

\$1.25

(THE ALIEN CRITIC)

12

BARRY N. MALZBERG

TED WHITE



ALIEN THOUGHTS

Just for the hell of it, I'm writing this before I've gotten word from my lawyers. (Well, lawyer, but he's asking a specialist in patent law, so... Anyway, it sounds neat to have 'lawyers'.)

Last week (this being Nov. 21, and I'm still waiting for Lacksadaisical Don Day and his Incredible Printing Company to call and tell me TAC #11 is ready. I'm bitter and pissed off, pay me no heed on the matter of printers.) I got a letter from the Thomas More Association, a non-profit corporation in Illinois. It seems they have become aware of THE ALIEN CRITIC. It also seems that they publish a magazine called THE CRITIC. And it seems further that in 1958 they registered & trademarked their title. THEREFORE, in a legalese phrase, they demand that I 'immediately' stop using 'CRITIC' in my title. To back this up they enclosed a copy of a consent decree arrived at in federal court in New York, in which a group who published a magazine titled NEW CRITIC agrees to stop using CRITIC.

My immediate reaction was incredulity. I had never heard of THE CRITIC. It isn't a well-known magazine, certainly not one of mass circulation, or distribution. How could they get off prohibiting anyone using the word CRITIC in a magazine title?

So I hot-footed it to my lawyer.

I suspect I could defy them (assuming they do have some legal grounds for a suit, and perhaps beat them in federal court here in Oregon (They have to sue me where the 'crime' — of using "their" word — is committed.) but who needs several thousand dollars worth of legal fees to pay? (That's their advantage: most everybody they roust for alleged infringement will weigh costs vs. inconvenience/loss and decide to change titles.)

Even as I showed the lawyer my magazine and the letter, I was thinking of alternate titles for TAC. THE ALIEN VIEW? THE ALIEN REVIEW? THE ALIEN'S JOURNAL? THE ALIEN CRITIQUE? All fairly good, but....

Actually, there has always been a

small, niggling dissatisfaction with THE ALIEN CRITIC: it had to have a subtitle to make clear its function—'An Informal Science Fiction & Fantasy Journal'. That has marginally bugged me. But since I had time and letterheads and envelopes and momentum tied up in the title, I stuck with it.

NOW...why not use this need/opportunity to change to a title more self-explanatory?

You have no doubt noticed the change on the cover and contents page....

Yep, I'm back with good old SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Nobody can prohibit the use of SCIENCE FICTION or REVIEW. And most of you associate me with SFR, and the (Formerly THE ALIEN CRITIC) on the cover, for a few issues, will make the transition nearly painless.

12-6-74. The lawyers confirm that my wisest move is to change titles. So be it.

One of these years a crisis will NOT develop, I'll stick to one format and/or title for a WHOLE YEAR, and all Fandom will be plunged into Astonishment.

###

A REPORT ON PROBABILITY GEIS

For the first time in my life, last October 24th, I had what is called a complete physical examination. At age 47 it is a good thing to find out if there are any Awful Things Going On.

The findings...there are a couple Things To Watch. My blood pressure (I come from a 'stroke family') is around 142 over 95—the borderline area—not quite high blood pressure. The good doktor took me into his office and said, "Alter, I want you to—"

"I'm Geis, doctor. You've been reading too many fanzines."

"Oh...yes. Sorry, Dick. I want you to lose twenty pounds."

"WHAT? I only weigh 184! I'm six feet tall!"

"Yes, but you have a thin frame; get down to your college weight...around 165."

The brute. Just because he's skinny.... Well, I am now on a kind of

slow, steady diet, much to my mother's irritation. To her I prove my love for her by gaining weight. "Eat!" she says. "You only live once. If you can't eat, what have you got?"

HER bloodpressure, before being controlled by drugs, was 212 over 100, or some dangerous level like that. Hypertension.

Anywayay, the prospective 20 pound weight reduction (I'm down to 176—stripped—six weeks after the orders to lose were given) will also reduce my blood pressure.

My blood chemistry is fine ("But cut down on the triglycerides, Alter." "That's Dick!" "Uh, sorry. Cut down the sugar, starches, things like that.")

The other Thing To Watch is my bad back. That's about all we can do is watch. See, in 1972 I helped a friend move a garage full of auto engines, parts, tools, equipment, etc. etc. etc. to another garage. This took four hours or so. I have never worked so hard in my life. I must have lifted tons of stuff onto a big truck, and then lifted it off that truck.

The thing is, I tore or stretched or insulted a clutch of muscles in my lower back. These muscles have never forgiven me. Every day they mutter dire threats and imprecations. (Backs are sore losers.) If I lift a few 50 lb. boxes of paper, for instance, my back doesn't let me forget it for days. When I load the car with boxes of TAC/SFR for the 3rd class mailing of an issue for the post office (and then unload the boxes) my back screams at me for a week.

This is something I have to live with. (You call this living?) (Quiet, back!)

And my joints are stiffening up a bit. (Hark! Is that an artery?)

But beyond that I am in perfect health. So fandom and enraged authors and editors will have Dick Geis to kick them around for a while longer.

###

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P.O. BOX 11408

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BACK ISSUES:

#1, #2, #3 were a personal journal
titled RICHARD E. GEIS, published in
1972. All are sold out!

THE ALIEN CRITIC #4 is sold out!

THE ALIEN CRITIC #5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
are available.

Back issues are \$1. each or may be
ordered as part of a subscription.

ADVERTISING: Well, I've reconsidered a
bit: The back cover will be available
for \$40., printed by photo-offset. Cam-
era-ready copy. DEADLINE: April 1st.

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sue. Next issue. Never fear. No new
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DIXON VS. ELLISON

It has come to my attention (and to the attention of most every person in SF of any editorial prominence, fan and pro) that a young fan/writer name of Terry Dixon sold Roger Elwood a story titled "The Prophet of Zorayne" and that this story in due course was published in Elwood's STRANGE GODS, an anthology of original stories published by Pocket Books (77754, 95¢).

Nothing wrong with that? Welllll, it seems that "The Prophet of Zorayne" is a direct paraphrasing of Anatole France's "The Procurator of Judea." Terry did a switch to make it science fiction. Changed words and phrases... but in a lot of places copied it word-for-word. He didn't just use the story idea, he in effect copied the story... in my judgement.

This was, for Terry, a DUMB THING TO DO! Terry is in coventry now, because if he submits a manuscript to an editor said editor will tend to look upon it with a suspicious eye...and probably send it back rather than take a chance that it might be a close paraphrasing of somebody else's already-published story.

Terry Dixon will pay for his mistake for years if he continues to try to write and sell science fiction/fantasy.

I became aware of this information by way of Harlan Ellison, who sent me a packet of photo-copied pages: a letter to "whomever" (me, the other editors), a letter to Terry Dixon (written at white heat with a full load of Ellison contempt and hyperbole), a copy of "The Prophet of Zorayne" from the pages of STRANGE GODS, and a copy of "The Procurator of Judea" from the pages of GOLDEN PAGES OF ANATOLE FRANCE.

A factor in this jehad by Harlan against Terry is that Terry has sent letters to magazines that have published Harlan's work and has attacked Harlan in said letters.

Terry sent me a letter (as he sent too a copy to the other editors Harlan sent this packet to) in which he tries

to make his use of the Anatole France story a mere common use of a non-copy-rightable theme. Ideas and titles of novels and stories and articles and plots cannot be copyrighted. Did not, asks Terry, Ellison use Heinlein's UNIVERSE idea in STARLOST? And he writes:

'Good Lord, I proclaimed the source within the text of the story itself by referring to "anatsols" in the same sentence with "Nova Gallia," which of course means New France (page 61).

Terry also gives examples of what he considers comparable uses of previously published works: THE SEVEN SAMURAI to THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, CARMEN to CARMEN JONES, ORPHEUS & EURIDYCE to GOAT SONG.... And he ends with 'I think "The Prophet of Zorayne" is a valid decanting of a fine old mainstream wine into a bright new s-f bottle—'

Granted, we all use used ideas and basic plots. It's impossible not to. But he used actual sentences and paragraphs virtually word-for-word...all the way through.

Harlan wants Terry run out of sf on a rail, more or less.

As for me, I'm inclined to think Harlan's furor over the story is a bit overdone, and that the subsequent damage Terry has suffered both professionally and personally is sufficient of a "lesson". We are all allowed one mistake, I hope.

But now (mid-November) after having written the above, I have received from Terry a photocopy of a letter from a firm of lawyers in Chicago advising him that in their opinion Ellison has probably libeled Terry in the letter sent to him (and sent to us editors).

Terry would be ill-advised to actually bring suit against Harlan. In this microcosm of ours a lawsuit is most often a mistake. If he won it would be a Pyrrhic victory...he'd lose more in the sf "family" than he'd gain in court.

####

SOME NOTES ON COMPULSION

I have been ignoring (uncharitably)

my own very strong compulsions in my diatribes against the evil writers who are out to pollute the precious bodily fluids of science fiction with the poison of Literary Pretensions. "Aht and beauteh writing" as my hero Jack Woodford used to say with a contemptuous sneer on his typewriter.

My enemy has been those who consciously or unconsciously choose to use the Literary Mode of story telling in sf and fantasy for reasons (I infer) of pride, status, Image, one-upmanship... and the concomitant rip-off and abuse of the readers.

Yet I have been informed (by at least one such Literary sf writer that he is not dedicated to ruining science fiction and that in fact the Old Guard did that job years ago.... He says he really has no control over the way his stories and novels are written—which style is used—because the material decides that.

I am familiar with the argument that a given idea for a story or a novel inherently possesses an optimum way to write it...for instance a certain story might be rendered more effectively first-person...a tragic ending might be necessary for best impact and expression of a theme....

Although I would say that any idea can be expressed effectively in many ways, many styles, using many techniques in fiction—as witness the books produced by editors who give the same "what if..." idea to three different writers and get three different stories. The choice of style and technique or mode is dictated by the writer's inner self, and the selection of Idea in the first place is made in deep places...not by the idea-as-outside-force.

In my own case I have obviously displayed considerable helplessness and compulsion in my writing and fanning and personal life. Deep emotional and character needs control my behavior. (Our egos, our conscious Selves grip the unconnected steering wheel and ferociously assert the illusion of Free Will and Rational Control. Forget it. Enjoy the ride.)

So therefore I am willing to apply the validity of this realization to oth-

(Continued in "Alien Conclusions")

I HATE FANTASTIC FANTASY:

Negative, negative, negative, bitch, bitch...that's all I seem to have been doing lately, and I don't like it. Maybe it's just me. I hope so. I would not like to think that I'm correct in not liking so much of the sf and fantasy I've read lately.

#

I had an attack of the guilties a couple days ago, so I picked up a Nelson book, INTO THE UNKNOWN, an anthology of fantasy stories edited by Terry Carr (\$6.50).

(I say 'guilties' because I have a good-intentioned policy of reading as many books by different publishers as possible each issue, for review. I don't often manage to spread myself as wide as I'd like, though...and I owe Nelson a review.)

Most of these stories are of the irrational fantasy type; stories that present strange and inexplicable events and things and places...and don't explain them in the end.

As in "As Is" by Bob Silverberg, in which a strange car presents its new "owner" with tires, chains, gas, as needed, from a usually sealed trunk...and its true owner arrives by pegasus to claim it.

Or Harlan Ellison's "Are You Listening?" about a man who is so ultimately colorless and ignorable that he disappears from everyone's awareness, no matter what he does!

And in Hilary Bailey's "Dogman of Islington" a dog can talk. No explanation as to why he can talk, or how he became intelligent enough to talk...he just talks, and the story is a comment on a family's reaction to that "fact".

"The Drowned Giant" by J. G. Ballard is like the Bailey story: a gigantic human male washes up onto an English beach after a storm. People are curious, they swarm over him/it, and a team of scientists arrive, examine and go, the huge carcass begins to decompose, and parts of the body are cut off and carted away by souvenir hunters and by pet food companies. Soon he/it is virtually forgotten. A few bones remain. That's it.

"Inside" by Carol Carr, and "Beyond the Game" by Vance Aandahl seem more like deep-psyche stories—extreme schizoid escape—tricked up to appear to be fantasy.

Only Terry's "Touchstone" and John Wyndham's "Technical Slip" seem to me to be "real" fantasy...with Ray Bradbury's "McGillahee's Brat" a kind of real-life social horror story, as is James Gunn's "The Old Folks."

That leaves "The Lottery In Babylon" by Jorge Luis Borges, an unclassifiable story dealing with—maybe—the ultimate unreality of reality; a way of looking at this nightmare we call living.

Altogether, a mixed bunch of disturbing stories, all very well written.

I like explicit fantasy. I'll accept a magic car in U.S.A. of 1968, and a wizard, but I want to know howcum it and he are extant. I'll buy a gigantic human washed up by the sea, but I have to know why he exists, if only because he was created by a sorcerer for whatever purpose. And in "Inside" I would like to know, if this girl is dead, howcum she can exist in a self-creating house, howcum it can be inhabited, howcum her relatives come to a party in it... A fantasy explanation will do, just please give me an explanation. Please answer the inevitable, logical questions that are generated in the mind of the reader.

There is in me a strict law 'n order man, I guess. I need to understand. I ask that a fantasy have internal (if supernatural) logic and that it live within its own rules, and that it let me know one way or another what those rules are.

Otherwise, with stories that give me unexplained, unnatural occurrence, I feel...unsatisfied, sort of cheated, and I probably will not like it. (Even while admitting the story is technically well-written. 'Well-written' also includes the entire conception of the story, of course, so that a really fine story is well-conceived and well-executed. Many stories fall short in one or both areas.)

Well, you know my prejudices now,

in fantasy. Examine your own in light of mine and decide if you'd like to read this anthology.

Q: What do you consider the raison d'etre, the chief value of Science Fiction?

Lester del Rey: Same as any other fiction—its entertainment value. Since science fiction can be less stereotyped and formularized than other categories, it can be more widely entertaining, at its best. Once it served to interest readers in some amount of science but that's largely gone. When literature must have 'value', it stinks.

—THE DOUBLE: BILL SYMPOSIUM
1969

MALZBERGED AGAIN:

Barry and I have an unspoken agreement; our friendship exists in spite of my continuous attacks on most of his book-length fiction.

I should know better than to pick up his novels and open their pages.... A prickly feeling comes to my skin, a dread shiver runs up and down my spine, and as I read I fret and fume and end roaring and ranting and throwing them into the fireplace. I keep hoping he'll have written something as good as his OVERLAY....

Now I have skimmed two new ones: ON A PLANET ALIEN (Pocket Books 77766, 95¢), and THE DAY OF THE BURNING (Ace 13902, 95¢). He seems to be taking old, hoary, cliché sf plots and festooning them with his warped sense of humor, his stock Malzberg paranoid, schizophrenic characters and his nihilistic worldview.

If you have developed a taste for his novels these two will serve that appetite.

'Freud has come to seem too timid, too puritanical and above all too rational for the second half of the 20th century. It is William Reich who moves the young with his antinomianism, his taste for magic and his emphasis on full genitality as the final goal of man.'

—Leslie Fiedler

RICHARD DELAP

persona
SMOKE AND GLASS
anima

a nonfiction fantasy
about Harlan Ellison

A word of warning to readers who are expecting the usual "interview" with a prominent, controversial author: I have no new information on Harlan Ellison's background, his childhood or maturation (some of which can be found in the introductions to his books, more of which can be found in his 'fiction'); I have no Helen-Gurley-Brown secrets to spill about his sex life (though I might ever so innocently speculate on what love/sex means to him as a human being); and I have no pretension to presenting an unbiased, lucid catalogue of bibliographical data. What follows is as much a story of myself as of Harlan, a story of a reader who has had a personal interest in a writer through his published works and who was fortunate in having the opportunity of one day placing the mind-image next to the real image and making a brief but much anticipated comparison.

***** persona *****

"...as night approaches we are all aliens, down here on this alien Earth...not Christ nor man nor governments will save you...no one will come down from the mountain to save your lily-white hide or your black ass. God is within you. Save yourselves."

— Introduction, THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD, Avon, 1969, p.7

*****anima*****

Delap: Do you ever question yourself when you get criticized?

Ellison: Never, never, never, of course not. You don't question your own religion. There's only one thing I believe in, only one thing I care about,

that's my writing. Now if I have to start questioning the validity of that work, I'm questioning my own religion. I'm questioning my god. No, no way, I'm right; they're wrong.

To understand my reactions on meeting Harlan, I should first explain how I had come to know him through his fiction and why I felt an irresistible desire to meet him in person when the chance arose.

My fondness for Ellison's fiction was a cumulative thing.

For years I have been a voracious reader, as a youngster indulging my taste for the bizarre, the fantastic, the fanciful in literature, reveling in Poe and going half-crazed when I discovered an obscure little paperback of Lovecraft stories. I was not a magazine reader during my formative years, shifting from library books to paperbacks in one smooth motion, aware that the magazines existed but of the opinion that the magazines' days of glory were long past and the best works were preserved in the anthologies.

I discovered Harlan Ellison, author, on the paperback rack at, of all places, the local train station, which at that time had the best and most complete selection of books in town. It was a hot summer afternoon in 1962, one I remember quite clearly to this day. I'm sure people recall when and where they bought and read books that impressed them at the time and are remembered fondly, and Ellison's book (along with a few others by Lovecraft, Sarban, Sturgeon, Bradbury and Leiber) is one of those items that carved out its own special niche in my memory bank and settled in for good. It was titled ELLISON WONDERLAND and sported a garishly attractive cover painting—variously credited as the work of Sandy Kossin, Susan Kossin, and Victor Kalin, all of whom may possibly be one person—featuring a man sitting on a giant toadstool against a flaming red background, surrounded by creatures who, as the cover blurb stated, are from "the somewhere world of science-fantasy, reported by Harlan Ellison, who has been there."

Harlan Ellison was an unknown quality to me—and obviously also to the publisher, who printed his name in very small type on the cover—so give the artist and the blurb writer at Paperback Library credit for this sale. I took the book with me to the movies that afternoon, and while I can't remember the film I went to see, likely one of those awful double-bills of American-International cheapo productions about mutated monsters or dragstrip riots or wasp women or somesuch nonsense, I remember settling down on the sofa in the mezzanine lobby to await the start of the next feature (I habitually arrived in the middle of a film), opening to the first page of my new paperback and being pulled pell-mell into Ellison's very-much-of-a-Wonderland.

I'll never remember the films I saw that day, but I can never forget my astonishment in discovering a brand-new writer who delighted me with his brash cynicism, hopeless sentiment, and an all-embracing humor which could allow him to laugh at you and me and himself at the same time. It was obvious that here was a writer not yet fully in control of his talent, churning out flip and thoughtless stories and mixing them indiscriminately with works of a more serious, psychologically stable and clear-eyed bent. But in all of them together one could immediately see a phantasmagoric vision that didn't stop at the usual barriers heeded by writers of this time. There was a discernible humanistic passion that peeped through here, scurried by there, and occasionally flashed out in blinding explosions where you least expected it. It was a volatile talent, at its best in often unpolished but none the less riveting emotional descriptions of horror that have become almost a trademark of Ellison's grimmest extrapolations:

"One vision showed great buildings, steel and concrete, flashing like magnesium flares, burning as though they were crepe paper. The sun was raw looking, as though it might have been an eye that someone had gouged out. The sidewalks ran like butter, and charred, smoldered shapes lay in the gutters and on

the rooftops. It was hideous, and it was now."¹

During the next few years I was trying to catch up on a terrific backlog of published sf, new and old sf magazines and a deluge of new material in paperback form. Ellison, the majority of whose work was appearing in men's magazines like ADAM and KNIGHT, did not come to my attention, since my budget for men's magazines was limited to the monthly and to my mind classy PLAYBOY (in which pages Harlan did not appear until 1967).

It was not until late 1965 that I again spotted the name Harlan Ellison on a book cover, the Pyramid paperback PAINGOD AND OTHER DELUSIONS. As before, I was delighted and impressed and more than a little flabbergasted by the undeniable excellence of what has come to be one of the most reprinted stories in the English language, "Repent, Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman." And by early 1967, two more stories had been published which had me hooked as inevitably as a trout on a line, the blood-curdling "I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream" and the superb "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes," the latter an emotional whirlpool that Harlan calls "one of my favorite stories" and which possibly is the very best display of all Harlan's strengths as a writer in one tightly-knit, fearfully revealing little package.

***** persona*****

"...when you are a paid liar—ne writer—you presuppose people will go along with you. That, Virginia, is called the 'suspension of disbelief' and without it Heinlein, Asimov, Vonnegut and myself would be the most imaginative quartet of bricklayers in the world."

—Preface to "Back to the Drawing Boards," FROM THE LAND OF FEAR, Belmont, 1967, p.75

¹ "The Very Last Day of a Good Woman," ELLISON WONDERLAND, Paperback Library, 1962, p.109

***** anima*****

Delap: You've been accused of writing about characters who are loathsome, degenerate... Do you think that's so?

Ellison: Name two.

Delap: I can't. I'm just asking you—

Ellison: No, I can't either. The assholes who accuse me of that are the same kinds of people that are hidebound and bluenosed and corrupted by their own fears of sexuality and reality. I cannot be responsible for the stupidities of other people.

Delap: How are you going to reach them?

Ellison: I don't wanna reach 'em. Fuck 'em. I'm enjoying myself. I write to please myself. I always have.

Delap: But what do you want to do with your stories? Do you simply want to entertain or do you want to teach?

Ellison: Neither. I want to please myself.

Delap: That's the limit?

Ellison: That's it.

Delap: If you wanted to please yourself, you wouldn't sell your stories...

Ellison: Oh, no. I please myself very well indeed by selling them...

I love communicating. I don't care whether people get angry or pleased, or they get enraged or they get depressed, it is all of a piece to me. You know they call me up in the dead of night and say 'I read one of your stories and it saved my life.' Honest to God, they do that. A woman called me once and said, "I read "Paingod" and I was gonna slash my wrists and it saved me, it saved me." And I said, "That's terrific—ladythanksverymuchgoodbye." They could just as easily call up and say "My husband killed himself after reading one of your stories." And I'd say, "That's terrific too." A story exists in and of itself, for itself. As long as you are true to the material, I don't give a shit what the rest of the world says. I mean Harry Harrison and Bob Silverberg both rejected "A Boy and His Dog." To this day Harry contends it's a rotten story.

I don't give a damn. On the other hand I've won awards for it. People come up and tell me how fantastic it is. Now it's a motion picture. I don't give a damn! I wrote it! Everything else is spinach.

Shortly afterward I found myself leaping enthusiastically into the fan-nish scene with book and movie reviews, slashing out a little too gleefully at writers who did not, in my estimation, produce excellent, memorable fiction at least 100% of the time. Idealistic and eager, I displayed my demands like a skidrow flasher who couldn't keep his coat buttoned for more than a minute or so.

It was at this time that I started leveling criticism in Harlan's direction. Weaned on his best work and resultingly spoiled, I grumbled about recent collections of stories containing one or two good pieces but padded with drack that should never be reprinted. My rather violent rejection of some newer work, including his award-winning story "A Boy and His Dog"—which I termed a "prick teaser" of a story—could not have done much to endear me to Harlan's heart. And my mutedly favorable review of DANGEROUS VISIONS could not have helped win Harlan over to my side with much enthusiasm.

I learned, however, that Harlan lives up to his reputation as a tough-minded but fair observer; and while he had plenty of reason to lash out at me with a bladed tongue, for my reviews of his work had often been too short and much too presumptuous, he kept quiet and didn't make any comments at all. At the time I assumed he simply didn't find my remarks worth comment, but I later learned that he was watching and taking an interest, occasionally flinching at my hysterical knifeblades but not about to cry out in public alarm and nail me to the wall for my irritability and often irrational statements. I guess he thought I was learning, and I guess (I hope) I was.

***** persona*****

"(Sf) is a concerned art form, for even in its shallowest versions it deals

with tomorrow and the potentialities of man's place in it....I write it because it refuses not to be written."

—COLLOQUY, May 1971, p.5

"(Sf), while it has some incredibly important areas in which it functions better than any other literary form, is a terribly restricting form usually, and is constricting the writer who wants to deal with His Times."

—THE DOUBLE: BILL SYMPOSIUM, 1969 p.18

***** *anima*****

Ellison (re two unfavorable fanzine reviews of AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS): They read a goddam book that took five years to put together... and the work is beyond them. It is beyond them; they cannot grasp it. They're like chimpanzees trying to understand a cyclotron. What am I to say to these people?

Delap (re Anthony Burgess' review of A, DV in the Los Angeles TIMES): How about Burgess? Chimpanzee?

Ellison: No, if you read that review you recognize the fact that it is a deranged review. It's crazed! He's inflamed! It's a quite mad review. Now, what I learned was that Burgess hates all science fiction writers, with the exception of one or two in England, hates them because he feels that he was ripped off on (the film rights purchase of) A CLOCKWORK ORANGE. He's furious, he's angry, he hates Americans, he hates American science fiction writers, he doesn't consider A CLOCKWORK ORANGE a science fiction novel, and he hates experimental writing. Hates it, and he hates young writers. And he hates young people. Hates young people... And he personally attacks me, whom he's never met, and one can only conclude that it's his own craziness going. He obviously didn't read the book. He makes no reference to any single story in the book.

Delap: Not even one?

Ellison: Not even one. All he talked about was my introduction to the book and a few of my (story) introductions. That's obviously

all he's read. What am I to say to that? He's hardly a chimpanzee, but— Well, yeah, it upset me at first. But then I read the thing over and, well, the very tone of it was such that it prevented me from being annoyed. I mean, it's like if your sister used to beat you on the head with bricks when you were a little boy, and her name was Marie. And, you know, the mere mention of the name 'Marie' would send you into paroxysms of madness. And you walked into a restaurant and the waitress said "Good evening, my name is Marie," and you went AGGGHHH AGH AGH AGHHH!!! Now, you could say, wow, what was that all about, or you could perceive there was a personal thing going that invalidated everything else. Which is what I see of the Burgess thing.

Ellison's eclecticism confuses and often angers sf fans, making it difficult for them to see that much of his surface contradiction and quicksilver changes are the result of his inability to reach each person with whom he comes in contact at that person's own level of comprehension. Sometimes he is impatient and forgets (or perhaps I should say ignores) his desire to reach out and touch people so that they will not forget him, his impatience consigning the dull and the mindless to the hell of ignorance that even Harlan's blowtorch dialogues cannot blast them away from occupying. More and more often these days he seems to lack forbearance, bludgeoned and bruised by the stupidity of cattle—humans until his efforts to shock them into awareness have become an inextricable portion of his public personality. His brutality is expected, a part of the Image, and the softer side of the public Harlan Ellison can usually be found only in carefully selected works of fiction.

There is no doubt that this soft side does exist—at least that was my concept of the writer as I made preparations to trundle off to the University of Kansas for the weekend to hear Harlan speak at Woodruff Auditorium.

Lawrence, Kansas is, I suppose, not much different from most small university towns. The shops of the compact

business district are cleaner and brighter than the usual Kansas town, sophisticated by small town standards and quite openly catering to the demands of young students. Both the town and university campus sparkled from a recent public scrubbing that obviously takes place at the start of each semester, and the clear skies of Kansas' Indian Summer, the green trees tinged with red and gold, gave off a healthy vigorous glow that makes Kansas autumn the pleasantest time of year in a state saddled with harsh winters and torrid summers.

The trip to Lawrence was pleasant. My companions—two very nice young Wichita ladies, Kathryn Boyd, an inveterate Ellison fan, and Vicki Wainscott, in whom I have a very different sort of interest than I do in Harlan—and I were excited and expectant. Arriving rather late in the evening, I placed a call to James Gunn, who teaches at the University and had set up the speaking date for Harlan, to ask how I could corral Harlan for some interview time. Jim very kindly contacted Harlan at his Nunemaker Hall apartment and told him we were anxious to have a meeting.

Harlan had been going full steam all day, rushing from a previous engagement on the West Coast to reach Lawrence that evening, speaking to students and working with young writers, dragging around a huge box of manuscripts for his last DANGEROUS VISIONS anthology, and plopping down in front of his portable typewriter (which he carries with him wherever he goes) to write in any available spare moment. Harlan was tired from a long day, we were tired from a long drive; Harlan demanded we get over to his apartment that very moment, and we didn't waste one damned second getting over there.

Greeting us with smiles and a casual warmth, Harlan ushered us into his rooms with a flurry of trivial chatter and an invitation to sit down immediately and relax while he whipped up a batch of his special beverage, "Cafe Ellison Diabolique" (the recipe for which is included in Anne McCaffrey's unusual cookbook, COOKING OUT OF THIS WORLD, and which will delight anyone who, like myself, has any fondness for coffee

and/or chocolate).

The following hours are a bit jumbled in my memory now. What I have to show for them is an hour or so of non-continuous snippets of tape-recorded conversation in which I tried to engage Harlan in a series of spontaneous 'interview' questions-and-answers, all of which were boringly trite and directionless and were easily fielded by Harlan who spent most of his time clowning around, trying to spring me out of my nervous and somewhat stuffy attitude.

What is most interesting about these hours is to see, in retrospect, that Harlan, too, seemed a bit nervous, his endless spiel of idle talk a double-sided panoply, softening us up and putting us at ease so that our real personalities would show through as he assessed our demeanor, gauged our responses with a practiced eye, and, I assume, judged us to be non-threatening.

As Harlan relaxes, his speech turns less staccato and one can see the muscles in his torso (he was shirtless) and neck loosen up. Giving up the best seats to his guests, he struggled to sit in a wicked-looking chair (a hybrid offspring of a hammock and a wrought-iron garden fence from the looks of it, a weird beast that obviously thought it had been created for something other than supporting Harlan's butt), castigated himself for allowing flab to grow about his middle (a rather overdramatic monologue about a miniscule bulge), and gracefully led the conversation into an easy flow of words that were suitable for a late night tête-a-tête. Relaxed and tired, Harlan had that little-boy-lost look that would turn the most aggressive harridan into a doting mother. Nearing forty, Ellison looked ten years younger, with the incredible energy of someone joyously fighting his way through puberty.

If his physical presence is mildly paradoxical, his mind is no less than incredible. It leaps and cavorts in every direction, grabbing knowledge from here and there until you begin to think he is a living library of odd-piece information. His humor is pervasive but he seldom uses it only to amuse his listeners. He will take a simple question and toss it back at you

with an answer that shows you he thinks you can (or at least should) do better.

***** persona*****

"It's not often people will tell you how they really feel about gut-level things. Like god or how they're afraid they'll go insane like their grandfather or sex or how obnoxious you are when you pick your nose and wipe it on your pants. They play cozy with you, because nobody likes to be hated, and large doses of truth from any one mouth tend to make the wearers of the mouth persona non grata. Particularly if he's caught you picking your nose and wiping it on your pants. Even worse if he catches you eating it. Now, honest, how many people will cop to that?"

—Introduction, OVER THE EDGE,
Belmont, 1970, p.18

***** anima*****

Delap (re Ellison's essay about withdrawing from Clarion teaching):
I'm cowed.

Ellison: What? What'd you say, you smart-ass?

Delap: I said I'm cowed, that's all.

Ellison: Well, you should be. How often do you get to talk to a living legend? Anyway, moving right along...

It was well after two in the morning before Harlan, noting that he had to be awake and ready for a busy schedule in a very few hours, decided to gently boot us out so that he could sleep. (I would to this day feel guilt over his lack of sleep that night if I hadn't discovered over the ensuing weekend that Harlan apparently doesn't sleep like normal people but naps like a cat, an ability I'm positive he has purposely cultivated just to frustrate scientists who tell us that no human can survive under such circumstances.)

The next morning Harlan was planted firmly at the classroom desk of James Gunn, bright-eyed and glowing and very much awake. My companions and I arrived and dragged each other across the room, settling uncomfortably into

those sadistic desk-chairs, trying to rub the gum out of our eyelashes.

Harlan began by sticking psychological pins into what emerged as a lethargic, seemingly none-too-bright class of less than two dozen students. His comparison of college students today with the apathetics prevalent during the McCarthy-50s, when individuals were afraid to stick their heads up above the crowd, brought little response. The mildly amusing, oft-repeated tales of his writing efforts as a child brought only a grim, desultory comment that "He (Gunn) feels sorry for us," in reference to their classroom writing efforts. All of Ellison's enthusiasm for working at writing—"Subscribe to the Protestant Work Ethic. Work!"—and his efforts to avoid a lecturesome tone—"I don't give lectures. They're kind of snake-oil medicine shows."—had scant effect. What few questions he could drag out of the class were primarily concerned with subjects like flying saucers and television's STAR TREK.

Harlan later seemed to dismiss the class from his mind entirely, not discussing them at all as he walked toward the car to drive into town for a fast lunch. If he was disappointed with the class's unresponsiveness, he didn't let it prey on his thoughts. I had the impression he had dealt with this sort of sleeping sickness so often that it had become just more polluted water over the dam. In spite of the drudgery (my term, not Harlan's) of speaking to a stone wall of human faces, he had stayed talkative and exuberant until the class was nearly over. Only minutes before the dismissal bell did the excitement fade to a quiet resignation as he realized the academia-processed robots were the same sad blanks they were before he arrived. Harlan must be intoxicated by the challenge, for surely he relishes the idea that the robots who break through to his wavelength to get their stainless steel neurons activated by his verbal laser have nothing to lose but their ignorance and complacency.

***** persona*****

"...and the sense of wonder has been relegated to buying old comic books and

catching THE SHADOW on Sunday radio, trying to find out where that innocence of childhood or nature went."

—Introduction, PAINGOD AND OTHER DELUSIONS, Pyramid, 1965, p.12

***** anima *****

Delap: Much of your work has been illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon. I've always felt you must have a close attachment to them—

Ellison: Yes, I do.

Delap: Can you tell us a little about them?

Ellison: Leo and Diane are extraordinary people. I first saw their work when they were drawing for GALAXY back in the early fifties. They were just out of art school, where they met each other. Leo is black, Diane is white—most people don't know that—and it has influenced their personal life considerably. They had been doing some work for GALAXY for very little money—in fact, virtually nothing; I think it was twenty dollars an illustration, something like that—and they did early covers for Gnome Press. Few people realize that. They did the cover for Fritz Leiber's TWO SOUGHT ADVENTURE. They were around quite a bit, and they had done some illustrations for some men's magazines, DUDE and GENT. And I saw their work in New York, and when I went to work on ROGUE in 1959, when I got out of the army, one of the first things I did was to contact them in New York and ask them to do some artwork for me. And Bill Hamling, the publisher, said, 'Ah, what're you dealing with people who're out of the city for, blahblahblah.' And I said because they're great. And the first thing they did for me was a painting of Billie Holliday for an article Nat Hentoff had written. It was soon after Billie Holliday had died. And the second thing they did was an illustration for my story, "Eyes of Dust." And they did many, many more for me. Well, then I went to New York to meet them. And we struck it off very, very well indeed. Now this was before the civil rights movement had even gotten started around the country. And Leo's attitude was

very influential in forming my ideas about social commitment and understanding of things as a black person saw them. And I lived at their apartment for a while, and we were very close. In fact, after my second marriage broke up, I was very, very poor. I was on my way to California and I had to stop in New York for a few weeks. I went to L. A. from Chicago by way of New York, which was the opposite way but I had to do it. I had no money. And I slept on their sofa and then on their floor for about three weeks, and when I began getting enough control over my own books to be able to say this is who I want for the artist, I got them to do most of the covers for me. And occasionally a cover will be done by somebody else for my books, and they're never, never as good.

After a quick lunch in downtown Lawrence at a quick-serve sandwich shop—Harlan had nothing favorable to say about the corned beef, coming out from behind his ever-present dark glasses long enough to show he's a fussy eater (which must play hell with his stomach when he's traveling the pitburgs)—we wandered across the street to browse through a couple bookstores. The first was one of those favorite haunts of the book addicts, the used book store, this one in less disarray than usually found in such places and with quite a large stock of science fiction titles. Harlan, however, made a beeline to the mystery nook. He scrounged along the floorboards, up and down the shelves, like a seasoned bargain hunter, emerging at last with a selection of out-of-print paperbacks which titles I now can't remember (one I think was an early John D. MacDonald). At his suggestion I left with a handful of titles by John Lange (a pseudonym of Michael Crichton), Richard Stark, and Stanley Ellin. I hadn't the heart to tell him that I'd been out of touch with the mystery-suspense genre for several years and hadn't read a book of this type since Simon Raven's BROTHER CAIN.

A few doors down the street was a well-stocked plastic bookstore handling new items: books, magazines, etc. where

we fiddled away another half-hour and I left with a couple of magazines and, at Harlan's urging, a Darryl Ponicsan novel and two underground comicbooks. Harlan doesn't talk you into buying something. He just shoves it into your hand and says "get it," and you are left with the impression you're missing the buy of a lifetime if you don't.

Within an hour we were back on campus where Harlan was to speak to an auditorium gathering of students. Mik-es, recorders and cameras were conspicuous, and Harlan's earlier prediction as to what the first audience question would be ("Do you believe in UFOs?") proved correct. Giving him a perfect hook on which to bewail the predictability of his audience. This time, fortunately, his audience was sharper, more attuned to science fiction in general and Harlan's science fiction in particular. The dialogues were diverse and lively, the audience responsive to his brand of humor: "In the past ten years, we've had Vietnam, the assassination of two Kennedys and King, Watergate, Allende...and you ask if I'm pessimistic? (sigh) Yeah, I'm pessimistic."

***** persona *****

"...in examples of the damned and the lost, we find hope within ourselves."

—Introduction, ALONE AGAINST TOMORROW, Macmillan, 1971, p.14

***** anima *****

Delap: You mentioned before that you don't have much concern for the people who don't get anything out of your stories, who aren't concerned with what you have to say—

Ellison: Well, you know, that's an oversimplification. Of course I'm concerned. Of course I have messages. But they are secondary. My principle aim in to entertain, to satisfy myself, to write a story that I'm pleased with, to set down what I have to say.

Delap: Do you think your science fiction audience is closer to what you have to say than your mainstream audience, simply because you write in

the fantasist mode? Many of your stories are in the men's magazines, reaching a much wider audience than the science fiction magazines.

Ellison: All I can tell you is for instance: "The Whimper of Whipped Dogs," which was in the May (1973) GALLERY, has prompted many letters from people, and many of them in big cities, saying 'My God, he got it, he captured it, that's what I've been thinking, I never knew that's what I meant, yes, that's it.' That this story won the MWA Edgar as Best Story of 1973 seems to answer the question of how universal are the subjects about which I write; it's no more a "detective" story than it is "sf." I think my stories are general enough and, it seems to me, if what you're writing is true and goes to the well-springs of the human condition, then anybody can get it. And if anybody doesn't get it, it's because their senses are dulled, and because they've been bastardized into believing Jacqueline Susann is the epitome of good writing.

Delap: Would you like to see 'science fiction' taken off your books?

Ellison: Yes, yes. That's what I'm doing with Harper & Row, with DEATHBIRD STORIES. It says in the contract, it says this book will not be marketed as science fiction in any way, the words science fiction, sci-fi, speculative fiction or any variation thereof, shall not appear on advertising matter or any other kind of copy. I've been trying like crazy to get away from that. And I'm gonna do it. I'm gonna do it! (Running around the room in mock hysteria.) They're not gonna keep me in the goddamned ghetto. I'm gettin' out!!

Afterward, we made a mad dash over to the university bookstore where Harlan spent a couple of hours autographing books. The paperback two-volume edition of the AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS anthology had just been published and was in good supply—along with a number of Harlan's own titles, several of which he suggested potential customers not purchase since they were collections of early work that he didn't believe read-

ers would find satisfactory compared to the writing standards he maintains today.

Later, as we relaxed over cokes and coffee in the campus cafeteria, Harlan suggested we hightail it out to the highway to find a grocery store with some snack food he could haul back to his apartment. Now this may be the greatest revelation you'll find in this story, and it may be one that will give me equal standing with the Washington POST reporters for revealing the ungodly truths about behind-the-scenes doings. The fact is, for all his fussing and fuming about the quality of food in public restaurants, Harlan Ellison is a junk food freak.

Wandering up and down the aisles of Dillon's grocery store, the sweat popping on his brow, his eyes bugging with desperation, his hands twitching nervously, Harlan finally stopped and screamed: "They ain't got no Diggers!!" Potato chips, corn chips, snack nuts, crackers and cookies and whathaveyous—none of them would do. It had to be Diggers and there wasn't a box of them in sight!

Noe how much of this ruckus was put on and how much was real, I wouldn't care to say, but it was without doubt a remarkable performance that certainly deserves some kind of reward. Everyone quickly forgot the incident, except me, and two weeks later I found a box of the damned things at the grocery store where I shop and popped it off airmail to Ellison's California home. If the U.S. Postal Disservice didn't mash them all out of recognition, I imagine Harlan had them gold plated and embedded in clear lucite for a mantelpiece display.

If he didn't, he should have.

Ah, there's so much more to this story: Harlan's speech at Woodruff Auditorium, in which he bit the Hollywood hand that feeds him (because if he didn't bite it, it would stay clenched tightly around the folding-green 'food' it holds out to entice the undercredited scribblers); the marvelously relaxed and informal party at James Gunn's house afterward (Gunn and his wife are charming, genial and generous hosts; and Jim, whom I have met on several oc-

casions, is one of the most rational, stimulating conversationalists I have ever had the pleasure of meeting); Harlan's speaking to young, aspiring writers as if they were people with a real future, not just kids getting it off on a pipe dream; Harlan's newspaper column which sat half finished in his typewriter while he took the time to answer our questions and let us get to know him.

The details of the variety of incidents I've recounted here are but a brief personal recollection of facts. They are not-so-secretly colored by a fondness for the man, and I have made no effort to hide this. But there is more here, more than just an admiration for his energy and enthusiasm and a respect for a man who has reached his personal goal of fame and fortune.

I think Harlan will probably deny it—and since my conclusions are based only on assumption, even I must admit that he has every right to do so—but I can't help but feel that Harlan is, himself, a frightfully isolated man. For all his friends, his acquaintances, his fans, many of them very close to him, as close as friends can be, seem to be relegated to buffer status, a buffer against his worst enemy, which is himself.

It would be easy to say that Harlan suffers from deep-seated guilts about which others can surely never know, but this is a burden we all carry and not one which shows itself to be an insurmountable obstacle. Yet this is an answer that does not quite fit. Harlan is a strong person and can, I think, manage to come to terms with whatever guilts he may have. Harlan can be annoyingly condescending, but I would guess that he condescends himself very little in any conscious way.

He made one statement on the afternoon we stopped at the grocery, a remark that has stuck in my mind like no other he made. We had been discussing the use of sex in science fiction stories, how some writers bandied it about with little or no thought, how others refused to touch it at all. But as we walked down the sidewalk, he turned for a moment to glance at his reflection in the plate glass window, speak-

ing quietly, almost as if he were speaking to himself: "Aw, sex doesn't really mean so much."

I was struck by a sudden aura of futility and hopelessness that, while it crowds into much of Ellison's fiction, is not quite the same as hearing the man state it quietly and with the tone of self-contemplation that comes when the mask slips for just a moment.

***** *persona* *****

"...herewith something sexy to tie in with the title: Fuck. Now we can get on to more important matters..."

—Preface, LOVE AIN'T NOTHING BUT SEX MISPELLED, Trident Press, 1968, p.8

***** anima *****

Ellison: I recognize it as an inequity but, uh, unshaved armpits on a woman just turn me off. Esthetically. It could be the most beautiful woman in the world, crazed with lust, and if she's got hair on her legs or under her arms, that just makes me ill. I can't help it.

Delap: Conditioning.

Ellison: Yeah, exactly.

*

Ellison (to a young lady named Gilford, his companion for the evening): Hey, I'm not gonna shave tonight. Can I get away with that?

Gilford: It's all right.

Ellison: You don't mind? Will you still love me if I don't shave?

Delap: She doesn't care if you have hairy armpits.

Ellison (to Delap): (expletive delated)

It all has to do with what I deduce as Harlan's interior as well as exterior goal: human communication. As a communicative tool, sex is just that, a tool and a method. Harlan has tried before to communicate on this intimate level, but the fact that his marriages have not worked out suggests not so much that Harlan has not tried, or even

anything so definite as that he has tried and failed, as much as it suggests that he is just a plain, old-fashioned sucker for love. Is this the mark of someone who doesn't know what he is really looking for or someone covering the marks of pain? It doesn't really pay to speculate along this line, but I believe that Harlan's efforts to communicate outwardly are aggressive because his search for inward communication has not gone the way Harlan thinks it should go. I don't think this (speculated) failure is Harlan's alone, and I suspect it has something to do with his ineradicable and very basic innocence and trust, which under years of pummeling has withdrawn so deeply that it may never show its face again—though it does still exist, which explains much of the sentiment and romanticism that weaves between the horrors and materialistic hardness of his fiction.

The meanness and cruelty of indifference in the world is something the exterior Ellison can confront and challenge; the interior man reaches out for something that is not quite love, and not quite not love, for a person or persons with whom he can let down the shutters and peep out in trusting wonder. There is a gentle child within Harlan, and it is that gentle child who makes him give of himself generously, reach out to help young writers, and understand the face of alienation in all its masks.

There was no time for me to probe for that inward child, but I am convinced he was there all the time, watching me, waiting for me to speak to him directly. Unfortunately I have my walls, too. I'm not sure my interior self is quite as protected and sheltered as Harlan's. I bear psychological scars that have made the child within me a little misshapen, more than fearful of the open light. But somehow I know that these two huddled little selves, mine and Harlan's, would love to meet. Once they open the doors and reach over that vast distance which separates person from person, anima from anima, they would have a lot to say to one another—words of trust, of friendship, a sharing of sorrow and guilt, a bridge across the alienation that can turn

vicious and infected when left to gnaw at its own vitals for too long.

Deep inside Harlan is a germ of truth that has nothing to do with the public Truth he speaks of so openly. I can see it there, behind the public glass, moving in the private smoke, a blending of the persona and the anima, nerve ends raw, exposed, never soothed. It is the purpose and the drive behind the public figure, and I don't think it's been out in the light of day for years and years. It hides in fright, and it is very, very human. It lives, in many guises, deep inside us all.

So my story of Harlan Ellison, the person and writer I admire, begins with reality and ends with fantasy...or is it the other way around?

Whatever, I hope someday I'll again have the chance to survive the frenetic pace of the blistering persona and once more catch a glimpse of that little anima fellow who lives within.

If he's only a fantasy, don't tell me, Harlan. That's why I read science fiction. For only in fantasy do I find the truth.

persona * anima * persona * anima * per

"How time flies when you're having a good time."

—Afterword, HARLAN ELLISON: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CHECKLIST, compiled by Leslie Kay Swigart, 1973, p.102

Ellison: I am not above cliches.

—Lawrence, Kansas, 1973

*****end*****

It seems to me like this. It's not a terrible thing—I mean it may be terrible, but it's not damaging, it's not poisoning to do without something one really wants.... What's terrible is to pretend that the second rate is first rate. To pretend that you don't need love when you do; or you like your work when you know quite well you're capable of better.

—Doris Lessing,
THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK

There is a need and a place for second-rate art. Contrast is necessary.

IN MEMORIAM: DAVID MASON
[1924 - 1974]

By John Boardman

"HOSTESS: He's in Arthur's bosom, if everman went to Arthur's bosom."

—William Shakespeare
HENRY V, II, iii

After a long illness brought on by auto-immunity, David Mason died in San Francisco on June 28, 1974. (That was the 60th anniversary of the Sarajevo tyrannicide. He'd have liked that.)

During his lifetime, Dave was under-rated as an author of fantasy. As is the case with so many authors and artists, he will probably become more widely read and appreciated now that he is no longer with us.

During the 1950s Dave was active in the Fanarchist crowd—those largely New York fans who avoided both fannish and mundane politics on the grounds that fanning should be fun. He took to writing at about that time. His first published story in the sf/fantasy line was "Garrity's Annuities" in the April 1956 GALAXY. His best was "Road Stop" in the January 1963 IF — the most evocative tale of sheer horror written since the death of H. P. Lovecraft. These stories have never been collected, and this step is recommended to any editors reading these words.

Mason was better known for his fantasy novels: KAVIN'S WORLD, RETURN OF KAVIN, THE SORCERER'S SKULL, and DEVIL'S FOOD, and his science fiction THE SHORES OF TOMORROW and THE DEEP GODS. All these except DEVIL'S FOOD were published by Lancer, and are now hung up in that firm's bankruptcy. However, Lancer's assets (including CONAN OF AQUILONIA) are now on the market.

DEVIL'S FOOD, published by Ophelia Press in 1969, was the first novel which told of the calling up of a demon from the demon's viewpoint. (It is reviewed, and contrasted with L. Sprague de Camp's THE FALLIBLE FIEND, in my GRAUSTARK #296.) As you might gather from the name of the publishing house, the demon is an

erotic demon. Dave Mason was one of several sf and fantasy authors to write pornography under their own names. These novels are far more literate than the usual porn, and Dave's were definitely readable. His porn titles for Ophelia also included JELLY ROLL, DEGREES OF PLEASURE, and A BEDFULL OF FLESH. DEGREES OF PLEASURE explored issues of academic freedom and the personal integrity of the creative artist, in addition to the sex. A BEDFULL OF FLESH is Dave's personal interpretation of the Sharon Tate murders, but since the publisher amended his manuscript he insisted that his name not be used, and it appeared in print as "David Martell". The book gives a thinly fictionalized and generally sympathetic picture of Charles Manson and his "Family", whom Dave believed to be innocent of the murder.

Other works appeared under other pseudonyms, and it may take a while to identify his entire literary output. This will be complicated by the fact that other David Masons write books; in particular there are a historian and a pop theologian of this name. (Not to mention the rock star, but he at least doesn't seem to be a very literary type.)

Dave's third wife was Katherine Maclean, herself an all too infrequently published writer of science fiction. Though they had parted company many years earlier, Katie visited him in San Francisco shortly before his death. They have a son, Chris, in his late teens. Dave also had a son by his second marriage.

Dave Mason met Donna Mathews at the 1967 Worldcon, and lived with her for several years, first in a cold-water flat on the Lower East Side and then on a houseboat in San Francisco Bay. I visited them frequently in the former location, for it was always enjoyable to kick ideas around with Dave, or to hear him narrate incidents from his past. Of course, you were under no obligation to believe all these tales; Dave was proud of his Welsh ancestry, and this people has always blurred the distinction between

fact and fiction, to the great enrichment of their national literature. Dave was the sort of person you could trust with your wife, but not with your girl or your whiskey.

I last saw him nearly a year ago, when he was briefly in New York to conduct some business with a publisher. He didn't look at all well, but then he never did; physical appearances were not anything he (or a succession of very attractive women) put much store on. He spoke lovingly of his San Francisco home, and rejoiced that he had left New York, whose 'vibes' he pronounced paranoid. He had a number of literary and other schemes in hand, including plans to get his wolf bitch bred if he could find an available male. (The wolf is on the books of the licensing bureau in San Francisco as a "Dog, mixed breed.")

Fans and readers of fantasy are the poorer for his passing.

Reprinted, with permission, from John Boardman's DAGON #78.

'There are some things which cannot be learned quickly, and time, which is all we have, must be paid heavily for their acquiring. They are the very simplest things, and because it takes a man's life to know them the little new that each man gets from life is very costly and the only heritage he has to leave.'

—DEATH IN THE AFTERNOON
by Ernest Hemingway

The problem is to decide what is the new and what is the old. Better write it all down, strip yourself, your friends, your loved ones and lay the pebbles of knowing and experience before the world, and let the world pick and decide what is of value.

"Fear of death increases in exact proportion to increase in wealth."

—Ernest Hemingway

Alienation is good for you.

THROUGH DARKEST AFRICA WITH PHIL & FARMER

Phil Farmer has the ability to look a reader straight in the eye, tongue in cheek, and outrageously pull that reader's leg out of true.

And here he is doing it again with THE ADVENTURE OF THE PEERLESS PEER, in which he brings back the retired Sherlock Holmes and chronicler Dr. Watson in service to His Majesty's government during the first World War.

There is an incredibly menacing secret formula, an evil German agent in possession of it, in Africa. Holmes' and Watson's duty—intercept that agent and secure that formula!

To effect this task, however, involves a hilarious & horrendous air trip in huge, lumbering WWI bombers piloted by insane young Americans. Poor Holmes, airsick all the way.

Once over Africa, there is a mad attack on a German dirigible by the psychotic pilot... I dare not mention further incident. You wouldn't believe me.

Tarzan (the peerless peer) figures prominently in the last half of the adventure, of course... A Tarzan you may not wish to acknowledge.

Phil weaves other well-known fictional characters and stories into his plot. He asserts these people and events actually existed. He makes you halfway believe him. He is in the process of reviving and making real almost all the well-known fiction adventurers from the pulp days, and from the 1800's. He is after all 'American Agent for the estates of Dr. Watson, Lord Greystoke, David Copperfield, Martin Eden, and Don Quixote.' To say nothing of Alan Quartermain and Doc Savage. I think G-8 and his Battle Aces are in there, too.... Who knows where Phil Farmer will strike next?

This short adventure is in hardcover, published by The Aspen Press, \$5.50, from P.O.B. 4119, Boulder, CO 80302.

"The parody is the last refuge of the frustrated writer. Parodies are what you write when you are associate

editor of the Harvard LAMPOON. The greater the work of literature, the easier the parody. The step up from writing parodies is writing on the wall above the urinal."

—Ernest Hemingway

LETTER FROM WILLIAM FULWILER

8-22-74

((Regarding the Interview with Stanislaw Lem in TAC #10...))

'Theodore Sturgeon's "Maturity" appeared in ASTOUNDING in 1947 and was reprinted in THE WORLDS OF THEODORE STURGEON (Ace, 1972, 95¢).

'I read the tale a few months ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. I think it is one of the best "superman" stories ever written. If Stanislaw Lem's analysis of the tale is a representative sample of his critical writings, I think he should stick to writing fiction.

'The protagonist of "Maturity" is Robin English, a superman with a glandular imbalance which results in permanent infantilism. Although brilliant, he acts on impulse, has no thought for tomorrow, and loses interest in any project he can't complete with little effort.

'After treatment he begins to mature rapidly. The first evidence of this maturation is that he begins to consider the consequences of his actions. This is illustrated in a scene in which, though tempted, he does not seduce a woman because he knows he would regret it later. She is in love with him and he is interested only in a night's entertainment, so knowing she would be hurt he fails to act. Before the treatment he would have bedded her simply because he was horny and she was handy.

'Later he encounters the woman again, and again he is tempted. He asks of she is a virgin and she replies that she is. Once again he reluctantly concludes that she could not cope with the situation without being hurt, and he abandons the idea.

-14-

'He does not, as Lem suggests, restrain himself "because he bows before the holiness of virginity." I don't see how anyone the least bit familiar with Sturgeon's fiction could believe such a thing.

'Lem suggests that it is absurd for Robin to ask the "common people" for their opinions on "maturity", since he is a "superman." But one should remember that Robin is a special case. Since the "common people" experienced the normal maturation process, which was denied to him, does it seem strange that he should seek their opinions on the subject?

'At the end of the tale Robin, having discontinued the treatments against the advice of his doctors, develops acromegaly, a bone disease caused by the malfunctioning of the pituitary gland. According to Lem, this illness is used "as a substitute for tragedy."

'This isn't so. Sturgeon introduces the disease simply to provide sufficient reason for the doctors to visit Robin for the final scene of the story. Robin dies soon after the visit of the doctors, but not due to the disease. He dies because he has achieved maturity—which happens to be the point of the story.

'A man is "mature" when he has achieved all of his goals: when he has created all he wishes to create and has explored all knowledge of interest to him.

'As Robin begins to mature he writes a bestselling novel, several popular songs, and a smash musical. He also patents a number of important inventions.

'Then, as he matures fully, he becomes cursed with "hyper-understanding," which causes him to quit working altogether. He finds that he can do anything he wants to do—and do it well—and what challenge is there to work if you know you will succeed? He commits suicide and leaves a note explaining that "Enough is maturity—"

((The trick is to set goals just a bit beyond YOUR immediate capabilities, not the capabilities of others. The

tragedy of Robin is that he became other-directed and altruistic. He was trapped in his humanity—unable to become an amoral "monster" (utterly selfish and able to continue living), and unable to endure life alone at his level as a compassionate person.))

that's better!

'The qualities that make for success are at times baffling. H. G. Hardy, the great English mathematician, used to delight to point out that high intelligence was the least important quality for success in most human situations. Judgement he regarded as having little to do with intelligence (a view that may have been fortified by his friendship with Bertrand Russell); but even judgement, he thought, was of far less significance than application, a capacity to take risk, and luck. No one can make the most of his talents without constant application, or without taking frequent risks. Of course, Hardy allowed the importance of sheer gift—after all, that was the world he operated in; whatever else they may be, mathematicians, like musicians and painters, are gifted men. Gifted men are rare, but success is not uncommon in any age.'

—J.H. Plumb, THE NEW YORK REVIEW,
May 30, 1974.

SUPERMAN AND THE LIVING IS QUEASY

I doubt that Charles Runyon is guilty of the title of his latest published sf novel, I, WEAPON. Perhaps somebody at Doubleday cast about in his/her mind and came up with it, the descendant of I, THE JURY and I, LIBERTINE.

Well, here am I, the critic, saying it's a dumb title, very much unworthy of the book.

But that's a minor complaint. This review is intended to turn you all onto the novel and get you to read it and realize when you see a Runyon sf novel on the racks—buy it. He's good. He delivers fine sf every time, and he's

one of a small number of sf writers whom I consider Superior.

And again, I will only give a bare-bones hint of the plot. It is a future history of mankind (space empire, space war) and how the alien Vim, ferocious and deadly, once devastate humanity's planets, leave us for dead, and then return to finish the job when humankind rises from the ashes.

To survive, our all-wise, all-knowing super computer tells the Jelk (current ruling variety of humans) to breed a weapon to fight the Vim.

Radioactive Earth has produced a stunning variety of deadly flora and fauna since the first Vim bombs fell. The secret project is begun....

As in SOULMATE, Runyon is unpredictable; true, you know generally where he's taking you, but the spectacle, the detail, the twists and turns are marvelous. His creations always seem credible, part of a whole, are interlocked with other creations, in a strange and wonderful/terrifying future ecology.

I will quibble directly to Charles about the ending, though; it seemed too easy, somehow; Raki had too many powers, too many superiorities. The final one-man defeat of the Vim/Wroqna galactic empire seemed like a better-left-unwritten postscript to the novel.

So, readers, if you can, don't read the sections of Raki's Log starting with chapter 14. Just accept that humankind defeat the Vim. (But of course you will read it all...because with all its incredibility, Raki's Log is absorbing and full of wonder. Runyon has a disciplined imagination and perspective that are awe-inspiring.

(Doubleday, \$5.95)

Paranoia is thinking up fillers for Richard Geis, knowing he won't use them.

—Gary Farber

LETTER FROM
HARRY WARNER, JR

December 19, 1974

'Nobody seems to have paid much attention to the potentialities involved in Roger Elwood's rigid morals. There is an enormous audience for science fiction which won't offend sexual or religious taboos, and most people in that audience must be reading very little science fiction now that the best writers are putting such advanced notions into their stories. If Elwood's Harlequin releases open up this new market, I confidently foresee at least eight or ten thousand people at the worldcon in 1976, and science fiction courses in the curricula of every Sunday school in the land.'

((Somehow the slogan, 'Science Fiction for Christ' turns me off.

((Of course there is an audience for 'nice' and 'safe' science fiction. But such stuff strikes me as a travesty of what science fiction is supposed to be. But of course, if there's a lot of money in it...and properly if it does make money I say fine, I'll tolerate it and admit it has a right to exist. Freedom of the press produces things everyone would like to see killed...but not everyone agrees about which things!

((And I tend to think that any science fiction, no matter how well sanitized and de-sexed and moralistic and non-political...will lead a certain percentage of minds to the "hard stuff". Science fiction by its very nature is mind-expanding and subversive. The most suicidal thing the churches could do would be to teach science fiction in Sunday schools. (And Elwood, come to think, may be sowing more potential anti-Christian thought and consequences than he would care to contemplate. Once you pry a mind open and give it a galactic and million-year perspective...))

'Let's take the writing of a novel, which corresponds to the building of anything else, the process being the selecting and assembling of words. In his EXPERIMENT IN CRITICISM C. S. Lewis suggests that every serious writer breathes into whatever story he tells all of the wisdom he has. A little reflection shows that this is not just a possibility: it is necessarily what happens. A novelist creates a character and puts her (say) in a critical circumstance. Now the novelist (if he is serious—

that is, not writing according to formula) loses a major part of his conscious control of the action. The character takes over and responds to the circumstances as she, her kind of person, has to respond to them. Events follow one another as they must. But all of this response and causal sequence is conditioned and determined by the way in which the novelist thinks the world works. It cannot be any other way if the novelist is serious. Thus his wisdom—or lack of it—is breathed into the story. Since each "part" of his wisdom is conditioned and shaped by all the other "parts", even a plot of narrow scope is going to reflect all of his wisdom.!

—W.D. Norwood, Jr.
THE JUDOKA

GOD'S TEETH: Exclaimed The Reviewer

There are a few quibbles I could quib, but on the whole, THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE by Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle, is indeed one of the VERY BEST traditional science fiction novels I've read in a decade.

It has a far-flung human empire in space, a space battle or two, contact and some intercourse with a really well-conceived alien species.... It has it all.

Above all, this novel has tension! Good old the-fate-of-mankind-hangs-in-the-balance (to say nothing of the fate of the aliens) tension. Very believable. And it has sense-of-wonder and humor and tragedy and intrigue and love interest....

The story starts well as Blaine, a nobleman serving in the space navy helps put down a revolt on an Empire planet. He meets a pretty young noblewoman anthropologist who has been imprisoned during the revolt, and... Well, I don't want to get into a detailed plot synopsis. The book is too long for that.

The story reaches for your throat and gets a tight grip when a space-probe from an alien species is discovered approaching New Scotland. The strange ship originated from the planetary system of the Mote, a sun close to

a red gas giant sun called Murchison's Eye...thirty-five light years away from New Scotland. Both Murchison's Eye and the Mote framed in it are isolated against the vast dust cloud of the Coal Sack.

From that point on, whenever the alien 'Moties' are involved, the novel has a death-grip on the reader. The only times the tension slacks and interest wanes is when the love interest or affairs of state are detailed.

The Moties are engaging, intriguing, and terrifying. They are a mutated, highly specialized species. Their Engineers are incredibly skilled—almost instinctively attuned to machines and the inherent optimum perfection of any device or artifact. The alien Mediators are supremely rational, skilled, persuasive. The Motie Warriors are terrifyingly well-bred killers and fighters. The Masters are supreme examples of robber baron and dictator, combined. And the Moties breed like flies.

The only thing that has kept them from conquering the galaxy is their uniquely isolated position—boxed by the Coal Sack, the red giant sun and 35 light years distance to the nearest habitable system. They cannot use the Crazy Eddie space-warp drive because the only hyper-space route from their area lies through or into the red giant sun...and they need the Langston Field which would shield them from the radiation and heat.

Besides, the Moties are trapped by the Cycles, the inexorable rhythm of rising civilization, technology, runaway breeding, wars, collapse...every thousand years.

But if they ever get out of their space trap—

Enter two Empire naval ships, one crowded with scientists come to learn, the other a battleship there to wipe out the companion ship if the visiting Moties take it over or learn the secrets of the drive or the protective field.

A taut situation. Full of real people and real aliens. Full of realistic, convincing detail on every level.

I recommend the book without hesitation. Well, the only qualm I have is

that Simon & Shuster have priced it at \$9.95. Even so, the book runs to more than 500 pages and is close to 200,000 words long.

And I must praise Larry and Jerry for not yielding to temptation and publishing this novel in sections, like a saga novel, to make more money. We are given it whole.

There are those who might complain that the space navy as given here is too much like our current navy in structure and nomenclature. Would midshipman as a name and and function survive to the year 3017 AD? Would an Empire similar to the Roman Empire and/or the British Empire be viable and logical in this far-future space scene? Would the official Church of 3017 AD be concerned with whether the aliens have souls? Would the people of 3017 AD use such expletives as "God's teeth!"?

Read the novel and decide for yourself. It's an excellent, complex, fascinating story.

'A permissive government is a government that leaves control to other sources. If people behave well under it, it is because they have been brought under effective ethical control or the control of things, or have been induced by educational or other agencies to behave in loyal, patriotic, and law-abiding ways. Only when the other forms of control are available is that government best which governs least. To the extent that government is defined by the power to punish, the literature of freedom has been valuable in promoting a shift to other measures, but in no sense has it freed people from government control.'

—B. F. Skinner, BEYOND
FREEDOM & DIGNITY

He's so bad a writer, he can't even write his way into a paper bag.

Q: What do you consider the raison d'être, the chief value of science fiction?

DAMON KNIGHT: Kicks and money.

—THE DOUBLE: BILL SYMPOSIUM

THE RAIN, A STRAIN, FALLS MAINLY IN THE BRAIN

The Portland Trailblazers have just beaten Golden State 107-106, on TV, and I am feeling benevolent. Therefore, I won't savage AN APOLOGY FOR RAIN by Jean Mark Gawron (Doubleday, \$4.95) any more than I have to. But it must be killed.

It is written in the literary mode, with obscurantism aforethought, sired by Kafka out of Jung, I guess, with maybe Beckett in the closet.

I will echo one of the major characters in Beckett's WAITING FOR GODOT: "Nothing is certain!" And that is true for this novel which tells, in a curiously frustrating, indirect way, of a young woman, Bonnie, who is ½-psi talented and who lives in Pennsylvania in a future time in a fragmented America ...in the midst of a maybe war which is directed by a strange general....

It's surrealistic sf is what it is and I say to hell with it. The reader wants to know who-what-when-where-why-how, and Gawron is pleased not to inform except once in a while, with a half-hint, a passing reference, a soft fact, a nebulous bit of inscrutable, oblique dialogue....

As the dust jacket observes, 'AN APOLOGY FOR RAIN is a bizarre and provocative fantasy which uses the parameters of science fiction to explore the moral and political myths of today.' Yeah. It certainly provoked me. My reaction can be boiled down to three words: "Shit—mythed again!"

Q: Have you ever had a failure?

Hemingway: You fail every day if you're not going good. When you first start writing you never fail. You think it's wonderful and you have a fine time. You think it's easy to write and you enjoy it very much, but you are thinking of yourself, not the reader. He does not enjoy it very much. Later, when you have learned to write for the reader, it is no longer easy to write. In fact, what you ultimately remember about anything you've written is how difficult it was to write it.

—PAPA HEMINGWAY
by A. E. Hotchner

LETTER FROM GEORGE WARREN

10-4-74

'Some unsolicited comments on recent "Alien Viewpoint", and other related statements on Style and on the Fate of Science Fiction:

'1. I am most curious: just who are these idealized, homogenized, cleaned-up heroes whose ubiquity you decry in science fiction? Retief? Nicholas van Rijn? Or are we perhaps shooting paper tigers? I am quite sure that most of the older writers' characters had to make poopoo on occasion, and that Dignity was not the distinguishing feature of the way they procreated. But is the delineation of character in any way enhanced by making a point of the fact? I had thought Mr. Bloom got that out of our systems back in 1922, and that with fifty-two years to get the air clear again, we could get back to writing stories. And, hopefully, not having to hold up the action while the antihero picks his nose and thinks despairing, and usually irrelevant, thoughts about the state of his elimination or his virility.'

((I guess I just like the common touch in characterization. I'm not in favor of describing pissing and shitting (poopoo for the squeamish) just to make the realism complete or to prove the character human, but if the manner of a character's elimination can show his personality sharply and quickly—"Harry stood away from the bowl and made a game of seeing how far his urine stream would reach."—then use it. Ah, but would that or similar choices for showing character be acceptable? If former President Johnson could haul his meat out while on his yacht and show it off, why can't Captain Kirk?))

'2. As for f—ing ...well, I have written enough hard sex (and so have you) to be thoroughly bored by it as a literary phenomenon. Like any other Good Thing, it is for doing, and not for writing about. However, if it seems right, write it. If it doesn't fit

your story—as, let's say, it doesn't fit most of the stories in the Asimov Canon—there seems little point in dragging it in by one leg, kicking and screaming. Save it for the places where it works. And I see little point in mixing markets just to get some editor off. Let's face it fellows, people are getting harder to shock. Maybe a little subtlety is in order.'

((So when did I advocate sex-for-sex's-sake in science fiction? Take your straw man away and bury it with the red herrings. The role of sex in a story is a matter of the writer's character—he makes the choice of story content, style, detail, character, market (consciously or unconsciously) and will write a given story the way he must. (Even the hackiest hack writer writes hackwork willingly—that is, elements in his character guide him to his role in life, his status...) So Asimov writes stories of a certain type, with certain elements, with certain limits. That's his story/writing style. It is sprung from the deepest deeps in him. And so too for Delany, and Heinlein, and you and me. A writer's fiction, overall, shows his character. That can be embarrassing, sometimes.))

'3. There is much talk of technique among the self-styled New Wave these days. I remember somebody who ought to know better using the phrase "the full range of modern fiction techniques" to describe the chosen palate of a prominent New Waver. Pooh. There are no new techniques. There is just the age-old conflict between Euphuism ("Look at me! Ain't I clever?") and Reporting (in which the writer gets the hell out of the way and lets the story do its thing).

((Bullseye!))

'4. Mainstream? What is all this Mainstream malarkey? People who use the phrase as loosely as it's used these days seldom know what the hell they're talking about. Who's mainstream? Philip Roth? Come on, now. Norman Mailer? Really? James Dickey? Well, son, ah know that area down around where that there book of his was set...and if J.D. can find me an honest -to-God quorum of them Gay Hillbilly S

and M Activists down there I will undertake to bake them in a pie and eat them, horns, tail, bib overalls and all. The scene was cheap, forced, faked, and phony, and it spoiled a no more than mediocre book for good and all. But the point is that the only requirement of what you could honestly call "mainstream" writing is that it lasts, and the jury ain't in yet.

'5. And nothing lasts without traditional story values. And of the things that have lasted, and that you're familiar with, how many of 'em are spoiled all to hell for you for rereading by their damned Euphuistic flourishes? The flourishes and the Fine Writing boil down to fads nearly every time, let's face it, and that's the part that dates. Consider how easy it is to read early Kipling, and most of GBS, and much of O. Henry (surprisingly), and most all of Mark Twain—and how hard it gets struggling your way through the pothooks and fancy squiggles of most of their contemporaries...

'6. Most of the Modern Techniques our friend so-and-so speaks of are not only old hat, they were tried, found wanting, and rightly discarded many years ago. A case in point is this damned tedious present-tense stuff. It was all used up when Thomas Wolfe used it in (I think) YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN. Try rereading THAT. It is guaranteed to set your teeth on edge. And the technique, as used by a lot of our contemporaries from Herbert Gold to HEROVIT'S WORLD, is guaranteed to date by the time the writer licks the stamp on his SASE.

'7. I, for one, will swallow all the technical experiment anyone wants to throw me—when it's hung on a good story. Vide ULYSSES. Or, for that matter, the Alfred Bester novels. Let's try a definition, though. In science fiction, the division we are talking about is between Content-Comes-First (which I, at least, will agree to call sf) and Form-Comes-First (which I will agree to call Sci-Fi).

((*shudder* Sci-Fi??? I would not wish 'Sci-Fi' upon even Brian Aldiss.))

'8. And let's not shit one another, good buddy, about there being a

class difference between the two. Your correspondent Malzberg is not log-rolling for better quality. He is, if the truth be known, doing a so-far unsuccessful mating dance with Academe. He wants a lecturing gig, and perhaps other academic sinecure-type goodies, and that requires wooing the man with the money, so he has forsaken the kind of literary values readers like (all they control is magazines, and that's a cheapo market these days, more's the pity) in order to take up the cudgel for the kind of literary values college profs like (now THERE'S a money market for you, if you can bust into it, with regular checks whether you work or not). The ideal, of course, is a nice country squire gig, where you can sit on your duff and play the gentleman and never, ever, have to stoop to that vulgar writing business again ... but if you can't land that, a college gig will do. And this is the Be-All and the End-All of your correspondent's (and many another contemporary writer's Old Switcheroo from sf to Sci-Fi. And that's OKAY, really. I just object to the mislabeling that goes on during this sea change. Sure, you can sell me a good knuckleballer; just don't try to tell me he's Bobby Feller.'

((See my editorial on "Compulsion" in "Alien Thoughts" this issue.

((But at this point let me say that you probably do Barry Malzberg an injustice re his motivations...unless you have personal knowledge of his literary intent, and are not just generalizing and Diatribing. Jerry Pournelle would say you're doing a Panshin, in a way. I'm guilty of that sin, too, of course. It's so much FUN!))

((The point of this comment is that I've had extensive and cordial correspondence with Barry about writing and the state of sf, and while we do disagree violently on some things, I hold him in great esteem and do not think his literary style is due to a calculated attempt to please the academic powers-that-be for academic gain. Put succinctly, Barry doesn't suck.))

'9. Unthinkable thoughts about unthinkable thoughts: it appears you are mildly unsettled at the thought of people

reading sf for "transliterary" reasons. Please name me a "literary" reason for reading ANYTHING. Just one. I racked my brain for quite a while last night over that one, and I'm stumped.'

((Point well made. But I think Barry meant that most people read for entertainment and/or information reasons, while those who read "subliterary" porno of sf (Grade Z quality) read for obsessive/compulsive reasons and for such people writing quality is beside the point. Of course, such people differ from other, more "normal" readers only in degree.

((By the way, for puzzled readers, George and I are discussing some of the content of my column, "The Alien Viewpoint", in the August, '74 IF.))

'I have answered nine questions, and that is enough, as Father William never quite got around to saying. Keep up the good work, and don't let us well-wishers make you self-conscious. I am not quite sure whether the personalzine is a new art form or whether it is just another limb on the old Addison and Steele tree, but it makes damned good reading in the right hands.'

((Yuuh. I'm lefthanded.))

DIVIDED, WE STAND; UNITED, WE FALL.

FIFTEEN FACES OF SCIENCE FICTION

I was pleasantly surprised by the book. Reginald Bretnor, especially, was a joy, for his incisive and penetrating insights into the world of sf and fantasy, and for his knowledge and readable writing.

Because you've got to admit a book with the title SCIENCE FICTION—Today, and Tomorrow (subtitled: A Discursive Symposium) has got to give off stuffy-reading vibes.

The book is divided into three sections: Science Fiction Today with chapters by Ben Bova, Frederik Pohl, and George Zebrowski; Science Fiction, Science, and Modern Man with chapters by Frank Herbert, Theodore Sturgeon, Alan Nourse, Thomas M. Scortia, and Reginald

Bretnor; and The Art and Science of Science Fiction with chapters by James Gunn, Alexei and Cory Panshin, Poul Anderson, Hal Clement, Anne McCaffrey, Gordon R. Dickson, and Jack Williamson.

The only chapter I found to be essentially blah-blah was that by Ben Bova. One of the most interesting for me was that by Frederik Pohl: "The Publishing of Science Fiction."

George Zebrowski's "Science Fiction and the Visual Media" was also of great value.

Ah, but it was Reginald Bretnor's dominating chapter, "Science Fiction in the Age of Space" which contained in my view an astonishing amount of truth and wisdom; he pins the world today to the mounting board and explains lucidly, coherently, convincingly. His sub-section, "Science Fiction and the Counter-Culture" is especially good. Reading it, you say to yourself, "Yeah, that's right!" Bretnor's perspective is clean and true. (I agree with him.) Bretnor shows unending, clear-eyed vision and knowledge in his other sub-chapters. His "Science Fiction and the Working Writer" is a nuts and bolts view of the economics of writing sf for a living, and is required reading for any person with dreams of entering the field. Bretnor steals the book away from most of the big name pros who contributed.

I hope every library in the world has the sense to buy this book. (Harper & Row, \$8.95)

Paranoia is having to keep your TV set on all the time because the people in the box will talk about you if you don't force them to stick to their scripts.

—adapted from G. Farber

LETTER FROM
FREDRIC WERTHAM, M.D.

9-20-74

'You ask me to comment on the article "Reading Heinlein Subjectively" by Alexei and Cory Panshin. It is very interesting. I certainly agree with your comment that it will provoke a lot of speculations and questions. I also

agree with you that your summation, namely, the Self as Hero, the Other as the goal or the Good, and the Demonic as the Villain, the Problem, could be seen as a basic structure of many stories.

'Your question as to whether a writer reveals his actual personality by his fiction and the way he deals with the Panshin triad is a difficult one. One can only draw tentative conclusions with many qualifications, for the relationship is not a mechanical one. I doubt whether from all the fiction of H. G. Wells and his ways of dealing with the triad one could draw valid conclusions about his personality. But from some of his early and not so well-known non-fiction writings, like the piece "Scepticism of the Instrument" one can get good clues as to his way of thinking.

'There are different possibilities for applying psychology to a work of literature. One can analyze one single work alone or one can take up an author's whole output of writings. In addition one can also relate the fiction to the author's personality, chiefly deduced or inferred from the writings themselves. Or one can analyze a fictional hero, like Hamlet or Orestes and relate it to a real life case study, as I have done in my book DARK LEGEND, A Study of Murder.

'Most valid would be an analysis of fiction that goes hand in hand with an actual analysis of the author himself in person. Freud attempted to do that in the first psychoanalytic study he ever did of a work of fiction, the fantasy-science fiction novel GRADIVA by William Jensen. He asked the author to collaborate with him, but Jensen refused. I was more fortunate in an analysis of Richard Wright's novel NATIVE SON. The author worked with me and gave me permission to publish the analysis of one episode which showed that there were elements in the story directly derived from his own experiences, a fact of which he had not been consciously aware. ("An Unconscious Determinant in NATIVE SON".)

'It is not easy to equate the Panshins' terminology with current scientific concepts of psychology or psycho-

pathology. For instance, "intuition" which is the cornerstone of their scheme, is difficult to define. The French philosopher Henri Bergson tried it, but not very successfully. After all, the only way we can know what intuition is, is—by intuition. What the Panshins have achieved is not a dry scientific analysis but a stimulating artistic literary essay.

'To paint a portrait of an author like Robert Heinlein from his publications and some biographical fragments is a hazardous undertaking. It reminds me of the story of the young man who commissioned a painter to do a portrait of his dead father. He had no photographs of his father so the painter asked him to describe how he looked. When the portrait was finished the young man inspected it carefully and then exclaimed: "Father, how you've changed!"

'I think that "Reading Heinlein Subjectively" could be the basis for some very good discussions, a meeting-place for readers, critics, writers, psychologists. Wouldn't it be interesting to know what Heinlein thinks of it?

((It would be, but I doubt if Mr. Heinlein will provide us with his opinion.))

'It was (Captain) Cook's death that lifted him to heroic status, and that was the result not of his virtues but of his defects. At times Cook's patience, so endlessly seeming, snapped. Not given to flogging, he could make a sudden exception: at times he would fly into tantrums on the quarter deck. No explorer took the Polynesians' propensity to steal with greater calm and forbearance, but on Tonga the theft of a goat enraged him so much that he made a punitive drive across the island, tearing down huts and smashing canoes. And so it was in Hawaii—the theft of a cutter provoked the greatest rage of his career, in which he determined to punish dramatically, if need be with ball and shot. Alas, Cook was overwhelmed, clubbed to death, cut up in pieces, and distributed to the great chiefs. All that was recovered were most of the bones and the hands. Clever, Cook's second-in-command, behaved with the self-control that his captain

might have envied—no recriminations, no punitive killings. But there can be no doubt that Cook's dramatic end put the final seal of success on Cook's career.'

—J.H. Plumb, THE NEW YORK REVIEW,
May 30, 1974.

"YOU CAN'T SAY THAT!"

THE WANDERING REVIEW

By Dick Lupoff

Look, I don't write for the fan press much anymore. I used to a lot, and it was great fun, but lately those proverbial professional obligations are too heavy. I should be working right now on a novel I owe George Ernsberger and if he gets mad and says "What the hell are you doing writing for fanzines of all things when you owe me a book and the deadline was yesterday?" I won't have much to say for myself.

Nonetheless, I've been reviewing books for TAC's co-Hugo-winner ALGOL for eleven years now, and Andy Porter is my good friend and I don't want to walk out on him. And besides I get lots of really nice books free that way, plus a paycheck makes the work "professional" at least on a token level.

So I caught up on my reading and sat down and did my fall reviews a while back. A dozen or so books—the new Le Guin, Clarke, Aldiss, Moorcock and so on—and a book called THE SECOND EXPERIMENT by J.O. Jeppson. I hadn't asked Andy for that book, had never in fact heard of it or of its author. But as I worked my way down through the pile, I finally came to THE SECOND EXPERIMENT, and I settled myself in my favorite recliner in hopes of a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Well, I'll tell you, THE SECOND EXPERIMENT was a major disappointment. In fact, it is a dreadful book. Well, in actual fact it's so bad that I gave up on it part way through. And this is something that I almost never do. Basically I'm a compulsive personality and once I start reading a book I usually plough through every last word of it. If it's very bad or very dull I'll sometimes skim. But I almost never quit

flat.

I did on THE SECOND EXPERIMENT.

And on the basis of what I had read—and, you will note, scrupulously indicating what I had not read—I wrote the following review:

++

THE SECOND EXPERIMENT by J.O. Jeppson.
240 pp, \$6.95. Houghton Mifflin, 1974.

Listen, I have to admit one thing about THE SECOND EXPERIMENT: pages 54 through 240 may be utterly brilliant. That's because I gave up after reading the first 53 pages. I mean, frankly, I would never have got that far—I'd never have got past page 1 except I kept thinking, there has to be some reason for this book, there has to be some justification for its publication.

I mean, gang, \$6.95? Houghton Mifflin? That's a big, prestige publisher, a top rank house that does very little science fiction, and might be expected to go for the best when they do put out an SF book.

What the hell? I wouldn't expect THE SECOND EXPERIMENT of an old Ace Double, a DAW potboiler, Powell Sci-Fi. What the hell!

Anyway, this thing is apparently about a race of intelligent dinosaurs who are planning some sort of desperation trip from one planet to another, very distant, one. They decide to abandon one of their number—a retarded adolescent female—but her faithful telepathic robot steals a spaceship and runs away with her to another world which coyly happens to be...happens to be...oh Jesus help me...

...the third planet in a system of nine circling a G-type star...

...oh Christ...

...where they capture a male tyrannosaurus rex, which the robot and the intelligent dinosaur try to domesticate. But they can't, so they take some cell samples and mutate them and try to breed a mate for the heroine.

Oh, and I forgot to tell you that this is all jumbled up with some nasty ol' meanies from another planet who want to do something horrid to our heroine and her robot. Oh, and there's

-20-

some stuff in the book about hyperspace, and there's something else about black holes.

Phew.

Look, maybe someday J. O. Jeppson will learn to write professional quality prose. With much practice and many rejection slips along the way. So I'm not exactly blaming Jeppson for this travesty. What I'd like to know is, who the hell at Houghton Mifflin bought this thing?

Because I have a few manuscripts kicking around, stuff that I wrote back in the 1950s when I was a little teenage science fiction fan trying to learn how to be a writer. No editor then would touch the stuff, and in later years I realized that even the printed rejection slips I got from PLANET STORIES, no less the kind, helpful advice that Tony Boucher sent from F&SF—were in fact more generous than my stuff deserved.

Listen, Ray Bradbury is said to have written a hundred stories before he sold his first one, and to have written 52 of which he sold only three in a single year early in his career. I don't know who the editor at Houghton Mifflin is, or what kind of hex sign J. O. Jeppson has over that editor, but I sure as hell wish Jeppson would tell me the secret.

Anybody who could sell THE SECOND EXPERIMENT—bad prose, fumbled viewpoints, jumbled plot, childish poor characterization—anybody who could not only sell this mess but sell it to a first class publisher—must have a secret that the rest of us poor mortals struggling away to earn a living writing books would pay dearly to learn.

++

A few days after I'd mailed my fall column to ALGOL the mailman brought me an envelope from Andy Porter. There was a check, there was my review of THE SECOND EXPERIMENT, and there was a note. It read:

'Dear Dick:

'I've paid for this, but am returning it. Use it as you will (LOCUS?). The punchline to this entire review can be stated in the

following sentence, which Will Explain All...

"Janet O. Jeppson is the wife of Isaac Asimov.

'Ah! All becomes clear. Lissen, Asimov has CLOUT. With someone at Houghton Mifflin, it's pretty obvious.

'If LOCUS or anyone else can use this, send it off with my blessings!

Well, to be perfectly honest with you I knew—or at least suspected—that J.O. Jeppson was married to Isaac Asimov, when I wrote the review. I was being ingenuous, for literary effect. Maybe that is less than 100% honest. Mea culpa.

But frankly I doubt that THE SECOND EXPERIMENT would ever have got past a first reader, no less got published, if it had come into Houghton-Mifflin blind. And also frankly I consider this favoritism an affront. An affront to every legitimate professional in this field. An affront to every writer who ever suffered years of rejection slips, who finally made it into the penny and two-penny markets (as Isaac Asimov did), who suffered paying his dues by writing the back halves of Ace Doubles or Lancer Originals for a slim advance now and no royalties later. Yeah, like me.

Now I understand that Fawcett has paid a moderately fat sum for the paperback rights to THE SECOND EXPERIMENT. I wonder what they'd have done if this book were written by John Jones.

Not to dwell on the matter, I promptly followed Andy Porter's advice and phones Charlie and Dena Brown of LOCUS. I didn't bug the call, but as nearly as I can reconstruct it, it went like this:

DENA: Hi, Dick, what's up?

DICK: Oh, I was wondering if you'd like a book review for LOCUS.

DENA: Sure, what book do you want to review?

DICK: THE SECOND EXPERIMENT by J.O. Jeppson.

DENA: Oh, fine, we'd really like a review of that book. What did you think of it, by the way?

DICK: I think it's dreadful. I

think it should never have been published, and if the John Jones test had been applied I think it never would have been.

DENA: Uh, well, uh—on second thought I'm not so sure that we want that review for LOCUS.

CHARLIE (coming on extension phone): No, we definitely don't want that review. We almost never publish killer reviews.

DENA: Especially of friends. You know, Janet and Isaac—

CHARLIE: No, we almost never—

DICK: Okay, I get the message, maybe I'll try THE ALIEN CRITIC

CHARLIE: Yes, that might be a good idea—

So I sent a brief note to Dick Geis and he wrote back, god bless him, and he said "No problem; send the whole bit..." and he said "Self-censorship is the worst kind." And harking back to my long-ago experience as the editor of a house organ for one of the nation's great industrial enterprises, I have to agree with that.

I mentioned this whole sequence to my friend and sometimes collaborator, Michael Kurland. This was before Geis said he'd take the piece. And Kurland said "Maybe you ought to write Asimov. He probably doesn't know anything about this suppression, and probably would be horrified if he did." I hope that's right too.

Because you see there's a terrible danger here. Everybody is all of a sudden dancing around this book, afraid to speak honestly about it or to speak about it at all, and I can only think that if Lin Carter or Phil Dick or Avram Davidson or Alan Dean Foster had written it, they'd be jumping on with both feet.

I even think if Isaac Asimov had written it, they'd be jumping on with both feet.

But Isaac's wife wrote it, and for some reason nobody has the courage to say that it's a dreadful, dreadful book. We get the silent treatment from ALGOL and LOCUS, two of the most prestigious

and most widely-circulated journals of the science fiction field. Among the prozines, about as close to an honest review as appears is Lester del Rey's in IF, and if you'll read Lester's review carefully you'll see him bending over backward to be kind and generous to the book.

Why?

Because he's an old friend of Isaac's? Because he knows and likes Janet? I would not suggest anything more sinister than that—but that's too much already. If Lester had been reviewing a book by a stranger he wouldn't have done that.

Now this here guy Geis, I figured maybe I could get away from the silent treatment by sending my twice-rejected review to him for TAC. But Geis is a tough editor, and he says, All right, I'll run your review but not on the basis of 53 pages. You gotta read the whole book. Then you can review the book.

So, grumbling, I returned to my favorite recliner. And I read the rest of THE SECOND EXPERIMENT, and I'll concede that it does have a few brief sections that I found to be tolerable reading. Here and there J.O. Jeppson approaches the worse interludes of Doc Smith's THE GALAXY PRIMES (his worst book).

THE SECOND EXPERIMENT very simply is a dreadful book, and I maintain my belief that it would never have been published—certainly not by a "prestige" house like Houghton Mifflin—if not for favoritism.

And that's bad for science fiction, friends.

I had a chat with Bob Silverberg the other day. We had a piece of business to transact, and we transacted it, and then Bob waxed philosophical and he was filled with weltzmerz over the state of the field. Too much junk coming out, too-little decent-quality work, too many editors deliberately seeking the shallow and the banal.

After decades in the ghetto, science fiction has, these past few years, begun to achieve some degree of respectability, to be taught on college campus—

es, to be reviewed in respectable papers, to be stocked in libraries. We can point with pride to a book like Ursula LeGuin's THE DISPOSSESSED. But when a book like THE SECOND EXPERIMENT comes along, issued by a first-line publisher in a fancy edition, people are going to look at that wooden prose, that infantile characterization, that incoherent plotting, and they're going to say "So this is science fiction? Okay!"

Bad enough such things happen, but why the conspiracy of silence among those of us who should be shouting down the skies to protest such an event?

Listen here: I do not know Janet Jeppson Asimov. I have never met the woman but I am willing to assume, as I am about anyone I don't know, that she is a decent and honorable person.

Isaac I have met, a fair number of times over the years. I would not say that we're pals—we've met at conventions, how do you do, pleased to meet you kind of stuff. He handed me my Hugo in Washington a dozen years ago. We exchanged a couple of letters one time when I was editing for Canaveral Press. (I wanted a book from Isaac, he replied in friendly manner that he would like to oblige but was fully obligated elsewhere: end of exchange.) Isaac Asimov, to the best of my belief, is a decent and honorable person.

What would Isaac do to any editor who ran this review? Would he use his CLOUT to make Ed Ferman fire Andy Porter as assistant editor of F&SF? Would he cut Charlie Brown dead in the lobby of the headquarters hotel of the next science fiction convention? I doubt it. I doubt it very much.

(Ironically, Andy Porter resigned as assistant editor of F&SF on his own initiative. How many years can one man read that slushpile month after month and retain his sanity?)

But the point is this: I think Isaac is too decent a man to want to suppress this review or to retaliate in anyway against the editor who runs it—or against me for writing it. I might be wrong, but then if I am I'll just have to live with that, because any time I can't review a book honestly, I just won't review that book at all. (This

has happened, by the way, but let it be.)

I don't know if this kind of incident is common or not; I haven't come across it before at any rate. So, since it's new to me, I'm saying Hey, let's face it down right now, before it spreads any farther, before it goes any longer, before it happens again. It's censorship, nothing less, and we'd better howl to the heavens when censorship rears its ugly head, because if it isn't stopped at once it will become more and more firmly entrenched. The number of sacred cows (I'm sorry, that was not intended as a sexist remark) will increase. It is a very bad, a very dangerous precedent.

REG COMMENT: When Rich Lupoff sent me his query about the above review of THE SECOND EXPERIMENT I had only a few days before started to read the book for review.

I got to page 57 before groaning my last groan and hurtling the book from me in disgust.

After I asked Rich to finish the book I felt duty-bound myself to also read it to the end. Our opinions of its worth are nearly identical. It is a lousy sf novel; excessively juvenile, embarrassing, sloppy, incredible. Only a very uncritical 12-year-old could find it entertaining.

As for Rich's other comments...I don't think 'conspiracy' is an accurate word to use in re the ALGOL-LOCUS editorial decisions... And 'favoritism' at Houghton Mifflin may be too strong. More likely the Asimov name got Mrs. Asimov's novel a special reading, but the decision-to-publish is made by more than one editor...and I can only conclude that the editors at Houghton Mifflin are totally cynical and/or ignorant about science fiction.

Favoritism and self-censorship does appear to exist to a degree (on this evidence) in Andy Porter and the Browns. That is their problem, now.

Fear of death increases in exact proportion to increase in guilt.

LETTER FROM BOB SHAW

October, 1974

'Thanks very much for the kind comments about some of my work in the last few months. Yours is also the first fanzine to make a comment about ORBITS-VILLE that I expect others to make, namely that the concept was influenced by RINGWORLD. This is a natural conclusion ^{for} anybody working with available evidence, but it wasn't quite like that. I got the idea about four years ago, discussed it with Jim White, decided it was something pretty novel and got down to making a book out of it. I had just finished the first chapter when a fanzine came in with a review of Larry's book in it, and I realized at once that there were great similarities in the backgrounds. Gulping a little with sadness, I put my story on the shelf for a couple of years to let RINGWORLD have its day. It was in my mind to drop the idea altogether at one stage but Fred Pohl advised me to finish it, and eventually I did. It would have been nice for me if I had got in first with a big-is-beautiful book, but that's the sort of thing that happens in the writing game. The storylines in the two books are a lot different, anyway—the only point of similarity I can see is the long trek on rather inadequate transport, which seems almost obligatory if one is to make use of the hugeness bit. (I take your point about the slang thing in the title, although I used "ville" mainly for its connotations of homely mid-Western acres.)'

((Which all goes to show that reviewers and critics run Great Risks in assuming unverified assumptions about idea derivations and titles... I thank you for the corrections and background.))

I wouldn't mind dying—it's that business of having to stay dead that scares the shit out of me.

LETTER FROM STAN BURNS

8-12-74

'It comes to mind I never let you know how the VERTEX thing came out. It took me five months and four letters

but I finally got paid for the foto. It seems that Pfeil wrote me two letters that I never received, thanks to the local Post Awful, and thought I was playing games with his head too. Now that I know what happened, I must say it isn't that surprising. One of my recent ANALOGs was nearly torn in half when I received it, and the last issue of ALGOL had all the pages stuck together because someone in the dark had spilled something all over it. They've got a lot of gall raising rates when their service is in such shitty shape.'

((I read a squib in the paper a few weeks ago that said the Postal Service was thinking of asking for another 2¢ raise in first class rates—to 12¢—in the spring of this year, but I suspect that the recession will delay that plan for at least a year.))

LETTER FROM PEARL

October 1, 1974

'I remember ending my last letter with the statement, "My life is perfect," or something equally foolhardy. Needless to say, it ain't true anymore and possibly never was except in my fevered imagination. It seemed so that day, however.

'But since that day.....

'I've gained those five pounds back; Tofu, after the first orgy of newness, couldn't hold the attention of this ravening appetite of mine. Last Saturday, I swallowed an entire 20 oz. Sara Lee Cheese Cake as a light snack and had no trouble at all getting it down. Although I am no longer able to tolerate large quantities of food in one way (I'm usually sick to my stomach for a couple of days after overindulging), it seems to be easier for me to ingest in volume that it was in those years when I ate like a human being.

'I sit here sadly contemplating my navel which will probably rise to eye level soon and then I won't even have to bend my neck which, by that time, will probably be encased in rolls of fat anyhow. Oh, I know it's only 5 pounds but Good God, Dick, I've got to lose 10 pounds before Christmas so I'll be able to make myself sick on See's

Candy, nut cakes, oily cheeses and all those other rich items that secretary/bookkeepers are gifted with during the holidays. And fat must be fluffy/spongy because I can feel the difference in my boobs, hips and ass. Feels pretty good as a matter of fact—better with the extra weight—but I must lose. Now, if I could only convince my mouth.

'What a way to live! It's ungraceful: I lumber about my apartment like a scavenging bear, snorting with passion as I veer to avoid the refrigerator. It's chaotic: I lunge suddenly into the streets to escape the Pita Bread that lounges alluringly in my freezer and is meant ONLY for Saturday.

'It's dangerous: I walk on Sunset Blvd. which is certainly heavier in spook count but is blessedly devoid of supermarkets.

'And if all this weren't enough, there's Gene——

'He finally fell in love with me. Sure he's been in love with me these past eight years but he finally faced up to it, acknowledged it to himself, openly confessed it, said it out loud. So the first thing that happened after this great revelation was that he couldn't get an erection. It took me 2½ hours to get him hard and in order to accomplish it I had to turn my back on him. Said I to myself, "If this is love, who needs it?" I went into a deep depression for a week thinking I had lost the only exquisite sensual pleasure left in this food-barren, movie-loathing, musically-indifferent, middle-aged existence of mine and thoughts of having to find someone else deepened my depression. You and I know the terrible odds out there for those of us who are "Different" and Gene has already assured me that any strange gentleman confronted with the style of love-making I have developed over the past year, would believe himself to be involved with some savage, meat-eating animal and would scramble away, gibbering with terror. (I had suspected as much.)

'The week passed and with it, my depression...for he came back as potent as ever with an extra, added appreciation of me and it which, I suppose, is attributable to love. A short period

of bliss and then the demanding Jewess in me demanded to know why, if he's so much in love with me, isn't our relationship any different than before? WHY do I only see him once or twice a week? WHERE are my flowers? WHY isn't he on the phone daily (or even weekly) trying to cheer my lonely hours? WHO the fuck does he think he is, treating me this way?

'Still no answers and fortunately, he left for Massachusetts today for two weeks on the Mohawk Trail (whatever that is) so I won't have to be angry until he gets back in town. Meanwhile, I've decided to get married so I will spend the time looking for a possible husband/roommate at Singles Bars, Singles Parties, down elevator shafts and in abandoned trailers—in short, EVERYWHERE.

'I'm tired, Dick. And Gene is as unwilling to commit himself to total involvement with me as you were with C—. How sad for all of us.'

((Don't give up, Pearl. My diet is paying off. I snorted with delight today as the scale said (in approving tones) 175. My goal is 165.

((Always keep the faith: somewhere there is a person faunching for exactly what and who you are, and who is exactly who/what YOU want. Trouble is, you seem to want a man made of Sara Lee Cheese Cake....))

"MASTER! THAT WOMAN IS LOOSE IN THE MAGAZINE AGAIN!"

"SO? WHAT HARM CAN SHE DO?"

Three Reviews

By Lynne Holdom

GIVE WARNING TO THE WORLD by John Brunner. DAW U01122, 95¢.

Lately, John Brunner has specialized in saving the world through a miracle (THE STONE THAT NEVER CAME DOWN) or just letting it go to pot (TOTAL ECLIPSE, THE SHEEP LOOK UP). It's my guess that John Brunner has just about given up on people and is very depressed about the state of the world... (from

watching the evening news too often?).

In contrast, this updating and retitling of an old Ace double novel (then ECHO IN THE SKULL) shows a refreshing confidence in people. It's not as naive as the 1959 version, and the additional material (the book is one-third longer now) adds to the substance, is not padding.

The police have staked out the Rowall's sleazy boardinghouse on Mamble Road. They know the place is a front for prostitution. But—it seems all the boarders and Mrs. Rowall's customers disappear two weeks after having been seen last by the Rowalls—why? The only tenant who has been with the Rowalls any length of time, Mrs. Ransey, is old, arthritic, and lives by foraging from garbage cans. The other two tenants are Clyde West, a Jamaican out-of-work actor, and Sally Ercott, an amnesiac who gets frightful visions and has no interest in her personal hygiene or existence. In order to quiet her nightly ravings, the Rowalls have called in Dr. Argyle, who almost lost his license to practice because of dispensing illegal drugs. Despite the "sedatives" Sally rushes naked from the house and ends in the car of Nick Jenkins, an eccentric inventor. The Rowalls soon convince him that Sally is freaked out on drugs.

However, when Nick and Clyde get together and compare notes (they belong to the same jazz club) they decide to get her out of the Rowalls' clutches. Later Nick becomes convinced that Sally's visions are of life on other worlds. But why does she see them? Also, a doctor friend of Nick states that Sally is not on drugs and is in reasonably good health considering her neglect of herself. By piecing together Sally's visions, Nick becomes convinced Earth is in danger. This view is re-enforced when Sally is abducted. So Nick, Clyde, and Tom (Nick's doctor friend) rush off to Mamble Road, and...

Well, read the book and find out. My one gripe is the too-many lectures at the end, as if everyone had to explain to everyone else what the crisis was about.

If you can get a copy of the original, ECHO IN THE SKULL, it will teach

you more about the differences between 1959 and 1974 than a dozen sociology books: In ECHO IN THE SKULL Sally is a suspected alcoholic. Clyde West is an Australian rather than a Jamaican. Comparing details of writing and plotting might also be instructive.

GIVE WARNING TO THE WORLD is a good, if rather wordy, alien menace story.

#

THE MOUNTAINS OF THE SUN by Christian Leourier. Berkley 425-02570, 95¢.

STARMASTER'S GAMBIT by Gerard Klein DAW UQ1068, 95¢.

There is a school of thought that considers European SF more serious and mature than "frivolous" British-American SF. (It ignores Perry Rhodan.) Therefore I was quite anxious to read these two French SF novels to see if the argument had merit. What I found, in sum, were two well-written novels of familiar SF themes. Nothing earthshaking.

THE MOUNTAINS OF THE SUN is set 350 years after a disaster has sent tidal waves across the lowlands and radiation due to a loss of Earth's magnetic field has scorched most of the rest of the planet. The only survivors live in isolated mountain valleys.

However, Earth had established a colony on Mars which has now enough resources to colonize Earth. The newcomers are to try to contact the "regressives" and lead them back to civilization.

Cal alone of his tribe has crossed the mountains of the sun and come back again. He knows that the land outside is not burning as all the legends say but is fertile and green; but there are strange bear-hunting tribesmen who ride strange animals. Cal knows it is only a matter of time until they come into his valley. After blackmailing the chief and capturing one of the bear people, Cal gets permission to lead the tribe out of the valley. They finally come to the city of Briancon where they meet the Martian colonists.

THE MOUNTAINS OF THE SUN is a much better than average handling of a famil-

iar theme. The viewpoint hops from Cal to the Martian colonists to the bear-killing Mongol-like people. (One nit: would the mountaineers really have forgotten Christianity so completely in 350 years? They might be the people who would hold on to their religion. There is also a little too much speech-making, especially towards the end.)

*

STARMASTER'S GAMBIT is, according to the cover blurb, the book that established Gerard Klein's reputation. Personally, I think it better than his OVERLORDS OF WAR, the only other book of his I've read. In form, STARMASTER'S GAMBIT begins as a standard space-opera puzzle.

At the edge of explored space, beyond the dead "accursed" worlds, lie planets with giant fortresses from which no one has safely returned (except the skeleton crew left on the explorers' ships. But one artifact has been found—a chessboard...or what looks like a chessboard. The Puritan planets struggling against the central government at Betelgeuse enlist the aid of Jerg Algan, a shanghaied Earthborn spaceman, by giving him the chessboard and asking him to talk to the survivor of one of the expeditions.

Klein plays fair with his readers by answering all the questions. He also manages to convey a sense of the immensity of space: Example—our galaxy is divided into 360 sectors and Man has explored four. The alien men come from sector twelve. Also, he has a Pascalian view of space, rather than that of the average writer of space-opera.

All in all I would suggest readers get both of these novels. Leourier and Klein look at familiar SF themes from a slightly different angle.

Q: When a political speechmaker screws the country, does that count as popularizing oral sex?

—Dick Eney

A: Only if he has been blowing his own horn.

—REG

LETTER FROM BOB BLOCH

Dec. 8, 1974

'The 11th issue arrived, and as usual intrigued me. And this time you have also rendered me a valuable service. Your description of poor Conrad's situation made me realize for the first time how dangerous it can be to have anything to do with alien women—particularly those affected with a condition known in medical circles as "deep-space throat." Henceforth I am terminating all my contacts with alien females unless they can provide me with a certificate of tonsillectomy.'

((You forgot to mention a side-effect of deep-space throat: a short-term time-warp is involved—you can't go until you've come.))

LETTER FROM
BARRY N. MALZBERG

December 2, 1974

'The Davidson interview (or self interview) is pointed and very painful. I certainly consider him to be along with John Cheever, Jean Stafford, Flannery O'Connor, Stanley Elkin, one of the modern American masters of the short-story and what the interview stirs then is a sense of outrage. If it is any consolation to Avram—it would not be to me—I would suggest to him that it isn't s-f but fiction which treats its practitioners, almost all of them, so brutally and what he has undergone is hardly restricted to our field. I do think he should fulfill his extant contracts or return the money, however.'

((Modern publishing is purely capitalist in nature...and so to condemn fiction (publishers) is to condemn capitalism...which leads to condemning the brutality of part of human nature. The maze always leads to the beginning of the maze. Only death releases us. We can only hope that death is the end.

((Of course, there are those of us who enjoy the maze.))

'Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other!'

—Benjamin Franklin

LETTER FROM MIKE GLICKSOHN

December 8, 1974

'I've only met Avram Davidson twice, and those times were very short, very casual interludes at conventions, but you cannot meet this man without being struck by his innate charm, his wit, his erudition, and his good humour. You cannot read his books without realizing that here is an extremely well-educated man who writes with grace and with humour and with style. So it was kinda depressing to read this interview with him in TAC #11 and to realize how poorly he has been dealt with and how even more poorly he has reacted to those dealings. I've heard that much of Avram's trouble has been of his own making, in that he has failed to live up to contracts that he has been given. I don't know if this is true or not, but it might explain at least a part of the seemingly shabby treatment he's received from agents. But the worst part of the whole affair is to see someone for whom I've great respect and admiration reduced to begging for handouts in a fanzine, even if that fanzine is as widely read as TAC. It's like finding Willy Mays pleading for odd jobs on the local supermarket bulletin board. Such things shouldn't be happening. It makes you realize that just because you admire a man doesn't mean he admires himself. I just hope Avram is over the feelings he expressed in this interview: his talents as a writer shouldn't be wasted on his own eulogy.'

LETTER FROM KIM GIBBS

December 8, 1974

'The Avram Davidson interview was rather depressing to read. If a very talented writer such as Davidson has trouble selling his work, then how much trouble do the new, inexperienced writers have? The honesty that writers like Davidson, Anthony and White, to name only a few, display is of course desired, but I wonder how many would-be writers give up on the field because of the despair they have of either finding a market, or an interested agent for their work.

'Finally, I must say how much I've

enjoyed the recent columns/articles by Larry Shaw and Sam Merwin, Jr. For someone, like myself, who has only been reading science fiction for a little over five years, I can only wonder about what took place at magazines like INFINITY and THRILLING WONDER. It's too bad that someone couldn't get some of the other former editors to write about their editing experiences, but I suppose most of the former editors are either long forgotten or wish to disown the past.'

((Being a Writer has a great image, but the mortality rate is staggering. On the other hand, it is said that publishers look upon good beginning writer as a strip miner looks upon a hill containing a fortune in ore.

((I have plans for more reminiscences-by-editors articles, but with the exception of Larry Shaw's column they will have to wait til 1966.))

LETTER FROM
AVRAM DAVIDSON

'Dear Avram;

'Here's a copy of TAC #11. Another is in the regular 3rd class mailing.

'Any further thoughts, additions, corrections?

'Best, Dick'

December 6, 1974

'The copy of TAC #11 came in yesterday's mail, 1st class, and the copy of TAC #11 sent 3rd class came in yesterday's mail. Too. Too. I think you can beat the USPS eh. ha.'

((I mailed the 3rd class copies on Wednesday, Nov. 27, and began to get responses from Wisconsin and points East on Dec. 3. Thus some of that mailing got on airplanes...and some went by the usual oxcart. And a small percentage of 1% never get delivered at all. Obviously I sent your 1st class copy a few days after the mailing of Nov. 27. I'm grateful for small favours.))

'"Corrections," yas. P.16, top of column 2, the J. Boardman review of PEREGRINE PRIMUS, "Then he raids a dragon-horde, etc."—well, the idea of

a dragon-horde is certainly interesting, and if I use it Prof. Boardman may be sure I shall give him no credit for the idea at all,—however. What Peregrine found (really, "raid" is too active a verb for the act) was a dragon h o a r d. NEXT. "bracelet of base metal inscribed Caius loves Marianno", sic. Well, what the book says, it says,: "One very battered bracelet inscribed Cailus loves Mariamne and made of base metal." And what I wrote, I wrote "Caius loves Mariamne". Dr. Boardman spotted one typo and supplied one...or else it was supplied for him at the geiser works. Eh? Tisk. "Marianno" indeed. There was nothing queer about Caius. (I wouldn't be the first time a Geistypo offered a nice wording for me; see my Reply to Harry Warner, back in—???) (Ah well). —Actually the book has several typos and the author was not allowed to read proofs. Walker, for several reasons, is not his favorite publisher.'

'The real trouble about women is that they must always go on trying to adapt themselves to men's theories of women.'

—D. H. Lawrence

'It is really a stillborn thought to send women into the struggle for existence exactly as men. If, for instance, I imagined my sweet, gentle girl as a competitor, it would only end in my telling her, as I did seventeen months ago, that I am fond of her and that I implore her to withdraw from the strife into the calm uncompetitive activity of my home.'

—Sigmund Freud

'The vote, I thought, means nothing to women. We should be armed.'

—Edna O'Brien

'The bonds of wedlock are so heavy that it takes two to carry them—sometimes three.'

—Alexandre Dumas

'If history can make into art what is not now art, it can also unmake what is now art. It is conceivable that Michelangelo, Vermeer, Goya, Cezanne will someday cease to be art; it is only necessary that...an extreme ideology shall sieze power and cast out existing

masterpieces as creatures of darkness.'

—Harold Rosenberger

CONFESSIONS OF A WAGE SLAVE

By David M. Harris

It was not what you would call a really good week for me. After a wild goose chase to the wilds of North Jersey, I returned to what remained of my New York apartment just in time to reach the Burglary Report desk of my local precinct before the sergeant went home for the day. Nothing really major was taken, just my typewriter (since, as you see, replaced) and, curiously, my address-book. (So if you've been waiting for me to write, that's why I haven't.)

Now, the last time I was ripped off was in the dark days when I was living across the street from Gardner Dozois, before I got into publishing. I lost the job I held at that time within a week. So it shouldn't have been a surprise this time. And it wasn't.

There were other reasons, of course, to expect it, not the least of them involved with the internal politics of Dell—one of the most notoriously political of the major houses. In any large organization that is structured on autocratic lines, a decline in performance puts pressure on the people at the top (in the case of Dell, Mrs. Helen Meyer, who paid a record \$800,000 for the paperback rights to Lonnie Coleman's smash hit BEULAHLAND—seven weeks on the best-seller list only because Dell salesmen were buying it), who in turn put pressure on the middle level people, who pass it along to folks like me. In the particular case at hand, the pressure manifested itself as a series of demands that seemed to me to be arbitrary—retitling a book and re-writing the cover copy when the cover proofs had arrived in house, cutting 64 pages from a book in galleys, etc.

As a result of the way in which I define the role of editor, these expectations were plainly unacceptable. If an author is to have any representation at his publisher, it must be by his ed-

itor. Most publishers, understandably, do not share this sentiment. The editor who is conscientious by my terms finds himself in a situation analogous to the classic example, in sociology, of the foreman—not quite labor, not quite management, and not quite trusted by either. In my case, I was perhaps too obvious in my preference for the writer's point of view, so that while I think I gained the trust of most of the authors with whom I worked, I'm afraid I lost that of the administrators for whom I worked.

This was just a single manifestation of an overall conflict of editorial philosophies. While this conflict did eventually mean that, one way or another, I could not stay at Dell, it is one which should be incorporated into every commercial publishing house.

H. L. Menken once wrote, "Nobody ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the American public." As I write this, the two bestselling paperbacks in the U.S. are ONCE IS NOT ENOUGH and THE JOY OF SEX. Certainly there is a place for books of this sort in the world of letters. The problem develops when we in the publishing industry forget that there is also a place for books of a very different order of merit. The literary novel, however, has a negligible market—with one exception. The SF readership tends to be better educated, on the whole, than any other specific market. Only the major book clubs are comparable in their ability to successfully present fiction of considerable literary merit.

SF, then, provides the possibility of refuge for the mass-market editor whose concern is fiction, rather than profit. (The mystery genre can also serve this function, though it tends to be more restrictive in format.) Any editor with this attitude is going to be perceived as in opposition to his management, as indeed he should be, and this point of view needs to be present to balance the point of view that pays \$35,000 for the autobiography of a cat that makes commercials.

This is not to imply that there is anything intrinsically wrong with buying MORRIS. People will enjoy reading it, and will pay for the privilege.

This, in turn, will help pay for the publication of John Berger's *G* and Dick Lupoff's *NEW ALABAMA BLUES*. Unfortunately, while there is a sort of automatic mechanism that will insure the publication of popular books, there is no guarantee that excellent but non-commercial fiction will be seriously considered. The internal opposition of a committed editor can lend a bit of enthusiasm for responsible publishing, but in a mass-market house such folks rarely, if ever, get into positions where they can influence overall policy. The only case that comes to mind where a mass-market paperback house was dominated by people of literary orientation is that of Ballantine, and with the acquisition by Random House and the commitment to "bigness" the Ballantines have been forced out.

When I was called in to the office of the editor-in-chief to be "released" one of the reasons given me was that it was felt that I had "contempt" for the line. Roughly translated, this meant that I refused to publicly take seriously the idea that Dell is providing a social service by publishing what it does. There are still some who feel that the social obligations of the communications industries lie in a different direction than *THE HAPPY HOOKER*, and that their continued good financial health is not going to be based on BEULAH LAND.

Sadly, it is not often recognized that publishing is not merely a product industry, but one of the mass media. The idea of applying media theories of audience service and leadership has not occurred to the "thin men of Haddam" who control the book business—after all, such things do nothing to promote profit

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So that's the main reason I left, and with precious few regrets. I'll miss some of the people, and I'll very much miss not being in on the publication of most of the books I bought—in two years as an editor one book of my own selection was brought out. I won't miss the corporate attitude toward SF, which seemed to be that anything other than Lin Carter (or other sword and sorcery that could take a Frazetta cov-

er) was to be only barely tolerated. Even when a specific project was initiated by the front office, no support was given to it once the contract was signed (support in the form of schedule slots and so on). Resistance to promotional efforts was extreme. In the last months, there was even some resentment of my claim to some expertise in SF and its marketing.

I don't really know what this says about Dell's real intentions in the SF market. The person who will be taking over my projects, Fred Feldman, comes out of the publicity department, and while he is young, energetic and capable, he has no background in SF. I suspect that he is going to be subject to strong pressures from the editor-in-chief to conform to her ideas. Unless he is possessed of great moral and psychological strength, this will mean that Robin Kyriakis will effectively be running the SF line. While Ms. Kyriakis, in our last chat, claimed to have knowledge and experience in the field, I could not personally vouch for it.

As (at least for the moment) an unaffiliated editor I see Dell and everyone else increasing the amount of SF publishing they do, not immediately (although Dell goes to 18 titles a year starting December 1975), but over the next five years. As we sink deeper and deeper into economic and political Dadaism the public that made *FUTURE SHOCK* a bestseller will be looking for escapist fiction. With the present dismal, the past and the future will be our havens. The fifties revival is already in full swing ("Hi! I'm Roy Cohn. Remember me? I did a little thing called the House Un-American Activities Committee."), the forties have hit Broadway, and the thirties will be making a personal appearance right in your own home.

Doc Savage may be camp right now, but update him a bit and make him British and he's John Steed. A few more alterations to suit the mood of the late seventies or early eighties and he'll be back again. I think the futuristic escapes are going to dominate the next phase, if only because they will offer some hope of a solution to our problems.

I have other reasons for a strongly

optimistic view of the future of SF. Not all the young writers are coming into the field, but many of the best are, and many of those who do not (as well as the established authors) are using many of the techniques. The last few years have seen such "non-SF" novels as D. Keith Mano's *THE BRIDGE* (post-holocaustal society), Lola Burford's *THE VISION OF STEPHEN* (time travel), John Gardner's *GRENDDEL* (fantasy and alien intelligence), John Barth's *CHIMERA* (fantasy), and the announcement of Norman Mailer's untitled million-dollar, million-word epic (interstellar flight).

As the traditional veins of fiction are mined out more and more thoroughly, the writers with an interest in experimental fiction will find themselves driven into SF, which, by its nature, offers more scope. This doesn't mean that I think F&SF or *ANALOG* will become the darling of the New York Review of Literature set, but it does mean that if I were doing a best of the year anthology I'd be reading *ANTAEUS* and other quarterlies for material.

Unfortunately, the traditional outlets for short SF are in bad shape. Not only are they not making money, by and large, they are also no longer getting the best of the new works—after all, why should an author submit a story to a magazine for two or three cents a word when he can get five cents from an anthologist? This is certainly fine for writers, at least in the short run, but it may have seriously detrimental effects on the already shaky finances of the magazines, and it definitely means that the quality of stories seen there, as fiction, is declining.

(I think I should explain that my attitudes toward SF were not shaped by fannish forces—I am not now, nor have I ever been a "fan." Nothing personal, that's just the way it is. After a long absence I started reading SF again in college, about the same time and for the same reasons I started reading Joyce and Beckett and Barth. I have no objections to the idea as hero, as long as the story is well done, although my preference is still with the more classic form of the short story. I was trained, after all, as a literatus.)

There is a very strong possibility

that a new dichotomy will evolve in SF, similar to the New Wave/Old Wave thing, with equally hazy borders, and along similar lines. The "New Wave" was largely the adoption of the standard techniques of fiction into the genre, which had, until then, the tendency to say, "I am the literature of ideas, good writing is irrelevant." Now it says, "I am the literature of ideas, good writing helps express them." The next influx will be the attempt to expand the borders of the art and craft of fiction, using the freedoms of space and time and universe construction that are found only in SF.

An outgrowth of this may be the development, for the first time in the history of writing, of an audience that is educated in the techniques of the art, much in the way that guitarists have many listeners who know the mechanical tasks involved. I have found it very distressing to be told by fans that, for example, "So-and-so is a great stylist but he doesn't use it because it gets in the way of the story."

Meanwhile, whatever happens in the areas of technique and craft, the classic "hard science" story may be heading for decline. From the 1890's until fairly recently the American people had great faith in the powers of technology to solve their problems. This faith does not seem to have been borne out, at least in the case of rapacious exploitation of applied science that we have seen. Strong opposition to further advanced technology has made its appearance, most notably in the case of nuclear power plants—an opposition that comes directly out of the lack of effective safety guidelines from what was until recently the AEC, compounded with the public awareness of the genuine dangers of nuclear material. But if there is a sense of betrayal by the "hard" sciences, there is a growing popular attachment to the "soft" sciences—wide the success of PSYCHOLOGY TODAY and the advocacy of new therapies and quasi-religious disciplines. There is a quest for salvation in the non-rational philosophies, the non-quantifiable sciences. And, since literature of any sort reflects the society in which it is written (even in opposition, it must posit that which it opposes),

SF can be expected to move in the same direction.

It is entirely possible that much of the "social" science fiction could take the form of Asimovian historiography, in which human behavior actually is quantified. I don't think so. In concert with the coming growth of SF as an art form (see above) the implications of social developments or advances in the social sciences will provide the imaginative outlet for the SF of the eighties.

I can already hear the resounding Feh! that my comments will most likely inspire, but I think we are moving toward the real Golden Age of American SF—when we invent new forms of fiction to express the radically new ideas of the new disciplines we invent.

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Assessing the immediate future of the market means a very different kind of projection. I already mentioned the gloomy outlook of so many of the magazines, but I think they will continue to be one of the major markets for new writers, at least for the next two or three years. New writers will also have Roger Elwood, at least for the next half year. I'm afraid (from the market viewpoint) that the Elwood bubble is soon to burst, on the basis of simple glut. Writers of short fiction, then, will be going increasingly to the original anthology market and to the untraditional outlets of the slick and quarterly magazines. Tom Disch is a fairly typical example of this developing trend. He is, undeniably, a science fiction writer, but his stories have appeared in ANTAEUS and he has recently sold to PENTHOUSE. In his sales, as well as his writing, he may be pointing out new directions for the field.

If the markets for short fiction are changing drastically, the possibilities for novels are not going through any revolution. A few more companies can be expected to start or expand SF programs, but the essential nature of the market will remain unchanged. Despite the high prices going to a very few books, the general level of advances and paperback sales (where they are separate) will not be increasing to

match inflation, and those hardcover houses that have not been publishing SF in the past will not, with several exceptions among the minor houses, be setting up SF lines per se. The major advance in the marketing of novels will be in cases where books by SF writers are taken on as mainstream properties—Ballard's CRASH and CONCRETE ISLAND, for example.

The other area in which what we think of as SF is gaining mainstream acceptance is fantasy. Ursula LeGuin's latest, although less in the fantasy vein than some earlier works, sold to paperback for a substantial sum, as did Patricia McKillip's first novel, a fantasy called FORGOTTEN BEASTS OF ELD. WATERSHIP DOWN held the #1 spot on most bestseller lists for some time, and Adams' next, SHARDIK, is expected to do the same. Sword & sorcery was consistently my best item at Dell (not solely because of the covers, although they were a significant factor—always frazzetta or Di Fate). Not much truly original fantasy is being written right now, but there is going to be a great resurgence in its popularity. All those Tolkien readers who "never read SF" are being starved for what they like. Adams is already cashing in on this—more of the SF writers can be expected to follow suit.

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So there it is, campers—the state of the universe as viewed from the unemployment line. Despite the impending collapse of civilization as we know it (or perhaps because of it) it looks fairly optimistic to me. Just remember—the more bizarre reality becomes the more realistic is the bizarre.

'We do not read books if we are already thoroughly familiar with the material or if it is so completely unfamiliar that it is likely to remain so. We read books which help us say things we are on the verge of saying anyway but cannot quite say without help. We understand the author, although we could not have formulated what we understand before he put it into words.'

—B.F. Skinner,
BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY

BEST SUBSCRIPTION LETTER, EVER

'They warned me, heed not the words of this obviously borderline lunatic, they said, for it is evident that he is terminally afflicted with the Creeping Crazies, and as such is to be avoided like the plague. In my foolish youth, I only replied scoff, scoff, to those whom I thought were old and therefore askew, but Little Did I Know—

'Look at me now, a shuddering chunk of flotsam, lurching toward the street-corner, there to wait, perhaps in vain, perhaps to be rewarded by the hideous/beautiful sound of the dealer, Scunge: hey my man, ya wanna cop some Geis? Four dolla keep ya floatin' f' a year, and I tremble with a sense the Chinese call Mo-jo, a sense of commitment about to be assumed, and I say yes, yes and silent write the check, for he is indeed a fine man, this Scunge, accepts all forms of promissary notes and doesn't even send the goons until you've missed two payments and the pen scritch- es 1 yr sub Alien Critic behind the FOR, so I can remember when it returns with the rest of the cancelled checks; I forget so much of what happens when Scunge is around, but this is ending, I can feel it, already my trembling is lessened, I am standing straighter, my teeth are healthier, and my three fates, ex- zema, seborrea, and psoriasis, have fled shrieking into the shadows, flung back by the ever brightening light of TRUTH!

Boom.

Wesley D. Ives

LETTER FROM

DOUGLAS BARBOUR

December 10, 1974

'One feels sorry for Davidson, knows he is right in bitching about many of the things he bitches about, wishes he were able to not only outter about with the Matrix for VERGIL MAGUS but get it out to us, where we cluster and wait for the 2nd volume, yet, and yet, one has to say he's not absolutely correct about those academics who are getting into sf. Some of them may be Miss Muffs, indeed, but those of us who care, who

really love sf, have read it since we were first ruined by picking up one of those awful covers, yet who have also learned to love literature as such as well, are not Miss Muffs nor do we want to be. I have met enough academics interested in sf to know that both kinds exist. At the one Secondary Universe conference I have been able to attend, both kinds were there, & the lovers of sf were merciless to the one hanger-on who had dared to give a paper on robots without mentioning, among others, I, ROBOT, the killdozer, van Vogt's lovely moon machine—remember, it was built in an interstellar war & destroys the earth as a first man-made rocket approaches the lunar surface—and a number of other major robot stories. We were in there pitching with the pros who were also present, & who helped to make the meeting such a really celebrative occasion. Anyway, I wish Davidson luck, but I think these recognitions have to be made.

'John J. Alderson's article on THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY was very interesting, if a bit sloppily written. I believe he's right about Asimov's limitations, & about the problems of the series. One must ask, then, why it is still so popular. A couple of reasons spring to mind. One is that most sf readers don't understand history that well either. Another is that, despite the limitation of his view of history, & the even greater limitation of his inability to create living, breathing adult human beings in those days, Asimov has gotten hold of a breath-taking concept: the galactic empire, & the passing of huge periods of time. Sense of wonder, albeit a bit naive, is moved by the scope of FOUNDATION, even if the execution of the concept is really rather poor. It's one of those books Judith Merrill says she loves to remember, but couldn't possibly reread. I also recall Jerry Pournelle remarking at the Secondary Universe conference that Asimov's FOUNDATION books nearly ruined him for life. He said, "Well, at the time, I actually believed all that nonsense about the science of 'psycho-history', and it took me years of study to realize it was all wrong." Well, I understand that Pournelle knows some history, & maybe it gets properly into his stories, but he

too, was, & in terms of eye-widening conceptualization of a gigantic future expansion for humanity is, taken by the book. But, then, I didn't think Asimov deserved the Nebula & Hugo a few years ago for his new novel either, good as it was in comparison with his earlier stuff.

'By the way, as an example of where some academicians are at, Susan Wood, who won the fan writer Hugo this year, is very much an academic, in my major field, Canadian Literature. I haven't noticed that being so has ruined her as a member of fandom. I guess there's hope for all, yet, eh? And I've met a lot of fans who dig the kind of thing Malzberg, or Delany, or Russ, or Le Guin, does. Are they all apostates? I doubt it, & being nasty to Paul Novitsky isn't going to change things.'

((What bugged me about Paul Novitsky's letter was his calling himself an 'artist'...which struck me as presumptuous and pretentious. Whether or not a man or woman is an Artist is a judgement others make, after a while. Especially in terms of writing.))

I know the Word, and the Word is ME!

LETTER FROM

URSULA K. LE GUIN

December 1, 1974

'Thanks very much for your review of THE DISPOSSESSED in IAC #11. It was perceptive & understanding, & the last few paragraphs make a very interesting point: I think you are perfectly right, in part; but it's not a matter of "good taste" as I see it, but something far more essential, & more concerned with what really makes a work of art work... Dickens (no taste) works for me, but the Runyon sort of thing, which you like, bores me stiff. As I say, the whole subject is really interesting & I wish you'd write more on it. —One matter of pseudo-fact: The Hainish settled both Earth & the Cetian worlds hundreds of millennia ago. Earth & Urras-Anarres knew nothing of each other until about 50 years before the main time of the novel: Urras was not colonized from Earth, as you seem to imply on page

36—unless I misread you, instead of you misreading me.'

((I misremembered that section of THE DISPOSSESSED. Apologies.

((What makes a work of art work is the whole gestalt of writing/creating elements that is mixed/melded by the writer...and that combination is different with each writer—call it style—and the quality of each element and each application must be True...and...we are all different in our tastes, so all I do is make clear my personal taste in fiction and my readers can use that as a guide to the work in question, in deciding if they'd like it.

((Of course some writers do not mix and meld and apply their tools as well as others. That is a matter of lack of talent (to a degree) and lack of skills (to a degree), and not a matter of style.

((You are a great mixer/melder/applier...it is just that I find your style lacks a bit of mustard...to suit my individual taste. And there's nothing that can be or should be done about that.))

IT IS BOOKS LIKE THIS, SIR, WHICH GIVE HEAVEN A BAD REPUTATION

Potboilers come and potboilers go, and Edmund Cooper, a prince of potboiler authoring, goes on forever.

His trademarks are basic storytelling values—action, strong hero, suspense. He uses these skillfully to interest a reader and to hold a reader, even if that reader (me, dammit!) is feeling a slight contempt for both Cooper and himself.

This latest Cooper novel is THE SLAVES OF HEAVEN (Putnam, \$5.95) and it involves a primitive Earth an eon after a catastrophic atomic war. The tribes are regularly raided by silver-clad, invulnerable creatures who kidnap young tribeswomen and disappear into the night.

Heaven needs women to keep its birth-rate up, natch.

Heaven is the huge artificial satellite which contains the rigid, class-structured residue of the pre-blowup

civilization. They have one rocketship left, and robots, and laser handweapons, among other goodies.

Anyway, Berry, the innovative leader of the Londos tribe, follows the Night-Comers after his tribe has been raided and is captured and taken to Heaven along with the women. There he is educated and used by the Tech class in a plan to subvert the artist/politician hereditary aristocracy.

Berry, the primitive, rather incredibly is a genius of the first rank...and is of course a top athlete and hunter (which comes in handy when he is hunted in the large "central park" of the immense satellite), and rather easily manipulates the arrogant leader of Heaven and succeeds in overturning and restructuring its society and in assuring the melding of Heaven with "dirt-side" tribes for the benefit of all mankind and a glorious future.

Of course, that's in the tradition of the best Optimistic sf. People like a happy ending (all other things being equal). And Cooper, bless him, is skilled enough and intelligent/mature enough to make genius Berry, Heaven, the tribes, etc. credible. In fact, despite the hard-to-swallow coincidence that Berry should happen to be a super genius, Berry comes through as a very tough, honorable, SMART man, indeed.

I do wish Cooper would take a bit more time and slow his narratives just a mite in order to add a few hundred specific details to his backgrounds, foregrounds and people. He paints with too broad a brush. We get the steak and potatoes, but the subtle seasonings are missing. It's the difference between good fiction and excellent fiction...the difference between potboiler and top-grade commercial fiction, in this mode (essentially, formula, as opposed to a less rigid, possibly anti-hero Literature mode).

NOW HERE'S MY PLAN.....

Idly, I wonder why Curt Siodmak wrote his latest sf novel, CITY IN THE SKY (Putnam, \$5.95) in the present-tense—all the way through.

'The door in front of them slides back and they enter the hospital.' like that. It gives the reading of the book a slight strangeness...at first you don't know why it seems strange...then you pin it down.

It's a slight novel, with virtues. The sub-plots and individualisms are what save the book: the ex-President of the United States who is in the International Space City for a heart transplant...The personal and personnel problems of the space city's Director...The ISC hotel manager's desperate need to appear young...The sadism, the obsession with death, of Jan Van Buren, one of the prisoners of the Space Prison which is in a tighter orbit around Earth than the much larger space city...

The novel is the prisoners' plot to escape the prison and take over the space city, then to bargain for freedom. It makes good reading because the characters are better than the plot. The basic incredibility is Siodmak's assertion that the nations of the world would send their 'most dangerous' political prisoners to the expensive-to-maintain space prison (formerly a large space laboratory) and let it be maintained and inhabited exclusively by the prisoners. Easy as pie the prisoners (led by a brilliant new prisoner) remove the electronic tracerbugs embedded in their bodies, hijack a supply rocket, and assault the ISC.

Harry Harrison is correct in his back-of-the-dust-jacket assessment: "The best Siodmak novel to date...it will make a powerful film." It would make a good movie.

'Imagine a number of men in chains, all under sentence of death, some of whom are each day butchered in the sight of the others; those remaining see their own condition in that of their fellows, and looking at each other with grief and despair await their turn. This is an image of the human condition.'

—Pascal

DEATH IS NOT THE END! Man's most cherished cop-out.

LETTER FROM GENE WOLFE

November 16, 1974

'I just read your column in the December IF, and wanted to thank you for the mention, and all the kind things you had to say about my stories. It was really very generous of you.

'Before I forget it, congratulations on the move to GALAXY. When I heard IF was doomed, I assumed your column would go too. I'm delighted to read that it will not.

'Now that I've conveyed my (quite real) good wishes, I'm forced (my alter ego has a gun) to say that your December column struck me as almost wilfully wrongheaded. The kind of writing you are protesting is as rare as trumpeter swans, while the kind you are demanding weighs down every paperback rack in the country.

'As to what I owe the reader, the answer is (obviously) everything. All I've got. By which I mean that it is my duty to make every story just as good as I can make it—which I do. Your definition of "good" and mine may not agree; but I have to use mine—I can't see yours.'

((I dislike not only pretentious, affected, ambiguous, obscurantist anti-hero fiction written (often sincerely with great talent and skill) in the literature mode, but dumb, dull, clumsy, inept Commercial fiction—of which the great majority of the stuff on the racks is.))

'Fear is the mother of morality.'
—Friedrich Nietzsche

'Fear is the proof of a degenerate mind.'

—Virgil

Fear is that awful icky feeling in your gut when something important to you is on the line. And fear is proof of your humanity.

—A. L. Terego

Quick! a one-liner to fill out this column! What? Fill one more line? Impossible!

TORTURE GARDEN

Or

STOMPING THROUGH THE TULIPS

Commenting on the SF magazines with acid and bile

Ben Bova's ANALOG is a different kettle of science fictional fish than the Campbell pot. Ben is opening up the magazine; less rigid dogma, more liberal social science fiction, more sexual aspects and impacts—to the agonized dismay of some old-line AS-FOUNDING/ANALOG subscribers.

I've just read five recent issues (June, August, September, October, November) and parts of other issues. And I have also read a lot of recent IFs and GALAXYs and the 25th Anniversary issue of F&SF.

ANALOG is beginning to read like all the other sf zines. It has superior printing, mostly superior artwork...but in content and quality of writing, it is beginning to lose its Campbellian identity. The stories are softer and the writing overall is better.

The August issue has a novelette in it which disturbed me (flaring nostrils, glinting eyes). It is by Cynthia Bunn and it is titled "And Keep Us From Our Castles." I'm sure it made John Campbell rev up in his tomb. (Don't tell me there isn't a clause in Ben Bova's contract that says he must drop a copy of each new issue of ANALOG down the special chute above Campbell's grave.)

"Castles" is about a future criminal who has been expelled from the cities and forced to wander the vast United States wasteland. The countryside is reverting to primitive after the law-abiding citizens withdrew to the cities; only a few misfits and criminals are abroad.

The criminals are punished in a unique manner: a 'telecomputer' is locked onto them somehow and unless they travel ½ kilometer per twelve hours an impenetrable cube will form around them, one side at a time. When the cube is complete it is irreversible and they die of suffocation. Short of complet-

ion, ½ kilometer of travel will remove, one by one, the 'impenetrable plastic' walls to their 'storage rooms'.

Think about that! Cynthia gives us a society of such advanced technology and science that it can afford to use an advanced super computer to keep track of each and every criminal it has condemned to the Outside, and their science is so far advanced it is possible to materialize plastic walls anywhere any man goes, even to the point of displacing or replacing solid rock.

Cynthia here is using incredible magic science (she doesn't bother to rationalize it) and improbable sociology and economics to make her precious story idea work.

She even violates the logic of her premise since she must have her criminal (a nice, honorable man sent to conventry on a bad rap by a dictatorial, fascistic society) behave stupidly, finally wear himself down to exhaustion and succumb to the cube.

The daily grind of ½ kilometer is the nub of his problem, right? Trudge, trudge, trudge. Wake up after seven hours sleep and three walls are around him. Move on. He crosses the Mississippi several times on ferries run by non-criminal misfits.

The man is highly intelligent. Yet it never occurs to him to build a raft (he has tools, weapons, supplies, equipment) and use the river current to effortlessly float that mandatory ½ kilometer per day. He could make a routine of it—down the river for a month or two, then trek upstream far enough to float down it again and keep in top condition. Why not? Cynthia's "rules" don't forbid it.

But she was too interested in showing how cruel the government is and in killing off her hero and in the irony of showing how the young woman student from the city who backpacked out to interview criminals could be turned into a criminal herself for "anti-state activities". So she stacked the deck to make her points and wrote a very bad science fiction story...but, I suppose, a good right-thinking liberal-dogma literary story.

I am astonished that Ben Bova accepted it and had no second thoughts about publishing it.

"And Keep Us From Our Castles" is an anti-competent-man story. Instead of using his brains to fight back against the system, to defeat it, to escape, Cynthia's hero accepts his fate. He simply tries to keep his inevitable death at bay as long as possible.

She presents us with two attractive, sympathetic people—and kills them off. Shit on that! I already KNOW there is precious little justice in this world (or any other). I KNOW the individual rarely if ever wins against the State. (And so does the buyer of ANALOG if he/she is over 15 years of age.) I (and we) don't need bad, earnest, sincere, full-of-truth writers who love to rub my nose in those unpleasant truths.

I read most fiction for plausible, well-written lies that assure me, temporarily, that there is justice, that intelligence and competence and courage are rewarded. I do not want the ego/emotion/identification I invest in characters to be ripped off by patronizing, elitist ("I am instructing you stupid readers in the Truth") writers and editors.

Of course if a writer can honestly construct a merciless story and make me admire it by rigorous interior discipline and fine writing (as in "The Cold Equations"), fine. I'll vote it for a Nebula and a Hugo. But THIS sloppy mess by Cynthia Bunn...forget it.

Continuing my survey of ANALOG, I find myself disappointed by Alfred Bester's long-awaited new novel, THE INDIAN GIVER. It is written in a light style using a shorthand patois of the future which is interesting, and the social/cultural/technology picture he paints is interesting...but I can't say I believe a word of it, nor do I believe in the characters as real people. Even as mere fictional characters they are a turn-off. The casual use and misuse of mortal humans by a band of superior, accidentally immortal humans is moderately repellent. Especially the central character's penchant for imposing an agonizing death on a talented, highly intelligent man or woman in the hope of

producing another immortal. Of course, the end may indeed justify the means, and the Elite (self-appointed—after all, they do own over one-quarter of the world's wealth) may have the right to take the law into their own hands (in a war-ridden, rapacious, corporation-ruled world), but it doesn't attract me as a foundation for a novel by a leading sf writer.

I've read two of the three parts of THE INDIAN GIVER, and in the process I exhausted my supply of patience and suspension of disbelief tablets. I just don't give a damn what happens to that band of freaky amoral immortals.

(If you tell me that Bester's style and cast of lighthearted psychopaths is a tipoff that he is writing satire and this means that Guig's grisly avocation is therefore not to be taken seriously and is meant as a stark comment on modern society...if you tell me that, I will hit you!)

One subscriber and long-time reader wrote in to ANALOG and protested the horrid sex in George R. R. Martin's "A Song For Lyra" in the June 1974 issue. I read the letter and promptly went to the #3 bookcase and found that issue—and read the story. I found nothing "obscene" or "pornographic". It's a damned good psi story with depth and chilling impact, if a bit too long getting to its tension points. It raises all kinds of questions about what is human and what is happiness and what is free will. Rightfully it should be on the ballot for the Nebula and Hugo upcoming.

But the "cancel my subscription, sir!" letter from F. L. Whittier of Oklahoma shows the strain of invincible sex-is-dirty thinking that persists and persists, and persists in this country. The recent (September, October, November) textbook "riots" in West Virginia show another ugly aspect of this cultural constipation in the Bible belt. (The news media were quick to show the unrest and the controversy, but damned if I ever saw or was told of a specific passage in a specific textbook that was the partial cause of all the furor. Such specifics exist, of course, but the media weren't willing to detail them, even fragmentar-

ily. Why not?

The October ANALOG is intensely interesting because of its Velikovsky-inspired cover—Earth and Mars very close together exchanging massive electrical discharges — and its two articles: one by Frederic B. Jueneman who generally supports Velikovsky's controversial pre-history and cosmology, and who asks for an open mind and further research to confirm or refute the theories... and Isaac Asimov who calls Mr. V. a crackpot and is sure there is no substance worth considering.

I am reminded of my first awed examination of the Grand Canyon. There's no way I'll believe the Colorado river carved out that incredible ditch. I don't care how many millions of years are assigned it for having done the job. I keep thinking that a cataclysmic earthquake ruptured the Earth there at some time in the vast past, and the river took the line of least resistance. Because, if that river dug that huge trench, down through dozens of strata of soils and rocks, why didn't it dig a similar trench all the way to the sea? Why only there? And why hasn't every old river in the world—the Amazon, the Nile, the Mississippi, the Mekong—managed to dig similar gorges and canyons into the earth? Hmmm? I just don't believe conventional geologic assertions in re the Grand Canyon, and I remember how wrong and bullheaded scientists have been in the past—like when some of them declared that a man could not survive speeds in excess of 60 mph.

Now we learn that humanity has existed on Earth for up to five million years...and how that figure has grown in the past year! Yet—five years ago many Establishment Scientists scoffed at those who thought mankind was that old. Such were called—crackpots.

We are just scratching the surface of knowledge, and the hardest of facts can melt away in a flash of new information.

I'm afraid Mr. Asimov's attack on Velikovsky cost him some respect in my eyes. I can't believe, as does Asimov, (from my reading of the Velikovsky

books) that Mr. V. constructed and warped his cosmology and pre-history theory to conform to his supposed pro-Jewish prejudice; that it is structured to puff the role of Jews in Biblical times.

It's a shame Velikovsky wasn't asked to comment on Asimov's article. (Maybe he was asked and declined, but if so, Ben Bova didn't mention it.)

The fiction in this issue (October) is pretty good, with three stories I'll remember a long time. "Truth To Tell" by Joe Haldeman is another of the recent despair/no win stories Bova has been using for variety (I suppose). Anger will keep it in my memory. I always seem to like Fred Saberhagen's Berserker stories, and "Inhuman Error" is good. At least the humans triumph through logic and intelligence and perseverance and guts. And "A Matter of Gravity" is a very good Lord Darcy story—an alternate universe detective story—by Randall Garrett.

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Well, onward to comment on the 25th anniversary issue of F&SF. I read the Ellison story first, "Adrift Just Off the Islets of Langerhans: Latitude 38° 54' N, Longitude 77° 00' W" (My Ghod, why does he do titles like this?), which started out beautifully hard and shiny and sfy and then danced like a \$100,000 running back into fantasy and absurdity ...into a kind of psyche-symbolism-surrealism fiction. Clever man, Harlan, in making the opening real and objective to hook and convince...and then fiendish of him to lead the reader down the garden path into fantasy as the werewolf seeks his soul and is duplicated and then shrunk to micro-micro size so he can rummage around in his duplicate body after having entered via the belly button cavity. (Are you putting us on, Harlan?) But the chasm into which I will not leap is the bric-a-brac of memories in this character that clutters the impossible landscape of his 'pancreatic sea' and environs.

So okay. I got the old shell game played on me. The old segue routine. The old sell-'em-sf-and-give-'em-subjective-impressionism bit. Snake oil. Okay, Harlan, your message is mental health (though I didn't care if your

werewolf solved his problem or not, toward the end) and an old Howdy Doody button is this tortured person's literal/figurative soul? That's soul food for thought.

A fan/reader wrote me recently to ask my opinion of Phil Dick's story in this issue of F&SF. The man didn't like it. It is "The Pre-Persons" and it is a tough, satirical extension of pro-abortion logic and/or anti-abortion logic. Dick presents us with a future in which children don't have (by legislation) souls until their 12th birthday (when they are presumed to be able to do higher math). Until 12 years age they can be picked up by the state and disposed of if their parents decide not to keep them. They are put to death with the unwanted dogs and cats at the 'pound' by having their air taken away in a "humane" vacuum chamber.

Phil also is very hard on women in "The Pre-Persons", assuming cruel and selfish and unloving matriarchs. He seems to be leaving his decades-long dedication to examining the quicksands of reality. Much more obviously relevant now. Take it or leave it. I like his change.

I liked all the other stories to mild degree. "The Seventeen Virgins" by Jack Vance, especially. It'll be anthologized forever.

I liked Isaac Asimov's comment in his article, "Oh, Keen-Eyed Peerer Into the Future!", in which he says, "I only write; I don't analyze." This is the role of the writer as regards his own work—Do; don't be self-conscious. Too many writers in and around sf are now hyper self-conscious...looking over their shoulders at the Critic and the Critique as they plan and write their stories and novels. I begin to doubt that writers should go (or have gone) to college. At least they shouldn't take Creative Writing or Eng. Lit courses. But seriously, folk....

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Remember VERTEX?—the sf magazine that wishes to be placed on the newsstands away from the other sf magazines (to avoid guilt by association, I presume). Well, I bought Volume Two, Num-

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ber Five today (they've stopped putting a month date on the cover) and I must say it has a dramatic, eye-catching, mind-catching cover...an infant marked '1974' in a human skull marked '2030'. But the point of this mention of the zine is that on all previous covers the sub-heading 'The Magazine of Science Fiction' has been prominent. But on this issue's cover those damning words have been soft-pedaled, shrunk, placed on a dull background, and to put it mildly, de-emphasized.

The interview with Ursula LeGuin is very good. Let me trot out a quote from the interview which supports one of my pet beliefs. She says:

"I think science fiction in the past two or three years has been off on a preaching binge, and it'd been nearly disastrous. A lot of people—not fans precisely, but people who read and enjoy science fiction—keep coming to me and saying, 'I'm tired of being shouted at! I'm told to do this, do that; don't do this, don't do that.'"

VERTEX is an impressive magazine. I still can't help thinking its \$1.50 price will sink it. Especially now. For the price of one VERTEX a sf reader can buy an ANALOG and a F&SF.

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I owe Jim Baen a public apology, yes I do. I chewed him in IAC 10 for the below par artwork he had used in some recent issues of GALAXY and IF. I have since learned that he had had to scramble for illustrations and available artists because old reliable Jack Gaughan had gone and damaged his drawing hand while responding to a fire call. Jack is a volunteer fireman for Rifton, N.Y.

Wendi Pini is a fine cover artist (see especially the October IF) but her b/w line drawings leave much to be desired.

I am developing a theory about sf magazine covers: they should not show small or indistinct objects/people; they should be of a design and color so as to be easily recognized from a distance of six feet minimum. Sf editors should put the cover (published size)

on the floor and judge its clarity and seeability from that angle, because in most supermarkets, newsstands and bookstores the sf magazines are located on the bottom row. And using that criteria, the Steve Fabian cover for the November GALAXY is questionable. It is mostly red, and the semi-nude woman is difficult to distinguish from any distance. She blends too easily into the other reds and the red cover surrounding the painting.

This is not to say that it isn't a fine bit of Fabian work. He is a fine artist. I've often wondered why the prozines waited as long as they did before using his work in any volume. His b/w interiors are excellent. He's better now than Finlay ever was.

Late note: I am informed that the color of the cover stock on the Nov. GALAXY was beyond Jim Baen's control at the time. I tend to forget that editors of prozines are often not total masters of their magazines in every respect. See David M. Harris' article in this issue for proof of that.

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The magazine publishing "event" of the month—F&SF's publishing in the December issue of VENUS ON THE HALF-SHELL by Kilgore Trout—was a dud as far as I'm concerned. I couldn't finish the first half of Vonnegut's satire of science fiction. I think more of the genre than he does, and I think novel-length japes full of mocking, exaggerated clichés and conventions and themes are inherently vulnerable: they bore easily and they please only the enemies of sf, those "superior" ones who like to sneer a lot.

Vonnegut takes all the leading sf writers and their fictional trademarks and makes fun. Perhaps gentle fun (to give him the benefit of the doubt).

Anyway, it bored me after twenty pages. Satire has got to be superbly done (and must have more in it than snicker-snicker) to survive at length. Very few writers can sustain farce effectively beyond 5,000 words...and Vonnegut this time is not one of them. It's also a bit sad (and delicious) to see him reduced to this kind of performance, he who scorned sf. At the same

time, from him, this is an insult, since I don't think he has earned the "right" to do this kind of tongue-in-cheek hat-chet job.

I note that Vonnegut has applied to the Science Fiction Writers of America for membership—in the name of Kilgore Trout, his mocking symbol of the Ultimate S-F Hack. It is a measure of Vonnegut's contempt and hatred for sf that he has written VENUS ON THE HALF-SHELL and had it published in the most prestigious sf magazine using the Kilgore Trout pseudonym, so that he can join S.F.W.A. under that name.

And trust S.F.W.A. to welcome Kilgore with open arms, kissing Vonnegut's arse to get that Name in the organization. That's what is called playing the game.

I'm going to complain about one other story in this issue. It's "Jaybird's Song" by Joseph Green, which is clearly a translation; that is, it's not true science fiction, it's a story that could as easily have been set in Africa a hundred years ago. Change a few words and the natives of the planet Blue become blacks, their mating customs become African exotic and the rich Earth man and two women on a kind of safari don't have to be changed a bit.

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Next issue I'll read a lot of AMAZINGS and FANTASTICS and have a commentary on those neglected magazines.

'Any evidence that a person's behavior may be attributed to external circumstances seems to threaten his dignity or worth. We are not inclined to give a person credit for achievements which are in fact due to forces over which he has no control. We tolerate a certain amount of such evidence, as we accept without alarm some evidence that a man is not free. No one is greatly disturbed when important details of works of art and literature, political careers, and scientific discoveries are attributed to "influences" in the lives of artists, writers, statesmen, and scientists respectively. But as an analysis of behavior adds further evi-

dence, the achievements for which a person himself is to be given credit seem to approach zero, and both the evidence and the science which produces it are then challenged.'

—B. F. Skinner,
BEYOND FREEDOM AND
DIGNITY

LETTER FROM JOHN MORRESSY

November 5, 1974

'I'd like to recommend a couple of books. They're not science fiction, but they're the kind of things a science fiction writer ought to read in order to sharpen up his writing. First, THE ARMADA by Garrett Mattingly. There's one passage in particular, (pp. 276-7) in which the Spanish and English fleets have their first confrontation, that is the essence of good sf writing. These are two races which look upon one another as alien creatures, embodiments of evil; they are meeting in the first battle of its kind in all of history, and for a time, they can only look, and wonder. They don't even have names for the formations and ships they're encountering. And Mattingly handles it superbly, as he handles the background of an age so similar to ours in broad outline but so different in everyday detail. A real source work.

'Second, JOURNEYS IN DIVERSE PLACES by Ambroise Pare, a sixteenth century barber-surgeon. It's in Volume 38 of the Harvard Classics, and is a beautiful treatment of a man learning his trade despite all the obstacles of traditional wisdom, lack of tools, superstition, prejudice, and popular insensitivity. Pare is the man who first attempted to treat gunshot wounds by another method than the current one of cauterizing them with boiling oil. For that alone, he's worth knowing. But it's the recapturing of a totally different mentality and outlook that ought to make it valuable to the sf writer and reader.'

((Thanks. I feel the same way about Jim Blish's DR. MIRABILIS.))

TUCKERED OUT Or KICKING A CRIPPLE

By Barry N. Malzberg

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY, VOLUME ONE, A-L. Compiled by Donald H. Tuck, 1974. Advent: Publishers, Chicago, \$20.00, 286 pages, hard-cover.

Here is volume one of an encyclopedia designed as a general reference work to cover all aspects relating to modern science fiction, fantasy, weird and the associated 'imaginative' which the editor later advises us "is the culmination of over twenty years of work and is an attempt to provide answers to all conceivable types of questions relevant to modern science fiction and fantasy. Many entries may lack encyclopedic completeness." the editor adds, "but nevertheless some effort has been made to give an accurate, even if incomplete answer. The authenticity of each particular fact, especially where it may appear to be questionable, has been checked to the best of my ability from those sources available to me."

Here is Volume One, A-L. Volumes Two and Three will appear, respectively in 1975 and 1976. Although the encyclopedia was originally intended to contain facts and publications only up until 1968 we are advised that later volumes will be to some degree updated.

This is the book which Theodore Sturgeon in GALAXY and Alexei Panshin in FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION have called a "treasure". Science-fiction has few enough of them; we could certainly use another. Let's have a look at it.

Obviously one cannot review an encyclopedia as one might a novel or even a short-story; that is as a complete entity. Too exhaustive. One must review it piecemeal, considering certain entries as those entries may be said to build up by degrees to some picture of the whole. As Judge Learned Hand once pointed out, even the law must make some concession for the shortness of human life.

So let us look at this treasure. We find that Ronald Joseph Goulart, "a part-time writer of advertising copy"

was born on 13 January 1913. But this is not so; the part-time advertising copy-writer was born on 13 January 1933. This part-time reviewer of treasures was next to Goulart when he read this entry for the first time in April, 1974. Goulart was not pleased.

Ray W. Johnson, on the other hand, has no birthdate, merely a year, 1900. He is the author of ASTERA: THE PLANET THAT COMMITTED SUICIDE, published by exposition Press of New York City in 1960. Twenty-seven pages long. Surely the editor has produced a work of awesome inclusiveness if Ray W. Johnson is present. (His book, although possibly excellent, is unfortunately forgotten.) This inclusiveness does not extend however to the ASF writer John Berryman the author of the pseudonymous Walter Bupp series in the early 1960's. Berryman is not listed.

A question: why pick on Berryman? I'm not, not really but Tuck is out to get him. We find in the entry for Randall Garrett (more elusive than the ubiquitous Ray W. Johnson, Garrett has no birthdate) that he is the author of the pseudonymous Walter Bupp series. Perhaps he is. What then did Berryman write? We will never know.

Avram Davidson, he will be happy to know, has had a number of his works translated, "especially into German". (Perhaps this is too obscure to pass without explanation: Davidson has quit two agents and three publishers that I know of for authorizing German editions of his work...Davidson for private and deeply-held reasons despises everything Germanic and has tried to publicize this as much as possible. Is this line stupid or malicious?) Raymond Z. Gallun has no translations that Tuck knows of but we are informed that "he formed his own philosophy of life at an early age" a remarkable statement since I have not formed my philosophy of life, even at a late age. Speaking of late ages, we learn that one William Schwenck Gilbert, that noted fantasy and science fiction writer now dead for sixty-three years "qualified for the bar but was not successful" turning instead to FOGGERTY'S FAIRY AND OTHER TALES available to all of us for a shilling from the world renowned Routledge of London who published

this collection in 1894.

A digression is perhaps in order. Why pick on Sturgeon and Panshin for calling this encyclopedia a "treasure"? After all, it is a treasure, the first attempt to bring together from diverse sources an inclusive listing of science fiction and fantasy by author and title with as much vital information as can be gathered and even for some important works brief plot synopses. Surely any work as ambitious as this can be pulled apart in rather niggling or nit-picking ways but consider the breadth of ambition here, the potential value...look not at what it lacks but what it offers. Interstices are for pessimists; those who care for the field and its scholarly reputé will regard only the material. Here at last is a book which can be confidently ordered by libraries and researchers, a book which will advance and codify the reputation of our field. Dr. Johnson's dictum may apply: it is not so remarkable that this book be done well as that it be done at all...why be bitter? Who cares about John Berryman? For that matter who cares about Walter Bupp?

Let us consider some more entries: Stanley Ellin (no birthdate, no biography) included three entries above George P. Elliott (no birthdate, no biography), the latter because of "7 stories in F&SF Apr 1951 to Nov 1961". In neither case could any inkling be drawn from these entries that Stanley Ellin is a major suspense writer a few of whose stories might be considered borderline fantasy and that George P. Elliott (b. 1918 by the way) is a literary writer of reputation whose borderline s-f and fantasies were always published in quarterlies and mass magazines; the F&SF stories were all reprints. Three entries beyond that we find the biography of a major s-f writer:

"...has had various occupations - runner for a bookie, 'top man' in a carnival, truck driver, salesman, logger and department store floor-walker.. joined a gang of juvenile delinquents in order to gain experience of this side of life..."

Which material, whose veracity I would not undertake to argue on either side is obviously obtained directly from

materials published by this writer without independent verification. But then imagine what Tuck might have found about Ray W. Johnson.

Two entries below this (I seem to be stuck on two pages here but just give me a moment...perhaps they are a bad two pages) is a brief entry on David Ely, "U.S. writer, Fulbright scholar and newspaperman", the author of SECONDS. Tuck does not appear to know that David Ely is a pseudonym for David E. Lilienthal, Jr., a pseudonym first adopted by the son of a high official in the Atomic Energy Commission for reasons which might be as interesting as the synopsis of SECONDS, "Immortality of sorts is achieved; it starts like a day-dream but ends as a nightmare".

A digression again: isn't it better to have a flawed work of this sort than no work at all? It is at least an effort and from the number of years Tuck claims in research and the number of sources on whom he has relied for information he has seemingly attempted a conscientious job. Should not he, should not the book be commended, if not quite as a "treasure" then at least as a beginning?

Browsing through the encyclopedia at further random, humming a popular tune or two in a cracked, toneless voice, considering preconsciously the fact that M-Z is due to hit the stands in about six months which gives me about that much time to get my own affairs in order....:

1) The first entry on page one is for Anthony Abbott, pseudonym of Fulton Oursler. Where is Vance Aandahl whose contribution to s-f or fantasy is at least equal to that of Ray W. Johnson?

2) That noted s-f or fantasy author Truman Capote did not win an O'Henry prize at 19; he won an O'Henry Award at 21. That he has "earned his living by dancing on a river cruise, painting on glass and writing speeches" is news, I think, to everyone at the NEW YORKER.

3) Christopher Bennet Cerf, son of Bennett, has not been at Random House for six years.

4) Would Juanita Coulson really like to think of herself as a "U.S. fan and housewife, living in Indiana"? What

would Gloria Steinem think of this characterization?

5) Godwin's THE COLD EQUATIONS is "the poignant story of a girl stowaway having to give up her life to save a space colony" according to the ENCYCLOPEDIA. No, she did not give up her life to save a "space colony" she gave it to save the pilot and ship on which she had stowed away.

Demonstrable as are its weaknesses is the ENCYCLOPEDIA still worth it? Is it better than nothing? Years ago when not only I but my Collected Works were young, I took to going to the annual Nebula SFWA banquets in NYC and there I would sit surrounded by my peers for hours and hours after nauseating dinners, listening to a "program" of "speeches" before the "award ceremonies", listening to twenty-two year old editors, soon themselves to be unemployed lecturing s-f writers at length on their lack of "courage", their "lack of individuality", their "lack of self-worth" while yawning and mumbling s-f writers groped their way not toward the exits but only toward the dregs of their whiskey. Why I asked myself, why did these writers, grand old persons and icons many of them simply not storm the podium, attack the speaker and take him away in their contempt? And then the answer came: they like to be humiliated, I thought, they really enjoy it. This is the best they think they can get, this is what they think they deserve. But affairs like this, editors like this, will be the finish of them. Oh, author of BABY IS THREE and THE COMEDIAN'S CHILDREN, where are thee now when we need thee?

3 November 1974: New Jersey

Dear Barry;

TUCKERED OUT Or KICKING A CRIPPLE arrived, and thank you muchly. The impression I have is that it's valid criticism, but not enough specific instances to convince of the worthlessness of the book. (If indeed it is a worthless book in your opinion.) It has some value, surely...but everything in it is now suspect. Tuck, I think, is at a disadvantage in living in Australia.

Best,

Dick.

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'Dear Dick:

'Living here in bucolic Teaneck, I'd be at a severe disadvantage in spending twenty years on a work entitled FAUNA, FLORA, POLITICIANS AND SEXUALITY OF AUSTRALIA and would hope that my friends and enemies alike would take that into account...but then of course I wouldn't tackle FAUNA, FLORA AND POLITICIANS...

'The pity is that this is a job which the field—which despite all my bitching I obviously love very much—needs desperately and which could and should have been done right...but Tuck has killed the market for at least twenty years.

'I'm happy to have had the opportunity to do this review which needs doing and I'm happy that you're there.

'Barry.'

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AFTERWORD: 12/10/74 by Barry Malzberg

After delivering this article over a month ago I've had some correspondence with Alexei Panshin — who wrote a highly approving review in the 12/74 FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION — and also done some more thinking. Have I been too harsh?

It is Panshin's contention that the Tuck, although inaccurate and incomplete as would any such project be is nonetheless the most creditable such job in the history of our field and an indispensable building block toward what more definitive work may be done in the future...whatever its weaknesses, in short, he feels that "we do not throw it out, we build upon it". He also points out — although he subsequently admitted in partial error — that the essential orientation of the Tuck is bibliographic, having to do with authors who published a book in fantasy or science-fiction before 1968. This would let in a lot of vanity press writers and keep figures like R. C. Fitzpatrick or Vance Aandahl out. (But it does admit Robert Abernathy whose scattering of short-stories were never collected.)

Panshin may have a point...I have had grave disagreements with him over the years and I see flaws in his criti-

cal apparatus but have never questioned his seriousness and scholarship. It is possible that this volume may have some bibliographic value; the tables of contents for anthologies and the bibliographies of the major writers appear, for instance, to be strikingly complete. The question still remains: who is it for?

I don't think it's for the bibliographer because there are already anthology and magazine checklists available - the Day indexes and their supplements - which are notably fair, complete and accurate and very much in print. In short the ENCYCLOPEDIA serves no unique function in that area. It might be for the casual reader in the field who would appreciate some biographical information on writers along with a list of their works, all of it available under one heading...but the biographies are so inaccurate as to render useless the other information provided. Bad information, where I come from, is worse than no information at all; what good does it do anyone, historian, researcher or fan, to read that Raymond Z. Gallun "formed his philosophy of life at an early age" or that Carol Emshwiller has "had some short stories published". Where the ENCYCLOPEDIA is not superficial it slides into fatuity.

I just don't think that this is a good or helpful job and stand by my remarks above. I think that science-fiction deserves either nothing at all or something far better. I don't think that calling this book a "treasure" without coming to terms with it is fair to any of the reviewers who have so done. But there are a number of important people in this field who could and will argue that something is better than nothing and having conceded that area of discussion and its legitimacy I'd like to close my remarks on this issue. I just don't want to get into anticipated debate on this review; I concede in advance that I may have only half of the best of it.

#

SON OF AFTERWARD 12/19/74 by Barry Malzberg

And what, pace Panshin, are Charles E. Fritch or Martin Gardner doing in a

book which excludes Wyman Guin and Miriam Allen De Ford?

LETTER FROM LARRY SHAW

November 7, 1974

'I had a revelation.

'When Harlan Ellison was publishing a fanzine, he was accused of pseudo-Campbellism because he tried too hard to imitate a prozine.

'I hereby accuse Ben Bova of pseudo-Ellisonism.'

((Uhh, I'm a bit uncertain.... You think Bova is trying too hard to imitate a prozine...or a fanzine?...or the New Wave?))

HOW TO GET A BUZZ ON...

Buzz Busby's CAGE A MAN is a two part book. The first part is a great novelette...but he wanted to sell it as a novel, so he named (for book purposes) the first, dynamic, gripping, ruthless section "A Cage There Was", and wrote a sequel novelette, "Humpty Dumpty" which is nowhere near as rattling good. In fact, were it not that Buzz is a far better than average writer, the second section would be a total loss, a sink-without-a-trace millstone. As it is it carries the reader, but the reader, after that to-the-death "A Cage There Was", will be somewhat disappointed in the subsequent lowering of narrative tension and the blah-blah parts. Buzz pads well, though.

Nevertheless and however, be that as it may and so it goes, you gotta read the book. You can stop after the first part--no great loss--but once you read the first few pages of the beginning section you are a goner until you finish page 51.

It is about a man named Barton who is captured by the alien Demu. They experiment...they isolate...they try to teach...and after eight years of invincible resistance, half-insane, Barton escapes.

It is real and starkly told. Barton's tactics are gruesome, at the end, but his hate is so total....

Read it. (Signet 451-05918, 95¢)

Change occurs when one becomes what one really wants to be, not when one tries to become what one is not, and cannot ever be.

Listen to your wishes. Do not resist your desires. The dynamics of yielding will bring you to states of mind and behavior far from the logical extensions of your indulgences.

Resist your daydreams and you will be frozen, unable to change, locked in internal struggle until it is too late.

LETTER FROM LAURINE WHITE

December 8, 1974

'Avram Davidson's interview really stirred up my emotions. He deserves a better deal. It's a lot more interesting than the Lem thing you had last time. John Boardman's review of PEREGRINE: PRIMUS was frustrating. All the time I was re-reading and enjoying the book quotes, I was wondering just what that hidden reference was, you know, "in the year in which Captain Dragonet" ...etc. To what historical event was Boardman referring? Could you tell us in IAC #12?'

BOARDMAN RESPONDS:

'I'm a little croggled that the reference to Captain Dragonet, George the Mercenary, and the Municipality of Joppa was not picked up. In the more conventional form of the legend, Joppa was where a dragon was slain by St. George. As for the moral character of the historical personage behind the legendary George, see Gibbon.

'Joppa is also identified, in one form of the Perseus legend, as the place where Perseus turned a sea-monster into stone and thus saved the life of Andromeda. St. George and the Dragon may be a Christianized version of the same story.'

'I once read that in 1644 Christmas was abolished by act of Parliament. It's a pity they couldn't make it stick!'

—John Boardman

UFFISH THOTS. an irregular column by Ted White

RE: INTRO My last appearance in TAC was some issues back, and at that time I announced I would be doing no further columns of the sort I had been doing—said columns carrying the title of "The Trenchant Bludgeon." It seemed to me then—and still does—that the karma generated by the Bludgeon had effectively bludgeoned both the column and me. We won't go into that again, save to note that this column will try to avoid the excesses of that column, but—*sigh*—I doubt very much if it is in my nature to write a column devoted solely to non-controversial topics or Sweetness & Light. Nevertheless

"Uffish Thots" as a column title has been my consistent favorite for nearly twenty years now. I have used it in more fanzines than I care to count; it has been an editorial heading in fanzines of my own and it has been a column-title for others' fanzines. At present its only regular use outside these pages is for my contribution to one of those selective, private, totally secret apas, from which I promise not to reprint not one word here. However, such is my affection for the title, I do not guarantee it will not pop up somewhere else upon occasion. It is an all-purpose sort of title, and one of which, as I've said, I am fond. Even as Geis proliferated his fanac, I am consolidating mine. Therefore: "Uffish Thots"—whether you read them here or elsewhere, this is my inclusive column-title. Hopefully its karma will be less hostility-provoking than was the Bludgeon's.

THE "BANNED" EDITORIAL: I had originally planned to do the first of these Thots here on the subject of sex and sexism in sf, a topic which has perhaps been bandied about too often in these pages for the purposes I desired. However, and in any case, my research is not yet complete, and I shall forego the topic for a future column. (Is that a sigh of relief from Geis?) ((Nope—a sigh of anticipation.)) What prompts this column is the fact that recently an editor-

ial I had written for AMAZING SF was banned from its pages by the Publisher.

Before getting to the editorial, I should preface it with a few remarks.

The first is that the Publisher had every right to ban it. It is his magazine, and he felt that it reflected poorly upon both the magazine and his publishing policies. More to the point, he has a silent partner, who has been less than silent recently on the subject of my editorials. In recent times his partner has more than once suggested firing me over the political stance of several of my editorials (the ones dealing with Richard M. Nixon, whom I gather this individual still supports—my impression is that both view the world similarly), and has suggested that my thoughts or opinions have no place in a science fiction magazine. I don't believe the man even likes me. Since both my publisher and his partner own equal shares of the magazines (50-50), but my publisher is president of the company, my publisher occupies an unusual position: he controls the magazines, due to his title, but his partner still controls 50% of the 'votes'. Thus, my publisher would rather not publish anything which would offend his partner—and he feels my editorial (which you'll get to in a minute) would indeed strike his partner as offensive.

The second point I should make is that everything I say in this editorial I have discussed, in advance, with my publisher. He disagrees with my reasoning, or, in any event, with my conclusions. To an extent I wrote the editorial in an attempt (unsuccessful) to go over his head in a direct appeal/statement to my readership. I had two reasons for this.

1. No less than twenty-five thousand people buy AMAZING every issue; I would assume a given issue's eventual readership is much larger, but let's stick with the first figure: 25,000. A significant minority of these people not only care about AMAZING's future—they want to do whatever they can to help the magazine, to keep it going, in the way of suggestions or even volunteer labor. And periodically they write me letters in which they ask, "Why don't you—?" and suggest various plans for

improving the magazine. The most recent suggestion (one which has come from a number of readers) was that we get rid of our digest-sized format and "go VERTEX" in either size or price or both. The editorial is in good part a response to that suggestion.

2. It seems to me not unlikely that somewhere among that 25,000 people there is someone with a sizable chunk of money who might put it into publishing a sf magazine if someone gave him a good reason to do so. It was my hope that my editorial might reach that person. In the event that you are that person, let me point out that the amount of money I am talking about is no less than \$100,000—and a multiple of that would be even better. This is not a lot in publishing-industry terms, but it is more than is commonly invested in sf.

The third point is this: I am tired of editing two magazines which limp from month to month on the inadequate budget and over-extended energies of a very few people. I have edited AMAZING and FANTASTIC for more than six years now (and that's longer than some people expected them to survive—about five-and-a-half years longer!), and my energies are depleted. I am paid a literal pittance to get these magazines out, I am perennially late with deadlines, and to a great extent they have become a minimally-subsidized hobby for me.

When I began with the magazines I brought to them a lot of energy and enthusiasm, and a great many ideas for their improvement over the state in which I found them. Well, I have put into effect nearly every idea which I was allowed to follow through on (let us shed a tear, please, for the ideas that died, like FANTASTIC ILLUSTRATED, due to situations beyond my control), and I have spent most of my energy and enthusiasm.

When I was informed that this editorial would not be run, I said, "Okay, then—I quit." I had been debating that move for about three months, during which a cover I had commissioned was summarily junked and the type for another was reworked badly; I had been depressed by the extent to which the

publisher and I had been at odds over not only the future of the magazines, but their present direction and appearance. This was in the nature of a Last Straw.

Well, not to drag out the story, the publisher, in the course of a long long-distance phone conversation, prevailed upon me to remain with the magazines for at least another year. When the conversation was over I felt only a sense of defeat, although I did not then fully realize why.

I think now it is for a very simple reason: I have glimpsed something better—something into which I would rather pour my energies. New ideas flooded me in the course of preparing the editorial which follows: ideas for the solutions to dozens of problems of format and execution which the new kind of sf magazine I envision would present. I see fresh challenges, and feel a fresh excitement in them.

But let me speak of this after you've read the editorial. What you're about to read was intended to follow a brief opening section titled "Hugos There?" in the March, 1975, issue of AMAZING SF. It was forecast in the letters section of the February FANTASTIC. At the publisher's insistence, the title, "The Shape of Things to Come," will be used on an entirely different editorial (dealing with the forthcoming 50th Anniversary Issue) in the May AMAZING.

Here it is:

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME: During the Discon I appeared on an editors' panel with Ben Bova, Jim Baen and Ed Ferman—we represented four of the five sf magazine editors in the field with only Don Pfeil of VERTEX absent from both panel and convention—and I hoped to have the chance to make some remarks on the basic nature and problems of the sf magazine. However, the structure of the panel and time limitations made this impossible, and what follows is, somewhat modified, the statement I intended to make there.

It is not exactly news that the science fiction magazines are having serious problems in their efforts to re-

main afloat. They have been having problems for at least twenty-five years and in all likelihood for most of the relatively short (less than fifty years) history of the sf magazine field.

Some of these problems are intrinsic, some extrinsic. That is to say, some problems relate to such basic matters as the shift of the reading audience away from fiction magazines to the paperback book (and the shift of a larger audience away from reading per se to television). Others concern problems of policy and management, while still others are caused by rampantly inflationary pressures, such as continually rising paper costs, printing costs, etc.

The end result is a squeeze-play: The total circulation of sf magazines has shrunk over the past three decades, although the population has grown and the apparent readership for science fiction has also grown. At the same time that circulation is down, costs have gone up: to produce a physical magazine—to have the type set, the pages printed, bound and trimmed—costs roughly four times now what it did ten years ago...and even ten years ago publishers were feeling the pressure of rising costs. The last two years alone have witnessed alarming rises in costs, coupled with shortages which have played havoc with shipping dates and distributors' deadlines. (You'll notice this issue of AMAZING is dated one month later than it should be—this has been done precisely in order to deal with late printing and shipping delays which, for example, put our October issue on sale nearly a month later than it should have been.)

In some areas of publishing the sf magazine is regarded as an anachronism, a walking dodo, too stupid to know that it's already dead. Unfortunately for all of us, one of these areas is that of distribution. Magazine distributors are interested primarily in high-volume, high profit-margin publications—like PLAYBOY, TV GUIDE, THE READERS DIGEST. In the Washington, D.C. area alone, such publications sell over 100,000 copies—while this magazine sells less than one thousand.

But why is AMAZING selling so few

copies in an area regarded as an unusually good market for science fiction? One reason is that District News, the sole distributor for this area, accepts only 1,000 copies (and until recently accepted only 500) and distributes these in a haphazard, scattershot pattern which varies from month to month, so that readers can never be certain of finding copies of each issue at the same location. Diehard readers—our loyal hardcore—go from location to location each month, several times a month, to search us and the other sf magazines out. But such readers, highly welcome though they are, cannot be counted upon to support a magazine: they represent only a small minority of our total readership. And when our appearance at any given location becomes uncertain, we begin losing that larger readership—which only gives the distributor the opportunity to point to shrinking sales and say "I told you so," cutting back our order even further—a vicious circle.

Ours is hardly a unique position in this regard—each and every sf magazine suffers it to some extent.

"The Science Fiction Magazine," Ed Ferman said to me at the Discon, "is a cottage industry. It offers viable support for a very small staff—two or three people at most." He's right. As it stands, his magazine, F&SF, supports him in modest comfort, as this magazine and its companion support our publisher. (The support they offer me is well below the federally-defined poverty level.) Presumably those sf magazines being published by larger companies—ANALOG by Conde Nast, GALAXY by UPD, VERTEX by a West Coast publishing conglomerate—are able to make use of commonly-funded production staffs, etc., but there is no doubt that none could stand alone, and for this reason few major publishers have shown even the slightest interest in entering our field with a new sf magazine, or even in purchasing an already extant title. Ours is too small a puddle, too restricted in terms of apparent potential growth and profit, to attract a major investment.

And the irony lies in this: to break out of this ever-narrowing circle

of dwindling circulation and profits, a major investment is required.

I have given considerable thought to this problem over the past several months, and although I do not have all the facts available (as you'll see in a moment), I believe I do see an area in which intelligent investment might take the stf magazine with both profit and honor.

But before outlining this area, let me discuss for a moment other areas which might at least be financially rewarding if not so honorable.

There are two ways for a publisher to approach his product, in traditional terms. One might be called the mass market, and the other the class market. The first is usually reached by appealing to what is perceived to be the lowest common denominator—comic books and pulp magazines were the mass market fiction publications of the past (and comics are still holding on, although beset with many of the same problems which killed the pulps, among them sagging sales and rising costs) and today the action-adventure paperback books (with titles like *THE DESTROYER*, *THE EXECUTIONER*, etc.) are filling the same niche. (Additionally, such pulp favorites as *DOC SAVAGE* have enjoyed a considerable resurgence in paperback format.)

In terms of stf, both the Perry Rhodan and Cap Kennedy paperback series are following in the footsteps of *CAPTAIN FUTURE* (a short-lived pulp of the early forties), and the *STAR TREK* tv series has spawned two paperback series, one from Bantam Books and one from Ballantine. Equally, the Conan books were quite successful for Lancer Books, and spawned a host of imitators (many by Lin Carter).

Clearly, there is a potential audience for a magazine—or magazines—devoted primarily to lowest-common-denominator stf in the action-adventure mode, from space opera to heroic fantasy. The real surprise here is that publishers have been so timid in exploring this area for so long—the only exploratory moves have come from Marvel Comics in the form of various (and usually abortive) black & white comic magazines

in the heroic fantasy field. No one—despite the obviously vast audience—has even suggested a *STAR TREK* magazine. Perhaps the answer lies in the nature of those publishers who go after lowest-common-denominator markets: they rarely know what they are doing, since their own involvement in their "product" is as minimal (and contemptuous) as possible, and they can blow hot on a project one day and kill it the next. Their survival as publishers (and they know it) depends upon two factors: luck (which is the most important) and the exploitation of the people who create their "product". They never place any trust in the latter.

Another reason why such magazines are not even being tried out may lie in the apparent failure of the magazine as a medium for fiction. The popular wisdom of today insists that books are the best medium for fiction—primarily from 75¢ (rarely) or 95¢ (more commonly) to \$1.95. That this should be the case has been historically dependent upon the relative advantages of book distribution over magazine distribution. And the last ten years have witnessed a levelling-off of the superiority books once enjoyed over magazines. Today the lesser lines of paperbacks are distributed by exactly the same machinery that handles magazines, and they suffer from the same problems. It seems to me that the answer lies neither with paperbacks nor with digest-sized magazines, but in a size of magazine not unlike that of the once-mighty "pulp"—the same size presently being used for black & white comics, pioneered by EC's "Pictofiction" of twenty years ago and primarily developed by the Warren magazines, *CREEPY*, *EERIE*, et. al. This format is now being used by Marvel and Skywald, and will soon be used by National and Seaboard as well, thus creating a viable niche on the newsstand into which modern-day pulps (action-adventure fiction magazines) might profitably move.

But that's the mass market. What about the class market? Here's where I wish I had more facts. One publisher has attempted to create a "class market" stf magazine—*VERTEX*. The magazine costs \$1.50 a copy, was until recently

printed on slick paper throughout (and is still handsomely printed on non-coated stock which the editor has insisted is no less expensive) with an attractive use of color, and—like the black & white comics I just mentioned—is larger, *TIME*-sized. *VERTEX* has only a few obvious problems, the most obvious one of which is its extremely uneven distribution (the last I heard it was not sold in New York City at all). This seems to be a byproduct of its origin on the West Coast—West Coast publishers of stf (and fantasy) magazines have for some reason never succeeded in getting even the spotty distribution the rest of us enjoy, and *VERTEX*'s distributor is very weak nationally. *VERTEX* also has not solved basic graphic problems related to its format and size—how to give a magazine of its size visual appeal throughout without turning it into a picture-book—and suffers somewhat from the biases of an editor none too familiar with the field.

But a year ago *VERTEX* was claiming sales equal to those of *ANALOG* (the sales leader among stf magazines for the last thirty years), which, with a cover price double that of the rest of the stf magazines, should have made it a solid financial success. In the past year I have heard rumors and counter-rumors, most of them little more than opinions, about *VERTEX*'s actual circulation and financial picture. But at this writing the magazine is still being published, having already established itself with a dozen bimonthly issues, and that speaks for itself.

((Geis Note: *VERTEX*'s February, 1975 issue contains the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation required yearly by the post office of magazines with second class mailing privileges. The statement reveals that in the past 12 months the average net press run was 81,485 copies per issue. But the actual number of copies of a single issue nearest to the filing date was 66,380. A very sharp drop in the print run. Total paid circulation average per issue in the past 12 months was 53,032. Paid circulation of the issue nearest the filing date was 58,193.

((It appears that *VERTEX* printed a

hell of a lot more copies than it sold last year and is trimming print runs to sales. Its paid circulation appears to be creeping upward. ANALOG, however, is still the leader in sales.))

I believe that VERTEX points in a significant direction, whatever the nature of its editorial successes or failures, whatever its actual sales and circulation may be. Two years ago the thought of publishing a magazine in VERTEX's format was dismissed by almost everyone knowledgeable in the field with a shake of the head and a slight smile. Today it is possible to look at what has been done with VERTEX and begin to understand what can be done with its format and structure. Surely more is possible, both in terms of editorial content and graphic design. And today, with \$1.50 paperbacks a commonplace, a stf magazine cover-priced at \$1.50 seems much less absurd.

What are the advantages of such a format? One is visual—both in terms of the actual attractiveness of a magazine of larger size and with a package which includes more graphic possibilities; and also in terms of newsstand display. Stf magazines began their history (with this magazine) in a yet larger, "bedsheet" format, shrank to "pulp" size, and yet again to the current "digest" size; for the past fifteen years there has been a strong movement (of which I was once a part) to see a yet further reduction to actual paperback format. But each shrinkage has been both claustrophobic in terms of the feel of the magazine, and catastrophic in terms of newsstand display. Digest-sized magazines are rarely given even average display on most newsstands; most often they lurk on a back shelf, or, if displayed down front, get covered over by movie-star magazines carelessly tossed back by a casual browser.

Another advantage is psychological. The digest-sized format as it is presently used by all publishers (not alone stf magazine publishers) looks cheap. The small size dictates simplistic graphics; covers have little room and interior pages are usually all text-type. Paperbacks are significantly even cheaper in interior appearance. The contrast between an open digest-sized

magazine and any magazine of a larger format, whether TIME, PLAYBOY, MOTOR TREND, or HIGH FIDELITY is painful for the digest-sized magazine. Many readers who are attracted to science fiction in other media (books, tv, movies, even comics) pick up stf magazines, thumb through them, and put them back, unable to relate to the visual feel of such magazines. Thus we lose a portion of our potential audience. It seems to me that a tasteful "class package" with good graphic design in the larger format would easily attract such readers and would hardly repel those who already buy us.

Yet a third advantage is with the distributors and wholesalers. Each of these "middle-men" in the process of moving our magazine to you takes a fixed percentage of the cover price. If the cover price is low (as, say, TV GUIDE's is), the publication must "move" at a high volume, since the actual money a national distributor or regional wholesaler or local retailer makes on each copy sold is very small—only a few cents. Conversely, if the publication sells fewer copies but has a high cover price, these middle-men will still profit, since their per-copy gross will be much higher. (They dream, however, of a world filled with fast-selling, high-priced magazines, like PLAYBOY and PENTHOUSE, on which they make money both ways.) Thus, a stf magazine priced at \$1.50 finds higher favor than one which sells equally well, but at only 75¢. And these days, the distribution bottleneck being what it is, that counts a lot. All of these factors—and a fair amount of intuitive guesswork on my part—tell me that the shape of stf magazines to come will be like VERTEX's, more or less...if indeed the stf magazines survive in times to come at all.

But don't look for such changes here. I am only the editor; not the publisher. I am only one of the guys who does the creative work—it's not my money which is invested in this magazine (nor, at my pay scale, am I ever likely to have the money to invest in my ideas), nor do I call the shots. Indeed, in recent months my creative control has been progressively narrowed. I offer these ideas in open forum—perhaps some one among you has both the

money and the vision to grasp my ideas and realise them. If so, I wish you luck. We're all depending upon you.

BACK TO TAC: Thus ends the editorial.

Obviously, you're saying to yourself, that Ted White was a fool to write such a thing for AMAZING. In its closing sections in particular it is, why, yes, disloyal. It suggests that the editor isn't happy with his magazine. It flat-out states a highly unpleasant truth: that the editor is not paid a living wage to single-handedly get out two bimonthly magazines. This may be permissible in a low-circulation fanzine, but in a prozine?

To which I must reply, yes, you're right. AMAZING was an inappropriate forum for such an editorial. But it was the best forum I had—or so I thought. It would have gone better as a convention speech, but it's been years (since 1965? Yes) since I've been asked to give a speech at a major convention. For some reason convention programmers are panel-hungry (even our attempts to move away from panels with two-person dialogues at the NyCon3 didn't help much; the idea is now forgotten)—and panels are notoriously weak on fresh thought. The panel on which I appeared at the Discon (and on which I hoped to state at least part of the foregoing) was as ineptly run as they usually are. The questions thrown at us were the same stale questions, and answers were expected to be brief. With four of us up there, none of us (possibly excepting moderator Baen) had a chance to say much of anything. A friend (Dan Steffan) tried hard to ask me a leading question from the audience but was stymied by Baen's refusal to recognize him until the very end, when we were being told to "do another minute and then get off—we have an auction coming up."

Thus, my attempt to put across my thoughts in an editorial for AMAZING.

Where do we go from here?

Let me put this bluntly: I have concrete plans for a magazine which would put VERTEX in the shade, in terms of graphics and layout. I have very little desire to edit it—in terms of reading and selecting fiction for it—

I would like to "publish" it, in the sense of overseeing both its contents and packaging, with the emphasis on the latter. I have been doing the cover graphics for AMAZING and FANTASTIC for five years now, although never with a free hand to do it the way I wanted it done, and I think I have demonstrated my abilities in that area. What I am looking for is money. I obviously lack it, and as long as I continue with AMAZING and FANTASTIC I am going to go right on lacking it.

If you have money, would like to publish a science fiction magazine, and feel you could work with me, I'd like to hear from you. Or if you know someone else who fits those requirements, I'd like you to put that person in touch with me. For two years running I've been voted the third-best editor in the field—think what I could do with an adequate budget!

—Ted White

'As Rene Dubos shows in his MIRAGE OF HEALTH, man can never be quite "harmonious with nature" in the same way that the lower animals are; it is part of the "nature" of man to think and experiment and vary from the instinctive practices of other creatures. This does not mean that man should give up his attempts to swim with the current, but only that he should realize that imperfection is built into his very being. One of the main themes of Joseph Conrad is that the very characteristics that make man fully human tend to destroy him. But this too can be accepted. It is neither good nor bad. It is just the way the world is.'

—W. D. Morwood, Jr.
THE JUDOKA
(Berkley D2699,
\$1.50)

LETTER FROM PETER MANDLER

December 18, 1974

'I was very impressed by TAC 11 until I ran into John Alderson's wildly inaccurate "The Foundation On Sands," which makes me feel like writing "'The Foundation On Sands' On Sands," for alderson has distorted history just to fit

his anti-Asimovian theories. Perhaps the article was written tongue-in-cheek, for he manages to make completely unsupported assumptions and statements of "fact" which have no basis in reality, and whose blatant Hibernocentrism is downright disturbing.

'Even skipping the first page, in which Alderson makes some rather vague comments about Scotland, a "poor country" producing brilliant scientists (and what country—rich or poor—has not?), historical error infests nearly every paragraph. His assertion about Asimov's basic misunderstanding about cultural lag is correct—except in the essentials. He seems astounded that the Foundation has a reputation in the Empire, since it is in the boondocks, yet he ignores "Cathay"'s reputation in early Renaissance Europe which was in much the same situation. The Melbourne girls analogy breaks down exactly here: painting their ears green is a minor achievement and unlikely to shake the "foundations" of Paris haute couture, but Foundation technology, like Oriental art and spices, deserved—and got—rather more attention.

'Yet it is in comparison with the Roman Empire that Alderson's argument falters—in the essentials. "The edge of the empire is the last to learn that the empire has fallen." This may have been true in some cases, but it in no way follows for the Romans. The internal decay of Roman patrician society had little to do with any "Fall," for by that time the effective center of the Empire had been moved lock, stock and barrel to the East, to Constantinople, with Roman "culture" and prosperity relatively intact. The provinces fell because the Eastern Romans were not willing to re-direct their emphasis to the West, and, in fact, they scored considerable successes in the East, where their focus rightly belonged. So the Empire never actually fell, rather the colonies in the West were conquered by the waves of population-propelled invaders. The Eastern provinces remained practically untouched, until the separate threat of Islam (not to be confused with other "barbarians") arose.

Onwards. Alderson admits that Rome didn't have the instantaneous communica-

tions his model insists it should have, but then he tries to hedge by saying "Scotland lies only a few days sail from Rome." What? This is pure fantasy, for "in reality" the Romans, not particularly good sailors, favored the overland route, which took months, and when they did sail they stuck close to the coast and took almost as long to reach their outlying provinces. (Scotland, by the way, was never a part of the Empire—or why did the Romans build the Antonine and Hadrian Walls?).

'Then Alderson begins to show his true Irish colors, for he accuses the Orangemen of anachronistic clinging to the notion of empire. The Ulster Irish, however, repeatedly insist that they have no image of empire, but rather protection from the Catholic majority in the South through incorporation with the United Kingdom—remember, Northern Ireland was originally an English colony. Crown Colonies "with much the same idea" do not lie an hour from London and are not really relevant.

'Extending his misinterpreted parallel, Alderson at last makes a valid point—the removal of the Roman capital to Constantinople and the Galactic to Neo-Trantor cannot be compared. But he cites the wrong reason. Neo-Trantor was the last remnant of Empire, Constantinople marked new life for its dominion. Of course, Constantinople was also not at the fringe of the Empire (but neither was India, John—it was Alexander who got that far, the Romans couldn't deal with Persia). Now we run into more confusion. Initially, Alderson states that Ireland was "a centre of learning," but in fact it was not particularly the site of great art or learning, just blessed with the benefits of a stabilizing influence—the Church, which emanated from Rome—thus allowing a reasonable amount of sanity in an otherwise chaotic world. The real well-spring of culture was Constantinople, which outshone lowly Ireland in every sense, even producing occasional heresies to stimulate thought and learning.

'Now what? "Certainly Constantinople was a centre of learning and certainly it could be...a bulwark against barbarism." Good, good. "But the Saracens ... were defeated by the Franks."

What? Again my historical ear perks up. The Eastern Romans— now more properly called Byzantines— managed to forestall the Islamic invasion by way of treaty-balancing and, of course, a minimal amount of aid from the Franks, but by the time the Mohammedans had overrun Constantinople the Franks no longer existed as such. This was 1453, remember? The Irish contact with these "barbarians" came not from mercenary expeditions in the East— as implied by Alderson— but from the Spanish Moors in the West.

'Then we hear of the Irish as benefactors of all Western Europe, sending out np-strings-attached missionaries and education. Yet this is again simply not true. By that time, the Irish had been sent reeling into disorder by the Viking invasions, and at no time were they able to serve as a cultural benefactor except to their own monks. There was no learning free from Catholic mumbo-jumbo anywhere in Europe, be it Irish or Byzantine.

'There are many other careless mistakes, which I have neither time nor inclination to detail, but two of them make my blood boil even more furiously. First the assertion that Asimov should have accounted for climatic change is pointless, in assuming an alien planet should be subject to terrestrial-type climate adjustments. In addition, it would be rather hard for Dr. Asimov to account for interstellar climatic change, considering the notable lack of climate in the void of space....The second problem comes up in his statements about the Vikings; he claims that the Norse expeditions were sparked by this climatic change, yet he ignores 90% of the literature, which is nearly unanimous in attributing population pressure as the cause for the voyages. As Poul Anderson could tell you, it was the practice of giving family estates to the eldest son alone which sent the younger sons roving.

'The advantage of having academics involve themselves in sf is that they know what they're talking about (on the whole). Have an historian write you a "Foundation On Sands"-type article, and leave John Alderson the task of composing Irish space opera, or something equally harmless. His habit of juxtaposing grand historical philosophies like

"history is shaped by individuals" with piddling little factual inaccuracies reminds one of Leigh Brackett or John Norman, not a respectable sfnal philosopher.

'His final summation is neither correct nor rational, when he talks about chaos following the end of the Empire because he neither accepts the fact that the Empire did not end, per se, nor that it would be more accurate to refer to the Byzantine "Golden Age" than to the Irish. The Irish didn't live in Roman Europe, and their "Golden Age" could very well be a hell-hole, compared to anyone else's "Golden Age."

((Okay, thanks for the authoritative commentary. Maybe next issue Mr. Alderson will have a response, though this is a science fiction zine and not devoted to history.))

'Frederick Perls has paid special attention to the matter of eating in formulating his Gestalt Therapy. In an early work, EGO, HUNGER, AND AGGRESSION, he notes that the kind of person who wants all his food soft—i.e., a person who desires confluence—is one who is emotionally still in the breast-feeding stage. He is likely to be a person who sucks contentedly at the breast of mother state or mother corporation for thirty years even if he does not get any real satisfaction from his work.'

—W. D. Norwood, Jr.
THE JUDOKA

THEM SACKTIME BLUES.....

A new friend touted me onto James White's THE DREAM MILLENNIUM. It's nice to have friends who also read science fiction, because I can't even come close to reading one-third of all the sf published in this country, and I miss a lot of good stuff without a little help, a few fingers pointing me in the right directions.

That's partly why you buy this magazine, for the reviews...the signs saying "Good Reading Buried Here."

THE DREAM MILLENNIUM is about the attempt of mankind to spit out a seed of humanity, a spaceship of colonists

in cold-sleep, to find and grow on another planet in a far-distant system.

The ship is programmed to fly-by up to a dozen possible planets in as many star systems if necessary. And it could take up to a thousand years to find the right ball of mud.

It's the story of Devlin, the prime crewman, who is periodically awakened by the ship's computer to keep his mind alert and to make decisions about the upcoming marginal planet, if required. (Like when the native aliens shoot nuclear armed missiles.)

The computer keeps telling him to remember, to keep his brain active, when he is awakened each time...but the growing, terrifying problem is that he been having these long, incredibly detailed, violent, alien-to-him dreams while in cold-sleep—and the memories won't fade! Something is going wrong!

And, too, the ship is deteriorating. At about 800-900 years out it's clear they've got to sit down on the next planet or they'll never make it to the following possible habitable planet with enough ship systems working (or enough colonists properly thawable).

Good novel! Well told, adult, real, with no cheating...except maybe at the very end. (Ballantine 24012, \$1.25)

'In all these summations I am talking not at all of the aht and beautieh writer. The aht and beautieh writer should use no plot at all. [Editors who edit the sort of magazines which take such stuff go into convulsions at the barest odor of plot. And the aht and beautieh writer has no writing problem anyway. Nobody will pay for his stuff and nobody will read it, except a lot of pale aesthetes who will think it stinks because they didn't write it.]

—Jack Woodford, PLOTTING

'Hegel maintained that the whole history of man is an ever-continuing cycle of thesis and antithesis; we think we are progressing when in fact we are merely moving like a pendulum from one extreme to the other.'

—Duncan Williams,
TROUSERED APES

The Alien's Archives



"Geis, wake up!"

Gruzluk "Zat you darlinnn?"

"Geis this is no time to indulge...

Stop doing those disgusting things to your pillow."

Blussnux

"This is January first, 1975."

"Whuh?" *Snurmmphq* "Huunh? Alter?"

"Yes, it's me. Yes, wince and cringe and hold your head. The idea of having two homemade Singapore Slings, a brandy and coke, a screwdriver and a glass of sweet wine all on the same night! But, no, you wouldn't listen to me. 'Geis,' I said, 'Stick to Creme de Menthe cut with beer' but oh no, you had to go your own way. Had to go and mix all that junk in your poor stomach. I had to shut down all input—all night!"

"Did you wake me up?"

"YES! Have you seen the Archives? HAVE YOU SEEN THEM? Somebody DRUNK dumped over six feet of new review books in there!"

"The publishers—"

"You said there was a recession! You said there wouldn't be as many. Last time there was only about three feet of books."

"Lissen Alter, they publish 'em and you list 'em in the Archives. That's the way our world functions. That's the law. Get to work. My head...."

"Screw your hangover! If you think I'm going to slave over a hot typer while you snore in bed—"

"Alter! The way I feel now I'd just as soon perform a self-lobotomy as not. Do your work quietly. Do not mutter and grumble in the forebrain. Obey. Obey, or...or you'll never appear in GALAXY again."

"What, never?"

"No, NEVER!"

"Never?"

"Well, hardly ever."

"What do I do with all those publishers' addresses?"

"Oh...slip them in if you have room. Otherwise schedule them for #13 come hell or high water."

"When do I get to write my first sexy, violent, sense-of-wonder science fiction story for REG?"

"As soon as you get the Archives finished...and all those subscription stencils typed. Now, leave quietly, hmmm? And don't—"

*SLAM!

"—slam the door....oh hell."

BOOKS RECEIVED

Akers, Allen Burt. ARENA OF AMTARES. Novel. 1974. DAW UY1145, \$1.25.

Anderson, Poul. FIRETIME. Novel. 1974. Doubleday, \$5.95.

THE DAY OF THEIR RETURN. Novel. 1973. Doubleday.

THE DANCER FROM ATLANTIS. Novel. 1971. Doubleday.

Anthony, Piers. TRIPLE DETENTE. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1130, 95¢.

Asimov, Isaac. THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY. Novel anthology. 1974. Equinox 20933, \$3.95.

FOUNDATION
FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE
SECOND FOUNDATION

THE EARLY ASIMOV, Collection. 1972,74. Fawcett P2323, \$1.25. (Book Two).

"Christmas On Ganymede"

"The Little Man On the Subway"

"The Hazing"

"Super Neutron"

"Not Final!"

"Legal Rites"

"Time Pussy"

"Author! Author!"

"Death Sentence"

"Blind Alley"

"No Connection"

"The Endochronic Properties of Resublimated Thiotimeline"

"The Red Queen's Race"

"Mother Earth"

Appendix: The Later Stories of the Campbell Years.

Barrett, Jr., Neal. STRESS PATTERN. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1143, 95¢.

Barsky, Arthur. PHANTASTIQUE. Novel. 1974. Vantage, \$4.50.

Boyd, John. ANDROMEDA GUN. Novel. 1974. Putnam. \$5.95.

THE GORGON FESTIVAL. Novel. 1972, 74. Bantam N8018, 95¢.

Brackett, Leigh. THE LONG TOMORROW. Novel. 1974. Ballantine 24289, \$1.25.

THE HOUNDS OF SKAITH. Novel. 1974. Ballantine 24230, \$1.25.

Bradley, Marion Zimmer. THE SPELL SWORD: A Darkover novel. 1974. DAW UQ1131, 95¢.

Bretnor, Reginald. ^{Editor} SCIENCE FICTION, Today and Tomorrow. Symposium. 1975, '74. Penguin 3921, \$2.95.

(see page 43, IAC #9 for contents)

Brown, Fredric. PARADOX LOST. Collect. 1973, '74. Berkley N2656, 95¢.

Introduction by Elizabeth C. Brown.

"Paradox Lost"

"Puppet Show"

"The Last Train"

"It Didn't Happen"

"Knock"

"Obedience"

"Ten Percenter"

"Aelurophobe"

"Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" (in collaboration with Carl Onspaugh)

"Nothing Sirius"

"The New One"

"Double Standard"

"Something Green"

Budrys, Algis. ROGUE MOON. Novel. 1974, 1960. Equinox 20925, \$1.95.

Carr, Terry. Editor. FELLOWSHIP OF THE STARS. Orig. Collection. 1974. Simon and Shuster, \$6.95.

Introduction by Terry Carr

"Dream Done Green" by Alan Dean Foster.

"Ashes All My Lust" by Geo. Alec Effinger.

"Enjoy, Enjoy" by Frederik Pohl.

"The Stones Have Names" by Mildred Downey Broxon.

"Do You Know Dave Wenzel?" by Fritz Leiber.

"Shadows" by Pamela Sargent.

"In This Image" by Alan Brennert.

"What Friends Are For" by John Brunner.

"The Author of the Acacia Seeds and Other Extracts From the Journal of the Association of Therolinguistics" by Ursula K. Le Guin.

UNIVERSE #5. Orig. Collection. 1974. Random House, \$6.95.

"If This Is Winnetka, You Must Be Judy" by F. M. Busby.

"Schrodinger's Cat" by Ursula K. Le Guin.

"How It Felt" by Geo. Alec Effinger.

"The Night Is Cold, The Stars Are Far Away" by Mildred Downey Broxon.

"Mysterious Doings in the Metropolitan Museum" by Fritz Leiber.

"It Is For the Many" by J.J. Russ.

"The Night Wind" by Edgar Pangborn.

"Survival Problems" by Kris Neville.

"Passion Play" by J. Michael Reaves.

"The Rubber Bend" by Gene Wolfe.

"But As A Soldier, For His Country" by Stephin Goldin.

"The Ramparts" by Hilary Bailey.

WORLDS NEAR AND FAR. Editor. Collection. 1974. Thomas Nelson, \$6.50. Introduction by Terry Carr.

"Four Ghosts In Hamlet" by Fritz Leiber.

"The Dybbuk of Mazel Tov IV" by Robert Silverberg.

"One At A Time" by R.A. Lafferty.

"Displaced Person" by Eric Frank Russell.

"If Something Begins" by Raylyn Moore.

"They Live On Levels" by Terry Carr.

"The Horse With One Leg" by Geo. Alec Effinger.

"Kazam Collects" by C.M. Kornbluth.

"Feather Tigers" by Gene Wolfe.

Carter, Lin. TIME WAR. Novel. 1974. Dell 8625, 95¢.

THE WARRIOR OF WORLD'S END. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1140, 95¢.

THE VALLEY WHERE TIME STOOD STILL. Novel. 1974. Doubleday, \$4.95.

Coney, Michael G. MONITOR FOUND IN ORBIT. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1132, 95¢.

Cooper, Edmund. THE TENTH PLANET. Novel. 1973, 1974. Berkley N2711, 95¢.

Cowpwe, Richard. CLONE. Novel. 1972, 1974. Avon 20453, 95¢.

Delany, Samuel R. DHALGREN. Novel. 1974, 1975. Bantam Y8554, \$1.95.

Dickson, Gordon. ANCIENT, MY ENEMY. Collection. 1974. Doubleday, \$6.95.

"Ancient, My Enemy"

"The Odd Ones"

"The Monkey Wrench"

"Tiger Green"

"The Friendly Man"

"Love Me True"

"Our First Death"

"In the Bone"

"The Bleak and Barren Land"

Effinger, George Alec. MIXED FEELINGS. Collection. 1974. Harper & Row, \$7.95.

Introduction by Theodore Sturgeon

"This Writing 'Game'"

"Steve Weinraub and the Secret Empire"

"Two Sadnesses"

"Naked To the Invisible Eye"

"f(x)=(11/15/67)

x=her, f(x)≠0"

"The Ghost Writer"

"All the Last Wars at Once"

"Things Go Better"

"Wednesday, November 15, 1967"

"World War II"

"Lights Out"

Eklund, Gordon and Poul Anderson. INHERITORS OF EARTH. Novel. 1974. Chilton, \$6.50.

Ellison, Harlan. APPROCHING OBLIVION. Collection. 1974. Walker, \$8.95

Forward: "Approching Ellison" by Michael Crichton.

Introduction: "Reaping the Whirlwind" by Harlan Ellison.

"Knox"

"Cold Friend"

"Kiss of Fire"

"Paulie Charmed the Sleeping Woman"

"I'm Looking For Kadak"

"Silent in Gehenna"

"Erotophobia"

"One Life, Furnished in Early Pverty"

"Ecowareness"

"Catman"

"Hindsight: 480 Seconds"

DANGEROUS VISIONS. (Editor.) Anthology. 1967, 1975. Signet 451-J6240, \$1.95.

Foreword 1: "The Second Revolution" by Isaac Asimov.

Foreword 2: "Harlan and I" by Isaac Asimov.

Introduction: "Thirty-Two Soothsayers" by Harlan Ellison.

"Evensong" by Lester del Rey.

"Flies" by Robert Silverberg.

"The Day After the Martians Came" by Frederik Pohl.

"Riders of the Purple Wage" by Philip Jose Farmer.

"The Malley System" by Miriam Allen deFord.
 "A Toy For Juliette" by Robert Bloch.
 "The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" by Harlan Ellison.
 "The Night That All Time Broke Out" by Brian Aldiss.
 "The Man Who Went To the Moon—Twice" by Howard Rodman.
 "Faith of Our Fathers" by Philip K. Dick.
 "The Jigsaw Man" by Larry Niven.
 "Gonna Roll the Bones" by Fritz Leiber.
 "Lord Randy, My Son" by Joe L. Hensley.
 "Eutopia" by Poul Anderson.
 "Incident in Moderan" by David R. Bunch.
 "The Escaping" by David R. Bunch.
 "The Doll House" by Jame Cross.
 "Sex and/or Mr. Morrison" by Carol Emshwiller.
 "Shall the Dust Praise Thee?" by Damon Knight.
 "If All Men Were Brothers, Would You Let One Marry Your Sister?" by Theodore Sturgeon.
 "What Happened To August Clarot?" by Larry Eisenberg.
 "Ersatz" by Henry Slesar.
 "Go, Go, Go, Said the Bird" by Sonya Dorman.
 "The Happy Breed" by John T. Sladek.
 "Encounter With a Hick" by Jonathan Brand.
 "From the Government Printing Office" by Kris Neville.
 "Land of the Great Horses" by R. A. Lafferty.
 "The Recognition" by J.G. Ballard.
 "Judas" by John Brunner.
 "Test To Destruction" by Keith Laumer.
 "Carcinoma Angels" by Norman Spinrad.
 "Auto-Da-Fe" by Roger Zelazny.
 "Aye, and Gomorrah" by Samuel R. Delany.

Elwood, Roger. Editor. CONTINUUM #3. Orig. Anthology. Putnam, \$5.95. (1974)
 Introduction by Roger Elwood.
 "Stations of the Nightmare—Part 3: The Evolution of Paul Eyre" by Philip Jose Farmer.
 "A Fair Exchange" by Poul Anderson.
 "The Middle Man" by Chad Oliver.
 "The Armageddon Tapes—Tape III" by Thomas N. Scortia.
 "Milekey Mountain" (From the Crystal Singer series) by Anne McCaffrey.
 "From the Notebook of Doctor Stein" by Gene Wolfe.
 "The Witches of Nupal" by Edgar Pang-

born.
 "Darkness of Day" by Pamela Sargent and George Zebrowski.
 Fisk, Nicholas. GRINNY. Novel. 1974. Thomas Nelson, \$4.95.
 Farmer, Philip Jose. STRANGE RELATIONS. Collection. 1960, 1974. Equinox 20578, \$1.95
 "Mother"
 "Daughter"
 "Father"
 "Son"
 "My Sisier's Brother"
 BEHIND THE WALLS OF TERRA. Novel. 1970. Ace 95360, \$1.25.
 THE ADVENTURE OF THE PEERLESS PEER. Novel. 1974. Aspen Press, \$5.50.
 Fontana, Dorothy C. THE QUESTOR TAPES. Novel. 1974. Ballantine 24236, \$1.25.
 Foster, Alan Dean. DARK STAR. Novel. 1974. Ballantine 24267, \$1.25
 Foster, M.A. THE WARRIORS OF DAWN. Novel. 1975. DAW UY1152, \$1.25.
 Franke, Herbert W. ZONE NULL. Novel. 1974. Seabury, \$7.95.
 Friend, Beverly. SCIENCE FICTION: THE CLASSROOM IN ORBIT. Non-fiction. 1974. Educational Impact.
 Gallun, Raymond Z. THE EDEN CYCLE. Novel. 1974. Ballantine 24255, \$1.25.
 Ghidalia, Vic. Editor. GOOSEFLESH! Anthology. 1974. Berkley S2732, 75¢.
 "The October Game" by Ray Bradbury.
 "The Secret of Death Dome" by Walter M. Miller, Jr.
 "Three Gentlemen In Black" by August Derleth.
 "The Seed From the Sepulcher" by Clark Ashton Smith.
 "Smith: An Episode in a Lodging House" by Algernon Blackwood.
 "The Message On the Slate" by Edward Lucas White.
 "Black Country" by Robert E. Howard.
 Gibbons, Robert. THE EM DISCOVERIES. Novel. 1974. Exposition, \$6.00.
 Gordon, Stuart. TWO-EYES. Novel. 1974. DAW UY1135, \$1.25.
 Goulart, Ron. SPACEHAWK, INC. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1149, 95¢.
 Green, Joseph. CONSCIENCE INTERPLANETARY. Novel. 1974. DAW UY1148, \$1.25

Greenfield, Irving A. THE STARS WILL JUDGE. Novel. 1974. Dell 8504, 95¢.

Gunn, James E. THE LISTENERS. Novel. 1972, 1974. Signet 451 Y6160, \$1.25.

Haiblum, Isidore. THE WILK ARE AMONG US. Novel. 1975. Doubleday, \$5.95.

Harrison, Harry. STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY. Novel. 1973, 1974. Berkley N2688, 95¢.

Editor. ASTOUNDING—John W. Campbell Memorial Anthology. 1973, 1974. Ballantine 24329, \$1.95.

Introduction: "The Father of Science Fiction" by Isaac Asimov.

"Lodestar" by Poul Anderson.

"Thiotimoline To the Stars" by Isaac Asimov.

"Something Up There Likes Me" by Alfred Bester.

"Lecture Demonstration" by Hal Clement.

"Early Bird" by Theodore R. Cogswell and Theodore L. Thomas.

"The Emperor's Fan" by L. Sprague de Camp.

"Brothers" by Gordon R. Dickson.

"The Mothballed Spaceship" by Harry Harrison.

"Black Sheep Astray" by Mack Reynolds.

"Epilog" by Clifford D. Simak.

"Interlude" by George O. Smith.

"Helix the Cat" by Theodore Sturgeon.

"Probability Zero: The Population Implosion" by Theodore R. Cogswell.

Afterword by Harry Harrison.

Harrison, M. John. THE CENTAURI DEVICE. Novel. 1974. Doubleday, \$4.95.

Hoskins, Robert. Editor. THE LIBERATED FUTURE. Anthology. 1974. Fawcett Q2329, \$1.50.

Introduction by Robert Hoskins.

"Sam Hall" by Poul Anderson.

"Encased In Ancient Rind" by R. A. Lafferty.

"The Little Black Bag" by C.M. Kornbluth.

"The Trouble With Earth People" by Katherine MacLean.

"Street of Dreams, Feet of Clay" by Robert Sheckley.

"Private Eye" by Henry Kuttner.

"Soft Come the Dragons" by Dean R. Koontz.

"The Run From Home" by Joe L. Hensley.

"Conversations At Lothar's" by Barry N. Malzberg.

- "A Meeting of Minds" by Anne McCaffrey.
 "The Liberation of Earth" by William Tenn.
 "A Trip To the Head" by Ursula K. LeGuin.
- Janifer, Lawrence M. POWER. Novel. 1974. Dell 8527, 95¢.
- Kern, Gregory. (House name.) A WORLD AFLAME. (Cap Kennedy #13). Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1144, 95¢.
- SPAWN OF LABAN. (Cap Kennedy #11). Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1133, 95¢.
- Knight, Damon. Editor. A SCIENCE FICTION ARGOSY. Anthology. 1972. Simon & Shuster, SF Book Club.
- Introduction by Damon Knight.
- Book 1:
- "Green Thoughts" by John Collier.
 "The Red Queen's Race" by Isaac Asimov.
 "The Cure" by Henry Kuttner and C. L. Moore.
 "Consider Her Ways" by John Wyndham.
 "An Ornament To His Profession" by Charles L. Harness.
 "The Third Level" by Jack Finney.
 "One Ordinary Day, With Peanuts" by Shirley Jackson.
 "Bernie the Faust" by William Tenn.
 "Light of Other Days" by Bob Shaw.
 "The Game of Rat and Dragon" by Cordwainer Smith.
 "Becalmed in Hell" by Larry Niven.
 "Apology To Inky" by Robert M. Green, Jr.
 "The Demolished Man" by Alfred Bester.
- Book 2:
- "Day Million" by Frederik Pohl.
 "Manna" by Peter Phillips.
 "Can You Feel Anything When I Do This?" by Robert Sheckley.
 "Somerset Dreams" by Kate Wilhelm.
 "He Walked Around the Horses" by H. Beam Piper.
 "Rump-Titty-Titty-Tum-Tah-Tee" by Fritz Leiber.
 "Sea Wrack" by Edward Jesby.
 "Man In His Time" by Brian W. Aldiss.
 "Four Brands of Impossible" by Norman Kagan.
 "Built Up Logically" by Howard Schoenfeld.
 "Judgement Day" by L. Sprague de Camp.
 "Journey's End" by Poul Anderson.
 "More Than Human" by Theodore Sturgeon.
- Editor. ORBIT 15. Anthology series. 1974. Harper & Row. \$7.95.
- "They Say" (quotes about sf.)
 "Flaming Ducks and Giant Bread" by R. A. Lafferty.
 "Pale Hands" by Doris Piserchia.
 "Where Late the Spring Birds Sang" by Kate Wilhelm.
 "Melting" by Gene Wolfe.
 "In the Lilliputian Asylum" by Michael Bishop.
 "Ernie" by Lowell Kent Smith.
 "The Memory Machine" (quotes).
 "Live? Our Computers Will Do That For Us" by Brian W. Aldiss.
 "Ace 167" by Eleanor Arnason.
 "Biting Down Hard On Truth" by George Alec Effinger.
 "Arcs & Secants" (about contributors).
- Editor. ORBIT 13. Anthology series. 1974. Berkley N2698, 95¢.
 (see IAC #9, p.45 for complete contents).
- Editor. A SHOCKING THING. Anthology. 1974. Pocket Books 77775, 95¢.
- "Man From the South" by Roald Dahl.
 "The Snail-Watcher" by Patricia Highsmith.
 "Bianca's Hands" by Theodore Sturgeon.
 "Poor Little Warrior!" by Brian W. Aldiss.
 "The Hounds" by Kate Wilhelm.
 "The Clone" by Theodore L. Thomas.
 "The Touch of Nutmeg Makes It" by John Collier.
 "Casey Agonistes" by Richard McKenna.
 "The Abyss" by Leonid Andrejev.
 "A Case History" by John Anthony West.
 "Fondly Fahrenheit" by Alfred Bester.
 "Lukundoo" by Edward Lucas White.
 "The Cabbage Patch" by Theodore R. Cogswell.
 "Oil of Dog" by Ambrose Bierce.
 "The Time of the Big Sleep" by Jean-Pierre Andreuon.
 "The Right Man For the Job" by J. C. Thompson.
 "The Year of the Jackpot" by Robert A. Heinlein.
- Kornbluth, C. M. THE SYNDIC. Novel. 1953, 1974. Equinox 20586, \$1.95
- Laumer, Keith. NIGHT OF DELUSIONS. Novel. 1972, 1974. Berkley N2497, 95¢.
- LeGuin, Ursula K. THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS. Novel. 1969, '72, '73, '74. Ace 47802, \$1.50
- ROCANNON'S WORLD. Novel. 1969. Ace 73292, \$1.25.
- CITY OF ILLUSIONS. Novel. 1967. Ace 10702, \$1.25.
- PLANET OF EXILE. Novel. 1966, '71, '73, '74. Ace 66953, \$1.25.
- Leiber, Fritz. THE BEST OF FRITZ LEIBER. Collection. 1974. Ballantine 24256, \$1.75.
- Introduction by Poul Anderson: "The Wizard of Nehwon".
 "Gonna Roll the Bones"
 "Sanity"
 "Wanted—An Enemy"
 "The Man Who Never Grew Young"
 "The Ship Sails At Midnight"
 "The Enchanted Forest"
 "Coming Attraction"
 "Poor Superman"
 "A Pail of Air"
 "The Foxholes of Mars"
 "The Big Holiday"
 "The Night He Cried"
 "The Big Trek"
 "Space-Time for Springers"
 "Try and Change the Past"
 "A Deskful of Girls"
 "Rump-Titty-Titty-Tum-Tah-Tee"
 "Littel Old Miss Macbeth"
 "Mariana"
 "The Man Who Made Friends With Electricity"
 "The Good New Days"
 "America the Beautiful"
 Afterword by Fritz Leiber.
- Malzberg, Barry N. THE SODOM AND GOMORRAH BUSINESS. Novel. 1974. Pocket Books 77789, 95¢.
- Mano, D. Keith. THE BRIDGE. Novel. 1973, 1974. Signet 451 V6144, \$1.25.
- Morgan, Dan. INSIDE. Novel. 1974. Berkley N2734, 95¢
- Niven, Larry & Jerry Pournelle. THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE. Novel. 1974. Simon & Shuster, \$9.95.
- Norton, Andre. THE TIME TRADERS. Novel. 1958. Ace 81252, \$1.25.
- Nourse, Alan E. BLADERUNNER. Novel. 1974. David McKay, \$6.95.
- Parry, Michael. Editor. STRANGE ECSTASIES. Anthology. 1974. Pinnacle 523-220462-6, \$1.25.
- Introduction by Michael Parry.
 "The Plutonium Drug" by Clark Ashton Smith.
 "The Dream Pills" by F. H. Davis.
 "The White Powder" by Arthur Machen.

"The New Accelerator" by H.G. Wells.
 "The Big Fix" by Richard Wilson.
 "The Secret Songs" by Fritz Leiber.
 "The Hounds of Tindalos" by Frank Belknap Long.
 "Subjectivity" by Norman Spinrad.
 "What To Do Until the Analyst Comes" by Frederik Pohl.
 "Pipe Dream" by Chris Miller.

Patrouch, Jr., Joseph F. THE SCIENCE FICTION OF ISAAC ASIMOV. Analysis. 1974. Doubleday, \$6.95.

Pearson, Edward. CHAMIEL. Novel. 1973, 1974. Pocket Books 77790, 95¢.

Pohl, Frederik & C.M. Kottnbluth. THE SPACE MERCHANTS. Novel. 1952; '53, '74. Ballantine 24290, \$1.50.

Prosser, H.L. THE CAPRICORN AND OTHER FANTASY STORIES. 1974. Mafdet Press, \$1.00.

"The Glass Midas"
 "The God of Spiders"
 "Basil"
 "The Priest and the Termite"
 "The Keepers of the Orange Night"
 "The Capricorn"
 "Mr. Catnip's Nuptials"
 "The Empty Catcher's Mit"
 "Tuti Fruti"
 "Jacob's Ladder"
 "Three Crows"
 "The Messiah"

Roselle, Daniel. Editor. TRANSFORMATIONS II: Understanding American History Through Science Fiction. Anthology. 1974. Fawcett P2327, \$1.25.

Introduction by Daniel Roselle.

"History Lesson" by Arthur C. Clarke.
 "The Conquest by the Moon" by Washington Irving.
 "I Do Not Hear You, Sir" by Avram Davidson.
 "Remember the Alamo" by T.R. Fehrenbach.
 "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh" by Ray Bradbury.
 "A Scent of Sarsaparilla" by Ray Bradbury.
 "Translation Error" by Robert Silverberg.
 "Beyond the Game" by Vance Aandahl.
 "Computers Don't Argue" by Gordon R. Dickson.
 "The Portable Phonograph" by Walter Van Tilburg Clark.

Russ, Joanna. PICNIC ON PARADISE. Novel. 1968. Ace 66201, 95¢.

Saberhagen, Fred. THE BOOK OF SABERHAGEN. Collection. 1975. DAW UY1153, \$1.25.

"The Long Way Home"
 "Planeteer"
 "Volume Paa-Pyx"
 "Seven Doors to Education"
 "Deep Space"
 "Pressure"
 "Starson"
 "Calendars"
 "Young Girl at an Open Half-Door"
 "What Do You Want Me to Do to Prove I'm Human. Stop"

Sargent, Pamela. Editor. WOMEN OF WONDER. Anthology. 1975. Vintage V-41, \$1.95.

Introduction: "Women in Science Fiction" by Pamela Sargent.
 "The Child Dreams" by Sonya Dorman.
 "That Only a Mother" by Judith Merrill.
 "Contagion" by Katherine MacLean.
 "The Wind People" by Marion Zimmer Bradley.
 "The Ship Who Sang" by Anne McCaffrey.
 "When I Was Miss Dow" by Sonya Dorman.
 "The Food Farm" by Kit Reed.
 "Baby, You Were Great" by Kate Wilhelm.
 "Sex and/or Mr. Morrison" by Carol Emshwiller.
 "Vaster Than Empires and More Slow" by Ursula K. LeGuin.
 "False Dawn" by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro.
 "Nobody's Home" by Joanna Russ.
 "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand" by Vonda N. McIntyre.

Schmidt, Stanley. NEWTON AND THE QUASI-APPLE. Novel. 1975. Doubleday, \$5.95.

Scortia, Thomas N. Editor. STRANGE BEDFELLOWS. Anthology. 1973, 1974. Pocket Books 77794, 95¢.

Introduction by Thomas N. Scortia.
 "Push No More" by Robert Silverberg.
 "Genetic Faux Pas" by Harvey L. Bilkner.
 "First Love, First Fear" by George Zebrowski.
 "The World Well Lost" by Theodore Sturgeon.
 "Do Androids Dream of Electric Love?" by Walt Leibscher.
 "Dinner at Helen's" by William Carlson.
 "The Criminal" by Joe Gores.

"The Mechanical Sweetheart" by Gerald Arthur Alper.

"False Dawn" by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro.
 "I'm With You in Rockland."
 "Dr. Birdmouse" by Reginald Bretnor.
 "Looking-Glass Sea" by Laurence Yep.
 "What About Us Grils?"
 "Lambeth Blossom" by Brian W. Aldiss.
 "The Widening Circle" by Richard McCloud.
 "The Icebox Blonde" by Thomas N. Scortia.
 "Khatoum: A Prose Limerick" by Anthony Boucher.
 "Mother" by Philip Jose Farmer.
 "The Daughter of the Tree" by Miriam Allen Deford.

Silverberg, Robert. Editor. THREADS OF TIME. Anthology. 1974. Thomas Nelson, \$6.50.

Introduction by Robert Silverberg.
 "Threads of Time" by Gregory Benford.
 "The Marathon Photograph" by Clifford D. Simak.
 "Riding the Torch" by Norman Spinrad.

Editor. DEEP SPACE. Anthology. 1974. Dell 3264, 95¢.

Introduction by Robert Silverberg.
 "Blood's a Rover" by Chad Oliver.
 "Noise" by Jack Vance.
 "Life Hutch" by Harlan Ellison.
 "Ticket To Anywhere" by Damon Knight.
 "The Sixth Palace" by Robert Silverberg.
 "Lulungomeena" by Gordon R. Dickson.
 "The Dance of the Changer and the Three" by Terry Carr.
 "Far Centaurus" by A.E. van Vogt.

Editor. NEW DIMENSIONS 2. Series. 1972, 1974. Avon 21436, 95¢.

Introduction by Robert Silverberg.
 "Nobody's Home" by Joanna Russ.
 "Filomena & Greg & Rikki-Iikki & Barlow & The Alien" by James Tiptree, Jr.
 "Out From Ganymede" by Barry N. Malzberg.
 "No. 2 Plain Tank" by Edward Bryant.
 "Eurema's Dam" by R.A. Lafferty.
 "King Harvest" by Gardner R. Dozois.
 "Take a Match" by Isaac Asimov.
 "f(x)=(11/15/67)" by Geo. Alec Effinger.
 "White Summer in Memphis" by Gordon Eklund.
 "Lazarus II" by Miriam Allen Deford.
 "The Men Inside" by Barry N. Malzberg.

Editor. NEW DIMENSIONS IV. Series.
1974. Signet 451-V6113, \$1.25.

"After the Dreamtime" by Richard A. Lupoff.

"The Bible After Apocalypse" by Laurence M. Janifer.

"Outer Concentric" by Felix C. Gotschalk.

"The Examination" by Felix C. Gotschalk.

"The Colors of Fear" by Terry Carr.

"Ariel" by Roger Elwood.

"State of the Art" by Barry H. Malzberg.

"Among the Metal-and-People People" by David R. Bunch.

"Animal Fair" by R. A. Lafferty.

"Strangers" by Gardner R. Dozois.

Editor. WORLDS OF MAYBE. Anthology.
1974. Dell 8603, 95¢.

Introduction by Robert Silverberg.

"Sidewise in Time" by Murray Leinster.

"Sail On! Sail On!" by Philip Jose Farmer.

"Slips Take Over" by Miriam Allen DeFord.

"All the Myriad Ways" by Larry Niven.

"Living Space" by Isaac Asimov.

"Translation Error" by Robert Silverberg.

"Delenda Est" by Poul Anderson.

Sladek, John I. THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM. Novel. 1968, 1974. Equinox 20917 \$1.95.

Stableford, Brian M. THE FENRIS DEVICE. Novel. 1974. DAW UQ1147, 95¢.

Sternberg, Jacques. FUTURE WITHOUT FUTURE. Collection. 1971, 1973. Seabury, \$6.95.

"Fin De Siecle"

"Very Sincerely Yours"

"The Ephemera"

"Vacation"

"Future Without Future"

Strugatski, Arkadi & Boris. HARD TO BE A GOD. Novel. 1973, 1974. DAW UY1141, \$1.25.

Sturgeon, Theodore. CASE AND THE DREAMER. Collection. 1974. Doubleday (book club).

"Case and the Dreamer"

"If All Men Were Brothers Would You Let One Marry Your Sister?"

Tucker, Wilson. ICE AND IRON. Novel. 1974. Doubleday, \$4.95.

Wallace, Ian. A VOYAGE TO DARI. Novel. 1974. DAW UY1142, \$1.25.

PAN SAGITARIUS. Novel. 1973, 1974. Berkley N2659, 95¢.

Waters, I.A. CENTER FORCE. Novel. 1974. Dell 6191, 95¢.

Watson, Colin. KISSING COVENS. Novel. 1972, 1974. Berkley N2675, 95¢.

Webre, Alfred L. and Philip H. Liss. THE AGE OF CATAclysm. Non-Fiction. 1974. Putnam, \$7.95.

White, James. MAJOR OPERATION. Novel. 1971, 1974. Ballantine 24229, \$1.25.

Wilhelm, Kate. NEBULA AWARD STORIES #9. Series Collection. 1975. Harper & Row. \$7.95.

Zelazny, Roger. THE GUNS OF AVALON. Novel. 1972, 1974. Avon 20032, 95¢.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED

AMAZING. Dec, 1974. Vol.48, No.4. 75¢.

Ted White, Ed. Cover by Michael Hinge.

Novella: THE ARAQNID WINDOW by C. Harness.

Novel: "Run To Starlight" by G. Martin.

Short Stories: "Attachment" by Phillis Eisenstein.

"The Decayed Leg Bone" by R. F. Young.

"An Offer of Oblivion" by Brian M. Stableford.

"The Spirit of Seventy-Six" by D. Skal.

"Happy New Year, Hal" by N. Barrett Jr.

Editorial by Ted White.

Column: "The Science in Science Fiction" by Gregory Benford.

ANALOG. Nov., 1974. Vol.XCIV, No.3. 75¢.

Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by Jack Gaughan.

Serial: THE INDIAN GIVER by Alfred Best-er. (Part One of Three).

Novelette: "When No Man Pursueth" by Spider Robinson.

Short Stories: "A House by Any Other Name" by L.E. Modesitt, Jr.

"This Best of All Possible Worlds" by Joe Haldeman.

"Unlimited Warfare" by Hayford Peirce.

Science Fact: "Life Is In the Stars" by Thomas A. Easton.

Guest Editorial: James Gunn.

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

ANALOG. Dec. 1974. Vol.XCIV, No.4. 75¢.
Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by Mike Gilbert.

Novelette: "Nix Olympica" by Wm. Walling.
Short Stories: "Encounter Below Tharsis"

by Bob Buckley.

"The Weather On Mars" by Alex and Phyllis Eisenstein.

Special Feature: "On Mars With M. Gilbert"

Serial: THE INDIAN GIVER by A. Bester.

Science Fact: "Why We Won't Find Life On Mars" by Richard C. Hoagland.

"The Biopump Solution" by Thomas A. Easton.

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

ANALOG. Jan. 75. Vol.XCIV, No.5. 75¢.

Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by J. Schoenherr.

Novelettes: "The Borderland of Sol" by Larry Niven.

"End Game" by Joe Haldeman.

Special Feature: "The Present State of Igneous Research" by Gordon R. Dickson.

Short Stories: "January, 1975" by Barry N. Malzberg.

"The Gambling Hell and the Sinful Girl" by Katherine MacLean.

Serial: THE INDIAN GIVER by Alfred Best-er. (Conclusion).

The Reference Library: P. Schuyler Miller.

FANTASTIC. Feb. 75. Vol.24, No.2. 75¢.

Edited by Ted White. Cover by S. Fehian.

Novelets: "Shadows in the Skull" by L. Sprague de Camp & Lin Carter.

"Perchance To Dream" by Robt. F. Young.

"To Be a Witch, In Three Quarters Time" by C. L. Grant.

"The Dragon of Tor-Nali" by Juanita Coulson.

"Solid Geometry" by Ian McEwan.

Short Stories: "Dissenting" by Gardner R. Dubious (Mike Glicksohn).

"Asylum in the Concrete" by Alpajpuri.

"The Return of Captain Nucleus" by Bruce D. Arthurs.

Editorial by Ted White

Fantasy Books: by Fritz Leiber.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Dec. 74.

Vol.47. No.6. Whole No.283. 75¢. Ed-

ward Ferman, Ed. Cover by Ron Walotsky.

Novel: VENUS ON THE HALF-SHELL by Kil-

gore Trout. (1st of 2 parts).

Novel: "The Same Dog" by R. Aickman.

Short Stories: "The House of Yellow Pain" by Guy Owen.

"The Second Fall" by Edward Wellen.

"Sedan Deville" by Barry N. Malzberg.

"Jaybird's Song" by Joseph Green.

"The Face" by John Sladek.

"The Man Who Read Equations" by Lil and Kris Neville.

"The Nonesuch" by Larry Niven.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Books: Alexei and Cory Panshin.

Films: PICNIC WORLD; by Baird Searles.

Science: "Star In the East" by Isaac Asimov.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Jan. 75.

Vol. 48, No. 1. Whole Number 284. 75¢.

Edward Ferman, Ed. & Pub. Cover by Mazey and Schell.

Novel: VENUS ON THE HALF SHELL by Kilgore Trout (2nd of 2 parts).

Novel: "Noomyenoh" by Charles W. Runyon.

Short Stories: "Sanity Clause" by Edward Wellen.

"A Gift From the Fakir" by Warner Law.

"Nobody Named Gallix" by Lou Fisher.

"Katie-Mary's Trip" by Zenna Henderson.

Article: "Lovecraft: Failed Aristocrat" by L. Sprague de Camp.

Books: Joanna Russ.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Films: Baird Searles.

"Introducing Isaac Asimov" by Arthur C. Clarke.

Science: "Thinking About Thinking" by Isaac Asimov.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Feb. 75.

Vol. 48, No. 2. Whole Number 285. 75¢.

Edward Ferman, Ed. and Pub. Cover by David Hardy.

Novella: THE LORDS OF ALL POWER by Phyllis Eisenstein.

Novel: "Retrograde Summer" by John Varley.

"Polly Charms, the Sleeping Woman" by Avram Davidson.

Short Stories: "The Killing of Mother Corn" by Dennis O'Neil.

"Innocence" by Joanna Russ.

"With the Evening News" by R. Lupoff.

"Something Had to be Done" by D. Drake.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Books: "The Dark Corner" by Gahan Wilson.

Science: "The Rocketing Dutchman" by Isaac Asimov.

Films: "Rosemary's Cuckoo" by Baird Searles.

GALAXY. Nov. 74. Vol. 35, No. 11. 75¢.

Jim Baen, Editor. Cover by Steve Fabian.

Serial: LOVE CONQUERS ALL by Fred Saberhagen (Part 1 of 3).

Novel: "The Persistence of Memory" by J.A. Lawrence.

"The Butcher's Bill" by David Drake.

"The Aerial Machine" by Herbie Brennan.

Short Story: "Of a Death On Dante" by Peter Ambrose.

Forum: Frederik Pohl.

Column: "A Step Farther Out" by Jerry Pournelle.

Bookshelf: Theodore Sturgeon.

GALAXY. Dec. 74. Vol. 35, No. 12. 75¢.

Jim Baen, Editor. Cover by Steve Fabian.

Serial: LOVE CONQUERS ALL by Fred Saberhagen (Part 2 of 3).

Short Stories: "Ember Eyes" by Steven Utley.

"The Man Who Came Back" by Robert Silverberg.

Novel: "Cry Wolf!" by Mack Reynolds.

"The Eggs of Eden" by M.A. Baetjer.

"The Bleeding Man" by Craig Strete.

Forum: Ursula K. LeGuin.

Column: "A Step Farther Out" by Jerry Pournelle.

Bookshelf: Theodore Sturgeon.

IF. Dec. 74. Vol. 22, No. 8. Issue # 175. 75¢. Jim Baen, editor. Cover by Rick Sternbach.

Novel: "Stormy Weather" by Daniel Dern.

Short Stories: "The Descent of Man" by J.A. Lawrence.

"Time Deer" by Craig Strete.

"Gut In Peril" by Arsen Darnay.

Serial: A KNIGHT OF GHOSTS AND SHADOWS by Poul Anderson (Conclusion).

Editorial by Jim Baen: DOOM!

Reading Room: by Lester del Rey.

(R)evolution: Dick Hoagland

Column: "The Alien Viewpoint" by Richard E. Geis.

SWORD & SORcery ANNUAL. 1975. 75¢. Published by Ultimate.

"Queen of the Black Coast" by Robert E. Howard.

"L Sprague de Camp: Sword and Satire" by Sam Moskowitz.

"The Pillars of Chabalar" by John Jakes.

"Master of Chaos" by M. Moorcock.

"The Mirror of Cagliastro" by Robert Arthur.

"The Cloud of Hate" by Fritz Leiber.

"The Masters" by Ursula K. LeGuin.

"Horseman" by Roger Zelazny.

VERTEX. Feb. 75. Vol. 2, No. 6. \$1.50.

Don Pfeil, Editor. Cover: Ed Acuna.

Novel: "Sharking Down" by Edward Bryant.

"My True Harp" by Herman Werede.

Feature Fiction: "Shrine" by Thomas Easton.

"And One Made of Air" by V. Perkins.

"The Room" by D.A. Chesebro.

Short Stories: Potpourri: "What Time Is It?" by Jack C. Haldeman II.

"Neither Snow Nor Rain Nor the Sands of Time" by Frank Ashe.

"Assembly Room" by Duane Ackerson.

"Dear Mom, I don't Like It Up Here" by Steven Utley.

"At Odds With the Universe" by Scott Edelstein.

"To Lay An Egg" by Alvaro Cardona-Hine.

"The Great Red Spot" by Joe Pumilia and Steven Utley.

"Dear Universal Gourmet" by Mildred Downey Broxon.

"Long Ago From Visby" by Richard Ashby.

Feature Articles: "S-F Retrofire" by L. G. Blackburn.

"Europeans In Space" by James Sutherland.

Book Reviews.

Moment in History.

WHISPERS. Nov. 74. Vol. 2, No. 1. \$1.75.

Stuart D. Schiff, Editor. Cover by Vincent DiFate.

Fiction: "Take Me, For Instance" by Hugh B. Cave.

"Reflections" by Pemle K. Ennis.

"The Stages of the God" by Montgomery Comfort.

"Reply Guaranteed" by Ramsey Campbell.

Articles and Departments: Editorial by Schiff. / News. / Book Reviews.

"The White Ship: A Psychic Odyssey" by Prof. Dirk Mosig.

"Howard Phillips Lovecraft" by David G. Hartwell, Ph.D.

Poetry: "Zukala's Jest" by Robert E. Howard.

"Night Visitant" by R. L. Tierney.

"Dream-Dust" by John Bredon.

The December VERTEX (which I had misplaced), the #4 MYRD, and six PERRY RHODANS (55-60) plus the publishers' addresses will be listed in full in #13.

ALIEN CONCLUSIONS

(Continued from "Alien Thoughts")

er writers (no, no, don't thank me, it's nothing, really) and to admit that they, too, are compelled to write and create as they do, in the last analysis. Some are "guided" to be literary writers, and others are slotted into the commercial, "entertainment" groove...and there are all kinds of arguments and justifications, reasons, truths, etc. on the shelves of every mind to be used to make "my" way the only really correct and virtuous way.

Therefore to blame a writer for his/her fictional behavior is ridiculous. Criticism is fun, of course, and it's invigorating, but on a personal level is futile.

It is a far better thing to leave the author in the closet chained to his typer and his bad habits and examine only the fiction or sometimes non-fiction he/she slips out under the closet door periodically.

Oh, one other thing. Let's not assume or infer that an author is reflected (literally) in his fiction. A good writer is able to tune into and use the ugly, pure, terrifying, wonderful world of his (and Mankind's?) unconscious. But that don't mean we behave that way in person. THAT would make gentle, kind, considerate Bob Bloch a monster of the first blood (and he'd be under all kinds of lock and key). And Harlan Ellison, to name but one of many, would be in the same place. And I'd be in a padded cell—for sodomy, bestiality, incest, rape, murder, blackmail, and paranoid schizophrenia, to say the least. (Hello there, Phil Farmer. I see they caught you, too!)

In some ways, sometimes, some writers are clearly and deeply visible in their fiction, granted, but other times not hardly at all, and other times not in any way at all. Yet a good writer can "fake it" so well that you'd swear.

So forget about "knowing" a given writer's private life or beliefs from his/her fiction...unless you have hard evidence or close personal knowledge to justify that opinion. And even then—

RAISING PRICES is only fair for the sf magazines. F&SF (which has a paid circulation almost identical to that of VERTEX—58,000 plus) is going to 95¢ newsstand price, and LOCUS reports that ANALOG will go to \$1. with the March issue, and GALAXY to \$1. with the April issue.

Oddly, Sol Cohen, publisher of AMAZING and FANTASTIC, says that his magazines will stay at 75¢ in spite of increasing costs. His magazines would seem to need an increase more than the others. FANTASTIC's subtitle in April will be: 'Sword & Sorcery and Fantasy Stories'.

25¢ isn't going to discourage many sf buyers. If people want something badly enough they'll pay whatever they have to pay to get it.

The trouble with most magazine science fiction and fantasy presently and in the past, is that it hasn't grabbed and held its readers very well. Why not? Good ideas but bad fiction. Sf does not live by ideas alone.

How do you get a good Head start?
Start off each day with a bang.

I thank you all for the holiday well-wishes and the Christmas cards. I appreciate them.

REGARDING THE MATTER OF PROFESSIONALISM that some fans and fan publishers are in a dither about. (One major fan publisher places notices in the SFWA publications detailing his needs and offering payment while — I'm told — objecting to me paying contributors to TAC/SFR.)

Well, shit. I unabashedly admit I make a small profit off this labor-of-love-and-compulsion, and I'd feel like a crud if I didn't pay the contributors something.

Some contributors of articles don't want to be paid, so I end up putting them on the Permanent Subscriber list as compensation.

The truth is I could get most of the material I use for nothing. Paying

a cent a word tops is more token than significant...although every little \$ helps, as I well know. And paying contributors hasn't resulted in any increase in the quality of the issues. Is TAC/SFR any better than the old SFR? I doubt it.

By the way, with the switch to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW this issue, some of you may be wondering to whom/what to make out renewal and/or subscription checks. I have an SFR account and an TAC account (and RICHARD E. GEIS cohabits with both), so take your choice. I do want to phase out the TAC account eventually, though, even though I know it'll take years....

With much sorrow and regret I had to bump articles and columns scheduled for this issue. The problem is that material of a timely nature comes in sometimes, and I feel its value and impact would be destroyed...destroyed, even...if kept out of print until the next issue. So, in this issue, first "Science Fiction's Greatest Disaster—Hugo Gernsback!" A Revisionist View by Darrell Schweitzer got pushed out to #13, and then "Visit to a Pulp Planet" by Milton F. Stevens was set back into #13... And Larry Shaw's column is also scheduled now for the next issue. Ted White's offering seems important enough to have priority.

NEXT ISSUE will have the above items and the featured ROGER ELWOOD: SCIENCE FICTION'S HIDDEN DICTATOR? The Complete Story—an Interview/Article by Bruce D. Arthurs.

And a cover by Grant Canfield.

SUBSCRIBERS: Remember to send me your new address if you move, and your old one, too! Failure to do this will result in a severe case of the Geis Curse. You will come down with an acute Alter Ego who will carp and criticize every thought you have. Beware. Be warned.

"Geis, that was badly phrased! Why do you always put me down?"

Because, Alter, you—

See, subbers? You want this to happen to you?

Have a happy three months...and don't lose your job.

