your THE ALIEN CRITIC #9, May, '74, page 30: and never mind picking nits as to why it took me so long. I haven't noticed you breaking your ass to print yesterday's interviews today. Page 30, 'Letter from Mike Gilbert.'

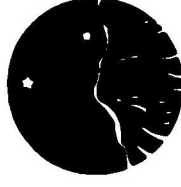
"Mr. Gilbert says a number of things about the plight of American artists illustrating SF books, and indeed he could have said a lot more. I believe that the cover artists are generally underpaid, even without foreign competition (Mike

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says that some publishers are now 'importing' Spanish cover art at \$10 a cover!). They don't get any subsequent payments, I don't believe, even if the book goes into subsequent editions (it usually doesn't). Sometimes, maybe even usually, the publishers keep the covers and interior illustrations and 'donate' them to auctions and deduct the value of the gift from corporate taxes. (Mercury Press—F&SF—is an exception in returning the original covers to the artist.) Mike's gloomy comments about art directors echo what the late Hannes Bok said to me a few times: "Art directors are what have driven me from the field." Once, when I complained to another well-known artist that a cover for one of my books was not true to the tone of the book, he said, "I wasn't allowed even to read the book!" He had been given (a) another artist's unfinished cover and (b) a brief 'synopsis' of the text!

"I agree that the author (who is never to my knowledge consulted, and, indeed, is lucky if he is given proofs to correct) (usually, if he is, the proofs arrive from left nowhere with orders to return them yesterday)—I agree that the author can at least express his opinion of the cover to the publishers.

"Now, getting down to what Mike Gilbert says about me, personally, he says, ahem, 'The good Mr. Davidson has taste in art and has said kind words about me—but as to covers all he has said was about recognizing artists' names—but he definitely cares and has voiced so sic.' This is the truth but it is not the whole truth; I don't accuse Mike of deliberately leaving anything out, but I expect he has simply not read all my reviews. I always whenever possible not only mention the names of the cover artists and designers but state my opinions of their art work. I have been doing this for years. The only times I do not do so are (a) if my review copy came in galleys and thus sans cover and cover art; and (b) if the

cover artist(s) name(s) are not given. In the latter case I have in recent years taken to mentioning in print this lack of mention, and I have been bitching about it.

"I believe that all reviewers should mention these things.

"I may not be qualified as an art critic, and perhaps artists have sometimes disagreed with my comments, but I believe that the average artist would rather be mentioned any way than not at all. When reviewing a book which is a collection of stories I always mention every contributor, even if I lack space to review the story, for the same reason.

"I have immediately to hand only one copy of a printed review by me, which happens to be from F&SF for Oct. '73. Therein, I note, I said of one book, '...such a good cover: Arresting jacket design by Enric Scull. Photograph by Ray Miller'...of a second, 'Effective cover design by Lawrence Ratzkin' (if my name were Ratzkin I would change it to Geis)—and of a third I seem to have said only, 'Beautifully designed, printed, bound,' ahem, blush, er...

"Well. Anyway.

"—You were saying?"

((Most reviewers are word-oriented, writers, and they/we don't think much about the cover...the artwork. The words are important (we like to think) and perhaps unconsciously consider the cover, the illustration, as mere decoration, as tools to help sell or attract attention to the precious words. Actually the cover of a pocketbook can have more to do with its success than the story.

((But—you're right. I, too, should pay critical attention to the artwork... and will...if I remember.

((What I need is a professional artist willing to write a column of comment on current SF & Fantasy art.))

AN EXTREMELY RAW DEAL

There are books which try reviewers' souls. (Leaving aside the question whether reviewers have souls.)

Books like **WILD CARD** by Raymond Hawkey and Roger Bingham. (Stein & Day, \$7.95) ..which both outrage and baffle.

Baffling, because beyond saying it is set in the near future in America when the whole damn country is fighting itself—each pressure group, race, minority, angry splinter group of a sub-group seemingly has turned to violence and senseless sabotage—and that the President is helpless to "bring the country together", and that his top advisor has a Plan...

Well, I'll say that the Plan (called Wild Card) is to assemble a super-top-secret group of scientists and have them fake a deadly UFO which will "crash" in Los Angeles...thus providing a bona fide Menace which will rally the country.

The security procedures, the planning and contrivance of the UFO and occupants, and the execution of the "crash" are both fascinating and disgusting.

The outrage comes from the realization that expediency and end-justifies-means reasoning as shown by the President and his advisor—the ruthlessness that **MUST** prevail—is too seductively easy. Even as this President quivers with post-Watergate apprehension at the possibility that this fraud might be found out, his fear translates into total mercilessness in making sure—deadly sure—that all links to him and to the government are wiped out. Because to make that UFO "crash" convincing....

This book would make a hell of a movie. Its message might help people see that that government which governs least governs best. And what was that about absolute power corrupting absolutely?

JFK COVER-UP

(ZNS) The United States Supreme Court has blocked an attempt by an independent investigator to obtain key evidence relating to the 1963 Dallas assassination of President John Kennedy.

Investigator and writer Harold Weisberg, the author of four books on the John Kennedy assassination, has been trying since 1970 to obtain what are known as (quote) "spectrographic analysis" reports from the F.B.I. A "spectrographic analysis" is a routine law enforcement test which can determine if various bullets and fragments of bullets are composed of identical materials.

The analysis is usually able to determine whether one specific type of ammunition—or if several different kinds of ammo—were employed in a shooting incident. In the Kennedy case, the analysis might have detected if more than one rifle was used in the shooting.

Shortly after the JFK assassination, the F.B.I. conducted "spectrographic analysis" on all of the ballistics evidence found at the shooting scene. This included tests of the clothing worn by President Kennedy, of a bullet discovered later on a stretcher, of bullet fragments recovered from Texas governor John Connally's wounds and even of a street curbing which was apparently hit by a stray bullet.

For unexplained reasons, however, the F.B.I.'s spectrographic analysis report was never given to the Warren Commission investigating the assassination.

Weisberg, when filing his suit under the freedom of information act, stressed that he wanted only the F.B.I. report of the spectrographic analysis—not raw files, internal memos or other generally confidential F.B.I. materials.

However, the Supreme Court ruled on Monday (May 13th) that the F.B.I. can continue to suppress the report. The court upheld a lower court decision which stated

that releasing the report would (quote)
"seriously interfere with the efficient
operation of the F.B.I." —ZOOIAC

A TIDE OF CLICHES

Hugh Zachary, who writes under the obvious pseudonym Zach Hughes, is a good, ~~prolific~~ prolific commercial fictioneer.

I have just read his (Zach Hughes) novel TIDE—A Novel of Catastrophe (Berkley/Putnam, \$5.95) and I'm sure he is a master of stereotype and cliché...ah, but used to their limits, handled nicely, with great verisimilitude.

The theme of TIDE is that wail of Oliver Hardy: "Well, here's another fine kettle of fish you've gotten us into!" Man has done it to himself again and this time ...

Tide is a huge government fish farm off the coast of North Carolina, a pilot project beset by a stingy congress, wild-eyed ecologists and a rabble-rousing bitch woman reporter.

But the real hook is that inexplicably some of the fat, healthy dolphin and blackfish have taken to going berserk and attacking anything in sight, including people if they're in the water.

The head of Tide sends his lovely girl friday to fetch a Vietnam war buddy who is a fish expert par excellence and who is loafing on his small cruiser living off a govt. pension because both his feet got blown off by a mine.

Well, sir, the fish expert (big, handsome, nicknamed 'Tusk') comes to Tide as a favor, romances the girl friday and discovers the Tide head wants her, too. And the infection in Tide spreads.... And with horrible swiftness it is discovered that eaters (human, animal, fish, birds) of a diseased Tide fish is within minutes also converted into a berserk killer.

Now—how do you contain this disease?
How do you find out what caused it? How

do you save the oceans from becoming a maelstrom of killing...and keep birds from eating the fish which are in turn eaten by cats, and which are in turn....

This is a Dire Warning to us, folks. And the ending of TIDE is not quite what you might expect.

Hugh Zachary has some good writing in this book in spite of his fondness for formula situations.

LETTER FROM MICHAEL G. CONEY

9-1-74

"Thank you for your well-reasoned comments, with which I wholly concur, on the question of SF as a 'revolutionary' literature. (TAC 10) I think Don Redmond's idea society ought to leave just one place for an old-fashioned reactionary like me, don't you? Or is it to be an exclusive club of identical thinkers?

"People like Don would probably be surprised at the innate conservatism—and cowardice, if you like—of the average SF writer. Every new idea put forward must be framed against a background of old ideas—otherwise the reader will reject it as implausible. Don's current concern is with sexism and what he sees as a dearth of progressive ideas in that field. However, I suspect that a biologist would bemoan the lack of convincing BEMs in current SF, and an anthropologist might say 'don't these guys think Man will ever evolve?' No—SF can produce such strange fruits as it will—so long as they stem from the roots of familiarity. Otherwise the reader will have no frame of reference.

"Take the simplest, most obvious factor. SF must be capable of reproduction on the printed page, in English. (With obvious exceptions.) Aliens are usually presumed to understand English, either via translation machine, telepathy, or an inhuman facility for quick learning. All emotions must be identifiably human. Oth-

er factors. There are many roots of convention which must be established before the writer can branch out weirdly.

"For most writers, this is not enough. In fear that the reader still will not believe his time-travel theories, still will not tremble at his monsters or identify with his super-hero, he introduces further familiar factors to make cosy the impossible. But now we come to the writer's individual preference. Bradbury, for instance, goes for places—Green Town, Illinois or variations thereof. So does Simak. Others write about love, wrecked automobiles, people and people emotions, people wars, good old good versus bad old evil; Heinlein, C.S. Lewis, Wells, everybody. All of us reactionaries in one way or another, all scared we're overdoing the weird stuff to the extent that we'll lose our reader.

"None more so than myself. I really dig myself in, Dick. I write about Devon, England and the ocean, about scotch whiskey and love and biology and psychology and boats, and there's nothing futuristic about any of that. I do this because I want the reader to believe and identify—and if I can convince him that John loves Susanna, then maybe he'll believe a tentacled telepath in the next apartment.

"And a good dollop of current human relationships helps. This is no excuse for the militant sexism of certain of today's writers whose fiction is thinly disguised propaganda, who equate half the human race with animals, who take advantage of the natural open-mindedness of SF fans to get across their own brand of isolationism. 'Come join me on my iceberg of hate....' Personally, I'll stick with the majority.

"With good reason. I like to write stories of planetary colonisation and nobody knows what form society will take in such an environment. However, I believe that the natural result of strange surroundings and underpopulation (triggering the instincts of self-preservation and

procreation) will be a strengthening of group and family bonds and an emphasis on a high birthrate. One half of our colonists will have the responsibility of bearing and rearing a far greater number of children than is considered normal—or even ethical—today.

"The name of that half happens to be Woman, and there's not a goddamned thing that any present-day action group can do about it."

((Well...doesn't fiction written by humans inherently have to be about humans or analogues of humans to be coherent, in any case?

((Another "trick" is to use first person to keep and intrigue the reader. Even if you start out: 'I eased off the cold slimy bed to the repellingly warm, dry floor....'

((Then, too, I like the specific detail, though alien, to make credible incredible things: 'His thread-like off-white tendrils, green-tipped, writhed briefly, veil-like, before his great purple eye flicked open....')'))

"By the way, don't put any more fillers about paranoia in TAC. We're persecuted enough as it is."

—Alan L. Bostick

LETTER FROM TED TUBB

8-5-74

"TAC 9 received and read with the usual joy, a feeling accentuated by the warm knowledge that, once again it made it, despite the apparent machinations of the Post Office to delay and maybe lose the precious article. The journey took something like 70 days – way back, as I recall, it would have taken about 10 – thus we pay for progress.

"And, while on the subject of delays and mysterious vanishings – please let me thank you again for putting me on that

small and gratifying list of Permanent subscribers. May you live forever!

"As TAC is so complete in itself I just tend to sit and read and revel - the penalty you pay for having achieved near-perfection, but I felt an odd kind of numbness after reading the article on Heinlein by the Panshins. I have the feeling that any author who has written more than a few books could be subjected to the same kind of in-depth psychoanalysis and the determination could be 'proven' by careful selection of what he makes his characters say in more than one conclusion. I'd be more interested to find out what makes a man who has shown that he can write good, entertaining stories with what has been claimed to be 'real' background, turn out such things as I WILL FEAR NO EVIL - a horrible example of - what? Sexy SF? Sex? Wishful thinking? Masturbatory fantasies? A put-on? One thing for sure - for me it was hell's own job to read.

"A word on Woman's Lib - to me it seems a little bit of a joke, something which has got way out of line and now verges on the insane as the dedicated make wilder and wilder statements of justification. This, maybe, because I like most residents of the Old World, have always thought the American female to be the most liberated of her kind, so to hear them shriek with anguish because of extended courtesies such as opening doors, yielding seats, etc., things which they consider are putting them down ((and keeping them in their place, in their traditional role)), makes their claims seem unreal. Equal pay and opportunities for all - and who is arguing? -but they want more than that, not true equality but total dominance and a double standard. And when I hear them savagely denouncing the use of women as sex objects I think of all those naked, nubile girls with their big smiles as they pose for pay, and the way they fight to become Bunny Girls, etc., - well, does anyone make them do it?"

((Women can't escape being sex objects, I'm afraid, but I can see their point: as a youth I dipped my toe into the gay world and came to know what it's like to be thought of as so many potential inches of hard meat.

((Man-woman relations are in a state of multi-faceted flux...and everybody is confused and uncertain in certain situations.))

"I loved Sam Merwin's article - and what did become of Rick Sneary?"

((Last I heard, Rick was alive and well in a suburb of Los Angeles and was/is an active member of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society...and a member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association.))

POSTCARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH

8-12-74

"Well, you went and done it—put a bit more Geis into the issue and improved it accordingly. I hope you get the proper reader reaction and will be encouraged to proceed along these lines. I'd imagine you'll be getting quite a response to the Lem interview. He makes some valid points, but in the end we part company—he seems to be an exponent of the Life-Is-Grim-and-Life-Is-Earliest school, and can't abide the notion of SF as pure entertainment, whereas my antithetical views are expressed in my speech transcript. Perhaps I do Mr. Lem an injustice; I'm sure his background is not one conducive to the development of a lighthearted attitude or approach. Those of us who were brought up under the influence of comics like Tucker and Reagan are bound to display more of a sense of humor—or at least a certain stoicism. Anyway, it's all very provocative, even though I feel that SF, by its definition, is somewhat of an abortion."

"I started writing ten years ago. I wrote for a solid year and collected nothing but rejection slips.

"Most beginning writers can't afford to do that. They take an honest job and write in their spare time, and it takes them five years to make their mistakes, instead of one. Me, I lived off a trust fund.

"The trust fund was there because my great-grandfather once made a lot of money in oil. He left behind him a large family of nice people, and we all owe him.

"TO EDWARD LAWRENCE DOHENY."

—Larry Niven, dedication of *A HOLE IN SPACE*

"Who was Doheny? Edward L. Doheny was a millionaire oil man. In March, 1930 — on a day that will live forever in American jurisprudence — he was acquitted of bribing a high government official. Virtue was vindicated.

"Six months earlier, the man who accepted the bribe was found guilty and sent to prison. He was...former Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall. (Doheny's son had carried \$100,000 in a little black bag to Fall's office seven years earlier. Doheny got permission to drill Naval Petroleum Reserve #1 in Elk Hills, California.)"

—Galal Kernahan, *THE DIXON LINE*, July-August 1974

"Do you suppose that Bebe Robozo's great-grandson is going to be a science-fiction writer?"

—John Boardman, Aug. '74

***GASPI* SIR, THERE'S A WOMAN REVIEWER ABOARD!**

Three by **LYNNE HOLDOM**

Rings Of Ice by Piers Anthony—Avon, 95¢
The Weathermonger by Peter Dickinson—Puffin, 25p DAW, 95¢
The Inferno by Fred Hoyle and Geoffrey Hoyle—Harper & Row, ((86.95?))

All three of these novels belong to the "disaster" school of writing. These are novels where the Earth is drowned, baked, boiled, or invaded by Triffids: it seems to be particularly British—Americans usually write after-the-bomb stories.

Piers Anthony lives in Florida where this story begins but I understand he was born in England. Anyways...due to a miscalculation by NASA, rings of ice form in the upper atmosphere and it rains and rains and rains and rains. The novel deals with the efforts of six people to survive. They've calculated that 2000 feet of water will fall before it finally stops, so they get a camper-van and head north to the mountains.

But forget the plot: it's no more improbable than *THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS*—probably less. The important part of the novel deals with the interrelation of the six people. They are, without a doubt, the weirdest bunch in SF without being aliens, mutants or BEMs. At first the odd edges of the characters are all you see; later their humanity begins to come through. Zena, a meteorologist, is afraid of sex; Floy is extremely clumsy; Gus is a rain-fearing straw boss; Thatch is totally dependent on Gus; Karen and Gordon—well, I don't want to give too much away—the cover blurb is misleading. Zena is the viewpoint character, and the others are seen through her eyes: she seems to have the least to contribute but the others all protect her—why? They're certainly not your typical cardboard characters.

The book ends when the rains end. By that time there have been sudden ambushes, violence, a lot of cruelty and cannibalism. Yet the people never completely lose their humanity; they retain compassion. About two-thirds of the way through the novel, you forget the weirdness of the characters and are seeing them simply as human beings.

Piers has an easy, smooth narrative style. He doesn't play Joycean word games or attempt to get cute. He is equally sympathetic to his male and female characters. Much of the action is predictable. Since the cover blurb said only four would survive, I was able to guess correctly the ones that wouldn't.

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In *THE WEATHERMONGER* the disaster has taken place five years before the start of the novel. Suddenly everyone in Great Briton had turned Luddite and smashed every machine from cars to electric can-openers. About twenty million people fled the country: there had been plagues and fires. Those who remained settled into a Medieval sort of existence, not wanting to travel, suspicious of strangers.

However, for some reason this Luddite feeling is wearing off in some people, as with Geoffrey Tinker and his sister, Sally, who are stoned as witches for fiddling around with an old motor on a boat belonging to their Uncle Jacob.

But because Geoffrey is the town weathermonger, he is able to conjure up a dense fog, which allows he and Sally to escape to France.

Later, they are sent to an area on the Welsh border which the French high command think is the source of the anti-machine mania, judging from satellite photos. Pilots attempting to fly over the area lose confidence in their planes and crash.

Geoffrey and Sally may be the only ones in France immune to the Luddite Effect (my name for it).

At first they travel in a 1909 Rolls-Royce, until it is destroyed by a lightning bolt conjured by a superior weather-monger. All along the way the Rolls drives animals mad so that even they try to destroy it. Finally, Geoffrey and Sally arrive at a tower which is the epicenter of the Effect.

This book, as the Puffin label attests, is a juvenile, though DAW doesn't say so.

A good aspect of it is that Sally is no mere adjunct to her brother. In fact, it is her ability to speak Latin that resolves the crisis. (Schools apparently became Medieval, too.) One hitch for American readers is that there is a scene in Latin—one of the climactic ones—that is only translated later when Sally tells Geoffrey what she said. (This may not be true of the DAW edition, which I haven't read.) This is an excellent book for girls, as Sally is as much a hero as Geoffrey.

The other two books in this Dickinson series are also girls' books—*THE DEVIL'S CHILDREN* (my favorite of the three) and *HEARTSEASE*, both of which take place earlier than *THE WEATHERMONGER*.

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THE INFERNO is much less successful even as a disaster novel than either of the two above, because of two major flaws. The first is that it is not until one-third of the way through the novel that the potential disaster is even discovered. Most of the first third in no way relates to what happens in the rest of the book. The other flaw is its Deus ex Machina resolution of the disaster, which may give one a sense of wonder but sure bails out the authors—otherwise the last third of the novel couldn't have been written.

Briefly: while at a conference in Australia, Dr. Cameron, a Scottish nationalist and physicist, spots an object in the sky which is first thought to be Mars, then a supernova, and finally recognized as a quasar. It seems that the centre of

the galaxy is exploding (shades of Larry Niven) and if this explosion is minor, maybe only half the people on Earth will die. If it's major, the atmosphere will be stripped away and the Earth semi-melted. Anyone south of, say, 50° N. latitude doesn't have a chance, anyway. (If the heat doesn't get you, the radiation will.)

One rather humorous part was the reaction of the British Prime Minister to the news: he's thinking of preventing panic when everyone has only ten days to live. He never seems to realize the extreme seriousness of the situation.

Cameron goes back to Scotland to die. Except—everyone doesn't die. Only 97% of everyone.

Because of an unexplained miracle, the Earth is in total blackness for ten days while the quasar burns itself out. This darkness occurs after everything south of 57°N has been burned and bombarded with deadly radiation, so Cameron is able, when light returns, to set himself up as a Scottish laird and head the reorganization. He always wanted to live in the highlands anyway but his wife liked city lights.

He does have a bit of trouble with an ex-British army captain (veteran of the Irish Civil War) and a madman who calls himself the Duke of Moray, but Cameron is doing what he always wanted to do.

It's too bad this book has so many flaws. The disaster the Hoyles describe could begin tomorrow—just one more thing to worry about, folks—and had the novel been better organized and written, it could have been a first-rate chiller. As it is, I can't recommend it.

The other two are fine light summer reading. *THE WEATHERMONGER* might possibly turn your favorite thirteen-year-old onto SF.



FOOTNOTES TO FAN HISTORY

A Column By LARRY SHAW

I owe a sincere, and long overdue, apology to Harry Warner, Jr. Years ago, when I took the uncorasable plunge into fandom by writing my first letter to *PLANET STORIES*, I signed myself "The Hermit of Schenectady." (It was not until a few issues later that I added those Big Red Letters on the Cave of which a certain number of sadists still enjoy reminding me.)

I thought I was paraphrasing D. B. Thompson, who styled himself "The Sage of St. Pete." I didn't know until several months later that Harry had already established title to "The Hermit of Hagerstown." I was sorry then, and I admit it in public now. Simultaneously, I may seem to be encroaching on Harry's turf again by using "fan history" in my column's title. Harry himself, of course, would be the first to admit that he is not the sole keeper of

the flame of fan history. I'm sure he would also admit that he has deliberately avoided committing to print some of the juicier scandals (the wife-swapping, the wife-stealing, the wife-beating, the wife-plagiarizing, etc., etc) that form part of the very fabric of the real history of fandom. Not being the true gentleman that Harry is, I intend to Reveal All.

PS: Not all at once, naturally. No one knows better than I the value of keeping readers in suspense. Stick around and wait for those spectacular, shocking revelations, folks. Meanwhile, since I am a fan and everything that I have ever done or thought about is history, I intend to write about anything that comes to mind.

FOOTNOTES TO INFINITY: Remember QUICK? It was the first of the "vest pocket" sized (the pages measured approximately 4½ by 5 inches) magazines that enjoyed a vogue of sorts beginning in 1948 and continuing into the fifties. A Luce brainchild, it was devoted to what we now call photojournalism, and naturally acquired imitators.

Sometime in 1953, my good friend Irwin Stein decided to stop being a starving genius writing the world's most impenetrable Great American Novel (it was going to be about all kinds of "marginal" people) and become a rich publisher instead. He and his wife scraped together just about enough money to buy a pair of secondhand shoestrings, and early in 1954 launched two QUICK-sized magazines, CELEBRITY (devoted to celebrities) and OUR LIFE (devoted to the kind of people we now call Blacks). Thus began the company that eventually turned into Lancer Books.

In the beginning, Royal Publications occupied a large room that took up almost an entire floor of a building at 148 East 47th Street in Manhattan. The room in turn was occupied by Irwin and his wife, one full-time editor named Johnny Johnson, and an art director. I arrived on the scene

from a sabbatical in Schenectady shortly after the first issues appeared, and immediately began doing freelance writing and part-time editing for the operation. I wasn't making much money, but at least it was convenient; the rest of the building was a rooming house, and for a while I lived on the fourth floor, so that when I got up in the morning all I had to do was walk down two flights of steps to get to work.

Before the year ended, I had acquired a full-time job as editor of a hot rod magazine (a field in which I was destined to earn my basic salary for the next nine years). But before the end of 1955, Irwin had some other things going for him and decided to replace the not-very-profitable and certainly boring vp-sized (What's a vest, daddy?) magazines with two digest-sized fiction magazines. They were to be a science-fiction magazine and a detective magazine. The last sf magazine boom had busted within recent memory, and everybody told him he was crazy to start a new one, but Irwin liked science-fiction. The same everybody told him that a new detective magazine was sure to sell. Hah.

I joined up again, on a part-time, freelance basis, working evenings and weekends, but nevertheless as editor-in-chief (Hi there, Don Pfeill) of both. We launched INFINITY SCIENCE FICTION and SUSPECT DETECTIVE STORIES. And everybody was wrong. INFINITY was an immediate if modest success which, I sincerely believe, touched off another bandwagon-style sequence of so many competitors that only the most solidly established leaders could survive. (Remind me to tell you sometime about W.W. Scott, a competing editor with decades of experience in the adventure pulps, who kept calling me up and saying, "Jeez, Larry, I don't know anything about science fiction. What do I do now?") SUSPECT was an instant disaster, although I still (sincerely) believe we published some very good stories in it.

(Footnote to a footnote: I've done a

lot of serious thinking about magazine titles in the years since then, and have decided that negative-sounding titles turn potential readers off. FORGOTTEN FANTASY, for instance, was probably licked before it started. SUSPECT seemed clever to us when we thought it up, but it's entirely possible that newsstand browsers thought the stories themselves were to be suspected of something...like being terrible.)

In any event, after five unprofitable issues, SUSPECT DETECTIVE STORIES became SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES. At least, we tried.

The one thing SUSPECT had acquired in its brief existence was a second-class mailing permit, and this is something no publisher takes—or gives up—lightly. Irwin wanted to keep the second class entry SUSPECT had won; it meant a saving in mailing costs of several hundred dollars a year. He also wanted to replace the detective magazine with a science fiction magazine. And, as implied earlier, he was a sporadic genius. What could be simpler, he figured, than to change the title of SUSPECT DETECTIVE STORIES to SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES?

That's why the contents page of the first issue of SFA said, "Vol. 1, No. 6." The only trouble was, the postal authorities said "No"—in no uncertain terms.

As you may suspect by now, Irwin was capricious. This made him fun to work for most of the time; only occasionally did it prove awkward or embarrassing. We had a story by Randall Garrett for the second issue of INFINITY, for instance, and Irwin insisted on blurring it on the cover as a "Dazzling Space Novelet," which wasn't all that objectionable; but he also was completely adamant that Randy had a middle initial which had to be on the cover, too. After getting tired of arguing, I arbitrarily supplied a "D". The line as it appeared didn't exactly make Randy happy.

The masthead of the first issue list-

ed Irwin Stein as Publisher, Larry T. Shaw as Editor, and Robert V. Engle as Art Director. That was accurate. Then came Helen Skalet as Production Manager, reasonably accurate except that Helen was actually Mrs. Stein. The "Associate Editor", Lenore Hailpern, was Bob Engle's wife, who never worked on the magazine at all, and the "Art Associate", Fuller Griffith, was totally invisible and, the rest of us were convinced, non-existent, although Bob always claimed with a straight face that Griffith was an old friend of his and one of the greatest artists alive. Assistant Editor John C. Johnson was there, all right—a nice guy, always genial, pleasant to have around, totally square and rather bemused by the whole business—but he never had anything to do with INFINITY, SUSPECT, or SFA.

There were many changes in the masthead during INFINITY's comparatively short life. William Bowman, a real and very talented guy, became Art Associate with the fourth issue. Lee Hoffman was listed as Assistant Editor beginning with the fifth, although the only tangible contribution she ever made to the magazine was an illustration signed "Lee" in that same issue. And one of the classic typos of all time appeared in Volume 3, Number 5, which listed the Publisher as Irwin Shaw.

It's easy to see how a typesetter got it wrong in the first place; a bit less easy, perhaps, to see how it went all the way through into the printed copies without anybody's catching it—but everybody takes things like the masthead for granted, and nobody really sees them as they are until it's too late.

(With the possible exception of sales managers. We didn't have a sales manager at that point. Later, Lancer Books had a sales manager named Dinny Zimmerman, who spotted a rather crucial typo on a cover that had gone past all the editors, copyeditors, proofreaders, publishers, art directors, artists, layout men, paste-up people, printers, printers' proofreaders,

etc., etc. He did it with one quick glance, after a hundred thousand or whatever of the covers had been printed already. The byline was supposed to read E. R. Bradbury—a pseudonym of Michael Moorcock's, incidentally—and as plain as your nose it said "E. R. Bradbury" instead.

(And that always reminds me of the typo that nobody caught at all which actually appeared in all the printed copies of a Gothic novel. Gothics, of course, are full of tender passions and sweet romance, but there is never any mention of sex. Well, when the hero of this one first appeared, he was described as having a genial smile. Genial. Yes. Only somebody dropped a "t" into the middle of "genial." Riggght....)

Well, we did have fun, and no harm's done—except for the last two issues of INFINITY, which on the whole I would rather like to disown. Sales had fallen off alarmingly, and Irwin was losing money. In a last desperate effort to salvage the magazine, he switched to the cheapest printer in the country, used as lead stories two short novels originally purchased for SFA, and filled the rest of the pages with stories (some of which I had earlier rejected) bought in a package deal for considerably less than a penny a word from a certain agent who will be nameless here forevermore. At the end I didn't feel I was editing the magazine at all, even though I was still listed as Editor. On the other hand, I was doing all the layouts myself, even though I wasn't listed as Art Editor.

FOOTNOTE TO THE VISIGRAPH: A couple of evenings ago, in hopes of getting any specific dates mentioned in this column really accurate, I went down to the cellar to look for some of those hot rod magazines I used to edit. I was surprised to find a carton containing some copies of things I had written in the dim past for other people's fanzines, one of which in particular I had looked for

recently in my files and had almost given up for lost. This was an article I wrote for a zine named PARADOX, published by Frank Wilimczyk, Jr., describing a visit I made to New York City and W. Scott Peacock, when he was the godlike editor of PLANET STORIES and I was a goshwow fan, in January, 1943. It was not the greatest article in the world—I think I can honestly say that my writing has improved somewhat since then—but I was enormously pleased to see it again. The next day when I took it to the office and showed it to W. Scott Peacock, who now edits magazines for American Art Enterprises, the parent company of Brandon Books, and has a cubicle just down the hall from mine, he was enormously pleased, too.

"Footnotes to Fan History" initially appeared in Ed Cox's F.A.P.A. zine, ESDACIOS #23, Feb. 1974. Subsequent "Footnotes" columns will appear first in TAC. The next, I hope, will be in the next issue.

SOME OLD AND RARE...

THE TEMPLE OF THE TEN is a rousing, realistic, melodramatic adventure set in the wilds of deepest Asia—the mysterious Gobi, the Khangai Plateau, the Sajan range, Lake Baikal, Karakorum....

In 1921, when this short novel was published in ADVENTURE magazine, these were sense-of-wonder names, fitting locales for wild, deadly fights, bizarre intrigues, treasure, and strange, forbidden knowledge.

Lean, hardened white men turned copper by the sun, seeking vast treasure... priests of an ancient cult, their mystic and maniacal leader who is a powerful telepath seeking a terrible vengeance... That is the stuff of THE TEMPLE OF THE TEN by H. Bedford-Jones and W. C. Robertson. They wrote very well in the "commercial" style with a fine array of convincing detail of foreign peoples and places, with strong, bold characterization the equal of most writing today.

I liked it.

Donald M. Grant published it recently in hardcover, \$5.

From The Not So Glorious Past

I have this vision occasionally, after I've indulged in Singapore Slings and a large pepperoni pizza....

I see dozens of small publishers and would-be publishers, editors and would-be editors, all pawing through old pulp magazines and out-of-print-and-in-the-public-domain books in the hope of finding something publishable for the current collector of s-f and fantasy and horror.

But now the pickings are slim, slimmer, slimmest, and these searchers raise their heads and howl plaintively, "All the good stuff has been locked up or used!" and with that they lower their heads and glumly pick up a piece of not-quite junk, and a piece of outright junk, and hand them to a waiting printer and say, "Here, run these."

I would, honestly, rather see Fantasy House publish a new novel by a good new (but probably slightly flawed, rough-edged, a bit amateurish in a bearable way) author than what they have been—"Fantasy Classics" that are in no way classics.

Their Fantasy Classics#4 features Algernon Blackwood's "Ancient Sorceries", a fairly good witchcraft short story padded to novelette length.

To fill the 48-page, 8½ x 11 slick paper book/magazine, the Fantasy House editors had to scrape the bottom of a barrel and print "The Vanguard of Venus" by Landall Bartlett, an awkwardly written alien-menace story that correctly had been avoided by everyone in the reprint biz, and also print a short horror story, "A Hand From the Deep" by Romeo Poole, which is actually funny it's so bad (that 'lobster brain' ending!).

The best that can be said for this series of publications is that they're extremely well printed on fine, heavy paper and give old fantasy and horror stories a better display than is deserved.

The price is a fair \$1.95.

LETTER FROM GEORGE WARREN

8-27-74

"TAC #10 received in good condition, and read with great enjoyment on my part, not all of which was evident to my wife, watching on. Much snorting and Hah! business. But damn it, it doesn't put down easy. This in spite of the interminable interview with the very unpleasant Stanislaw Lem, who makes a shrinking violet like Norman Mailer pale by comparison. The best part of the book is still Geis, and I agree thoroughly with Larry Shaw that the more personal you get, the better you read. Even the dialogues with the alter ego, personal though you may think them, get between the writer and the reader. Your crickatism isn't bad at all, although it could stand a trifle more viciousness and a little less trepidation at the thought of what your raving-liberal friends might say. Matter of fact, I take that back about the viciousness. You can get by without it; there's too much of that crap around already. And your fiction is quite respectable, such of it as I've read as a Barclay House editor. But when you get to rapping with the reader in the wee hours of the night, with (perhaps?) a wee drinkie down, there's a small touch of the old Bozzy there from time to time, and that's high praise indeed around my part of town."

((I've been tinkering in my head with the idea of switching back to a diary-type format—daily or near-daily commentary on selected mail, current events, personal life... But I suspect the zine would run Much Too Long, especially for photo-offset. Then, too, there isn't enough personal life going on now to add

the zest and motivation... And, I don't want to offend or disturb my mother. She is an emotionally rigid and fragile woman now, and I have responsibilities. After she goes to her great punishment, however, if I'm not too ancient by then, I'll probably do my diary thing again....

((I hasten to add that interspersed in the diary entries would be the regular TAC-type articles, interviews, columns, fillers...and at the end, The Archives. That type of Mix, though, might not work, subject-matterwise. In any event it is years, maybe a decade off.))

"I am enjoying the running commentary on the part of one and all about the New Wave, whatever that is. I hate to find myself siding once again with the evil forces of Demon Reaction (why, I don't know; what the hell's the matter with a little reaction now and then? Salt on the food), but I have to admit that I do, indeed, prefer the old Silverberg to the new; that Barry Malzberg is still doing cutie-pie twistie-poo stuff to impress the professor; and that, of all those 8 million words in DANGEROUS VISIONS and its 43 sequels (each one of them a Triumphant Farewell Tour after the manner of Harry Lauder, or perhaps Maurice Chevalier), the only damn thing I could read without grinding all the enamel off my teeth was Ellison's prefaces. The funny thing there, by the by, is that Ellison couldn't write the sort of precious College Writing Course crap he buys if he tried. Like him or not, he's a communicator. When he and I were writing weekly stuff in Art Kunin's paper his stuff often pissed me off, but I always read him all the way to the end. There is an art in that, artless though it may seem; and if Ellison is making money by the steam-shovelful these days, it would behoove those of us in the writing racket to remember that there is always a reason for everything. Is Arthur Hailey's dialogue sometimes wooden? Ah, but he could plot with Dumas. Is Irving Wallace's charac-

terization upsy-downsy? Maybe; but he's the best damn art director and executive producer in the business. Just is the wheel, as Kim's guru was fond of saying. Go ye and do likewise. And while I'm being officious, I think you would find food for thought about that personal-journalism question in Anais Nin's preface to TROPIC OF CANCER. I don't have it in front of me but I think it might make the wee hours easier to bear. Or do I mean bare?

"Speaking of wee hours suffered through in the throes of a wee drap of gin, please let me for once and all say, perhaps, a couple of things Poul Anderson seems to have been too much the gentleman to say (as he was too much the gentleman to say it of the egregious Joanna Russ): this Panshin pair are embarrassing. I mean cringey-crawley embarrassing, like the creek who used to follow Bob Dylan around, going through his garbage can, like the chick who has put in all those dues making the beast with two backs with Janis Joplin just to get a bad book out of it. One would perhaps be reminded of the Awful Brat in the Buster Brown Collar who upbraids you for moving just when he was about to win the world's championship at kicking somebody in the nuts... if they weren't so embarrassingly serious about it. In all the world there is no person I would walk so many blocks to avoid as the Envy Groupie. I once knew a man—a foul-breathed Ukrainian with facial pimples the size of ping-pong balls—whose very approval of a book could make you toss it on the pyre, whose nice words about a play in Boston could send you, straight as a bee, to a burlesque house in Baltimore. I would spend six weeks in an orbital vehicle with the son-of-a-bitch before I would share the air of the same city with an Envy Groupie. I would appreciate it slightly if TAC would give me slightly more Geis and much less that makes me go icchhh and turn the page with tweezers...."

((Now THAT'S what I call an emotional

rejection.

((More Geis is in the works. Further thought on the diary format leads me to agree with a reader who commented that my "Nature of the Beast" section in #10 was out of place in the magazine TAC has become...and I agree. Becoming too intimately personal in these pages is out of bounds for TAC.

((HOWEVER—a true personal no-holds-barred diary of limited circulation, on-stencil, for the strong-minded of TAC's readership might be fun, a learning experience, and a sharing of naked ids. But that, too, will have to wait.))

LETTER FROM ROBERT HOSKINS

8-27-74

"Had a letter written the other day, then TAC 10 showed up with the morning mail. So I start over. I've had one piece of good news: Doubleday has accepted my s-f novel, THE SHATTERED PEOPLE. When I heard that Diane Cleaver had left I was certain that the deal had died—and even more certain in my heart that it was an illiterate piece of crap as it finally came through. But Sharon Jarvis likes it, and is buying. My first hard-

cover, which I think is as big a thrill as was my first short story sale, to IF, seventeen years ago. (Where is Jim Quinn now, if still alive?)

"I see in TAC 10 that the old screaming about cover artists not reading the stories continues. I can only speak for Lancer, but I feel that my experiences there were typical of other pb houses. And for the most part, the artists never see the mss. They work from a brief description of plot, characters, setting, and costume description given by the editor. There are exceptions—Ron Walotsky read all of the books for which he did covers, and Frazetta reads the scripts. But Frazetta paints exactly what he feels like painting—if you don't like the finished job, fuck off. He'll take it home and sell it to someone else.

"Many paintings, of course, and particularly for gothics and westerns, are bought as samples of the artist's work, usually at a lower price than assignment work. Then the editor gets together with the art director and tries to match story with the girl in the painting—at least so far as hair color. But when in a hurry you can't always do that.

"Speaking for myself at Lancer, I worked very closely with Howard Winters, and most of the time I was satisfied. Occasionally there would be something used because it had to be used, despite my ob-



jections—such as the horror on TAU ZERO, which was taken from a piece of an astrology sample. Howie had one s-f hangup—he hated Kelly Freas, thought he was stuck twenty years in the past. Finally he cut him off, leaving me quite embarrassed. Howie did not like Jack Gaughan's work either, although that happened before I joined Lancer. Winters told me that after Gaughan did Dick Lupoff's TWO MILLION CENTURIES (if I remember the title right-ly) he gave Jack a gothic assignment which he thought was so bad as to be beyond description. So he never gave Jack another chance.

"After I left, Winters was promoted to publisher of the magazines and a new art director came in. (I've forgotten his name, but he is at Manor Books now.) He hated Walotsky, which was where I disagreed with him. But he would not let Walotsky do INFINITY SIX. (Which, incidentally, reverts to the authors at the end of September.) I also liked Steranko, although Jim kept trying to slip static hero poses through in place of the action we wanted. The cover of INFINITY THREE, incidentally, is a case of Winters' salvaging of what seemed a hopeless mess—in the original cover there was a pyramid of yellow garbage* at the bottom of the picture, with the spaceman hovering overhead. I remember commenting that the garbage reminded me of a rotten banana. Mike Hinge was another that I liked, altho Howie felt that there was not enough individuality on any one painting. He did several for us, however."

* It wasn't intended to be garbage, but that was the impression on the viewer.

LIFE IS A DISEASE

The Doctor will see you now.

—Epigram Distillers,
C. Runyon, Chief
Potentate.

LETTER FROM GEORGE HAY

7-25-74

"You asked for news. Here it is.

"My anthology of original sf stories, STOPWATCH, is due out in hardback from New English Library around October. This set out to be a collection of subversive sf tales: I think the book is value for money, but there is less real subversion than I would have wished—subversion in my terms, anyway. First rate stories by Ursula LeGuin, A.E. van Vogt, John Brunner, Chris Priest, David Masson, and good ones by totally new or less-frequently seen names.

"Two other 'substantian publishers are talking with me about original anthologies involving U.S. writers, possibly joint editorship. I'll confirm with you if/when the publishers confirm with me.

"Have interested the North East London Polytechnic—lair of the SF FOUNDATION—in the possibility of a Futures Degree course, as an extension from sf. We plan a major one-day Conference around January, to have a major sf writer as opening speaker. This will fit in with the Institute of Contemporary Arts lecture series Jan-March next year, when U. LeGuin, Phil Dick, (I think) and others will be speaking, also with the Futures series of talks, films, etc., I am, on behalf of the World Futures Society, London Group, helping to run the I.C.A. in December. This still has to be confirmed, but I think is fairly safe as a bet. The sf lecture series is for sure, since the I.C.A. are funded for it. Their major sf art show is put off till the end of 1975, as both the exhibition and the related book will take that long to get together.

"I'm working with two separate outfits on sf cards/posters, involving sf writers & artists."

((If I had your energy and drive... Fortunately (yawn) I don't.))

LETTER FROM
HARRY WARNER, JR.

7-18-74

"Several weeks ago I emerged from fandom of the 1950's and I've just begun to try to extricate myself from the crush of fanzines that piled up during those four months of work on the fan history. I know now how Hope Lange felt at the climax of CROWHAVEN FARM. You are very kind to have sent yet another issue of THE ALIEN CRITIC on an Annie Oakley basis and the delay in responding is just one of many such horrors that are to be laid to my fanish door-sill until I recover from those 140,000 words of first draft fan history.

"You don't mention one possible cause for the rapid rise in the number of female science fiction enthusiasts. I suspect it involves the near-disappearance of those oldtime magazine covers. Decades of illustrations which showed a woman wallowing in the clutches of someone or something bad must have lured mostly men to purchase those prozines. The force of habit wore off in the years after such pictures were softpedaled. Notice that STAR TREK, the big magnet for female fans, always did things differently, causing the men to be shown in the gravest of peril.

"I continue to take great interest in anything about changes between manuscript and published story, because of so many personal wounds in that respect involving non-fiction. One emendation: there's no reason why the printers should be blamed by the editorial people. A good proof-reading department takes care of accidental or deliberate changes during the typesetting process. One proofreader simply reads aloud from the proof to another proofreader who watches the original manuscript. This shows up any deviations instantly.

"I read the Penshins' new essay on Heinlein with much interest but very few opinions. I'm starting to think that it's time for an unofficial moratorium on Hein-

lein Unveiled Through His Fiction material and for a concerted effort to replace such articles by material about the scores of other science fiction writers who haven't received extended attention."

((But Heinlein is so...granite-like and monumental...with such strong opinions...and is so impervious...and so infuriating to certain minds...and so intriguing to others...that the temptation to analyze, perhaps to undermine, is always strong.))

"Sam Merwin was amusing. He mentions Walt Dunkelberger as unforgettable, but fandom seems to have done a pretty good job of achieving the impossible. Too bad, because Walt was an interesting person. A fan somewhere out in that general area was planning a big memorial publication about Dunk just a couple of years ago, but something must have thwarted him.

"I was glad to see Bob Sabella's article again. It's the one I was trying to remember when I wrote a loc the other night on another fanzine with Clarion material. Harlan claimed somewhere that he could tell the difference between a writer with promise and one doomed to fail by reading the first and last pages of his stories, and I wonder why submission of these pages isn't required for Clarion applicants to make sure nobody gets in whom Harlan will reject permanently."

((As Harlan would probably tell you if he were still responding to comments in fanzines, he is not the only instructor at Clarion (and perhaps some years he is not present at all) and the other writers-in-residence (in sequence) might not agree with his initial judgements...and that it is also possible that he could be Wrong.))

"The Unclassified Ads section rewoke an old memory. I wonder if this Fandom House in Winnipeg will get a stern letter some day? Jimmy Taurusi a long while ago used that as a name for his enterprises, and Random House scared him so badly he abandoned it. Or maybe Random House is

no longer in existence. I never read anything but fanzines and second-hand books from Goodwill Industries that are usually too badly battered for a publisher's name to be visible."

((You jest, sir. Random House is very much alive, but I doubt if they would bother to harass, today, a bookstore—or a small publisher—named Fandom House... if only because they would lose a court test of that restraint of trade nature. I doubt their Trade Mark property rights in the Random House name extend to legitimate variations on "andom House. "Harrumph!"))

"And something else struck my sense of wonder (in the meanwhile, proving that someone really does read "The Alien's Archives" instead of just thinking about how good that will be for future reference if I can ever find this issue when I want to to go referring): the listing for a John Hollis Mason short story in an issue of PERRY RHODAN. This must be the Canadian fan who flourished in the early 1940's and whose name I don't recall seeing anywhere in a contemporary publication for a quarter-century. Maybe Forry Ackerman has flushed him out of hiding again, or more probably, it's a reprint from some fan publication or other originally published long ago.

"Meanwhile, the letter from Harlan pleading for assistance in his pursuit of peace worried me briefly. I had visions of Harlan having finally flipped under the strain of too many leavetakings from fandom. But then I decided that Harlan has simply turned his fannish connections over to a public relations firm. Just as Tallulah Bankhead used to be pictured enjoying her new hobby of crocheting and W. C. Fields was announced as leader of a new cub scout pack, back in the old days, so we will most likely see Harlan cast in a variety of unprecedented roles."

The lost secret of eternal life is in the

WE'RE ROTTEN TO THE CORE

The core—the grim/funny/shocking core —of Herman Wouk's THE "LOMOKOME" PAPERS is his satirically truthful assessment of mankind:

We must have enemies; we cannot be happy without them;

We need war; no matter what the cost, we continue to fight wars;

War has its social/cultural/racial uses and advantages.

Unfortunately, the invention of the Atomic and Hydrogen bombs and the missiles to deliver them...has resulted in a need to avoid a total war and devise a rational war system.

Wouk's creation of The Law of Reasonable War is, alas, rational, and thus conscious, and thus untenable for a species which is 99.9% irrational, and which therefore considers such logical solutions to be funny and (if advocated seriously) immoral.

No, humans will continue to war and fight and kill—and probably avoid using the ultimate weapons for unconscious reasons which work out as the collective id's equivalent to Reasonable War. In fact, according to Wouk's guide lines, the Vietnam War may have been this country's first rational war...irrationally speaking.

The framework for the "core thoughts" is a 'documentary' style—the "diary" of a stranded astronaut on the Moon which tells of the strange human society he found in the vast network of caverns and tunnels below the surface.

(Pocket Books 77749, 95¢.)

The world gets better every day...
Then worse again in the evening.

—Epigram Distillers,
C. Runyon, Chief
Potentate.

VANITY, VANITY, ALL IS EGO

We have to make the distinction, in reviewing the vanity press publications that come our way, between those items which are published by writers themselves—good writers who can find no publisher willing to risk their book (as did Theodore Dreiser, for instance), those who self-publish because they are bitter at previous publisher rip-offs, those who simply prefer to retain all the profits and are writers of professional calibre—and those who are taken-in by the vanity press ads in the writers mags and are suckered by vanity and delusions and illusions into forking over five or six thousand bucks for a "Package" of several thousand bound copies, review copies sent out, press releases, etc.

GOD FORBID, by R. G. Davis, is alas, one of the latter. But I will say this for R.G.: He/She is closer to professionalism than any Exposition Press novelist I've read so far. He (I'll assume he because of the strong machismo evidence and subliminal homosexual evidence) has a story sense and some vague idea of plot, characterization and narrative technique, but suffers from Klunky Amateur Phrasing in places and unfortunately thinks less than 30,000 words is a novel.

Actually, his story of a Russian attempt to take over New York City with the assistance of 1500 or so American fifth-columnists founders on several incredible assumptions which no halfway intelligent reader will accept: No conspiracy of that magnitude could be kept a total secret, no fleets of Russian ships, converging on New York could be ignored, the population of New York would never be that docile, and the President of the United States, even Nixon as proposed here, would never visit such a captured city to talk with the head of the fifth column and would never sit and wait while 50,000 Russian troops landed.

R.G.'s solution is that one ruthless CIA agent in New York is able to use a double for the fifth-column leader, kill the leader and aides in the leader's office (by sticking a silenced gun barrel up their asses and pulling the trigger twice. Dig the symbolism of which I'm sure R. G. is unaware...unless that is standard CIA kill procedure, which I doubt), and then issuing fake orders for the Russians to board their ships, take the fifth-column bully-boys with them, and sail away home. "Deep breath"

R.G. Davis and Exposition Press want \$4.00 for a copy.

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LITTLE KNOWN FACTS OF WATERGATE —No.32 in a series of 126.

Fact: White House Press Secretary and Presidential Secretary Ron Ziegler is the first android to work in the White House. There are 139 androids dispersed in American society, none of which are members of the early ZIEGLER (Zero Intelligence Graded Low Energy Requirement) line of androids. This fact came to light when one of the Ziegler programming tapes was accidentally turned over to Judge John Sirica with subpoenaed Watergate tapes.

—Chris Normandeau

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SOUL MATE IN 25 REMOVES

I can't really do SOULMATE justice in this review—it's the old problem of not wanting to give too much of the story away while tempting the readers into buying it.

Charles W. Runyon is a writer after my own heart—or soul. He writes the way I wish I could write; he has class, a high-gloss professionalism, a depth of mind and emotion I admire, a willingness to walk the last mile.

SOULMATE is the story of Anne, a little girl of eleven who is invaded by an evil

thing which sits in her brain and makes her into a voluptuous woman in a matter of weeks, who compells her to have sex with any man and who sucks the life-force from the men and poisons them so that a short time afterward—they die.

Anne cannot be killed—it sees to that. And she cannot suicide.

Yeah, I know, it sounds like a soft-core porno novel. But it isn't! It twists and turns surprisingly, and the ending is logical/strange. And the writing is tough and sensitive and real.

Runyon is GOOD!

(Avon 18028, 95¢.)

"I believe the moment is near when by a procedure of active paranoid thought, it will be possible...to systematize confusion and contribute to the total discrediting of the world of reality."

—Salvador Dali
((Thanks to Irving Furst.))



MARK IT UP FOR A QUICK SALE

Andy Offutt is not a spectacular writer, or terribly deep, but he is extremely competent and professional, and this Juvenile, THE GALACTIC REJECTS (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, \$5.50), is very, very good.

It tells the story of three "rejects" from Earth's space force during a war with the humanoid but alien Azuli.

They are Bernie, a young man with the psi power of teleportation, Cory, a girl of 16-17 who has telekinnesis, and the older man, Rinegar, who can read minds.

After their Earthbound transport is attacked by an Azuli ship, they escape in a lifeboat and soon land on a planet inhabited by a human race who are very slow to adopt change and whose civilization is comparable to the early nineteenth century of Earth.

The three Earthlings find they can fit into the Borian society by joining a carnival and using their psi talents as "tricks".

And then the Azuli establish a base on Bor....

The novel is well done as Andy shows the personality and character flaws in the three which got them "rejected" from Earth's space force...and as they mature and change under the impacts of life experiences and the pressures of the Azuli invasion of Bor.

The story is formula, with strong story elements, and demonstrates again the truth that fiction formulas have inherent power, and can be used excitingly and rewardingly by a good writer who knows what he is doing.

The middle of the book drags as the three learn the customs of Bor and find their niche, but once the Azuli land, the story becomes exciting again.

The Alien's Archives



"Geis, will you please get that hinge fixed? It drives me nuts every time you come in here."

"The door?"

"No, idiot, the flap on your mouth. I know the hinge on your mind is gone—"

"Alter, I have news—"

"—that's been unhinged for years! What news?"

"It looks like the recession is affecting science fiction and fantasy publishing. You will note I am bringing in only a measle three feet of new books for the Archives."

"Good! Too much sf and f being published as it is. Now maybe I can get most of this new batch read in the next few months."

"Of course, it could be that summer publishing is normally the year's low point."

"Just thank Ghod for small favors, Geis. Now, about this new 'personal journal' you're going to be publishing in January...if you expect me to write all that fiction for you, I'll have to have some improvements in my living conditions down here. First I want—"

"You can easily do it in your spare time, Alter. No problem if—"

"SPARE TIME! Listen, Geis, no fiction unless I get a new Egoboo dispenser. This one breaks down once in a while and spews out criticism! And a new life-size rubber girl would help. Suzi is wearing out. She's only 32-18-32 and leaking fast. She's getting wrinkles! And a new—"

"None of the above, Alter. I've spoiled you rotten as it is. All you do is cost me money and embarrass me."

"Yeah, but where would you be without me? Think about that, Geis. I could go back to my used synapse collection, maybe grow a little garden of ganglions and multi-colored callosus fibres..."

"Alright. Alright. Now get to work on these books and magazines. What's that?"

"That's Herman, my pet roach. Geis, don't—"

"Squash—crunch" "I hate cockroaches!"

"Damn you! I was teaching him to write science fiction. You just killed a new Silverberg, a budding le Guin, a potential Phil Dick!"

"It wouldn't work, Alter. Everybody knows roaches can never learn to capitalize. Editors spot roach-written fiction instantly. Now, to work. I need the Archives by Monday."

"May you be doomed to read Roger Elwood's entire output, Geis!"

"I should live so long."

BOOKS RECEIVED

Aldiss, Brian W. BILLION YEAR SPREE. 1973, 74. Non-fiction. Schocken Books, SB450, \$2.95.

Anthony, Piers. RINGS OF ICE. Novel. 1974. Avon 19448, 95¢.

Bayley, Barrington J. SOUL OF THE ROBOT. Novel. 1974. Doubleday, \$5.95.

Bova, Ben. THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME. Vol. IIA: Novellas. 1973, 74. Avon 19489, \$1.75.

Introduction by Ben Bova.
CALL ME JOE by Poul Anderson.

WHO GOES THERE? by John W. Campbell, Jr. (as Don A. Stuart).

NERVES by Lester del Rey.
UNIVERSE by Robert A. Heinlein.

THE MARCHING MORONS by C.M. Kornbluth.

VINTAGE SEASON by Henry Kuttner and C. L. Moore (as Lawrence O'Donnell).

...AND THEN THERE WERE NONE by Eric Frank Russell.

THE BALLAD OF LOST C'MELL by Cordwainer Smith.

BABY IS THREE by Theodore Sturgeon.

THE TIME MACHINE by H. G. Wells.

WITH FOLDED HANDS by Jack Williamson.

Editor. THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME. Vol. IIB. Novellas. 1973, 74. Avon 19729, \$1.75.

Introduction by Ben Bova.
THE MARTIAN WAY by Isaac Asimov.

EARTHMAN, COME HOME by James Blish.

ROGUE MOON by Algis Budrys.
THE SPECTRE GENERAL by Theodore Cogswell.

THE MACHINE STOPS by E.M. Forster.

THE MIDAS PLAGUE by Frederick Pohl.

THE WITCHES OF KARRES by James H. Schmitz.
E FOR EFFORT by T. L. Sherred.

IN HIDING by Wilmar H. Shiras.

THE BIG FRONT YARD by Clifford D. Simak.

THE MOON MOTH by Jack Vance.

Brunner, John. GIVE WARNING TO THE WORLD. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1122, 95¢.

Caidin, Martin. HIGH CRYSTAL. Novel. 1974. Arbor House, \$6.95.

de Camp, L. Sprague. LEST DARKNESS FALL. Novel. 1939, 41, 49, 74. Ballantine 24139, \$1.25.

Carter, Lin. BY THE LIGHT OF THE GREEN STAR. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1120, 95¢.

Chapelaine, Perry A. SWAMP WORLD WEST. Novel. 1974. Elmfield Press, \$2.60.

Clarke, Arthur C. RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA. Novel. 1973, 74. Ballantine 24175, \$1.75.

Costello, Peter. IN SEARCH OF LAKE MONSTERS. Non-fiction. 1974. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, \$8.95.

Davis, Richard. Editor. THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: Series II. Anthology. 1972, 73. DAW UY1119, \$1.25.

Foreword by Christopher Lee.
"David's Worm" by Brian Lumley.

"The Price of a Demon" by Gary Bradner.

"The Knockers at the Portico" by Basil Cooper.

"The Animal Fair" by Robert Bloch.

"Napier Court" by J. Ransey Campbell.

"Haunts of the Very Rich" by T. K. Brown III.

"The Long Term Residents" by Kit Pedler.

"Like Two White Spiders" by

Eddy C. Bertin.
"The Old Horns" by J. Ransey Campbell.
"Haggopian" by Brian Lumley.
"The Events at Poroth Farm" by T.E.D. Klein.

Ellison, Harlan. ELLISON WONDERLAND. Collection. 1974. Signet 451-Y6041, \$1.25.

Introduction: "The Man on the Mushroom" by Harlan Ellison.

"Commuter's Problem"

"Do-It-Yourself"

"The Silver Corridor"

"All the Sounds of Fear"

"Gnomebody"

"The Sky Is Burning"

"Mealtime"

"The Very Last Day of a Good Woman"

"Battlefield"

"Deal From the Bottom"

"The Wind Beyond the Mountains"

"Back To the Drawing Boards"

"Nothing For My Noon Meal"

"Hadj"

"Rain, Rain, Go Away"

"In Lonely Lands"

Elwood, Roger. Editor. FUTURE CITY. Anthology, Orig. 1973, 74. Pocket Books 77936, 95¢.

Preface by Roger Elwood.
Forward by Clifford Simak.

"In Praise of New York" by Tom Disch.

"The Sightseers" by Ben Bova.

"Meanwhile, We Eliminate" by Andrew J. Offutt.

"Thine Alabaster Cities Glean" by Laurence M. Janifer.

"Culture Lock" by Barry M. Malzberg.

"The World as Will and Wallpaper" by R.A. Lafferty.

"Violation" by William F. Nolan.

"City Lights, City Nights" by K.M. O'Donnell.

"The Undercity" by Dean R. Koontz.

"Apartment Hunting" by Harvey and Audrey Bilker.

"As a Drop" by D.M. Price.

"Abendlandes" by Virginia Kidd.
 "The Weariest River" by Thomas M. Scortia.
 "Death of a City" by Frank Herbert.
 "Assassins of Air" by George Zebrowski.
 "Getting Across" by Robert Silverberg.
 "In Dark Places" by Joe L. Mensley.
 "Revolution" by Robin Schaeffer.
 "Chicago" by Thomas M. Monteleone.
 "The Most Primitive" by Ray Russell.
 "Hindsight: 480 Seconds" by Harlan Ellison.
 "5,000,000 A.D." by Miriam Allen deFord.
 Afterword by Frederik Pohl.
 Editor. THE WOUNDED PLANET (orig. SAVING WORLDS). Anthology. 1973, 74. Bantam 07789, \$1.25.
 Introduction by Frank Herbert.
 "Saving the World" by Terry Carr.
 "Parks of Rest and Culture" by George Zebrowski.
 "The Quality of the Product" by Lil & Kris Neville.
 "Ode on the Source of the Clitumnus", "The Politics of Darkness" (two poems) by Tom Disch.
 "Small War" by Katherine MacLean.
 "Desirable Lakeside Residence" by Andre Norton.
 "The Smokey the Bear Sutra" by Gary Snyder.
 "An Article About Hunting" by Gene Wolfe.
 "Wooden Devil" by Dennis O'Neil.
 "Scorner's Seat" by R. A. Lafferty.
 "The Battered Earth Syndrome" by Barry N. Malzberg.
 "Windmill" by Poul Anderson.
 "Paradise Regained" by Cogswell Thomas.
 "Beautyland" by Gene Wolfe.
 "The Day" by Colin Saxton.

"Starfish", "Billennium: A Note To Deadcat" (two poems) by D.M. Price.
 "Don't Hold Your Breath" by A. E. van Vogt.
 "The Wind and the Rain" by Robert Silverberg.

Editor. OMEGA. Collection. 1973, 74. Fawcett Gold Medal M3030, 95¢.
 "Running Around" by Barry Malzberg.
 "The Empty Field" by Morio Kita.
 "Qd" by Jack Dann and George Zebrowski.
 "Amfortas" by Laurence M. Janifer.
 "After King Kong Fell" by Philip Jose Farmer.
 "Symposium" by R. A. Lafferty.
 "Swords of Iffthan" by James Sutherland.
 "Beast in View" by Miriam Allen deFord.
 "Slide Show" by George R. R. Martin.
 "Rabble-Dowser" by Anne McCaffrey.
 "The Serpent In Eden" by Poul Anderson.
 "Beachhead In Utopia" by Lloyd Biggle, Jr.
 "Geraniums" by Valerie King and Barry N. Malzberg.

Editor. THE MANY WORLDS OF ANDRE NORTON. Collection. 1974. Chilton, \$6.95.
 Introduction by Donald A. Wollheim.
 "The Toads of Grimmerdale"
 "London Bridge"
 "On Writing Fantasy"
 "Mousetrap"
 "All Cats Are Gray"
 "The Long Night of Waiting"
 "The Gifts of Asti"
 "Long Live Lord Kor!"
 "Andre Norton: Loss of Faith" by Rick Brooks.
 Norton Bibliography by Andre Norton.

Editor. STRANGE GOOS. Anthology. 1974. Pocket Books 77754, 95¢.

Introduction: "Whatever Gods There Be: Space-Time and Deity in Science Fiction" by George Zebrowski.
 "High Priest" by J. F. Bone.
 "Oversight" by K.M. O'Donnell.
 "One Afternoon In Buster-ville" by William K. Grasty.
 "The Prophet of Zorayne" by Terry Dixon.
 "In His Own Image" by Rachel Cosgrove Payes.
 "Try Again" by Barry Malzberg.
 "Chold" by Virginia Kidd.
 "What Hath God Wrought?" by Lloyd Biggle, Jr.
 "Throwback" by Roger Elwood.
 "The Director" by James Howard.
 "Return To a Hostile Planet" by John B. Thomas.
 "Musspelsheim" by Richard A. Lupoff.

Ferman, Edward L. Editor. THE BEST FROM FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Anthology. 1974. Doubleday, \$7.95.
 Introduction by Ed Ferman.
 "When You Care, When You Love" by Theodore Sturgeon.
 "Theodore Sturgeon" by Judith Merrill.
 Sturgeon Bibliography by Sam Moskowitz.
 "To the Chicago Abyss" by Ray Bradbury.
 "Ray Bradbury" by William F. Nolan.
 Bradbury Bibliography by William F. Nolan.
 "The Key" by Isaac Asimov.
 "Isaac Asimov" by L. Sprague de Camp.
 Asimov Bibliography
 "Ship of Shadows" by Fritz Leiber.
 "Fritz Leiber" by Judith Merrill.
 Leiber Bibliography by Al Lewis.
 "The Queen of Air and Darkness" by Poul Anderson.
 "Poul Anderson" by Gordon

- K. Dickson.
Anderson Bibliography.
- "Midsummer Century" by James Blish.
"James Blish" by Robert A. W. Lowndes.
Blish Bibliography by Mark Owings.
- Foster, Alan Dean. STAR TREK—
Log Two. Adaptations.
1974. Ballantine 24184, 95¢.
"The Survivor" from a script by James Schermer.
"The Lorelei Signal" from a script by Margaret Armen.
"The Infinite Vulcan" from a script by Walter Koenig.
- Foster, Robert. A GUIDE TO MIDDLE EARTH. Concordance.
1971, 74. Ballantine 24138, \$1.50.
- Gerrold, David. Editor. ALTERNITIES. Orig. Anthology.
1974. Dell 3195, 95¢.
Introduction by David Gerrold.
"Sand Castles" by Jack C. Maldeman II.
"Before the Great Space War" by Barry N. Malzberg.
"The P.T.A. Meets Che Guevara" by Robert Wissner.
"The Legend of Lonnie and the Seven-Ten Split" by E. Michael Blake.
"Webster" by Greg Bear.
"The First Few Kinds of Truth" by James Sallis.
"A Gross Love Story" by Arthur Byron Cover.
"Recourse, Inc." by Vonda N. McIntyre.
"Sign at the End of the Universe" by Duane Ackerson.
"No Room for the Wanderer" by Lee Saye.
"Hung Like an Elephant" by Steven Utley and Joe Pullilla.
"Delta Flight 281" by James Sallis.
"Message of Joy" by Arthur Byron Cover.
"Womb, With a View" by
- Steven Utley.
"How Xmas Ghosts Are Made" by David R. Bunch.
"Cowboys, Indians" by Edward Bryant.
- Hamilton, Edmond. WHAT'S IT LIKE OUT THERE? Collection.
1974. Ace 88065, 95¢.
"What's It Like Out There?"
"The King of Shadows"
"Castaway"
"Serpent Princess"
"The Stars, My Brothers"
"Dreamer's World"
"Twilight of the Gods"
"Sunfire"
"The Inn Outside the World"
"The Watcher of the Ages"
"Transuranic"
"The Isle of the Sleeper"
- Harrison, Harry. Editor. SF: AUTHOR'S CHOICE 4. Anthology. 1974. Berkley 425-02622, \$1.25.
Introduction by Harry Harrison.
"Old Hundredth" by Brian W. Aldiss.
"Fair" by John Brunner.
"The Forgotten Enemy" by Arthur C. Clarke.
"Warrior" by Gordon R. Dickson.
"Et In Arcadia Ego" by Thomas M. Disch.
"But Soft, What Light..." by Carol Emshwiller.
"The Misogynist" by James Gunn.
"All of Us Are Dying" by George Clayton Johnson.
"The Fire and the Sword" by Frank Robinson.
"Bad Medicine" by Robert Sheckley.
"The Autumn Land" by Clifford D. Simak.
"A Sense of Beauty" by Robert Taylor.
"The Last Flight of Dr. Air" by James Tiptree, Jr.
"Ullward's Retreat" by Jack Vance
"The Man Who Loved the Faoli" by Roger Zelazny.
- Harrison, M. John. THE PASTEL CITY. Novel. 1971, 74. Avon 19711, 95¢.
- Herbert, Frank. THE GREEN BRAIN. 1966. Novel. Ace 30262, \$1.25.
DUNE. Novel. 1965. Ace 17263, \$1.50.
- Hoban, Russell. THE LION OF BOAZ—JACHIN AND JACHIN—BOAZ. Novel. 1973, 74. Pocket Book 78392, \$1.25.
- Hoyle, Fred & Geoffrey. INTO DEEPEST SPACE. Novel. 1974. Harper, \$6.95.
- Hughes, Zach. SEED OF THE GODS. Novel. 1974. Berkley 425-02642, 95¢.
- Jeppson, J.O. THE SECOND EXPERIMENT. Novel. 1974. Houghton Mifflin, \$6.95.
- Kern, Gregory. PLANET OF DREAD. (Cap Kennedy #10). Novel. 1974. DAW U01123, 95¢.
- Lafferty, R.A. DOES ANYONE ELSE HAVE SOMETHING FURTHER TO ADD? Collection. 1974. Scribners, \$6.95.
"About a Secret Crocodile"
"Mad Man"
"Nor Limestone Islands"
"The Man Underneath"
"Boomer Flats"
"This Grand Carcass Yet"
"In the Garden"
"Groaning Hinges of the World"
"Golden Trabant"
"How They Gave It Back"
"Maybe Jones and the City"
"Seven Story Dream"
"Adam Had Three Brothers"
"Pig in a Pokey"
"The Weirdest World"
"The Ultimate Creature"
- Lauria, Frank. BARON ORGAZ. Occult Novel. 1974. Bantam 08657, \$1.25.
DOCTOR ORIENT. 1970, 74. Occult Novel. Bantam 08078, \$1.25.

Lory, Robert. THE THIRTEEN
BRACELETS. Novel. 1974.
Ace 80680, 95¢.

Malberg, Barry M. HERO VIT'S
WORLD. Novel. 1973, 74.
Pocket Book 77753, 95¢.

Moorcock, Michael. THE HOLLOW
LANDS. Novel. 1974.
Harper, \$6.95.

THE LAND LEVIATHAN. Novel.
1974. Doubleday, \$4.95.

Nolan, William F. ALIEN HORIZONS.
Collection. 1974.
Pocket Book 77928, 95¢.

Introduction: "From the
Other Side of the Mask"
by William F. Nolan.

"Starblood"

"Jenny Among the Zebras"

"The Joy of Living"

"The Last Three Months"

"The Underdwellers"

"Full of, Mostly, Bagels
and Cream Cheese"

"Kelly, Freddie Michael:
1928-1987"

"The Day the Gorf Took Over"

"Happily Ever After"

"Fasterfaster"

"We Kilt It with a Stick"

"Toe to Tip, Tip to Toe,
Pip-Pop As You Go"

"The Party"

"Papa's Planet"

"Solution"

"Landbreaker"

"The Mating of Thirdburit"

"The Worlds of Monty Willson"

"Promises to Keep: A Sci-
ence Fiction Drama"

Norton, Andre. WARLOCK OF THE
WITCH WORLD. Novel. 1967.
Ace 87321, \$1.25.

THE SIOUX SPACEMAN. Novel.
1960. Ace 76802, \$1.25.

Reynolds, Mack. DEPRESSION OR
BUST / DAMN PLANET.
Novels. 1974, 1966. Ace
14250, 95¢.

Runyon, Charles. I. WEAPON.
Novel. 1974. Doubleday
\$5.95.

Saunders, Jake. & Howard Waldrop.

THE TEXAS-ISRAELI WAR:
1999. Novel. 1974.
Ballantine 24182, \$1.25.

Silverberg, Robert. SUNDANCE.
Collection. 1974.
Thomas Nelson, \$6.50.

"Sundance"

"Neighbor"

"Passport To Sirius"

"Caught in the Organ Draft"

"Neutral Planet"

"The Pain Peddlers"

"The Overlord's Thumb"

"The Outbreeders"

"Something Wild Is Loose"

Editor. ALPHA 5. Anthology
1974. Ballantine 24140,
\$1.25.

Introduction by Robert Sil-
verberg.

"The Star Pit" by Samuel R.
Delany

"Baby, You Were Great" by
Kate Wilhelm.

"Live, From Berchtesgaden"
by Geo. Alec Effinger.

"As Never Was" by P. Schwy-
ler Miller.

"We Can Remember It For You
Wholesale" by Philip K.
Dick.

"Yesterday House" by Fritz
Leiber.

"A Man Must Die" by John
Clute.

"The Skills of Xenadu" by
Theodore Sturgeon.

"A Special Kind of Morning"
by Gardner R. Dozois.

Sladek, John. THE NEW APOCRY-
PHA. Non-fiction. 1974.
Stein & Day, \$8.95.

Spinrad, Norman. Editor. MOD-
ERN SCIENCE FICTION. 1974.
Anthology. Anchor A-978
(Doubleday) \$3.50.

Foreword by Norman Spinrad.
Introduction by Norman Spinrad.

"The Golden Age"

"Twilight" by John W. Camp-
bell, Jr.

"The Enchanted Village" by
A.E. van Vogt.

"Helen O'Lo" by Lester

del Rey.

"Nightfall" by Isaac Asi-
mov.

The Postwar Awakening

"The Star" by Arthur C.
Clarke.

"Affair With a Green Monk-
ey" by Theodore Sturgeon.

"Stranger Station" by Damon
Knight.

"The Cold Equations" by
Tom Godwin.

"The Marching Morons" by
C.M. Kornbluth.

"5,271,009" by Alfred
Bester.

The Full Flowering

"The Voices of Time" by J.
G. Ballard.

"The Pleasure Garden of
Felipe Segittarius" by
Michael Moorcock.

"No Direction Home" by
Norman Spinrad.

"Descending" by Thomas M.
Disch.

"For a Breath I Tarry" by
Roger Zelazny.

"Don't Wash the Carats" by
Philip Jose Farmer.

"Faith of Our Fathers" by
Philip K. Dick.

"Aye, and Gomorrah" by
Samuel R. Delany.

"At the Mouse Circus" by
Harlan Ellison.

"In Entropy's Jaws" by
Robert Silverberg.

"Nine Lives" by Ursula K.
Le Guin.

Stableford, Brian M. THE PARA-
DISE GAME. Novel. 1974.
DAW U01121, 95¢.

Weinberg, Robert E. ^{Editor} FAR BELOW
And Other Horrors. An-
thology. 1974. Fax,
\$6.95.

Introduction by Robert
Weinberg.

"Far Below" by Robert Bar-
bour Johnson.

"The Execution of Lucarno"
by Julius Long.

"Thing of Darkness" by G.
G. Pendarves.

"The Accursed Isle" by Mary

Elizabeth Counselman.

"Masquerade" by Mearle Prout.

"Naked Lady" by Mindret Lord.

"Out of the Deep" by Robert E. Howard.

"Doom of the House of Ouryes" by Earl Pierte, Jr.

"The Chapel of Mystic Horror" by Seabury Quinn.

"Return to Death" by F. Wesley Rosenquest.

"Under the Tomb" by Robert Nelson.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED

AMAZING. October, 1974, Vol. 48, No. 3. 75%. Ted White, Ed. Cover by Jack C. Haldeman II.

Short Stories: "The Sun's Tears" by Brian Stableford.

"Stella Blue" by Grant Carington.

"Downfall" by Jeff Jones.

Serial: THE DOMAINS OF KORYPHON by Jack Vance. (2nd of 2 parts)

Editorial: Ted White.

Features: Requiem for Apollo:

"Like the Sun In Splendor" by Sandra Meisel.

"Space Through Our Fingers" by Jack C. Haldeman II.

The Club House: Susan Wood Glicksohn.

Or So You Say: Letters.

ANALOG. August, 1974. Vol. XCIII, #6. 75%. Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by John Schoenherr.

Short Stories: "Enter A Pilgrim" by Gordon R. Dickson.

"Paleontology: An Experimental Science" by Robert Olsen.

Novellettes: "The Ninth Circle" by Robert B. Marcus, Jr.

"And Keep Us From Our Castles" by Cynthia Bunn.

Serial: STARGATF by Tak Hallus. (Conclusion)

Science Fact: "The Split Brain" by J. Eric Holmes, MD.

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

Editorial: "Citizens of the World."

ANALOG. September, 1974. Vol. XCIV, No. 1. 75%. Ben Bova, Editor. Cover by Kelly Freas.

Novellettes: "The Raven and the Hawk" by William Rotsler.

"Whale Song" by Terry Melene.

"All Which It Inherit" by Bernard Deitchman.

Short Stories: "Touchplate" by Alan Brennert.

"The Mazel Tov Revolution" by Joe Haldeman.

"Black Fly" by George M. Ewing.

Science Fact: "Inside a Neutron Star" by John W. Clark.

Editorial: "Where Do We Go From?"

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

ANALOG. October, 1974. Vol. XCIV, No. 2. Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by Rick Sternbach.

Special Features: "The Search For Truth" by Frederic Juvenon.

"CP" by Isaac Asimov.

Short Stories: "Truth To Tell" by Joe Haldeman.

"Sleeping Dogs" by Harlan Ellison.

"Inhuman Error" by Fred Sæberhagen.

"Contact!" by David Drake.

Novellettes: "Gone With the Gods" by Andrew J. Offutt.

"A Matter of Gravity" by Randall Garrett.

Science Fact: "Psychosomics: The Emerging Science of Consciousness" by Norman Spinrad.

Editorial: "The Whole Truth".

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

ETERNITY SCIENCE FICTION. Vol. 1, No. 3. \$1. Stephen Gregg, Ed. Cover by Stephen Fabian.

Fiction: "A Knight For Merytha" by Roger Zelazny.

"Going Inside" by Barry N. Malzberg.

"My World, Things Past" by

Arthur Byron Cover.

"No Deposit, No Return" by Janet Fox.

"Moonchild" by Pg Wyal.

"At the Zoo: Marking Time In Semi-Darkness" by Robert Wisner.

"Tribute" by Andrew J. Offutt and Robert E. Margroff.

"Helping Put the Rough Works To Jesse" by David R. Bunch.

Poetry: "Solemn, Slowly To the Dawn" by Michael Carlson.

"Comic Book Story" by Scott Edelstein.

"Pacen In Terris" by Gene Van Troyer.

"The Prometheans" by Peter Dillingham.

"Determination" by Max S. Barker.

"Atavism" by Patrice Schroder.

Article: "Science Fiction Poetry" by Peter Dillingham.

Interview: Kate Wilhelm.

Graphics: alpaipuri.

Features: Editorial.

Books, Recordings, Roaches, Comics.

FANTASTIC. September, 1974.

Vol. 23, No. 6. 75%. Ted White, Ed. Cover by Jeff Jones.

Short Stories: "Tattered Stars, Tarnished Bars" by Gordon Eklund.

"Black Hawk of Valkarth" by Lin Carter.

"Poets and Humans" by Geo. Alec Effinger.

"Present Perfect" by Thomas F. Montealeone.

"Hanging" by Barry N. Malzberg.

Serial: WILL-O-THE-WISP by Thomas Burnett Swan (Part One).

Editorial by Ted White

Article: "Literary Swordsmen & Sorcerers, William Morris: Jack of All Arts" by L. Sprague deCamp.

Fantasy Books: (reviews) by Fritz Leiber.

According To You: Letters.

FANTASTIC. November, 1974.

Vol. 24, No. 1. 75¢. Ted White editor. Cover by Joe Staton.

Novel: "A Song On the Rising Wind" by R. Faraday Nelson.

Short Stories: "Half Past the Dragon" by Grant Carrington.

"Saving Grace" by Terry Carr & Laurence M. Janifer.

"Grablam's Game" by Ova Hamlet.

"What's a Mother For" by David Morowitz.

Serial: WILL-O-THE-WISP by Thomas Burnett Swan. (2nd of 2 parts).

Editorial by Ted White.

"Literary Swordsmen & Sorcerers—Superman in a Derby" by L. Spague deCamp.

According To You: Letters.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION.

September, 1974. Vol. 47, No. 3. Whole #280. 75¢. Ed Ferman, Ed. Cover by Jeannine Guertin.

Novel: "The Rescuers" by Ted Thomas.

"Twilla" by Tom Reamy.

Short Stories: "Goodman's Place" by Manly Wade Wellman.

"Elephants Sometimes Forget" by Larry Eisenberg.

"Cathadonian Odyssey" by Michael Bishop.

"The Rest Is Silence" by C. L. Grant.

"Spacetrack" by Robert F. Young.

Books: John Clute.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Films: EARTHTREK: Baird Searles.

Science: "Look Long Upon A Monkey" by Isaac Asimov.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION.

October, 1974. Vol. 47, No. 4. Whole Number 281. 75¢. Ed Ferman, Ed. Cover by Rudy Wolliff, Inc.

Novel: "Count Von Schimmelhorn and the Time-Pony" by R. Bretnor.

"Adrift Just Off the Islets of Langerhans" by Marlan Ellison.

"The Pre-Persons" by Philip K. Dick.

"The Iron Years" by Gordon R. Dickson.

"The Seventeen Virgins" by Jack Vance.

Short Stories: "Blue Butter" by Theodore Sturgeon.

"Nothing Like Murder" by Isaac Asimov.

"The Visitor" by Poul Anderson.

"Mute Inglorious Tam" by Frederik Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth.

"In the Land of Unblind" by Judith Merril.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Films: Baird Searles.

Science: "Oh, Keen-Eyed Peerer Into the Future" by Isaac Asimov.

FANTASY & TERROR. 1974. Vol. 1 No. 6. \$1.50. Amos Salmonson, Ed. Cover by A. B. Cox.

Fiction: "Toyman's Trade" by Phyllis Ann Karr.

"The Last Words of Imatus Istum" by David C. Smith.

"Gods of Anduil" by Darrell Schweitzer.

"Satanesque" by Allan Weiss.

"Mihera-Mahura" by Amos Salmonson.

Poetry: "Returning" by Josiah Kerr.

"The Singing Sword Trilogy" by Stephanie Stearns.

"Treasure Chest" by Susan L. Tannahill.

"The Dream Child" by Walter Shedlofsky.

"That Is Our Eden's Spring, Once Promised" by Ray Bradbury.

Feature: "Nightmare" by Salmonson, Barrow, Asimov, Karr.

Editorial: Amos Salmonson.

P.S.: Amos Salmonson.

GALAXY. August, 1974. 75¢. Vol. 35, No. 8. James Baen, Ed. Cover by Wendy Pini.

Novel: "The Gift of Garigolli" by Frederik Pohl & C.M. Kornbluth.

Short Stories: "The Day Before the Revolution" by Ursula K.

Le Guin.

"Big Black Whole" by Steven Utley.

Serial: THE COMPANY OF GLORY by Edgar Pangborn (Part 1 of 3).

ORBITSVILLE by Bob Shaw (Part 3 of 3).

Forum: Poul Anderson.

Showcase: Stephen Fabian.

Bookshelf: Theodore Sturgeon.

A Step Farther Out: Jerry Pournelle.

Directions: Letters.

GALAXY. September, 1974. Vol. 35, No. 9. 75¢. James Baen, Ed. Cover by David Hardy.

Novel: "The Splendid Freedom" by Arsen Darnay.

"Family Program" by J. A. Lawrence.

Short Stories: "Nature's Children" by Doris Piserchia.

"Incident" by Rex & Elizabeth Levie.

"Target of Opportunity" by Thomas Wyde.

"The August Revolution" by Mary Soderstrom.

Serial: THE COMPANY OF GLORY by Edgar Pangborn (Part 2 of 3).

Bookshelf: Theodore Sturgeon.

A Step Farther Out: Jerry Pournelle.

Directions: Letters.

Showcase: Fidelis Z. Danilowicz.

GALAXY. October, 1974. Vol. 35, No. 10. 75¢. James Baen, Ed. Cover by Jack Gaughan.

Serial: THE COMPANY OF GLORY by Edgar Pangborn (Part 3 of 3).

Novel: THE EASTCOAST CONFINEMENT by Arsen Darnay.

Novel: "Under the Hammer" by David Drake.

"Witch Children" by James F. Lacey.

Short Stories: "Easy Rider" by H. Carl Hill.

"The Last Destination of Master G." by Mal Warwick.

"The Long Night" by John Christopher.

"The Twist" by Tim Altom.

Galaxy Bookshelf: Theodore Stur-

geon.
A Step Farther Out: Jerry Pournelle.
Showcase: Jack Gaughan.

IF. October, 1974. Vol. 22, No. 7. 75¢. James Baen, Ed. Cover by Wendi Pini.
Serial: A KNIGHT OF GHOSTS AND SHADOWS by Poul Anderson (Part 1 of 2).
Novellette: "Mephisto and the Ion Explorer" by Colin Kapp.
Short Stories: "Such Is Fate" by Arsen Darnay.
"Julie" by Jan Trenholm.
"Egantei and the Sage" by John C. White.
"Saying Goodbye" by Scott Edelstein.
Non-Fact Article: "Death and Taxes" by S. Roger Keith.
(R)evolution: "Torchships Now!" by Robert C. Enzmann & Richard C. Mogland.
Ars Gratia: Edward Kimmel.
Editorial: "On Building Walls."
Reading Room: Lester del Rey.
Hue and Cry: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #51. Ace 66034, 95¢. Forest J. Ackerman, Ed.
Novel: RETURN FROM THE VOID by Kurt Mahr.
Guest Editorial: Lou Perkins.
Scientific World: THE MAN FROM PLANET X by Sue Hammond.
Short Stories: "Racial Memory" by Ralph O. Hughes, Jr.
"Under the Lavender Skies" by Adrian Hayworth.
Serial: COSMOS: "At the Crater's Core" by J. Harvey Haggard (Part 12a).

PERRY RHODAN. #52. Ace 66035, 95¢. Forest J. Ackerman, Ed.
Novel: FORTRESS ATLANTIS by K. H. Scheer.
Guest Editorial: Keith Helms.
Scientific World: "The 12-Handed Men of Mars" by Hector R. Pessina.
Short Stories: "Alien Catastrophe" by Henry Melton.
"Cop Out" by Elaine MacLane.
Serial: COSMOS: "At the Crater's Edge" by J. Harvey Haggard. (Part 12b)

PERRY RHODAN. #53. Ace 66036, 95¢. Forry Ackerman, Ed.
Novel: SPYBOTS by Clark Darlton.
Editorial: "A Peacelord Passes"
Scientific World: "The Love War" by Hector Raul Pessina
Short Stories: "A Resume of Rays" by Forest J. Ackerman.
"Replacement Part" by Greg Akers.
Serial: COSMOS: "The Fate of the Neptunians" by P. Schuyler Miller. (Part 14a).

PERRY RHODAN. #54. Ace 66037, 95¢. Forry Ackerman, Ed.
Novel: THE BLUE DWARFS by Kurt Mahr.
Editorial: "The Sound of Music".
Rhoda Quiz: by Dwight Decker.
Short Stories: "The Cat and the Canaries" by Helen M. Urban.
"Untimely Interruption" by Matt Graham.
Serial: COSMOS: "The Fate of the Neptunians" by P. Schuyler Miller (Part 14b).

VERTEX. October, 1974. Vol. 2, No. 4. \$1.50. Don Pffel, Ed.
Serial: SUNRISE WEST by William K. Carlson (Part One).
Novellette: "Definition On Tide-world" by Joseph F. Patrouch, Jr.
"The Teacher" by Don Pffel.
Feature Fiction: "Grow In Wisdom" by Mildred Downey Broxon.
"Juryrigged" by Joe W. Halderman.

Short Story: "Tallwalker" by Peter Martin.
"A Three Letter Word Called Love" by Walt Leibscher.
Potpourri: "Robo" by Marilyn Shea; "Ration Biscuits" by Charles Ott; "Retroflex" by F.M. Busby; "Primate" by Sharon Tucker; "The Shakespeare Show" by Scott Edelstein.

Articles: "Space Vehicles From the Past" by Jay Arrow.
"VAbulous" by Neil Shapiro.
"The First Observatory" by Igor Bohassian.
Interview: William Rotsler, by Terry Carr and Stephanie Bernstein.

Editorial: Don Pffel.
Book Reviews
Eco-Corner: "Power Without Pollution" by Jerry Pournelle.
"An Open Letter To Joanna Russ" by Philip K. Dick.

WHISPERS. July, 1973. Vol. 1, No. 1. \$1.50. Stuart David Schiff. Cover by Tim Kirk.
Fiction: "House of Cthulhu" by Brian Lumley.
"The Urn" by David Riley.
"The Willow Branch" by Joseph Payne Brennan.

Articles & Departments:
Editorial.
News.
"Renunciation" by Donald Wandrei.
"Toward a Greater Appreciation of H. P. Lovecraft" by Dirk Mosig.
"Robert Howard and the Stars" by E. Hoffman Price.
The End.

Poetry: "The Outsider" by Walter Shedlofsky.
"The Cats of Anubis" by Robert E. Howard.
"The Altar" by Richard L. Tierney.
"Cradle Song for a Baby Werewolf" by H. Warner Munn.
"Guillotine" by Walter Shedlofsky.

WHISPERS. December, 1973. Vol. 1, No. 2. \$1.50. Stuart David Schiff, Ed. Cover by Stephen Fabian.
Fiction: "The Way To Casa's Place" by Henry Hesse.
"The Story of Obbok" by Darrell Schweitzer.
"The Song of the Bone" by Dave Drake.
"The Bait" by Fritz Leiber.
"A Weather Report From the Top of the Stairs" by James Sallis & David Lunde.

Articles & Departments:
Editorial.
News.
"The Prophet From Providence" by Prof. Dirk W. Mosig.
"About GATHER, DARKNESS and CONJURE WIFE" by Fritz Leiber.

"Robert E. Howard and the Stars" Part II, by E. Hoffman Price.

Book Reviews: Fritz Leiber, Dave Drake, Schiff.

"The Vampire in America" by Manly Wade Wollman.

Poetry: "In Halls of Fantasy" by Richard L. Tierney.

"Egypt" by Robert E. Howard.

WHISPERS. March, 1974. Vol. 1, No. 3. \$1.50. Stuart David Schiff. Cover by Lee Brown Coye.

Fiction: "The Shortest Way" by Dave Drake.

"Elizabeth, My Love" by G. E. Symonds.

"Sticks" by Karl Edward Wagner.

Articles & Departments:

Editorial.

News.

"Lee Brown Coye: An Appreciation" by Gahan Wilson.

"Lee Brown Coye: An Appreciation" by Stuart David Schiff.

"Lee Brown Coye: A Folio" by Stuart David Schiff.

"Chips and Shavings" by Lee Brown Coye.

Book Reviews by Stuart David Schiff.

The End.

WHISPERS. July, 1974. Vol. 1, No. 4. \$1.50. Stuart David Schiff, Ed. Cover by Tim Kirk.

Fiction: "The Inglorious Rise of the Catsmeat Man" by Robin Smyth.

"They Will Not Hush" by James Sallis and David Lunde.

"The Farmhouse" by David Riley.

"The Soft Wall" by Dennis Etchison.

Articles & Departments:

Editorial.

News.

Book Reviews.

"The Sails of Fancy" by Fritz Leiber.

"The White Ship" art folio (various artists).

"The White Ship": a Holo-

graph Manuscript by H.P. Lovecraft.

The End.

Poetry: "The Sea Girl" by Robert Howard.

"To Gorice XII, King of

Carce" by Richard L. Tierney.

"The Abandoned Boudoir" by Joseph Payne Brennan.

"Ice Forest at Midnight" by Joseph Payne Brennan.

WYRD. Spring, 1974. #3. 60¢. Irvin L. Wagner & Al D. Cockrell.

Editors. Cover by Steve Swenson.

Fiction: "Along the Ancient Way" by Al D. Cockrell.

"The Disintegration of Snailbrass" by Greg Stafford.

"Tale of Three Tasks" by George Duck.

"Who Writes Your Horoscope?" by JeanPaul Jenack.

Poems: by Theodore Kriner.

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NEXT ISSUE—

I will be using the heavy Richard Delap Interview with/Article about HARLAN ELLISON titled "Smoke and Glass" which I am proud to run. You'll see it here first.

Also provocative is Darrell Schweitzer's article, "Science Fiction's Greatest Disaster—Hugo Gernsback!"

Plus the nostalgia piece, "Visit To a Pulp Planet" by Milton F. Stevens; PLANET STORIES revisited.

And Larry Shaw should have his column, "Footnotes To Fan History" in the issue.

"The Archives" will be in its usual place, and there will be Geis, Geis, Geis

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ALIEN CONCLUSIONS

(continued from "Alien Thoughts")

LOCUS, the sf newszine. Any zine with less than 1500 circulation (from now on) hasn't a chance.

Best Fan Artist is Tim Kirk. He's got to deserve it. 2nd (again!) is Bill Rotsler. 3rd is Alicia Austin.

Best Fan Writer is Susan Wood, who beat me out, but I think she earned it. 3rd was No Award.

Special Hugo Award went to Chesley Bonestell. According to Linda Bushyager, who publishes KARASS, this special Hugo is illegal.

ADVERTISERS ATTENTION! I don't want any in TAC anymore. Go to ALGOL, please. Andy is building up a bigger circulation and I want more room for myself and other text. I have a few paid-in-advance unclassified ads, and when they run out, that's it. No more ads of any kind in TAC.

Gee, does this make me an amateur again?

The latest letter I have from George Hay (9-14-74) tells of A.M.D. Distributors

dropping AMAZING and FANTASTIC, in Britain. Also, he reports that New English Library have stopped distributing IF and GALAXY. This means, he says, that only one English importer is distributing these magazines...which, I suppose, means a much smaller total of sales in England.

George's new address is: George Hay, 388 Compton Road, London, N.21., UNITED KINGDOM.

***** THE ULTIMATE LAST MINUTE UNCLASSIFIED AD *****

RUNE MAGAZINE contains 70 pages of original science fiction and fantasy including an interview with Isaac Asimov. Send \$1.25 (no personal checks) to: RUNE PRESS, Box 3346, Columbus, OH 43210.

Missing from this issue, with much regret on my part, are:

Small Press Notes;

Promag Comment;

Letters (lately arrived) from Jerry Pournelle and Dr. Fredric Wertham;

A Dave Mason Memorium by John Boardman;

The book publishers' addresses in the Archives (I'll have new ones to add next issue);

My comments on the latest shift of direction in the Science Fiction Writers of America, initiated by our new Presi-

dent, Frederik Pohl.

These will all be in TAC #12, Ghod willing.

The ALIEN CRITIC is not enough

As I note elsewhere in this issue, it was inappropriate for me in TAC #10 to run that section of "The Nature of the Beast" and discuss my personal personal life (the singles magazine ad). "The Nature of the Beast" doesn't fit in TAC; it was a jarring note.

When I said 'Something is surfacing' I may have been more right than I realized, in more ways than one....because the Urge to write some kind of personal journal and to make much more extensive social-political-cultural-economic commentary on the current world scene has also become more and more insistent.

And, AND, the Urge to write some fiction has poked its weird head up and fixed me with its gimlet gaze.

What to do with these troublemaking Urges? Killing them is bad for my mental health. So is keeping them locked in the dungeon with Alter.

Those of you who have read RICHARD E. GEIS #3 (Sold out!) will remember the novelet in that issue, "Tomb It May Concern", and how I indulged in a lot of taboo sex (taboo for science fiction, anyway) and graphic, perhaps shocking violence.

As time has passed—two years!—I have not written another word of fiction. TAC and sloth have kept me busy. Especially TAC in its mimeo format, with all that mimeo slavery.

Now, if I've learned one thing about myself, it's that I have to structure a thing into my daily life if I want to do it consistently. Thus after countless

beginnings to do daily exercises I settle for going out of my way to ride my bike—to the post office, to the bank, to the stores, downtown to a show, to the central post office....

And now, in order to get my trenchant (I call them trenchant, you may call them cynical) views on paper and out of my head where they clang around for hours and hours looking for an exit, and in order to get my day-dreams on paper, I have to build-in a necessity to write them. I have to have a spur and a lure—an obligation and a small profit.

So I'm going to publish RICHARD E. GEIS again. That's the way I am; I have to work with my odd character—take advantage of its weaknesses—if I want to get anything done.

So the Urges are sitting in the driver's seat and I am reduced to figuring out how to accommodate them. (The question of 'Who is master here?' will not be examined at this time.)

I think I have found a way. As I type this I am sitting propped up in bed with my Sears electric typer on my home-made bed tray/table. (I keep the typer and bed table on the shelves of the bookcase which sits next to my bed, on my right.) I am writing this in the 7 A.M. to 8 A.M. period that I normally use to daydream, read a bit, masturbate.... And I'm sure, with a bit of discipline!, I can use this time, often enough, to write some fiction, edit it (and find the time later in the week or month to put a few thousand words on stencil).

As George Warren mentions in his letter elsewhere in this issue, he does a lot of snorting and "Hah!"ing to himself as he reads TAC. I do the same as I read the morning paper and various magazines, as I watch the TV news.... So I'll find the time to sit down and stencil my snorts, grumps and "Hah!"s.

When I wrote RICHARD E. GEIS #s 1-2-3 and most of TAC #4, I was really leveling

about my intimate personal thoughts and behavior. I mentioned various women.... When they read those diary-journals those women were disturbed. Angry. Although all but two have forgiven me, I will not in good conscience go that route again. I would like to be able to write that freely, but the price is too high for others, and so future issues of REG will not contain my personal personal life.

I have some things to say about the fiction that will appear in REG. It will



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be self-indulgent as "Tomb It May Concern" was: sexual, violent graphic, outrageous, a bit grotesque in places, "sick" here and there, and unpretentious. Above all un-pretentious.

It will not be what I consider to be pornographic. There is a not-too-fine line between "legitimate" sex in fiction, and pornography: beyond the point where characterization and plot-furthering action and motivation and theme and mood and etc. can be illustrated and advanced by sex and sexiness lies the fevered area of sex-for-sex's sake—porno—in which sex acts become ends in themselves, are strung out for pages upon pages, every variation in technique is detailed, and the sensations are dwelled upon with great, exquisite care...and the orgasms! My dear, the orgasms are simply incredible!

Would you consider the following porno, or "legitimate"?:

She glared at him. She tightly fisted his penis and dove her mouth to it. "Earthling!" she whispered with contempt, and sucked harshly, without mercy.

Conrad writhed in pain/pleasure and soon spurted into the alien woman's strange mouth, knowing his semen would be kept in the womb-sack in her throat and used to grow thousands of infant Conrads...which would be butchered and sold in the meat markets of the planet as delicacies.

(At the same time, just as all sex in real life isn't limited to procreation, and is actually "indulged" in for fun and pleasure, so in my fiction there will be sex for fun and pleasure...but not carried to porno lengths.)

The same approach is true of violence. Life is brutal, dangerous, and uncertain. It is even said that you can't get out of it alive. Most of us live protected, hedged lives. When, perchance, violence intrudes into our cocoon we are shocked and shook.

My fiction in REG will contain naked, real violence. Emotional violence and physical violence. Not gluttonous quantities, but you'll get the full flavor.

I like to read sexy, violent, realistic fiction. And I like to write it; the fiction in REG will be fun/enjoyable for me to write or I won't write it. Yes, I'm in this to please myself. Does that make me an artist? I hope not.

I'll be writing science fiction and fantasy for REG, but not anti-hero, experimental or literary s-f and fantasy. It will be plotted, with a hero or strong central character, and it'll have action, danger, suspense...and I hope Wonder.

Now one special plea: DON'T WRITE ME LETTERS OF COMMENT THAT YOU EXPECT TO BE ANSWERED OR PRINTED! REG will be all Geis, and I won't have time to answer you. The mail runs heavy enough outbound as it is.

Because people differ so violently about what-is-porno, I want to avoid hassles as much as possible. I do not want to send REG to legal children. Therefore, ALL SUBSCRIBERS must be at least 18 years old. I'm going to add a REG subscription form at the bottom of this page and please note that it calls for a signed declaration that you are 18 or over. If you'd rather not cut up the page, simply be sure you add an age declaration to your "I want to subscribe to REG, here's my \$2." letter.

The format: REG will be ten pages (5 sheets, 8½ x 11), mimeographed, one staple in the upper left corner, folded to letter size for mailing, and stapled firmly shut. It will be mailed to you FIRST CLASS. There will be no advertising.

I chose this format after long, heavy, detailed thought. I can run off an issue in an hour. I can do all the collating, folding, stapling, addressing and stamping while sitting in my easy chair half-watching TV shows like JOHNNY CARSON.

REG will be mailed soon after I have filled 10 pages; no set schedule, but I estimate anywhere from two-weekly to monthly. The contents will run about 4000 words of commentary plus about 6000 words of fiction per issue.

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I am starting fresh with this REG; the first issue will be #1. And the first issue will probably be run off and mailed in mid-January (to give me an idea by then of how many copies to run off).

RICHARD E. GEIS
P.O. Box 11408
Portland, OR 97211
UNITED STATES

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