

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

\$1.25

(THE ALIEN CRITIC)

13

ELLISON ON ELLISON

THE ELWOOD CONTROVERSY

VISIT TO A PULPY PLANET

THE GIMLET EYE

A POT OF STALE GOULART

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SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

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COVER BY GRANT CANFIELD

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ALIEN THOUGHTS

I TALKED WITH KURT VONNEGUT, JR a few days ago, yes I did. The phone rang about 8:35 A.M. and when I answered it the man said he was Kurt Vonnegut, and that he had just written me a letter in which he had called me a cocksucker.

He was angry at my criticisms of him in SFR #12, page 34. His complaint that I didn't check on his state of mind is valid, I admit, except that I haven't his address, though if his letter ever arrives I presumably will then have it and can check things in future if the need arises.

I do too often plunge into the morass of assuming others' mental states and motives. I should not do that. I yield to temptation and the creative instinct....criticism as fiction.... Guilty. Guilty. Guilty.

Kurt said (if he can call me a cocksucker, I can call him Kurt) that he did not write VENUS ON THE HALF SHELL, and that he is not Kilgore Trout even though he did create the character. Trout is a figment.

Kurt said that the science fiction writer who did write VENUS asked if he could use the Kilgore Trout byline and was given permission. In fact, Vonnegut said anyone can use the Kilgore Trout name. He (Vonnegut) did not get a cent from VENUS or the use of the Trout name, and he does not want



any money from the use of the name.

Also, Kurt said he has been a member of the Science Fiction Writers of America, under his own name. (Before my time in the organization, I presume, around 1968-70.)

And so the conversation ended. I'm pretty sure it was Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. because it sounded like him (from his voice on TV) and because of the long-distance hiss on the line.

The question arises: who is the s-f writer who wrote VENUS ON THE HALF SHELL?

A vital clue comes from "Paper Back Talk", a column in the 3-23-75 issue of the NEW YORK TIMES Book Review section. It said:

"Last week we wondered about the identity of Kilgore Trout, whose name appears on the title page of Dell's science fiction novel, "Venus on the Halfshell." This week, from Peoria, comes a letter from a man who asks not to be named, stating that he is its author. He writes that he felt he has so much in common with Kilgore Trout, the "sad-sack of science fiction" who is a character in three Kurt Vonnegut novels, that he asked Vonnegut to allow him to publish a book under that name. Vonnegut "graciously gave his permission." Our cor-

respondent's real name is a familiar one to avid readers of science fiction, although his production falls far short of the "117 novels and 2000 short stories" Dell's prefatory note attributes to Trout. Certainly "Venus's" sales (225,000 copies in print to date) have not been harmed by the put-on."

The give-away (deliberate, I think) is the 'from Peoria'. Which well-known s-f writer lives in Peoria?

Which s-f writer likes to write "new" novels using well-known fictional characters like Tarzan, Sherlock Holmes, Doc Savage, etc? What would be more natural and in keeping with his predilection than for him to write a book using a well-known fictional author's name?

Philip Jose Farmer. He lives in Peoria.

(Thanks to the two fans who sent me the NEW YORK TIMES clipping, and to the book editor who gave me a clue.)

A few of you may be asking yourselves, howcum Vonnegut had (or could find) Geis's phone number?

It occurred to me, too, and I asked him how he had gotten my number. He said he asked Portland Information.

Aha! I remembered! I had, a few days ago, called the phone company and asked them to list this number in my name instead of my mother's name. So next year the Portland phone book will carry a Geis, Richard E. listing.

(For those of you who don't subscribe to RICHARD E. GEIS—A Personal Journal, my mother died of a massive stroke January 16, and I am buying their shares of this house from my step-brother and sister.)

So... If any of you ever have an overpowering urge to Talk To Dick Geis, please

squelch it. But if the matter is of really vital importance, please call between 8 AM and 10 PM Pacific Time.

If you call before 8 AM or after 10 PM you will likely have to deal with an enraged Alter-Ego.

If you are an attractive, slim young woman, however, and begin your conversation with, "Hi, Alter, I am a slim, attractive young woman..." even Alter will not snap your head off...immediately. There is something else you could add that would make your call even more welcome, but this is a quasi-family, semi-respectable magazine, and I shall not detail it here. However, REG readers know....

With all the above Restrictions in mind, be it known that my phone number is:

(503) 282-0381

THE TERRY DIXON VS. HARLAN ELLISON AFFAIR

continues, after a fashion, primarily from Terry Dixon's end. I have received from Terry several letters which he wants me to publish "answering" my editorial in SFR 12 and condemning Harlan. Also a review of Harlan's recent DEATHBIRD STORIES. You can imagine the tenor and message of the review.

I did not print the text of Harlan's letter-to-editors. I summed it up. And I will not print Terry's attacks.

One thing that bugged me about the letters from Terry was his lack of a return address. But he explains that he is moving around a lot, hopes to settle down later this year.

Terry Dixon is a professional writer with two book credits and several stories sold. He thinks Harlan Ellison's writing is pretentious, derivative, and bad.

I think I'll change the subject.

THERE IS ANOTHER MESSY BIT OF LEGAL BUSINESS brewing in fandom/prodom. This time it involves a threatened legal suit by Leland Sapiro, publisher of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, against Chilton (a book publisher) concerning an article by Sandra Miesel which appeared originally in the January 1970 issue of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY.

Sandra expanded and rewrote the article, "Challenge and Response", for Roger Elwood who wanted it for his book, THE MANY WORLDS OF POUL ANDERSON, which he had sold to Chilton.

Leland Sapiro had copyrighted RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY in his own name.

(It should be noted that it is customary for fan publishers to copyright their magazines or publications with the words 'for the contributors' added. Thus: 'Copyright 1975 by Richard E. Geis for the contributors'. This phrasing grants all subsequent publishing rights to their material to those who created it. All I ask is a credit line to the effect that the item was first published in TAC, SFR, PSYCHOTIC, or whatever.)

It is worth noting that Sandra received no payment from Leland for the publication of her article in RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY.

Now, if Leland Sapiro persists and does sue Chilton for copyright infringement, Chilton then has the contractual right to turn around and sue Roger Elwood, who may then sue Sandra for compensation....

I do not know why Sapiro is considering suing Chilton. Lack of a credit line? But if Sandra's article is substantially expanded and changed from the original Work, it becomes a new Work, and thus a credit is not due Sapiro.

Ah, complications upon complications. Only a judge can decide if the Work is new Work.

Until further information surfaces I

will have no further comment. But I do not at this time think very much of Leland Sapiro. But, then, I have never thought much of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, either.

Dan Miller, a subscriber to SFR, wrote an item for his newspaper (THE CHICAGO DAILY NEWS 4/26/75) on my problems with the Thomas More Assn.

Dan even got a quote from Dan Herr, publisher of the Association's magazine, THE CRITIC.

(Briefly, they threatened to sue me if I didn't stop using their word 'CRITIC' in my title.)

Herr is quoted as having said, "We went to a lot of expense and trouble to register our name. If we let just anybody use it, we'd lose it. It's as simple as that."

It sure is, if you've got enough money to go to court and can therefore coerce publishers who don't have the money to fight.

But whatthehell. Let them have their word. All they're doing is giving themselves and Catholics a bad press.

(Many TAC/SFR subbers want me to publish the address of The Thomas More Assn. so nasty letters could be written and sent on the matter of Freedom and Censorship and like that. The truth is I've misplaced the letter. But anyone truly dedicated could go to their library, look in the Chicago phone book....)



THE ELWOOD CONTROVERSY

Editor's Note: The Roger Elwood Controversy has raged now, in the "inside" area of the Science Fiction Writers of America, and in a few fan magazines, for about a year.

He seemed to come out of nowhere to dominate the field. Suddenly he had contracts with (apparently) every publisher in the country for anthologies. Abruptly, he was the largest current buyer of short fiction in the world.

And gradually his editorial failings and "restrictions" became known.

He sought to be interviewed for the fan press and for SFWA. One of the interviews was with Bruce D. Arthurs, who has written the longest and most comprehensive report on Roger Elwood. That report, "ROGER ELWOOD: A Personal Reaction" follows the preliminary letter Bruce wrote which appeared in THE ALIEN CRITIC #11 (which I am reprinting here), Roger Elwood's reply to that letter and to Bruce's initial GODLESS article, and Bruce's comment on Elwood's reply.

I have a "REG COMMENT" following the article.

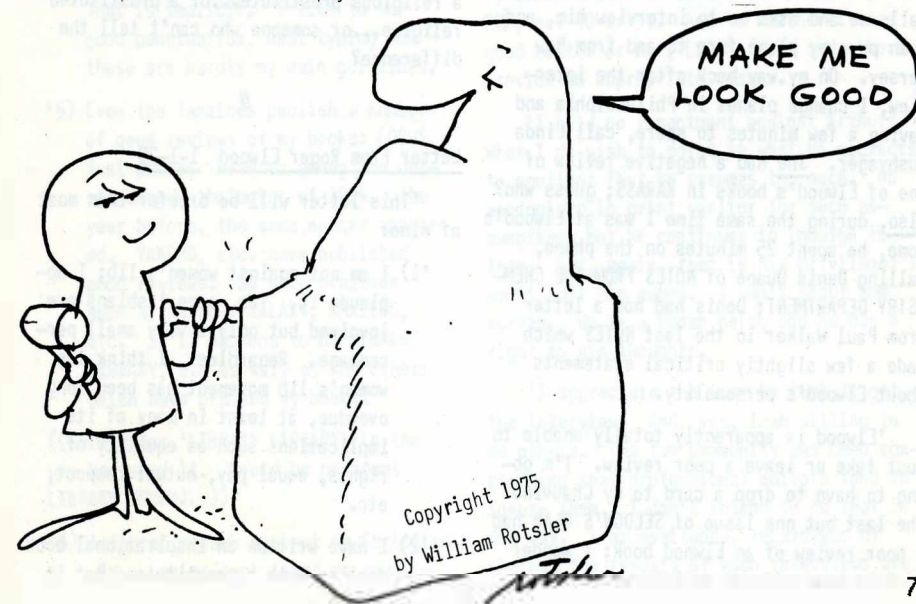
Read on—

Letter From Bruce D. Arthurs 7-24-74

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

'In the meantime, a few interesting bits:

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



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

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

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

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

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

'One more bit for your entertainment: Elwood is writing a book, which could be described as a Christian inspirational sex novel: MAGDALENE by title, it's about a professional prostitute who is saved from the horrors of selling her body, and fella-tio, and group sex, and all that other degrading stuff when she meets a minister and finds Christ. From what I gathered, the first parts of the book read just like a regular sex novel, excepted that Magdalene feels degraded by sex, rather than enjoying it.

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

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

#

Letter From Roger Elwood 1-1-75

'This letter will be briefer than most of mine:

'1) I am not against women's lib; I applaud it. Yes, some lesbians are involved but only a very small percentage. Regardless, I think the women's lib movement has been long overdue, at least in many of its implications such as equality of rights, equal pay, mutual respect, etc.

'2) I have written an inspirational book dealing with a prostitute. But it

is a non-fiction, not a novel, and whatever outspokenness is present happens to be factual. Besides, it was carefully checked with the field representative of a leading conservative Christian publisher as well as the editor of a leading conservative Christian magazine—and neither expressed outrage over the sexual content. The message of Christ's redemptive power comes through as a stark contrast with the life of sin once led by this woman. You cannot preach effectively against an evil unless you show why it is evil.

'3) The two to three thousand manuscripts I have received are only those on an unsolicited basis. Most of the stories in my anthologies are either directly assigned or the author has queried me in advance. I buy five percent or less from the unsolicited pile.

'4) The overall concern I have in making story selections is QUALITY. That is implicit. I like to see good punctuation, neat typing but these are hardly my main guidelines.

'5) Even the fanzines publish a number of good reviews of my books: LOCUS just picked three as among the outstanding anthologies of 1974. The year before, the same number appeared. YANDRO, etc. have published good reviews. So have prozines such as ANALOG, GALAXY, AMAZING, etc. So it happens to be LIBRARY LIBRARY, etc as well as the others which have praised my books.

((Geis Note: 'LIBRARY LIBRARY' is the way he typed it. Could be he meant LIBRARY JOURNAL.)

'6) Arthurs' attack against my Christian views, using such terms as revolt-

ing, frightening, cruel, evil, etc., is shocking and, in its own right, fosters the kind of persecution which he professes to be afraid of. I will not attack his views because I respect his right to hold them. (I did not attempt to force mine on him while he was here, a fact he acknowledged to me, personally, and with some surprise.)

'7) As for the sexual happiness book, I soon thereafter had misgivings and dropped it.

'Much else in Arthurs' article is inaccurate. But I won't bother to explore it in any more detail. One final comment: Arthurs says that I seem too quick to accept the first version of a work. Let me say, in reply, that a portion of the grievances I have had with SFWA members can be traced to my rejection of stories/novels I thought were poor. For Harlequin alone, I have had to turn down six thus far, six, I might add, that caused considerable havoc in my planning, but I thought they were poor. As for my control of the market, the percentage is 20%, not 40 or 50. And to whether I am a good editor or not, LOCUS' poll and others provide an appropriate answer.

'I hold no resentment against Arthurs. What I do wish to point to what he neglects to mention: That he assumes too much. He apologized in print earlier for such assumptions but he continues to indulge in them. But, again, that is his privilege: I won't call him names. I won't shout and scream. He is a human being and he has a right to his thoughts.

'I appreciate the time he took to get the interview. And, yes, I am willing to do others. The fan community has been complaining that professional editors tend to ignore them. I don't intend to do that in any way. I am available, regardless of whether the results of such interviews are

favorable or not.'

REG COMMENT: Roger Elwood wrote: 'I will not attack his views because I respect his right to hold them.'

Faulty reasoning. One should attack views as one wishes. One should not attack another's right to hold and express those views.

Bruce D. Arthurs Replies 1-11-75

'I'll take Elwood's points one by one:

'1) Women's Lib: I corrected this in my last letter. As I stated therein, Elwood approving of Women's Lib was not the impression I gained from the original interview.

'2) This comes as a surprise to me. The interview was nearly six months ago, and my memory may be inaccurate, but I'm certain that the book was referred to several times as "an inspirational novel" (emphasis mine), and that there was no mention of it's being non-fiction. Frankly, what I heard about MAGDALENE struck me as so ludicrous that the thought of it being fact never even crossed my mind.

'3) This was noted in my finished article, as when I completed the transcript of the interview, I found that one of the later questions covered this. Even so, 5% acceptance out of the slush pile still seems much higher than average to me. I noted White's remark in an earlier TAC that when he was reading the slush pile for F&SF, the number of acceptable stories was about one in six hundred.'

((Geis Note: The "Elwood Market" was not and is not generally known to the reading public; his slushpile was made up primarily of stories sent by members of the Science Fiction Writers of America and/or literary agents. The quality would be much higher than the slushpile of any sf magazine, which attracts huge numbers of stories from amateurs of every level of competence.))

'4) With this point, Elwood leaves my letter in TAC #11 and begins to complain about my article in GODLESS, but more of that later. As for his claims of quality, that's one thing that I certainly find hard to find in Elwood's anthologies. And judging from the response to my article (resulting in the longest lettercolumn in GODLESS' history, fifteen pages), there are a great many people who hold the same opinion. I pointed out in the article that "Elwood does consider himself to be a good editor; the stories he buys are the ones he enjoys." Unfortunately, most of fandom, it would seem, don't enjoy the stories that he does.

'5) I specifically stated in my article that Elwood has published good, praiseworthy anthologies. I referred to FUTURE CITY as "one of the Ten Best." The specific complaint I had against Elwood is that a person can never tell if an anthology will be good like FUTURE CITY or if it will be almost unreadable like THE NEW MIND. His quality varies so much it's staggering.

'I might also point out that having manuscripts typed with a fresh ribbon was the one subject that Elwood spent the most time on and placed the most emphasis on in the entire interview!

'6) I think Elwood is mistaking cause and effect here. Saying that my anti-Christian views cause persecution by Christians is like saying that the Nazi extermination of Jews came about because Jews didn't like Nazis.

'True, Elwood did not force his religious views on me. Before I left, however, he offered and I accepted a copy of THE BASICS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH by Floyd C. Hamilton. Elwood said that this book gave a fair and accurate overview of Christianity, and that he recommended it to anyone who wanted an honest appraisal of Christianity. Frankly, I found it to be one of the most vile, vicious, and ignorant books I have ever had the displeasure to encounter. Its descriptions of other religions are dripping with venom and hatred: "Plunder and rapine appealed to the Moslem armies." (Christians were nice Crusaders, no doubt.)

'And one passage in particular:

"The unbeliever in the Triune God doubtless will virtually hold that the scope of the human reason is unlimited. For him everything imaginable comes within the realm of investigation for the human intellect, and that there are no limits to be placed on the comprehension of the human mind."

'I think that the author comes very close to defining science fiction in that passage. My angry scrawl in the margin (the book is filled with them) says, "DAMN RIGHT!" Yes, I consider that any religion that holds the opinion "There are things man was not meant to know" is revolting, and evil in its blindness. Rather than making me more sympathetic to Christianity, the book only reinforced my anti-Christian feelings. If Elwood feels that this is a fair and impartial study of Christianity, there is only one word to describe him: he is stupid.

'7) I'm glad the sexual happiness book was dropped, and I think it was a wise decision on Elwood's part. It was even more ludicrous than MAGDALENE.

'8) Elwood says that a portion of the grievances he's had with SFWA members concerned rejections of stories. Well, I hard-

ly think that professional writers are going to complain because an editor accepts their work! My complaint that he seems too willing to accept work was a reader's complaint, not a writer's; he's published some of the most godawful crap that the field's seen in recent years (in my humble opinion); as a reader, I don't like having to wade thru so much dreck to read the good stuff in sf. I put it point blank in the latest GODLESS, "There's too damn much sf being published."

((Geis Note: Most of the complaints involved Elwood's biting off more work than he could (for a long while) handle properly. Contracts were delayed, questions never answered, confusions about what was meant/remembered from a phone conversation deal, failure to follow through, too-long delays in deciding on manuscripts... He has now pulled back on his work load and added much help to his organization. According to the current (March) LOCUS, Elwood has withdrawn completely from creating original science fiction anthologies. He is concentrating now on original novels.))

'9) At the time of the interview, Elwood was responsible for 40-50% of the sf market. The figure was mentioned numerous times during the interview, and Elwood expressed no objections or disagreement with it. Since then, Elwood has reduced his anthology work, and the sf field has grown larger.

'10) As for assuming too much: Yes, the article had many assumptions in it; I felt it was necessary to fully state my opinions and feelings. BUT: 1) I specifically asked that if any of my opinions or assumptions in the article were wrong or misguided, that they should be corrected. To date criticism of the article has been minor. I might also add that I was expecting Elwood to react to the article. I was hoping he would, since I was aware that the article was quite critical of his work, and



I would have liked to have given him a chance to respond to those criticisms. He did not respond, except for those few moments we talked at Philcon, when the only objection he raised was to the Women's Lib quote, which I have corrected in the latest GODLESS.

'2) I tried my damndest to insure that the article would come across as opinion, my own opinion. It was a highly subjective article, and I tried to put that point across as clearly as possible in the title "Roger Elwood: A Personal Reaction" (and I do wish you'd use that title instead of that "Hidden Dictator" shit), in the foreword, and in the body of the article itself. Geis, I sweated blood to make that article as fair to Elwood as I could while still remaining honest and candid in my opinions; I spent I don't know how many hours writing I don't know how many drafts of that thing. I worked harder on that than on anything in my life before. And the responses I've received seem to indicate that I was successful in getting this point across; many of the letters of comment complimented me for putting so much obvious effort into making sure the article was as fair as possible.

'I believe that covers most of Elwood's points, now for a few general comments of my own: My own personal opinion of Elwood as a person is highly ambiguous. He is extremely well-intentioned. So well-intentioned that it's almost disturbing, and I'm sure that some of the hostility and mistrust expressed about Elwood by numerous people is because they're somehow disturbed by this altruism. On the other hand, he comes across in person as dull, characterless, and wishy-washy—a milquetoast, in other words. His intentions are good, and I'm convinced they're completely sincere, but characterwise, he doesn't seem (to me) to be particularly well-qualified to do much of anything with these intentions. If his results were anywhere near as good as his

intentions, he'd be the best editor the field has ever had.

'I don't like Elwood, at least not as far as a personal friend, but I don't think I dislike him, either. He's the type of person whom you can't like because he really doesn't do anything worth liking him for, and he doesn't do anything to cause you to dislike him either. I've never met anyone with that type of personality before, and I don't really know how to react to him. Now I think I left my personal opinions of his personality out of the article almost entirely, except where it was absolutely essential to some of my arguments, because I thought such opinions might prove personally embarrassing to Elwood. I left out a lot of wordage from the article for this reason; one person to whom I wrote of these feelings said that I should have left them in because they gave a clearer picture of why Elwood is the way he is.

'Writing the article was tremendously difficult for me. On the one hand, there's this guy who, despite his faults, is really rather a nice guy, even if he's so straight he's downright strange; a person doesn't really want to hurt the feelings of someone like this. On the other hand, his work record isn't very impressive (quality-wise; on a piece-rate basis no one can match him) and some of it's downright awful. You're faced with the task of writing a report on this person. Sorry, but I felt the report had to emphasize the quality of his work over the sincerity of Elwood's intentions. The report will be somewhat revised and updated when it appears in TAC, but it will remain highly critical of Elwood's work.

'One final word: If Elwood still feels that the article is inaccurate and prejudiced, I am fully prepared to send him a check for \$100.00 to cover the cost of the airfare he paid when I traveled to New Jersey for the interview.'

REG COMMENT: I wanted to know more specifics about Roger Elwood's taboos. I wrote him on 3-16-75:

'Dear Roger;

I have just completed typing Bruce D. Arthurs' subjective article on you (ROGER ELWOOD: A Personal Reaction) for SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #13 (May) and I was struck by a lack of specifics. I, and the 6,000 plus readers of SFR would like to know more exactly your "taboos". ARE there themes you refused to permit in your anthologies, and will not permit in the novels you edit and/or package for publishers? Are there words you will not allow to be used? Attitudes? Situations?

'I have read that you don't like to see religions put down. Is this an absolute no-no?

'We need to know if there are specific limits or taboos in your editing and if they apply regardless of other factors, such as quality of writing, in a given story or novel.

'Do you have a sheet of suggested-areas-to-avoid you send to writers (or agents), and if so, may I have a copy?

'Sorry to bother you, but you have become a controversy. Censorship in sf raises a lot of hackles, and any clarification you can provide would help everyone.

'Best,

Richard E. Geis'

As of April 18—no answer or response from Roger Elwood.

ROGER ELWOOD:

A Personal Reaction
By BRUCE D. ARTHURS



FOREWORD: Originally, this article was supposed to be a straight question-and-answer interview with Roger Elwood. Try as I might, though, I found that there were too many things I felt needed to be commented upon or explained, and I eventually abandoned the question-and-answer route for an essay-type article. I am, however, grateful to Mr. Elwood for granting the interview, and the results of that interview form the foundation for this article.

A great deal of this article consists of my subjective opinions and thoughts. Where possible, I've tried to back up my opinions with the facts as I know them. In my research for the article, I questioned a number of people, fan and pro, for their own opinions of Elwood. I found that there was no discernible majority view: I came across people whose opinion were in agreement with most of mine, and people with directly contrary views, and all shades in between. I could not, and cannot, say "A majority of people hold such-and-such opinions of Roger Elwood's work." The views expressed herein are my own. Many of my views and opinions are quite critical of Elwood, but I hope that I have also been honest and fair in my presentation of those views.

BACKGROUND: Since mid-1971, Roger Elwood has become one of the major and most controversial influences in the science fiction field. He has accomplished this by accumulating more contracts and commitments for editing sf books in a shorter space of

time than any single individual has done before. In approximately three years, he has accumulated commitments and material for over 80 original anthologies, of which about half have been published with the rest scheduled for release over the next two or three years. He has contracted with the Canadian-based firm of Harlequin Books to edit a series of 48 original science fiction novels per year. He is also sf editor for Pyramid Books, Chilton, and others. At the peak of his efforts, around the middle of 1974, Elwood was personally responsible for choosing in the area of 40% of the science fiction being published. Since then, due both to the expansion in the rest of the sf field and Elwood's having largely switched his concentration from anthologies to editing novels, this figure has changed to about 20% of the sf market. This is still a larger portion than any other individual has responsibility for, with the nearest competitor being Don Wollheim.

(And as Elwood has pointed out, a significant portion of the DAW Books output is composed of reprints from hardcover, while Elwood edits almost exclusively original work.)

There is little in Elwood's past career to show the potential for the magnitude of his present accomplishments. He was born in January 1943 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. After graduating from high school, he began supporting himself by full-time writing and editing. None of Elwood's own writing was science fiction until recently. (He is working on an sf novel and has sold several short stories to other editors in the field.) He has written for women's magazines, mystery magazines, movie and television magazines, and others. Elwood himself admits that at least as far as fiction writing is concerned, his own abilities lie mainly with the mainstream markets.

If he did not write science fiction, though, he did read it. Elwood's father has been reading sf since the Gernsback era. (In fact, Elwood's father has read some of

the slushpile for Elwood since his retirement, as well as taking over the bookkeeping tasks.) Elwood began reading sf at age 10 or 12; such books as Clarke's CHILDHOOD'S END and Pangborn's A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS were particular favorites. In his own words, "I simply devoured all the science fiction books I could read. I've liked sf for a good many years; it's just that I haven't been vocal about it."

His editing work pre-1971 lay mostly with various magazines: one issue of a mystery magazine, magazines centered around various TV shows such as BONANZA, and even wrestling magazines. In addition, he was responsible, in collaboration with Vic Ghidalia, Sam Moskowitz, and others, for some fourteen reprint anthologies of sf, occult and horror stories. None of these anthologies made any particular stir in the sf field or brought Elwood's name into prominence.

It was the announcement in 1971 that he had arranged contracts for some 50 (since gone to 80) original anthologies that his name became a household word among science-fictionists and people began asking "Who is Roger Elwood?"

THE QUESTIONS: The matter of Roger Elwood boils down to two major questions:

- 1) Is he a good editor?
- 2) What effect, if any, has he had on the science fiction field?

In response to the first question, Elwood's natural reply is that he does consider himself to be a good editor; the stories he buys are ones that he enjoys, and he believes that his tastes are similar to those of many sf readers. In support of this, Elwood keeps a scrapbook of xeroxed reviews from PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY, LIBRARY JOURNAL, KIRKUS, various newspapers, and other publications. "Fine science fiction," "thought-

provoking," "highly entertaining" are typical quotes.

But there have been other reviews, particularly in fanzines, that haven't been quite so praising of Elwood's anthologies. (Though there have been good reviews of Elwood's work in the fan press.) "...simple-minded plots," "none worth reading twice - or once, if you don't have a lot of time," "lack purpose and direction," "mixed quality," and "disappointing" are samples.

The question rises, which reviews are the best guide to the quality of a book. The "mainstream" reviews or the fan reviews? One of the reviews that Elwood is proudest of is by a lady who said "I've never read much science fiction before, but I really enjoyed this book and intend to read it again." The fact that Elwood's anthology was able to enthuse this woman and make her want to read sf again is something that he can and should be proud of. But I wonder whether this woman, who admittedly had read almost no sf before, was a competent judge of the stories?

Remember that story or book you used to think was the greatest piece of writing in the world? Remember how you used to enthuse over it and recommend it to everybody? Remember how you finally got around to rereading it a while ago and were so embarrassed for having actually enjoyed that piece of crap that you went to bed and didn't get out for three days? I do? I can think of a number of stories I used to feel that way about. I won't mention any names, though. Don't like to be laughed at.

One of the common problems with sf reviews by mainstream reviewers is that the reviewers don't know what sf is all about. As a buying guide, I've always found fan reviews much the better bargain, and I tend to agree more with their judgements.

Which is not saying that all fan reviews are good. A poorly done fan review

(and I've seen too many) (for that matter, I've written too many) can be one of the most revolting things in existence. But a good fan review...ah, here we can experience the judgement and expertise of someone who's read sf for most of his/her literate life, who has seen the good and the bad and knows how to differentiate between the two, and can communicate that judgement to the reader. These are the best reviews.

My own feeling is that the charge of "mixed quality" is the complaint that can be charged most characteristically against Elwood. In my own reading of Elwood's anthologies, I've found that you cannot expect anywhere near a consistent level of quality within them. There is an occasional good story, well written and worth the reading time. The majority of the stories are average or mediocre. And there are those stories for which the politest possible term is "unforgivable." It is not that this latter category runs contrary to my tastes, it's that they are badly, horribly written, with the most cliched plots and situations, the most unbelievable and stilted characterization, and blatant internal inconsistencies.

An example. In THE NEW MIND, one of the stories has a main character whose arms are withered, so that even buttoning his own shirt is almost impossible. Near the end of the story, as he is running from an attack by the authorities, he picks up a girl in his arms and....

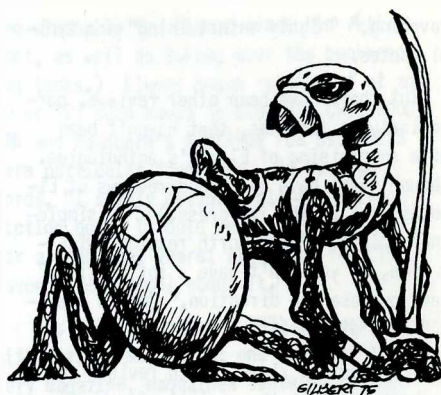
Now, this wasn't a complete contradiction. The author threw in some spinach about how the mental training the character was undergoing also helped develop his body. BUT...the character's arms were still withered and represented as being extraordinarily weak (he could put his own pants on, but not much more). I don't believe a word of it. Even if the author had spent more time on the story and made the bodily improvement believable, the story would still be a

poor one because of the cliched plot (Secret Society of Psis Teleport Themselves to Another Planet to Escape Persecution By Normal Humans).

This rather staggering disparity in quality, not just between individual stories in an anthology but between different anthologies (FUTURE CITY might be among the Top Ten of original anthologies I've read; THE NEW MIND is one of the worst books of any types that I've read, and I had to force myself to finish), is something I've seen from no other editor in the field. Many people dislike Damon Knight's ORBIT series of original anthologies, but this is largely a matter of personal preference in the types and styles of stories these people prefer. Knight has a set of consistent standards that he can apply towards the selection of his stories. Therefore, his anthologies are of a fairly consistent quality (or disquality).

Elwood, on the other hand, doesn't seem to have a well-defined idea of what his standards should be. I asked Elwood if he felt that his books had a recognizable editorial personality, if someone could read one of his anthologies without looking at the credits and say, "This book was edited by Roger Elwood." His reply:

"I hope not, because I feel that the stories I buy should appeal to the widest range of readers. I don't want to become known for my 'tastes', as such, if they're narrow; I'd like to be known for a broad range of tastes. So if I have a broad range of tastes, I should not enter into it very much at all, because you'll find something there to please everybody. Not necessarily all in the same book, but over a period of a hundred books. I'm sure that I've published stories that appealed to the traditionalist, the 'New Wave' experimental people, and so on."



I am irresistibly reminded of something I once said about myself: "I have a wide range of tastes. Or as some might say, no taste at all."

A logical error in Elwood's statement above is that if an anthology includes something to please everybody, it's just about a sure bet that there is also going to be something to displease everybody. As I mentioned before, Damon Knight is pretty consistent in the types and styles of the stories he edits, and this gives the potential reader a measure of assurance as to whether or not he'll like the book as a whole; many people don't like the ORBIT books, others do. The same thing applies to Terry Carr, who is also fairly dependable in the types and styles of the stories he buys for UNIVERSE and his other anthologies. Because the stories Carr edits are not only well-written but stylistically match up very well with my own tastes in science fiction, I consider him the best editor presently working and try never to miss any of his books.

Sure, there are some damned good stories in Elwood's anthologies, but they're scattered, shotgun style, and it's impossible to predict where the next one will be. You can't depend on finding a good story in any given Elwood book. If you read all eighty of Elwood's anthologies, you'd come

up with a nice batch of the best material. But who has the time, money, or inclination to read 80 anthologies, particularly when you know that the majority of the material you'll have to wade through will be average at best? I don't have the time. I don't have the money. And I certainly don't have the inclination when there are other editors like Terry Carr around that I can depend upon to bring out anthologies I know I'll like.

I asked Elwood, "What makes a science-fiction story seem well-written to you, seem acceptable for publication?" His reply:

- 1) The story has to fit whatever theme he's building an anthology around.
- 2) It has to have good grammar.
- 3) It has to be legibly typed.

That was the complete reply. (Though later questions made it evident that a story might also have to fit a required word limit and could not be offensive to Elwood's personal beliefs, of which more will be said later.) Some things can be taken for granted—characterization, theme, plot, etc.—but Elwood doesn't even mention these in passing. Does he favor strong characterizations? Well-developed backgrounds? Simple vs. more complex plots? I can't help feeling that the "broad range of tastes" Elwood has tried to include in his books are so broad that they include plain unvarnished poor writing.

Other reasons for the unevenness of Elwood's anthologies may lay in the methods he uses to put them together. As mentioned before, he has completed some 80 original anthologies in approximately three years. Simple mathematics shows that the average time spent on each anthology was about two weeks! Not just picking stories for publication, but arranging contracts, negotiating with agents, arranging promotion, getting the package prepared for the publisher, etc.

I'm not saying it's impossible to put together a good anthology with only two week's work, but it's certainly more difficult than with one that more time is spent upon. At least one writer, Joe Haldeman, has spent over three months worth of working time compiling a projected anthology of sf stories proposing alternatives to war. He has stated that he could have used this time to write a novel and brought in more family-supporting money than his anthology will. But rather than rush his work and jury-rig his anthology together with insufficient preparation, Haldeman has spent more time on his anthology than he can really afford, trying to insure it is the best he can possibly compile.

One thing which many people I asked for opinions of Elwood did agree upon is that Elwood has overloaded himself with work, that he has too many commitments and contracts to be fully able to handle all of them. The area where this has shown up most clearly has been with the handling of manuscripts and correspondence. Extremely long response times, failure to respond to inquiries, and confusion over Elwood's contract terms have been common complaints. In one instance, Elwood asked a writer (F. M. Busby) to submit a story to him. Busby wrote a letter back, asking Elwood if he had any taboos which should be avoided in a story. After waiting several weeks and receiving no reply from Elwood, Busby sent in a manuscript...which was rejected because of Elwood's taboos. Because of this, Busby for a time (until Elwood reorganized his office procedures) held a policy of not submitting any of his work to Elwood.

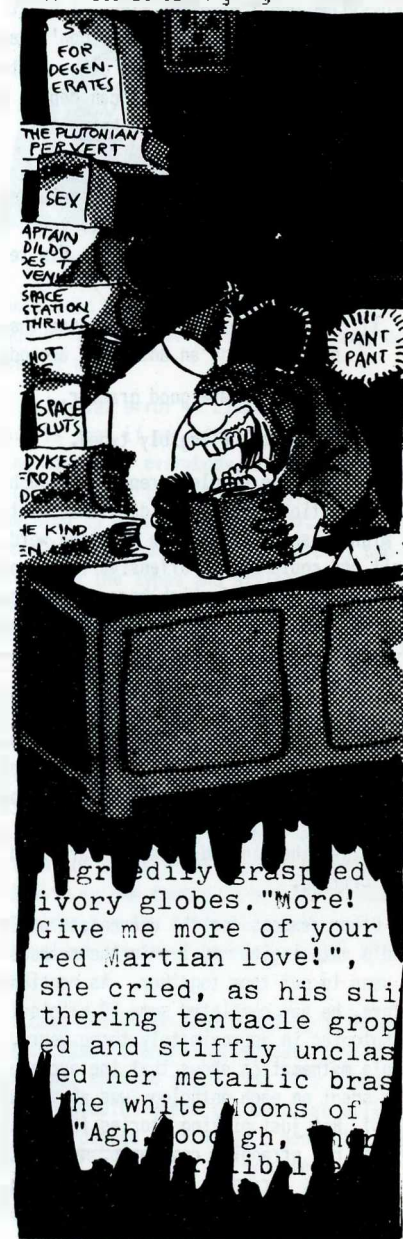
Another of Elwood's working habits that may have contributed to these problems has been his heavy use of the telephone, in place of the usual written correspondence most editors use. (Elwood's telephone bills have sometimes gone over \$600.00 a month.) A letter from Buck Coulson describes this clearly:

"Elwood is geared to the telephone; he wants personal contact, verbal assurance, etc. (One is reminded of Hollywood's version of the film industry, with agents and producers making deals right and left via telephone.) Most writers I know aren't used to this, don't like it, and expect contracts with provisions carefully spelled out in advance, even if the initial deal is via personal contact. This isn't helped by the fact that Elwood doesn't have all that good a memory for what he's already said over the phone. The apparent 'overload' may be more bad memory than too much work."

At the '74 Worldcon in Washington, DC, an entire section of the SFWA meeting was devoted to complaints about Elwood's business handlings. As a result, Elwood has hired a permanent secretary to handle correspondence, hired another agent to handle contracts and complimentary copies, has his father (a retired accountant) handling the financial bookkeeping, and has taken other steps to reduce the reporting time on manuscripts. In addition, he has more recently begun the practice of tape-recording his telephone calls, to eliminate any complaints about his memory. Hopefully, these steps will reduce the responsibilities that Elwood has handled before now, and will give him more time in which to consider which stories to buy.

Another of Elwood's practices that has raised some criticism is his practice of assigning stories. An example of this type is seen in THE ALIEN CRITIC #6, wherein Ted White reported that Elwood told him, "I'm doing a book on cities of the future, Ted, and what I'd like is about 3,000 words on the theme of prostitution. Now, I'll pay \$120.00 for it, and I need it within two weeks."

In this instance, Elwood set: 1) the theme—prostitution in a city of the future, 2) the required length—3,000 words, and 3) a time limit for completion—two weeks. Plus it can't go against Elwood's



own beliefs and taboos, a limitation imposed on every story Elwood assigns.

My question is, does setting these types of conditions create undue restrictions on the imagination and creativity of the writers involved? I myself have written non-professionally on specific themes. I have written to deadlines, and will usually set them for myself to avoid my usual endless procrastination. And I have written to specific lengths, though with great reluctance and difficulty, but under all of these conditions? I would not want to, because I would feel stifled, not at ease to write what I felt to be best.

My greatest objection would be to the length requirement. Suppose Ted White had written his story to his own satisfaction and it turned out to be only 1500 words long? To fit Elwood's requirement, it would have to be padded to double its length. Or suppose the story had come out 5,000 words long? It would have to be blue-penciled mercilessly. Both actions might possibly remove the effectiveness of the story.

It used to be almost mandatory in the sf field for novels to be only 60,000 words long, give or take a few thousand. This was because most novels were originally published in the magazines, where 60,000 words was about the most that could be comfortably serialized over three or four issues. Since then, thankfully, with the growth of the original paperback and hardcover markets, this limitation is no longer as prevalent and we are now able to see numerous published works of well over 100,000 words. Can you imagine DUNE if Frank Herbert had had to cut it down to 60,000 words? Or Brunner's STAND ON ZANZIBAR?

And I believe that these word limits have reduced the effectiveness of many of the stories Elwood has bought. In FUTURE CITY, which Elwood considers the best anthology he's yet put together, there are

stories from 22 different authors, with an average length of about 10 pages each. Upon reading the book, my feeling was that many of the stories deserved a greater length to work in, and that the book (which is quite good, much above average for the Elwood anthologies I've read) could have been even better by reducing the number of stories and letting the remaining ones be done at greater length. (Indeed, two of the stories in FUTURE CITY, Andy Offutt's "Meanwhile, We Eliminate" and Barry Malzberg's "City Lights, City Nights", were later incorporated into novels by those authors.) I think it's more than just coincidence that the story in FUTURE CITY I found most engrossing, Tom Scortia's "The Weariest River", is also one of the longest. The greater length gives him more room to develop characterization, present a background, and let the events of the plot take place.

In the case of the Ted White story mentioned above, Elwood rejected the piece. But I wonder: Might the story have turned out acceptable to Elwood if he had eased some of the conditions he set upon it?

The creative freedom of the writer is what's involved here, and I believe that setting too many limitations and conditions will stifle the creativity that is necessary to the field.

Probably the most controversial limitation Elwood applies is that of his Christian beliefs. Elwood is a devout, fundamental, conservative Christian who takes his religion seriously and has written a number of books for the "inspirational" market. He says, "Religion means a great deal to me. Christianity means a great deal to me. To get even more specific, Christ means a great deal to me. And if I were a less loyal person, I would buy anything, regardless of what it is, simply because it's a good story, but I think there has to be some allegiance at some point in a person's life to something. That happens to be re-

ligion in my case."

Before I go further, one fact must be made clear: I have strong feelings about Christianity. I am fervently anti-Christian. My own fanzine is named GOOLESS, the lettercolumn in my personalzine POWERMAD was called "The Damnation Choir", and the mimeograph I own is called the Malacoda Press (from Dante's Inferno). I find fervent Christianity, particularly the Jesus Freak movement, revolting and even frightening. History is filled with too many examples of persecution, enslavement, and murder by Irue Believers to leave me with any other reaction. (No, I don't deny that religions other than Christianity have been responsible for many cruel and evil actions. I don't like other religions, either. But as the major religion of North America, Christianity is the religion that has the most potential for persecuting me.)

Elwood will not publish any story that goes contrary to his Christian beliefs, that has an atheistic or agnostic viewpoint (bye bye, "Deathbird"), that features an unsympathetic portrait of Christ (so long, BEHOLD THE MAN).

I asked Elwood whether the beliefs that cause him to reject stories he considers un-Christian might not also influence him to buy pro-Christian stories:

"Yes, of course, as long as they were good stories. I would not buy a pro-Christian story that I felt was a poor story, because I don't think that the fact that its pro-Christianity or pro-anything is an excuse for poor literary standards."

In reply, I queried whether Elwood's beliefs might not make him take a more lenient look at the literary standards of a pro-Christian story:

"Let's face it, prejudices can play a part in any editor's opinion."

There are some editors I know, without stating specifics, who have bought rather poor stories simply because they were anti-Establishment stories. Let's put it this way: I wouldn't consciously do it...I would be less inclined to turn down a story critical of a person who is a Buddhist or a Mohameddan. I would allow there for personal criticism because I myself am critical. You can be legitimately critical or you can be sarcastically critical; I wouldn't take a sarcastically critical story of any religion."

Nor a legitimately critical one concerning Christianity.

The anti-Christian viewpoint is a valid one, just as legitimate for usage in a story as a pro-Christian one or one that ignores the matter in favor of other subjects. (If I were editing, I would probably be more inclined to accept anti-Christian stories than pro-Christian stories. So much for my own prejudices.) Because he is personally responsible for such a large portion of the sf market, Elwood is directly acting as a censor for that portion of the market, and possibly being a powerful influence even beyond that portion.

I asked for an example of a story he would have turned down for its irreligious tone:

"Well, there is one story which Terry Carr wrote and I believe Bob Hoskins published in INFINITY—I'm not knocking Terry; he's doing a novel for me so it'd be hypocritical to knock him—it was called 'Changing of the Gods' and it poked fun at religion in general, and it was to me offensively sexual in tone, and I would have turned it down, yes."

Which brings up another bugaboo of Elwood's resulting from his religious beliefs:

HEAVEN IS A PLACE WHERE
YOU CAN EXERCISE YOUR
TALENTS TO THEIR UTMOST,
AND, G-D WILLING, BEYOND.

HEE! HEE!
WORKING
FLAT OUT FOR
ALL ETERNITY!



sex. As the Bible condemns homosexuality, so does Elwood. Sex outside of marriage, ditto.

There have been stories about homosexuality published by Elwood, and stories with unmarried sexual partners. But, and Elwood is careful to point this out, these instances serve to discourage the practices involved and present them as degrading or corrupting to individuals.

Now, at first glance this sort of thing looks bad. Even at second glance it looks bad. It smacks of one-sided moral censorship and religious bigotry. But Elwood is quick to assure that it is not censorship or bigotry, because he does not have total control of the markets, and if he rejects a piece because of his taboos, or if a writer feels his creativity stifled by Elwood's conditions, then the writer can submit his

work to those other markets.

And that's a more encouraging response now than it was at the time of the original interview in July of 1974. At that time, Elwood was responsible for about 40% of the sf market. And he has stated that about 95% of the stories he buys are ones that he has assigned to specific writers. So, from a third to a half of the stories being bought in the entire sf market at that time were being done under conditions and limitations similar to those I've described. And that's pretty disturbing. With the wild growth of the sf field in the last year and Elwood's cutback on his anthology work, his control over the field now stands at about 20%...still a somewhat disturbing percentage and one that holds a good deal of influence over the field, but nowhere near as disturbing as the previously valid 40% figure.

If it were just Christianity that was concerned, I wouldn't worry about Elwood's effect on the market so much. But his Christian beliefs also influence other issues besides religion itself, such as homosexuality. If Elwood were Catholic, would he ban mention of birth control in a favorable light? If he were Jewish, would one of his conditions be that no mention could be made of pigs or pork? Elwood's entire life-style is centered around his deep-rooted beliefs in The Truth (Baptist version), and he allows these views to influence his editing work. The conditions he imposes on the work done for him are, unfortunately, mostly restrictive ones: he is bringing back taboos to sf that writers previously had struggled for years to eliminate from the field.

If Elwood were a minor editor in the field, no one would worry about his personal beliefs. It is the fact that he controls such a large portion of the field that causes concern. There have been other editors in the field who have been criticized for narrow views. John Campbell was often

criticized for his "right-wing" views, and Michael Moorcock was also criticized for the highly experimental contents of NEW WORLDS while he was editing it. But while both these men had a great deal of influence on the sf field, in no way did they exert this influence by controlling a huge portion of the markets; theirs was an "honest" influence, caused by their being able to assemble a package of writing that impressed other writers and brought in more work written to their standards.

I made an observation to Elwood that if a poor story appears in an anthology the editor gets blamed, while if a poor novel is published, the writer gets the blame. Elwood replied that this was true, but in both cases it was really the writer's fault for writing the story poorly.

But it's the editor's responsibility to see that poor writing doesn't get published in the first place! An editor who isn't able to recognize when a story is poorly characterized, or is cliched, or what changes can be made to improve it, is a poor editor. The best type of editor is one who can point out to a writer where a story slips, suggest how it might be improved, and inspire them to greater efforts. It was because John Campbell was that type of editor that the "Golden Age of SF" (sometimes called the "Golden Age of ASTOUNDING") came into existence.

I don't feel that Elwood is that type of editor. In the course of our conversations, he made what might have been a Freudian slip. The statement is taken out of context, and the subject under discussion at that moment was not science fiction, but it is still a statement that I feel says a lot about Elwood's attitudes. Elwood stated, "I don't really dislike anything very much."

Elwood does not possess a particularly forceful or inspiring personality. (Which was rather surprising. One expects a high-

energy super-salesman from a person with Elwood's record for accumulating contracts.) He came across to me as a non-violent, honest, sincere, very conservative person—rather a credit to his Christian beliefs, in fact. If there are some things which he dislikes or objects to, there is nothing for which he evidences a hate (with the exception of manuscripts typed with a worn-out ribbon). He bore no resemblance to the many stories I've heard about how mean and cruel and vicious editors are. Elwood is a "nice guy."

While being a "nice guy" has its advantages, I think that for an editor it also has its disadvantages. I gained the impression from talking with Elwood and observing his behavior with other people that he is too unwilling to criticize other people's work. I think that, on an unconscious level, he may be accepting work he knows might be better written. I think that if he were more "snarly" in his work, if he took a more critical look at the stories he receives and pointed out any flaws he saw to the authors and insisted on more rewrites, that the quality of the work he publishes would take a giant leap upwards. He seemed too willing to accept the first version submitted of the stories he assigns (though not always, as the Ted White case cited earlier shows). Trying to judge other people's psyches is a tricky and dangerous business, but the impressions I've described are the ones I perceived about Elwood.

Elwood's affect on the science fiction field as a whole is something that probably cannot be determined conclusively. But questions have been raised about possible effects of his work and methods.

One that I raised in an earlier GODLESS might, I think, give another reason why I feel Elwood's anthologies tend to be below average in quality. Most of the markets Elwood has broken into have been new markets, that had published sf infrequently or never before Elwood's arrival. In just a

few years, he effectively doubled the size of the science fiction field. My question is: Has the amount of sf being written increased proportionately to the amount of sf being published?

To illustrate: Suppose that in 1970 there were markets for 100 stories (a ridiculous figure, but easy to calculate with), and that there were 1000 stories submitted that same year. Roughly the best 10% of those stories (allowing a few percentage points for editorial preference and bad taste) would have been published. Now, in 1974, markets for 200 stories exist, but has the number of stories being written also doubled, to 2000, so that the top 10% are still being published?

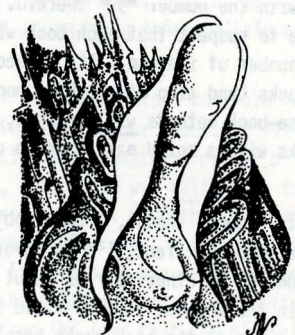
I don't think it has. There is more sf being written, I'm sure; many new writers have appeared on the scene and older writers, because of the expanded markets, are able to write more or even go full-time. But I don't think it has increased as fast as the markets have. Is it now necessary to buy the top 12% of sf being written? The top 15%? What? (Because I don't know what the various figures for stories submitted/stories accepted are for various years, I don't know what the true figures would be. I sure wish I could find out, though) The stories included in those extra percentage points would tend to be more poorly written than the other 10%, meaning that the overall quality of the field is lowered.

Has such a drop in quality taken place? No doubt there are many who would disagree with me, but I feel such a change has taken place. There no longer seems to be the excitement, the feeling of new potential that infected the sf field five or six years ago. Other people have expressed similar opinions. Whether this change, if it exists, can be placed at Elwood's door (and no matter how much of the field he's responsible for, I wouldn't give him total blame; but a strong influence...maybe) is, again, an un-

determinable answer.

The question of "glut" arises: Has Elwood's massive entry into the original anthology market caused a glut in the markets for that type of book? Yes, I think it has. On a personal level, it is no longer possible for me to even try to read all the original anthologies being published now. On a higher level, it may be that there are too many o/a's being published for the available markets, particularly in hardcover. The majority, I believe, of hardcover anthologies are sold to libraries. And it may be that there are now too many original anthologies being published for the libraries to support all of them; the libraries will only be able to budget for some of them, causing drops in the total sales of each, possibly to the extent where it will no longer be good business to publish the books. Result: a "bust" in the original anthology market.

Elwood's opinion is that a "bust" in the o/a market will not occur. On the other hand, he does admit that "market conditions favor novels" and that novels tend to sell better than anthologies of short stories. And it is a fact that Elwood has drastically reduced his work on anthologies and is concentrating most of his efforts on novels, particularly the 48 per year for Harlequin Books. There are still between 30 and 40 Elwood anthologies unpublished, but these are scheduled over the next two or three years, not actually "new" work.



And speaking of Harlequin Books, one of the worries about Elwood's contract with that company is their practice of "nurse-book" distribution methods: Harlequin supplies its line of nurse novels with their own book racks, and they place these racks in places where racks are usually not found in great number (drugstores, five-and-dimes, etc.), and their sales are supposed to be extraordinarily high. Some people have expressed worry that if the same methods are used with Elwood's sf line and it reaches similar popularity, that some of the regular book racks might be replaced by Harlequin's, to the detriment of other publishers.

Preliminary reports after Elwood was first hired by Harlequin said that they would not be using the "nurse-book" methods to distribute the sf line. In the course of the interview, however, Elwood admitted that this was no longer quite so certain. He said that Harlequin was planning to try a variety of methods, "presently confidential but quite exciting," and that the nurse-book methods might be a part of these plans.

In Elwood's office, I came across a dummy cover for one of the Harlequin books (quite attractive, I might add; Harlequin will be using cover art by well-known sf artists such as Freas and Schoenherr for their sf line, instead of the monotonous and poorly-done covers on their nurse books). At the top of the cover were the words "A Roger Elwood Selection" and a circle with the number "50" therein. Such leads me to suspect that each book will have a number of its own, like Harlequin's nurse books (and also DAW Books), and that the nurse-book methods will be used, hitting the racks with a solid massed group of titles.

Oddly enough, though, I don't object to these methods. In fact, I'm in favor of them. One of my other worries about the growth in the science fiction field is that display space on the book racks hasn't, I

feel, grown apace with the number of books being published. While I was stationed at Fort Lee in Virginia, there was a nearby store that had a fairly nice selection of sf; nearly a rack full. But by the time I left Virginia, the quality of that rack had gone way downhill. Why? Because over a period of months, nearly half that rack had become permanently occupied by Perry Rhodan and Doc Savage books. So there's no longer as much space available for all the rest of the sf being published.

Now if Harlequin had come into the market with regular distribution methods, it would have made the situation even worse. With a new book almost every week (or worse yet, placing dozens of books on the market simultaneously), it would have resulted in even less opportunity for all books published to get a fair showing (including Harlequin itself). While the separate racks might be detrimental, I think the chances for detriment would be even greater with regular distribution methods.

For nearly twenty pages of manuscript now, I've been expressing my doubts and worries about Roger Elwood. It's about time I began telling some of the things I found encouraging, and make me hope his work will make a better impression upon me in the future.

First, he's gotten better deals for the writers whose work he's bought. His word rates are as high as ANALOG's, 3-5¢ a word. He's increased his pro rata royalty rates to 70-80 in favor of the author (for any royalty payments over the original price, the writer gets 70%). I believe this is higher than most other markets offer at this time. He has stated he would like, and is trying, to get publishers to use the SFWA Model Contract. And he has taken steps to cut down on his paperwork load, so that hopefully he will no longer have the problems with handling manuscripts and correspondence that has caused complaints.

Because he's expanded the markets, he has been able to give a large number of new writers their first sale. While I haven't been particularly impressed by any of these new writers yet, and I think that some of them will look back years from now and be dreadfully embarrassed by their first stories, it proves that Elwood is open to new talent and that a new Big Name Pro may surface under his editorship yet.

He has been willing to try new methods and ideas. Not the least impressive of these methods is his talent for breaking into heretofore virgin markets; no one else had even thought of Harlequin Books as a potential sf publisher. The MANY WORLDS OF.... series he has been doing for Chilton uses an idea I think is marvelous: each collection of stories by a certain author (so far Poul Anderson and Andre Norton) contains not only fiction by the authors, but commentary and criticism on their works by highly reputed critics like Sandra Meisel and Patrick McGuire, and pieces by the authors themselves discussing their own writing. The CONTINUUM series is another experiment, though the reviews I've seen so far haven't been particularly enthusiastic of the results.

He's helped arrange contracts not just for himself but for other authors. Elwood is responsible for the series of books that Barry Malzberg will be editing for Harlequin, and he was also instrumental in launching Harlan Ellison's Discovery series of first novels for Pyramid.

I think that by moving the emphasis of his work to novels instead of anthologies, Elwood will increase the quality of the work printed under his direction. Even though he may be editing as much wordage as before, he won't have to judge as many stories. Instead of dealing with ten or twenty writers for one book, there'll be one writer, one book; this will save considerable time and pressure, and I think he'll be able to take a bit more relaxed and careful

look at the manuscripts submitted to him, with better writing resulting. Also, the novels will tend to be judged individually, by themselves, and the glaring disparity in quality that appears in his anthologies won't be so evident. Like I said, if a poor novel is published, the writer is blamed, not the editor.

Elwood's plans for the future are many. Some of them he admits are only dreams right now; something he would like to do at some time. He has stated, however, that he'll be spending more time on his own writing in the future. Another possible plan is the introduction of a tabloid-sized science fiction magazine printed on newsprint, so that it could be sold at newsstands and in NATIONAL OBSERVER-sized racks in supermarkets, as well as at regular magazine stands. And one of his dreams is to get into movie production and film such works as Pengborn's A MIRROR FOR OBSERVERS.

Elwood is very sincere about his work and beliefs. He doesn't want people to think of him as a religious bigot or to dislike his anthologies because of that. He wants to publish books that people will enjoy and appreciate, and he's willing to listen to criticisms of his work and methods, and if he's convinced, he'll take action to try and correct such deficiencies. He is aware that many people consider his strict beliefs to be a danger to the quality of sf being published. And I think that because he is aware of this, that he is nowhere as strict in applying those beliefs as he could be.

It is when a person controls too much of a market that danger looms. A year ago, with Elwood responsible for 40% of the field, I think he was definitely too powerful, even without any other drawbacks. Now, with about 20%...well, that's still pretty large and my eye still glares somewhat skeptically at it, but it offers relief from the fear that the sf field would

become too much a reflection of one man's likes and dislikes.

Of course, part of this reduction in percentage is because of the growth of the rest of the sf field. Publishers are expanding their lines, new ones being started, older books being reissued in droves, etc. (It would be an interesting question as to whether Elwood merely preceded this growth, or inspired it.) It only makes more serious the question I raised earlier of whether the number of stories being written is growing as fast as the number of stories being published. There's more sf being published, but there doesn't seem to have been much change in the amount of good sf being published. The publishing scene is so chaotic and fast-changing right now that it's hard to say with any degree of certainty what the future holds.

What I hope doesn't happen is that all this expansion eventually results in a field-wide "bust". The sf magazines underwent a similar growth and bust back in the '50's and they've never fully recovered. If a bust does occur, Elwood will probably go down with all the rest.

Final conclusions: Right now, I don't think that Roger Elwood is a very good editor, and his reassurances about his ef-

fects (or lack of) on the sf field don't particularly reassure me. But he is sincere about his intentions are good. I think that with changes in his working methods, he could become a better editor, one whose work I might enjoy. I hope that his work improves and I hope that there are no detrimental side-effects to Elwood's work and influence in the sf field.

REG COMMENT: In my view Roger Elwood is a curious anachronism, a man faithfully defending a dead corpse of dogma and, astonishment upon astonishment, defending this rotting Establishment hulk in the field of science fiction—the area of literature based upon the what-if, the speculations of unrestricted, unblinkered minds, the free realm where lie the infinite possibilities of the vast future.

Roger Elwood is a bad intellectual joke in the field of science fiction. He is prepared to reject a superior story for shameful personal reasons. Shameful in the sense that he is prostituting his position as an influential, powerful editor to the fearful defense of that which he feels cannot stand—his personal religious/social/cultural/sexual code.

His religion comes first; his dedication to good writing and science fiction comes

second.

For a science fiction editor that is shameful, and he cannot honestly pretend otherwise. He is a censor, nothing more. He is busily at work restricting ideas, limiting concepts, building walls, proscribing themes...to the limits of his editorial powers.

He is trying to perpetuate and defend social/sexual/cultural/religious dogma that is outmoded, illogical, PROVEN WRONG, and essentially immoral by the tests of personal freedom and intellectual honesty. His weakness is so great that he dares not let these faiths be tested or challenged in his books, by others, in fiction form, no matter how well written! (Especially if the "unacceptable" story is well written!) He doesn't even realize how pitiable and sad he is—what a spectacle!—and how contemptible.

His output (despite good stories that don't happen to conflict with his taboos) is inherently second or third rate...as is the work of any "sincere" censor in the position of editor.

HELP! I'M A PRISONER IN AN ASTERISK FACTORY

VISIT TO A PULPY PLANET

By MILTON F. STEVENS

It occurs to me that some people may never even have heard of PLANET STORIES. Well, I'm going to tell you about it. PLANET STORIES ran 71 issues from 1939 to 1955, and it was a true pulp in the old tradition of high adventure and untrimmed edges.

The thing that made PLANET STORIES notable was that it was so much pulpier than the other pulps. You just had to look at one issue with stories like "Swordsman of Saturn," "Necrophiles of Neptune," and "Pederasts of Pluto" to know that this was where it was at in pulpdom. Still, if you

hitched up your disbelief suspenders a couple notches, it was sort of fun.

Once I'd made my mind up to wallow around a little in nostalgia, I decided to look at the first and last issues of PLANET STORIES. Sort of the where-it-came-from and where-it-went approach.

The first issue of PLANET is really a marvel to behold. You have the title emblazoned across the top of the cover in flaming letters with the subscript "Strange Adventures on Other Worlds—The Universe of Future Centuries." In the background, you have a whole bevy of brass braed babes firing arrows at a very antagonistic looking crowd of scaly Green fellows. In the mid-ground, you have an Earthman in the usual diving suit firing a ray gun at a bunch of the aforementioned Green fellows. In the foreground, another gang of Green fellows are about to carry one of the brass braed babes off to a fate that even Dick Geis wouldn't talk about. I think you can see why respectable parents in 1939 wouldn't let their kids read this stuff.

Once you're past the cover, the table of contents reads something like this:

"The Golden Amazons of Venus" by John Murray Reynolds.

"Expedition to Pluto" by Fletcher Pratt and Lawrence Manning.

"War-Lords of the Moon" by Linton Davies.

"Cave Dwellers of Saturn" by John Wiggins.

Of course, each story had its accompanying blurb. In the action pulps, the blurbs were designed to stir up your sense of wonder and maybe even to get you to buy the magazine. Presuming that the cover's promise of unnatural goings-on hadn't done that already. The lead story, "The Golden Amazons of Venus", has a good example of the flowery verb:

"Dakta death, horrible beyond



the weirdest fever-dreams of Earthmen, faced Space Ship Commander Gerry Norton. The laconic interplanetary explorer knew too much. He stood in the dynamic path of Lansa, Lord of the Scaly Ones, the crafty monster bent on conquering all the rich, shadowless lands of the glorious Amazons of Venus.'

See what I mean? It's a little disappointing to find out that Dakta Death merely consists of being eaten by a Dakta. Maybe it isn't the nicest way to go, but it doesn't take a very imaginative person to think of worse ways. And it's probably no worse than being eaten by anything else.

This story begins with the aforementioned Gerry Norton leaving on the second human expedition to Venus in a space ship that sounds like war surplus from ROBUR THE CONQUEROR (namely, it has about fifty helicopter rotors on it.) The first expedition has, of course, disappeared without a trace. Norton arrives on Venus only to find himself in the middle of the battle which is pictured on the cover. Naturally, he knows that he ought to save the brass braed babe from the Scaly Ones. After doing so, he discovers that not only is she completely humanoid, but she also speaks a dialect of Old Martian with which he happens to be familiar. I don't know what he would have done if she spoke some other alien language like Hungarian. No WASP space ship commander ever knew how to speak Hungarian.

After the battle, Norton is escorted to the city of the Amazons where he is told that in the Amazon race female births outnumber male births by a ratio of a hundred to one. With odds like that, it's not hard to imagine why the males don't do much fighting. He's also told about the Scaly Ones and their concerted effort to conquer the country of the Amazons.

After that, he's given a tour around the city, which is pretty much a standard

super science city of 1939 complete with ray canons on the bulwarks. Things are fairly quiet until that evening when Norton and his new female acquaintance are kidnapped by a raiding party of Scaly Ones and taken through the sewer system to Scalyheim.

The Scaly Ones have no redeeming social virtues at all. They're ugly, they're nasty, and they smell bad. They're like all the Green Fellows who used to be found lurking out in the bush on various backward planets. From the many descriptions of this type of creature, one might conclude that their only pleasure in life consisted of



offending as many values of White, Christian Civilization as they could manage at one time.

Like certain other literary bad guys, the Scaly Ones have a knack of making offers which can't be refused. Once Norton has been tossed in a dungeon, the bad guys inform him that if he doesn't radio his space ship to come to Scalyheim so it can be captured, they will torture the Hell out of his female acquaintance. Having complied with their wishes, Norton is informed that his girlfriend won't be tortured. However, both of them are going to be fed to the Daktas. The Daktas aren't described

very thoroughly except that they fly and eat. They seem to be part of a local recycling program which eliminates the need for space consuming graveyards for prisoners.

During negotiations, Norton meets Lansa, the leader of the Scaly Ones. Lansa turns out to be the leader of the first Earth expedition to Venus. You can always count on a renegade Earthman to be out there stirring up the Green Fellows. In the time since the first Earth expedition, Lansa has organized the Green Fellows (Green Fellows Local 777) and is planning nothing short of the conquest of the universe.

The plan doesn't work. Norton's space ship doesn't fall into Lansa's trap. Norton and his girlfriend escape and make their way back to the city of the Amazons where Lansa's invasion is repelled, Lansa is killed, and the Green Fellows are wiped out.

"Expedition to Pluto" is about a spaceship going to Pluto. I guess you could really figure that one out for yourself. The reason it's going to Pluto is that Earth needs a supply of a particular metal which is essential to its spaceship technology, and the only remaining source of the metal is on Pluto. Of course, they don't happen to know where on Pluto.

The plot arises out of the fact that the captain and the senior scientist are plotting to make the expedition fail, because they stand to make a bundle out of the collapse of Earth's spaceship technology. The young first officer is naturally trying to make the expedition a success. After floating around for awhile in the oceans of Pluto, the first officer finagles the expedition into drilling in a spot where he thinks there must be a quantity of this metal.

Does he find the metal? Well, sort of. Actually, he drills right into the middle of a subterranean (or maybe subPlutonian) city inhabited by dwarves. That's really

okay, because the dwarves have lots of the metal in question. The only problem is that they want to feed the humans to a giant amoeba. After much sound and flurry, the dwarves manage to feed only the bad guys to the amoeba, while the good guys escape with the metal. I think it's sort of heart warming how things work out that way.

The moon in "War-Lords of the Moon" isn't anything like you've seen on television. It's quite a bit closer to what you read about in Dick Tracy. One gets the feeling that the giant snails may be hiding just around the corner, although they aren't directly mentioned. It is mentioned that the moon has an atmosphere and an indigenous humanoid population.

At the beginning of the story, we have a Terran combat squadron on its way to the moon. Suddenly they notice that all the blue stars have faded. That seems a little bit suspicious. Then they notice that one of their spaceships has blown up. That's a whole bunch suspicious. From garbled radio transmissions, they learn that the emperor of the moon has been killed, and Horta, Lord of the Caverns, is working on taking over the whole place.

However, Horta hasn't entirely succeeded yet, so the Earth ships have some friendly territory left for a landing. On their way in, one of the Earth ships has its rudder disabled by ground fire. You may react rather negatively to the idea of a spaceship having a rudder. That was my first reaction, until I recalled that Larry Niven and Cordwainer Smith have sails on their spaceships. If they can have sails, why can't this guy have a rudder? Anything to keep science fiction writers happy. Besides, every spaceship in 1939 PLANET STORIES had a chartroom where they probably kept up their dead reckoning track, so the rudder seems in keeping with the whole thing.

Once the Earthmen arrive on the moon, they find out more about what Horta has

been up to. The Earthmen have been powering their spaceships with red rays which they get from red stars. The Earthmen are much better at squeezing red rays out of red stars than the moon people are, so they have an advantage.

However, Horta has discovered a way to get blue rays out of blue stars. (They don't write hard science stories like they used to.) With all these blue rays at his disposal, he decides to destroy a few Earth cities and unleash The Purple Plague. The less said about The Purple Plague the better, since it's never explained in the story anyway. Horta's choice of cities to destroy is interesting. His first choice is Nagasaki. That certainly sounds significant, doesn't it? I quite seriously suspect that it's a case of the monkeys at the typewriter effect. Horta's second choice of cities to destroy is Los Angeles.



Obviously something must be done about this menace. The daring Earthmen decide to invade Horta's cavern in an attempt to destroy his blue ray machine. After knocking out the two guards at the front door, they find Horta and his henchmen working on the giant machine which fills an entire cavern.

The friendly natives have told the Earthmen that the machine stores blue rays in a ray reservoir. The Earthmen had previously thought they were stored in a file cabinet. Once they're within eye tracking distance of the machine, all they have to do is get a shot at the ray reservoir. You can guess the results. Blooie!

"Cave-Dwellers of Saturn" has another blurb which is worth quoting:

'Across Earth's radiant civiliza-

tion lay the death-shot shadows of the hideous globe-headed dwarves of Mars. One lone Earth ship dared the treacherous blockade, risking the planetoid peril to find Earth's life element on mysterious Saturn of the ten terrible rings.'

Among other things, this blurb indicates that the blurb writer at least had enough taste not to read the story. Your guess is as good as mine as to where he may have picked up 'the planetoid peril', because nothing of the sort is mentioned in the story. Saturn's rings are not not mentioned as being terrible, they're not mentioned at all. Also, the Martians are not described as being any more hideous than any other gang of globe-headed dwarves one might encounter.

At the beginning of this story, the Martians are about to invade the world using their Photo-Atomic Ray for which there is no defense. Well, hardly any defense. The Earthmen know that there is a metal called tridium which will neutralize the Photo-Atomic Ray, but the only known supply of the metal is on Saturn. Of course, they don't happen to know where on Saturn.

Obviously this means that a gallant spaceship commander must run the Martian blockade and get the metal from Saturn. A gallant spaceship commander just happens to be available, and he arrives on Saturn two hoops and a holler ahead of the Martians. Does he find the metal?

Well, sort of. Actually, he falls down a shaft and discovers a city inhabited by ...survivors from a previous Earth expedition of two hundred years ago. (You were expecting maybe Plutonian dwarves?) That's really OK, because the survivors have lots of tridium, and they don't even want to feed anybody to a giant amoeba.

However, the gallant spaceship commander does have to fight off the man-eating Sludgies. Something must have gone wrong

with the plot, because he later has to fight off the Martians, too. If he'd been efficient, he would have fed the Martians to the Sludgies and then fought the Sludgies... I guess some gallant spaceship commanders just aren't as smart as others.

The menaces were many between the first issue of PLANET STORIES and the last. I don't think that anyone has ever counted the number of alien invaders and man-eating thingies that slithered their way across the pages of PLANET STORIES. I'm sure that if they did it would add up to quite a crowd. But by 1955 the urge to either conquer or eat mankind must have been abating, because PLANET STORIES had become a lot calmer.

The cover still says 'Strange Adventures On Other Planets', but the flaming lightning bolt letters for 'PLANET STORIES' had shrunk to a respectable-looking logo. The cover is by Kelly Freas, and it depicts a girl in a black lamay outfit holding two lightning bolts which seem to be aimed at a passing spaceship. The girl seems to be somewhat larger than planetary dimensions. While this does have a certain amount of the old pizass, the cover does seem a little bit constricted by the neat border around it.

Inside the magazine, the table of contents lists:

- "Out of the Iron Womb" by Poul Anderson.
- "Last Call From Sector 96" by Leigh Brackett.
- "Once A Starman" by Joe L. Hensley.
- "Image of Splendor" by Lu Kella.
- "The Brides of Ool" by M. A. Cummings.
- "Dust Unto Dust" by Lyman D. Hinkley.
- "Alien Equivalent" by Richard R. Smith.

The Anderson and Brackett stories were the lead novelets in the issue. These were probably the two best writers who appeared regularly in PLANET STORIES. Several of Poul Anderson's stories from PLANET STORIES have been reprinted, but strangely almost

none of Leigh Brackett's have. I noticed that Ace has recently brought out an anthology of her novelets. It's surprisingly that some publisher hasn't done that earlier.

"Out of the Iron Womb" deals with a duel to the death on an asteroid. The background is the standard frontier asteroid mining sort of thing. The story uses flashbacks to keep the action moving from the first paragraph to the last paragraph with the explanation slipped in the middle. The two duelists are an anti-technology fanatic and a space pilot whose partner has been killed by the fanatic in a staged barroom fight. The two have each other stalemated in space and the duel is to resolve the stalemate so one of them can leave.

The Brackett story is an interstellar cloak and dagger piece. Sector 96, which is mentioned in the title, is being considered for membership in the Galactic Federation. If it does become a member of the federation, an influential mining company will lose its monopoly interests in the area. The sector can't join the federation if the two sentient races in the area are at war. Guess who's trying to start a war?

The protagonist of the story is a drunken bum who is hired by the mining company to carry a message to the humanoid race in Sector 96. (Note the little bit of naturalism there.) The mining company officials think that the joker they've hired is so unreliable that he will release their message in five minutes flat. Since he's much more unreliable than they realize, he doesn't release the message. Of course he's being chased by some green folks and a big black thingie that goes "Jub, jub, jub," so maybe he just doesn't have time. Eventually, he's contacted by representatives from the non-humanoid race and convinced that he's being used.

Now that I think about it, the protagonist's actions really aren't that import-

ant, because the plot is resolved by the non-humanoids using their super weapon which is a synthetic energy eater known popularly as The Bitter Star. The Bitter Star has the interesting property of freezing anything it gets near. It seems to be quite persuasive in convincing the mining company that monopoly rights aren't everything.

Of the other stories in the issue, "Dust Unto Dust" is about explorers discovering an ages old, deserted city at the south pole of Mars. Entering the city is easy, but getting out again proves to be much more difficult. "Once a Starman" is a rather maudlin piece on the glories of being a space pilot. The other three stories are really not worth mentioning.

During its entire career, PLANET STORIES was essentially a prose comic book. During the late forties and early fifties, it was a pretty good prose comic book. It was eventually beaten out by the regular comic books, and it didn't succeed in creating a new slot for itself.

In its last half dozen issues, PLANET STORIES was trying to attain a degree of slickness to attract a more adult audience. The attempt didn't succeed, but it did kill much of the enthusiasm which had been the magazine's major virtue.

Now I first encountered PLANET STORIES when I was a toddler, so my judgement may be irretrievably corrupted. If you picked up a copy of the magazine with no prior experience, you might find it to be utter gunk. But even gunk has a value if it's amusing. Just think of it as literary nutty putty.

"Visit To A Pulp Planet" was first published in Milton F. Stevens' F.A.P.A. zine, THE PASSING PARADE #5.

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN MEN WERE MEN AND WOMEN WERE SOMETHING ELSE!

Rather than watch the MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW I will review a pretty damn good Philip Jose Farmer novel, HADON OF ANCIENT OPAR.

The star of the book isn't Hadon, a nice kid with athletic and fighting skill; it is the ancient world Phil has created, its peoples, customs, its religions and politics...and above all its critical geography.

Phil went to the trouble of writing a history of civilization on the shores of the twin inland seas existing in central Africa from 12,000 BC to 10,000 BC. This history is in the back of the book and it enhances your enjoyment of the story if you read the history first and study the maps of the Kemu (northern sea) and the Kemuwopar(southern sea) and Khokarsa Island.

The novel incorporates the adventures of Hadon, winner of the Great Games (to-the-death Olympics) and his 300-pound warrior relative, Kwasin, the beautiful Lalila, the off-stage Sahhindar, the man-God who came from the far future and taught the central African peoples key knowledge and attitudes to establish the high bronze-age civilization of the inland seas.

Hadon is a true hero, but it is Kwasin (rapacious, uninhibited, fierce, a liver of life to the hilt) who seems to have had the most fun in life. Maybe one of these days, when the basic anti-sex and anti-pleasure bias of Anglo-Saxon civilization has changed significantly, the Kwasins of fiction will be properly given center stage and the idealistic, over-controlled, self-sacrificing (fools?) like Hadon will be shoved aside as uninteresting and unrealistic. Granted Hadon is not as idealistic or controlled or self-sacrificing as Heroes of a few years ago, but he still is Too Much in my view, given the short, brutal, dirty lives of

99.9% of the people of his era.

Well, that's neither here nor there for this review's purposes. If you like deadly action, a quest, a catastrophe or two, a gripping dungeon escape, a chase, battles and fights galore, coherent exotic religions, customs and behavior, be assured that Phil Farmer does not stiff you in this book; it's all there, and more. (DAW UY1107, \$1.25)

"Pogo, in a INVESTIGATION, SUSPICION is NINE POINTS of the LAW! C'mon!"

—Albert

LETTERS FROM DENYS HOWARD

3-2-75

'RE: your review of THE DISPOSSESSED. In the reviews which I have read of this book, I have been struck by the unanimous failure to recognize what I felt to be the major flaw of the book: LeGuin's inability to delineate anything other than an "open marriage", ala heterosexuality, in the Odonian society in which there are supposedly no gender roles left. Only Joanna Russ has picked up on this, in the prozine reviews; Jude Rosenberg talks about it in the review which she wrote for FOSFOS, but I expected that inasmuch as Jude is a dyke. I don't think that this is merely a matter of our homosexuality providing lavender-colored glasses through which we instantly perceive insignificant points.

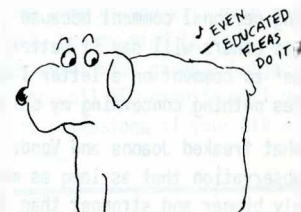
'I think that this failure on the part of LeGuin is substantive: she has drawn a portrait of a society in which women are equal to men in terms of the options open to them as a class, and in which there is no social odium attached to any form of love — yet she cannot carry through on this vision. She cannot bring herself to depict lesbians at all, and faggots only in cursory scenes.

'When I asked her about this at a public get-together at Reed College, she argued that homosexuality is outside her experience. At the time, this sounded like a good argument; yet now it makes me angry. The experience of being a male is outside a woman's ken, yet LeGuin and most other women who write don't think twice about using male protagonists. And nobody really knows how an alien will experience anything (except perhaps Alter?).

'The argument which LeGuin made oppresses me by assuming that I am so bizarre that even the best writer could not describe my character, and it oppresses her by assuming that there is no homosexual in herself. (Which in turn oppresses me further by assuming that she and I are wholly and irremediably alien to one another.)

'RE: Michael Coney's letter, pp43-43 ((TAC #11)). Coney concludes his letter with the observation that, in a society of terran colonists on another planet, "one half of our colonists will have the responsibility of bearing and rearing a far greater number of children than is considered normal—or even ethical—today. The name of that half happens to be Woman, and there is not a goddamned thing that any present-day action group can do about it."

'Well, unfortunately, he's wrong. If women today can seize control, or substantially influence, over genetic and gynecological research, then it is likely to the point of certainty that by the time this race is colonizing other planets, we will also have safe, efficient, practical extra-uterine birth. I think that the women's



revolution today will produce a society which would never sanction the kind of macho bullshit which Coney describes as an inevitable characteristic of colonization, and for that reason alone I think other solutions will be found to the problem of needing large populations quickly. And even if a colony did rely upon womb-births exclusively, what is there to prevent men from raising children? And why should all of the women necessarily participate in child-bearing (i.e., necessarily be fertile)? A crew could just as easily (if there must be oppression) be all-female, with three or four males to act as stud for the fertile women, who might be as much as one-third to one-half the crew.

'About the Archives: am I correct in assuming that a "collection" is all reprint, while an "anthology" is all new material? If not, what is the difference?'

((A collection is almost always a gathering of stories by one author, and they can be new or old. An anthology is a gathering of stories around a theme or idea; usually the stories are by various authors, and the stories may be new or reprints.))

3-5-75

'I just read Michael Coney's letter in TAC #6 (I recently bought #5 and 6 at The Looking Glass; now I have all that are in print). I can certainly understand better why Vonda McIntyre and Joanna Russ freaked out at your printing such a thing sans any comment at all.'

((I sometimes print letters with no following personal comment because I anticipate that others will say it better. My 'failure' to comment on a letter I publish signifies nothing concerning my opinion.

((What freaked Joanna and Vonda was my small observation that as long as men were generally bigger and stronger than women,

women would continue in greater or lesser degree to be sex objects and "property". There, I said it again. Maybe the above shouldn't be true, but I think it is true, and I'm sorry if that is so unpalatable as to cause hot flashes and hysteria.))

'Sometimes, when I am very, very depressed about the possibilities of ever overcoming the kind of smug arrogance which Coney so aptly represents, I daydream about how it must feel to be so immersed in your role as a member of the privileged class, that you can magnanimously assume that your goals and needs are congruent with those of the whole race. Make no mistake about it, Coney is most definitely merely a member of the privileged class, certainly not of any majority. What banal arrogance it takes to claim that a "white non-religious male of heterosexual leanings" is part of a "vast and passive majority"! Where? Perhaps in Schenectady and Pawtucket, but not on the planet as a whole. Straight white men, religious or not, are perhaps the most rapacious minority group ever inflicted upon this race by our ever-invictive, repressed unconscious.'

((Really?))

'Coney was hated in the West Indies, not simply and solely because he was white, but because he was part of, and refused to abdicate the privileges of, a minority ruling class. And he is hated and attacked by feminists (and now, oh ghod, by queers too) not simply because Russ has no prick (which I thought was a verb anyway), but because he refuses to perceive and struggle against the power and privilege which are handed to we men solely as a result of our having a penis.'

((In that case, why go against Mother Nature by denying his heritage? If he truly saw himself as a member of a privileged class instead of sacrificing his power and advantages to further "justice" he might be better off honestly fighting the revolutionaries, since their intent is to

castrate him.

((It always astonishes me when the have-nots, after reviling the haves as merciless, rapacious, and without conscience, promptly turn around and appeal to the have's conscience and ask the ruling class to give up power and privilege.))

'My experience has been that it is primarily straight white men who preach a gospel of the unity of the human race and the need for all of us to stick together and support one another. That kind of human-being-ism seems to spring either from idle dilettantes of the privileged class, or from those men who see that their power is in fact being challenged by those whom they have oppressed, and who fear the loss of that power so deeply that they are willing even to offer to share it with anyone who will help them to retain it. Those of us who have been denied our humanity by those very straight white males, solely because of our class characteristics of being non-white, or female, or non-masculine, are not particularly excited about responding to still another clarion call from ol' massah michael to man the barricades to save his skin. We are learning that we have one another, and that we do not need his sanctions in our struggle to create a non-oppressive future. If that struggle to define our humanity in our terms is bigotry because we reject the definitions branded upon us by the likes of Coney, then so be it.'

((Well, Mike? Care to pluck all those labels off your moneyed, arrogant, privileged prick and enter the fray?))

"ME, paranoid? Why do you ask?!"

—Victor Kostiukin

I don't believe in astrology. We Geminis are very skeptical.

—Tom Marcinko

***** 35

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Sforum: an informally outrageous SF journal, published by Tesseract, the Univ. of N.H. SF Society. Essays, reviews, short fiction, poetry, art, special features. \$1. per issue, 6 for \$5. Sforum, F. Bertrand, Editor, 23 Grove St., Dover, N.H. 03820.

BOOK-QUOTERS-AID #2—\$2.50. FREE 15-word ad. #3 being planned: FREE OETAILS: Bookshelf, Pacific, MO 63069.

RICHARD E. GEIS IS DEAD!

My personal journal, that is. Not me. The reasons are three-fold: Firstly, and more important, I am entering into a relationship with a woman which is serious and which I refuse to endanger by reporting in REG, and I cannot feel good about NOT reporting it... There's an element of dishonesty and compromise that I can't live with. So that factor says stop the journal if you have to censor your reporting in it.

Another reason is that in spite of my hopeful rationalizations, the thing is taking a lot of time—and the guilts from SFR are eating at me. I simply must do a better job with SFR (by my standards), and I want to concentrate all my energies and time to that end.

Thirdly, I discover myself to have given the basics of my beliefs and philosophies in TAC, SFR and the two issues of REG published...and in the few sten-cils I have of #3 I am repeating myself and elaborating and decorating... The core of me is exposed...so why go on?

I'm sure some of you will give me an argument, but my mind is made up. Ha! Refunds cheerfully given. Subject to your veto, all REG credits will be applied to extensions of your SFR subscriptions.

GRINNY DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANY MORE

GRINNY is a Juvenile---for about 10 to 12 year olds---by Nicholas Fisk. Grinny is the name given "her" by Tim, Beth and Mac. They discover "she" isn't really their Great-Aunt Emma (whom the family was not aware of until "she" arrived out of the blue), but is a robot-in-human-form sent down by aliens to reconiter and advise as to suitability for conquest.

The climactic scenes where the children destroy Grinny and save the world are well done-exciting.

The novel is written in the form of Tim's diary. All I can say is that for an eleven-year-old, Tim is one helluva good writer. (Thomas Nelson, Inc. \$4.95)

LETTER FROM DENNIS LIEN

A Friend of The Cripple
Strikes Back!

March 22, 1975

"I've been reading and enjoying REG/TAC/SFR since #2 (and the 'old' SFR before it) but have never been inspired to write a letter of comment before. Feuds didn't do it. Witty articles didn't do it. Conspiracy theories didn't do it. Even the details of your (Dick's, not Alter's) sex life didn't make me do it.

Barry Malzberg's review of Donald Tuck's ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION is making me do it.

Don't ever let anyone tell you we librarians aren't weird. Yes.

I think the chief problem is the one Alexei Panshin pointed out: Tuck's work is essentially bibliographic. Malzberg expects it to be essentially biographic and attacks it from that viewpoint. Malzberg apparently feels that, insofar as its chief function is as a bibliographic tool, that it is redundant: '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.'

I suggest Malzberg take a closer look at said indexes. All of them are indeed fair, (reasonably) accurate, and complete within their limits--and many of them are indeed

in print. But none of them does quite what Tuck does.

The Don Day Index covers U.S. (and a few British) science fiction (and a few fantasy) magazines up through 1950. It does not include, for instance, WEIRD TALES, for which one must check the Cockcroft index, which also picks up seven other obscure pre-1950 fantasy magazines ignored by Day.

A new index by Frank Parnell (which I've not yet seen) picks up a number of other fantasy magazines ignored by both (such as the Canadian UNCANNY TALES), while material in the pulp hero magazines, the sex-and sadism pulps, and GHOST STORIES each requires yet another index.

For material since 1950 in the sf/f magazines, the situation is a little simpler--or is it? The MIT Index covers America and British magazines from 1950-1965 and the four (to date) supplements thereto extend this to 1974. Since only the first of these (covering 1966-70) so far falls within Tuck's scope, we'll ignore the others, along with the separate index to PERRY RHODAN which serves as their supplement.

Of course, none of these cover the Australian magazines, for which one must consult Graham Stone's index, nor do they take note of British editions of American magazines, for which one must check one or more of the five such indexes put out by the Australian Science Fiction Association (or the independent index to the British edition of F&SF).

And having checked all of the above, one has a fairly complete picture of stories published in the English language in science fiction and fantasy magazines--and that's all (if the story you seek appeared in PLAYBOY or POST or the old pulp ARGOSY, go back to square one). No indication of reprints in anthologies or collections by the author. No indication of books published during that time. In most of the indexes (Day being a major exception), no indication of title changes, collaborators, pen-names, etc.

I could go on at equal length to detail search patterns needed to locate information on anthology reprints (Malzberg notwithstanding,

only the 1971 to date NESFA Indexes give any information on anthologies at all, and they cover only the all-original ones; for others, one consults Cole, the two Siemon indexes, the various volumes of SHORT STORY INDEX, and the new CHICORELL index--and lots of luck finding, say a 1965 paperback British fantasy/horror anthology in any of them).

I could go on at equal length--greater length!--to explain the procedures for tracking down publication data on multiple editions and translations of books. But enough.

Given the fact that I work in the main reference room of a major research library and have an sf collection of my own built up over twenty years of collecting, I could probably duplicate 95% of Tuck's bibliographic data if I were to take the twenty-plus years Tuck took. But I'd a lot rather spend the twenty-plus dollars instead and use my time to make corrections and expand upon Tuck's work instead. (Malzberg's mention of 'the number of years Tuck claims in research'--emphasis mine--suggests that Tuck may be a liar. Since Tuck's first edition came out in 1954, twenty years before vol. 1 of the current (third) edition, I think the 'claim' can be accepted on the face of it.)

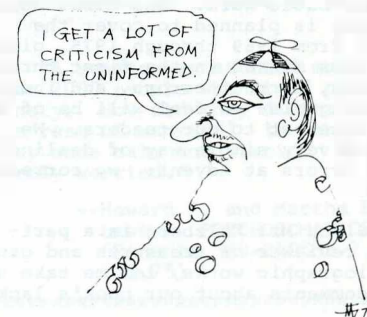
As for Malzberg's complaints of Tuck's inaccuracies: of course there are errors and omissions. I've been making a list of such, off and on, for almost a year to eventually send to Tuck, and I would hope that Malzberg would be doing the same. Or, if he finds Tuck that hopeless, be doing his own competing encyclopedia, despite Tuck's 'having killed the market for at least twenty years.' (If he has done so, he presumably did so way back with the first edition in 1954--and said dead market has seen a lot of sf reference/bibliography tools published since then. For that matter, the new volume does not seem to have 'killed the market' for Robert Reginald, whose SF INDEX is due out from Gale Research Co. in a few weeks.)

But specifically as for Malzberg's complaints of Tuck's inaccuracies: I note that Malzberg (or you, Geis?) twice refers to an 'O'Henry' prize where an 'O. Henry' prize is meant; that he says the stowaway in 'The Cold Equations' gives her life to save

a pilot and his ship, not a 'space colony' (reread the story--said ship was carrying serum needed to save six infected members of an exploration team and much is made of the seven vs. one decision); and that he cannot see what 'are Charles E. Fritch or Martin Gardner doing in a book which excludes Wyman Guin and Miriam Allen De Ford?' I don't know what Malzberg is doing with a defective copy of said book, but my copy includes an eight-line entry on Guin on page 195 and a 37-line (!) entry on DeFord (which is the way she spells it--not 'De Ford') on pages 134-135.

I find it interesting that Malzberg closes the penultimate section of his review with the statement that '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.' Granting him the weakness of much of the (incidental) biographical material, I think he still has rather less than half of 'the best of it,' while if he is unwilling to debate his review, why write it at all?

Tuck's work is a flawed masterpiece, but a masterpiece just the same. I'm sure Tuck lost money on his first two editions and I doubt if he'll make much on this one, even if prospective buyers disregard Malzberg. Producing a twenty-year labor of love does not put one above criticism, but it should at least encourage informed criticism by someone willing to defend his views in the 'anticipated debate.' If it were twice as flawed as it actually is, it still would not deserve Malzberg's 'Kicking a Cripple.'



April 3, 1975

"Thank you for the issue of SFR with Barry Malzberg's dissection of Don Tuck's ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY Vol. 1. Ed Wood, one of my partners in Advent and the principal editor of the ENCYCLOPEDIA, sent me his comments, which I now pass on to you with occasional interpolations by me:

WOOD: I have read Mr. Barry N. Malzberg's criticism of Tuck's ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol.1, and it is surely as fair for me to correct some of his mistakes as for him to nitpick. To take his last point first, I am sorry that he has picked up some variant edition of the encyclopedia, but the one and only printing I have in my possession has a section on GUIN, WYMAN (WOODS) at the bottom of Column 1 of page 195, and a section on deFORD, MARIAM ALLEN on page 134 and 135.

It is silly to argue with any reviewer about liking or disliking any work. His opinions are his own. However, it would be polite to be accurate.

PRICE: To be fair, I expect Malzberg missed the deFord entry because he thinks her name is De Ford --two words--and looked for it between De Camp and De La Mare, when actually it is deFord--one word--and so follows Defoe.

WOOD: Surely we at Advent were not expected to be error-free in a volume containing over a third of a million words? Our plan is to have a basic three-volume work with the bulk of the information, to be followed by a series of supplements to both update and correct the basic set. That way a buyer will not have to keep buying 'updated' editions of the basic work. The first supplement is planned to cover the field from 1969 through 1975, pick up items missed in the first three volumes, correct errors, and include anything else we feel will be of use and interest to our readers. We have a very simple way of dealing with errors at Advent: we correct them.

Since Mr. Malzberg is a part-time reviewer of treasures and other bibliographic works, let me take up his comments about our book's lack

of value to 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.' I know of the one Donald Day 1926-1950 magazine index which, horror of horrors, left out an issue of FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, neglected to put in the two 1950 issues of the British magazine SCIENCE-FANTASY, didn't include WEIRD TALES, etc. etc. I did not throw it out for these shortcomings, because the bulk of the information is invaluable. Its last known retail price was \$15 and it is probably in short supply if still in print. In a quarter of a century, I doubt if its sales exceed 2500.

PRICE: Our first printing of the ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol. 1 was 2,000, and it looks as if we will have to reprint even before Vol. 2 is ready late next year. WOOD: There are other indices by Bradford M. Day and they are valuable in their way but hardly free of errors, and what is their present availability? Walt Cole's CHECKLIST OF SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGIES, which has its share of mistakes and omissions (and doesn't cover individual author collections) is being reprinted by Arno Press at a mere \$21.00. Tuck's work will list the contents of over 3600 collections and anthologies. Does Mr. Malzberg know of any comparable work? I really doubt it! I find it extremely useful even as it is. Berkley has recently reprinted Heinlein's THE PAST THROUGH TOMORROW, and it is a fabulous buy at \$1.95--but how many people would realize that the story "Let There Be Light" from the Shasta edition of THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON is not in this or the Putnam editions? Tuck noted it.

This business of errors interests me--why should Malzberg waste a whole paragraph on a very obvious typographical error (Mr. Goulart's birth-year)? We do not for one minute believe that the errors of others excuse our own. Yet, if Frederik Pohl states on p.24 of Bretnor's recent SCIENCE FICTION, TODAY AND TOMORROW that after selling WONDER STORIES Gernsback returned to the science fiction field to start FUTURE FICTION and SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, do we then say that since Pohl has made one mistake, everything he writes is suspect? L. Sprague de Camp's excellent biography of H. P. Lovecraft has Houdini

dying of cancer whereas other books state that he died of a ruptured appendix. Does this make his book worthless in the light of Malzberg's criterion of absolute perfection?

PRICE: At least one of the errors detected by Malzberg is non-existent. He criticizes Tuck's description of "The Cold Equations" as 'the poignant story of a girl stow-away having to give up her life to save a space colony,' saying '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.' This point is usually fascinating because Tuck's manuscript said 'space pilot', and I carefully changed it to 'space colony' (with Tuck's approval) precisely to emphasize the point that the vital reason ship and pilot had to be saved was to deliver medicine to save a planetary exploration party. Go back and reread the story.

WOOD: This business of Davidson's dislike of Germans is an interesting item. We will include it in the supplement. Yet the fact remains that German editions of his work exist and so must be reported in an encyclopedia which is covering this field. I feel that the public life of any public person, artist, writer, actor, etc., is available for the public record. Perhaps the following incident will prove of interest to the readers:

Back in 1964, when a version of the ENCYCLOPEDIA was in the hands of Edward Wood, he asked Earl Kemp if Earl knew the identity of Cordwainer Smith, since Earl was working for Bill Hamling, whose firm Regency had published the collection YOU WILL NEVER BE THE SAME. Earl refused on the grounds that Cordwainer Smith really valued his privacy. Wood then informed Kemp that while browsing through CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS, he had noted that a Paul A.M. Linebarger had claimed the collection YOU WILL NEVER BE THE SAME to be his work. He also revealed this information to a member of the Los Angeles fan group at a meeting he attended in 1964. Earl said, 'He won't thank you for broadcasting the information.' Wood replied in the mild and gentle manner he is famous for, 'Earl, the man can't have it both ways. It is absurd for him to broadcast the details of his life in CA (he was the only one who could put it there) and then expect others not to notice this and reveal it to

the field where he is gaining an excellent literary reputation.' Don Tuck was informed and the section on page 277 is the result.

Advent intends to put every piece of relevant science fiction and fantasy information into Tuck's work.

PRICE: We welcome all suggestions, corrections, and further information from our readers, including Mr. Malzberg. We've already found one real howler that Malzberg missed: on page 285 is a reference to H.P. Lovecraft's 'visit to Florida in 1939' (two years after he died).

WOOD: If we have killed the market for at least twenty years, as Malzberg fears, we're truly sorry. Anyone who wants to write and/or publish encyclopedias of science fiction and/or fantasy is at liberty to do so. We at Advent have never had any monopoly on either knowledge or work in this field. We merely do the best we can.

PRICE: Malzberg's fear is premature. I understand that at least one competing work will be forthcoming from Fale, a major publisher of reference books. Its author, one R. Reginald, had already informed Tuck (who showed me the letter) that our planned supplement will be uneconomical in the face of Gale's competition. We will see."

"On the other hand, if his body image is deficient, he may never outgrow an aspect of infancy: a preoccupation with his own body, in a pattern of fixation that can intensify a psychosomatic symptom and disturb normal functioning. Dr. Z. J. Lipowski of McGill University recalls a young man who fixated on his penis and suffered from impotence. Circumcised in infancy, he went from surgeon to surgeon demanding that "my foreskin be replaced by a new one to allow me to have an erection."'

"A researcher studied more than 2000 people who lived past ninety. How did they differ from the rest of mankind? In general, they were calm and placid. They rarely worried."

--Howard R. and Martha E. Lewis. PSYCHOSOMATICS (Pinacle 523-240532-2, \$1.75)

THAT DREAD DISEASE OF THE EGO....

This is going to be absolutely unfair as a review. Consider it a preliminary opinion based on probably insufficient reading. (But I'll probably never do sufficient, so...)

I started THE WILK ARE AMONG US by Isidore Haiblum (Doubleday \$5.95) and quickly discovered it is written in the one style I HATE: tongue-in-cheek.

Why a good writer thinks it is good narrative form to hoke up with exaggeration and whimsy a basically good sf plot is beyond me. All he does for me is utterly destroy the credibility and reality of the story and background. I can't believe a word of it once the author succumbs to that uthish disease called jocularity. All I'm left with is a writer who is indulging himself by showing the reader how clever and superior he is.

I'm not snickering, Isidore. Give me back my 35 minutes.

'People seek government action because they don't approve of what other people choose to do with their lives. They want to overrule the decisions others have made concerning the uses of their own time and money.'

---Harry Browne, HOW I FOUND FREEDOM IN AN UNFREE WORLD (Avon 17772, \$1.95)

LETTER FROM ROBERT BLOCH

March 5, 1974

"Dear Dick:

I hate to say it, but there are several things about #12 which greatly disturb me.

First of all is the news that your attorney advised you to abandon your title, THE ALIEN CRITIC, to avoid being sued by a magazine called THE CRITIC. This I can understand -- but never in a million years will I comprehend why you have chosen to revert to calling your publication SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Aren't you aware that there's a SCIENCE magazine? And an arty little one titled FICTION? To say nothing of THE SATURDAY REVIEW? Seems to me all you've done is to jump out of the frying-pan into

three fires.

Secondly, I note an alarming tendency on the part of several contributors -- yourself included -- to say nice things about fellow-pros. Vide, cf., and how about that Delap piece on Harlan Ellison. Here is heresy indeed. Harlan Ellison, who has spent more than twenty years building up his image as a 'registered troublemaker' --and is painstakingly identified as such in a current UCLA mailing-piece -- the selfsame author of I HAVE NO ARMPITS AND I MUST SHAVE--the notorious closet-claustrophobe -- demolished with the flick of a careless pen! A man who will go to any lengths to be abrasive -- who, if confronted by a white racist, would unhesitatingly identify himself as 'Harlem Ellison' -- or, facing a Jewish audience, proclaim himself the author of A GOY AND HIS DOG -- put down as Mr. Nice Guy in so cavalier a fashion! Fie and double-fie! Then there's Dick Lupoff, with his gratuitous insult to Isaac Asimov, describing him as a 'decent and honorable person' Asimov, who has devoted a lifetime to establishing himself as an innocent and dishonorable character, an ambidextrous pincher of pennies and butts alike, a self-styled Ph.D. (Doctor of Phrenology) who has broken all the laws except those of robotics, the kind of a man who has given evil a bad name -- reduced to the role of an upright citizen! For shame!

As for your own remarks about 'gentle, kind, considerate Bob Bloch' --well, my attorneys will be in touch with you shortly. Until then I remain,

Yours maliciously,
Robert Bloch"

((I know, I know... The care and feeding of an image is a long, tedious project. My apologies. Please, Bob, don't let it out that my image as Pornographer and dirty middle-aged man is a fake. I'm really a pious celibate. The CIA is paying me to present myself this way...and the money is too much to resist.))

LETTER FROM BEN BOVA

March 10, 1975

"I don't usually respond to fan publications, but Dick Lupoff's column on J.O. Jeppson's THE SECOND

EXPERIMENT is so out of touch with the facts that I feel somebody has to set the record straight.

Lupoff is entitled to his opinions on the literary merits of the novel. But to imply that Houghton-Mifflin bought the book only because Janet Jeppson is Isaac Asimov's wife is not only unreasonable but unfair. I've been close enough to both Janet and Isaac to know that she submitted the book to them herself, with no strings pulled and no mention of Isaac. Houghton-Mifflin doesn't strike me as the kind of publisher that will deliberately put on a book they don't like, for fear of losing the prestigious Dr. Asimov. Nor is Isaac the kind of man who would walk away from Houghton-Mifflin (or any publisher) because they turned down Janet's novel.

I myself rejected THE SECOND EXPERIMENT when Janet submitted it to Analog for serialization. I felt it wasn't the kind of science fiction that Analog's audience would go for--in the version that I read. I suggested to Janet how she might modify the manuscript to bring it closer to our kind of story. She sold it to Houghton-Mifflin instead. Isaac and I are still friends. Janet and I are still friends. No Jewish assassins from Brooklyn have made any attempts on my life, my fortune, or my sacred honor.

Janet Jeppson has had her share of rejection slips. She has written professionally, as a sideline, for many years and was already a published writer when she and Isaac first met. To claim that THE SECOND EXPERIMENT was published through influence, and that nobody--from Houghton-Mifflin to Charlie Brown--thinks it has any merit, is nonsense.

As I said, any reviewer is entitled to publish his opinions of a book. But to impugn the honor of both Asimovs, from a cross-continental distance, without any effort to check on the facts, is not only bad taste, it is poor policy on your part as a publisher and just plain dumb."

((If the book was bought for slightly less than ideal literary reasons by Houghton-Mifflin, who there will cheerfully admit that in a letter to anyone? There's no way I (or Lupoff) can check on the "facts."))

LETTER FROM

POUL ANDERSON

National Headquarters

THE AMERICAN LEAGUE FOR TOLERANCE AND BROTHERHOOD

"Kill the bigots!"

"Since you are kind enough to send me SFR, I ought to give you some response once in a while.

I wish George Warren had not taken that gratuitous and indefensible slap at Barry Malzberg. Despite several disagreements with him, or even because of them -- since such things can be revealing -- I know Malzberg is an honest man who's not trying to brown-nose anybody. If his writing seems to be of the kind that some academics prefer, this is simply the result of his own preferences, or his vision if you want to talk fancy.

I've been on the receiving end of corresponding imputations myself (in that case, being told variously how I was getting rich by pandering either to the military-industrial establishment or the great unwashed) and remember how it used to feel. These days, case-hardened, I give such things the indifference they deserve; but seeing somebody else get that treatment can still excite a certain amount of anger.

Otherwise Warren's points are very good and well-made. It might be worthwhile to expand on them a bit, as regards the freedom of the modern American science fiction writer.

Actually, he's had as much as he could reasonably ask for since 1949, that being the year that Fantasy and Science Fiction was founded. John Campbell was never a prude himself, but Street & Smith, an old family-owned firm, was somewhat, and put restrictions on him which he cheerfully shed after he changed publishers. To be sure, meanwhile many others took some time to realize that sf was not for kiddies and could safely be given the same liberties as Hemingway had always enjoyed. For instance, I remember the then editor at Doubleday making me tone down a moderately sexy scene in the book version of THREE HEARTS AND THREE LIONS. But this was all fairly trivial, and soon went away. To

all intents and purposes, we've been free to deal with human psychology as well as we're able for the past quarter century or so.

The much-touted liberation of more recent years amounts to nothing except the admission to print of a few four-letter words and an occasional quasi-clinical description of a sex act or something like that. This hardly seems worth getting excited about, and does seem inadvisable to overwork. Why should sf do poor imitations of D. H. Lawrence -- or, for that matter, James Joyce? There is no profanity in the Elizabethan dramas because it was illegal on the Elizabethan stage; nevertheless, Shakespeare & Co. managed to say quite a bit about the relationship of God and man. Similarly, the great Victorian writers dealt as effectively with the relationship of woman and man as anybody has done before or since, and more effectively than anybody is doing at present.

I don't say that it is not convenient to be able to use a flat-out undeleted expletive or a spelled-out description now and then. I do it myself. But it's overrated. 'Convenient' is the adjective for it, not 'necessary.' The real freedom, which is freedom of content, of idea, was won some time ago.

It probably isn't absolute yet (leaving aside libel, etc.) and probably never will be. After all, in a free society a publisher is not obliged to publish something he finds abhorrent, regardless of whatever literary merit it may have. One advantage of capitalism is that a good enough writer can find a greedy enough publisher. But there are limits. For example, I doubt if a novel making Eichmann out to be a saintly martyr of the international Jewish conspiracy would ever sell well, no matter how written. And were I an editor or publisher, regardless of its sales potential, I'd bounce it. To print this, trees should die?

Such considerations lead to a point which I believe is worth thinking about. Quite possibly we'll get some kind of reaction against the way things have been going, and possibly it will take the form of puritanism. In this country, at least, it could express itself much more as a change in public taste than as a change in the law, though the latter might follow. Well, if

this deplorable event happens, I'd rather it took the form of old-fashioned prudery than of present-day ideological conformity. If we must yield some ground, let us give up pictures of naked ladies and long accounts of copulations, but draw the line and try to hold it in those areas which concerned the Founding Fathers. As long as we can, without fear of personal consequences, damn the government, we haven't lost hope. If we can't, then we have -- and it's quite conceivable that our owners will give us license in our sex lives and biologically-oriented language as a pacifier.

Thus, I decline to fulminate against, say, the taboos of Roger Elwood. He's within his rights when he refused matter he finds offensive. If it's any good, there are plenty of other markets for it. (In this specific case, I speak from experience.) If absolutely nobody will publish a story known to be good, on grounds of its sexual or scatological content, we can take that as an early warning. If the same thing happens to a story on social or religious grounds, it's time to call out the troops. To date, I know of no cases of either kind. But we might do well to straighten out in our minds just what we mean by 'freedom,' in advance of any such emergency."



Anarchists of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your...
er...anarchism.

GEIS NOTE---

A public apology is due Harlan from me, here, for misplacing his Afterthoughts and forgetting they existed. (I put them in the 'Material File' drawer...) When he received SFR 12 and noted the lack of his contribution, Harlan called and asked mildly what the hell had happened. It was humiliating.

So, below, an issue late, is the article that should have followed Richard Delap's "Smoke and Glass" in #12.

Apologies to Richard, too.

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HARLAN ELLISON	
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some afterthoughts

on Delap's nonfiction

fantasy

by the subject

"Getting past the sheer flattering ego-trip of having a critic as smooth and deep as Delap even doing a piece on me -- taken as infinitely greater a compliment than the dozens of other 'interviews' I've given in the past few years, predicated almost entirely on the fact that my name on a magazine cover can sell some copies (usually to those who despise me, who hunger to see how big an asshole I'll make of myself this time) -- a few thoughts occur that may be of interest.

Clearly, this isn't an interview, nor even a straight reminiscence, nor even a critical study. It's a peculiar minsh-mosh, sui generis. And for that reason I honor and respect it. Delap is a talented writer. I've been trying (since that same period of time during which he 'interviewed' me) to get him to do a critical study of science fiction that I could publish in Pyramid's Harlan Ellison Discovery Series. I think it would be a smasher. Please drop a card or letter to Delap or Geis and badger the lazy sonofabitch into doing the outline and ten thousand I asked

for, so I can get him an advance, and we'll all be able to settle down to a good read. Richard is one of the five or six genuinely perceptive critics in the field, which was obvious from the first things he wrote, even when he was learning his craft, which is why I never bitched at his unfavorable reviews of my work...as I do with some of the brain damage cases who festoon the other fanzies that occasionally slither under my door.

And because he is a talented writer, what he has created in this interview-cum-mish-mosh is something singular and, in a few different ways, a fresh approach to getting inside the writer. I don't know that it's 100% successful, or even if it's accurate, but it's fascinating as hell. I think it says almost as much about Richard as it does about me, but I'd be out of line going at it from that tack.

In some ways, it's a sorts kinda psycho-sexual study of the inside of a human being, as seen from the viewpoint of analysis of the outside. And with the exception of his perception that at one point I was nervous (which I wasn't; not in the way he deduced it), he seems to be dead on target all the way.

The gentle thing he says about the little anima fellow inside me is hard to deny, even if I wanted to, which I don't. In each of us there is a crippled child. Someone must have said that; it's too deadly and right for me to have cobbled it up myself. (Although, just the other day, talking to Herb Kastle, the novelist, a friend, in relating how I've taken over the support of my mother in the past ten-fifteen years, I said, 'I've become my father,' which drew me up short with a screech, and Herb went awoooooo and knew just what I meant. That my mother has become the child, and I the adult, and I'm handling her, in her declining years, as my father must have handled me in my childhood. And it was a shocker of a line, all set down neat and clear; because it answered, in a terrible way, the observation of Faulkner that, 'No matter what it is a writer writes about, he is writing about the search for his father.' Which means I've found the father I lost to death so long ago, by becoming him. So maybe I did invent that line about the crippled child. But I don't think so.)

There is a gentle little urchin in here somewhere. He's the one for whom I wrote One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty. He's the one who had the smarts to take Jim Sallis up on his suggestion that I turn that loathsome evening in New Orleans with the ex-Mardi Gras Ball queen into a sweet, happy story, instead of letting it be the raging-hate thing it was destined to be, and it came out On the Downhill Side. He's the one responsible for the Bittersweet aspects of The Resurgence of Miss Ankle-Strap Wedgie (which is the longest piece of really good writing I've ever done), for the section on my dog, Ahbhu, in The Deathbird, for In Lonely Lands and Cold Friend and Hindsight: 480 Seconds and the gentler sections of Pennies, off a Dead Man's Eyes and Catman.

I used to think that little fellow in there was a twisted crippled thing--left over from my twisted, crippled childhood. And I played to him in that way. And when I wrote, thinking to reflect his attitudes, I wrote a lot of nasty things...the ones Richard says (and I guess, sadly, it's true) have become my trademark. What a sorry thing to have to admit.

But the damnable thing about it is that the little fellow in there, who was so warped to start with, has been very quietly but determinedly getting his act cleaned up all these years, and now he's strong and straight and healthy, and I'm still playing to him out here as though he were something out of Tod Browning's 'Freaks.'

If nothing else, Richard Delap and his strange article have made me realize that wonderful thing.

So don't ever tell me that the written word can't change people's lives, bring them to fresh awareness of self, alter the course of actions that have been ongoing for years. It just happened. Try it for yourself. That Delap has some talent.

Now I have to look at myself from a new place, because of Delap. And I see that I'd like to be something else. And am on the way to being it. A new goal.

Richard talks about me in terms of what Glenn Wright at Clarion/MSU calls the 'archetypes and archetypal images,' as derived from

Jung and Eliade. He deals with the Persona and the Anima. I see myself these days as heading toward the Shadow and the Trickster.

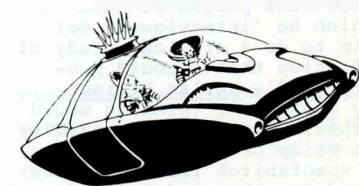
Shadow, in that I'm going to start letting the shade of myself out more. To get some fresh air. That little kid, the Anima, He's been a Shadow till now. I find I really can dig him. He sees things much more clearly.

Trickster, in that I realize if I could be anybody in the world (and failing reincarnation, by which I'd come back as Pittsburgh), I'd be the Harlequin. I always denied that I was that character out of my own work. And maybe when I denied it, it was true. I wrote the story as an apology for my inveterate tardiness, but it's become more than that. It's become a sort of statement of gadflying, and good-deed-doing in the noble sense. And boy does that one rock me! Noble!?! Wheeew. Hev-eee!

But a lot of the things I've always done, and which I'm doing more of now, when I should be laying-back, because I'm secure financially and get my ego stroked all the time, those things suddenly seem do-able only out of a sense of honor or ethic or crusading. Nobility. Either that or I'm really around the bend. So, coming up short of believing I'm ready for the rubber room, it'll probably serve a more worthwhile end if I just accept a certain trickster nobility.

Which will, I suspect, make me a more loving and lovable character. At age forty, I will slide jauntily into a new social suit of clothes, and be considered a patron of good work and kind deeds.

Except...I've got this pain right here, and...when it hits... I sorta go kinda crazy and want to bury my teeth in someone's throat!...



A STITCH IN TIME

Ye Gods! I am about to praise to the skies a novella by Norman Spinrad. He's come a long way, baby, from the excesses of MEN IN THE JUNGLE and BUG JACK BARRON.

His "Riding the Torch" is the standout novella of the three in THREADS OF TIME, an anthology of originals edited by Robert Silverberg. (Thomas Nelson, Inc. \$6.50)

The others are "Threads of Time" by Gregory Benford--really a superior ASTOUNDING/Campbellian story of an alien ship millions of years old discovered on the Moon and the intra-religious/cultural/social rivalry its discovery and investigation triggers...and a low-key, quiet story by Clifford D. Simak, in which time-travelers are "caught" by the hobby of one of their teams: he likes to take multi-viewed laser photos of ancient battles and events, and one of his "photos" is found by a modern-day history professor.

Both the Benford and Simak novellas are good, detailed, convincing, well-written.

But Spinrad's "Riding the Torch" is special. He deals with basic drives and philosophies as he tells of a science-rich cluster of colony ships in deep space--all that is left of mankind--on a seemingly endless (eons-long) search for another Earth-like planet.

The Scouts find many planets along the way, but they always turn out sterile, barren, lifeless... And meanwhile, using the raw forces of hydrogen fusion, the colony ships have modernized, rebuilt their fleet, expanded, become rich and glittering with culture and art.

Humanity is searching for another home after having ruined Mother Earth. But--does mankind really need to be dirt-bound again?

Norman's style is smooth and sharp and balanced; a delight to read. He has matured as a writer, and this marries his natural power and vivid imagination with his hard-won grace and command. He reads in this novella like a man who has all the tools and knows precisely how to use them.

I'll pay a good deal of attention to him from now on.

*****45

"In whatever country Jews have settled in great numbers, they have lowered its moral tone, depreciating its commercial integrity, have segregated themselves and have not been assimilated, have sneered at and tried to undermine the Christian religion, have built up a state within a state, and have--when opposed--tried to strangle that country to death financially. If you do not exclude them from the United States in the Constitution, in less than 200 years they will have swarmed in in such great numbers that they will dominate and devour the land and change our form of government. If you do not exclude them, in less than 200 years our descendants will be working in the fields to furnish the substance while they will be in the counting house rubbing their hands. I warn you, gentlemen, if you do not exclude the Jews for all time, your children will curse you in your graves. Jews, gentlemen, are Asiatics; they will never be otherwise."

---BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, speaking to the Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, 1787.

LETTER FROM
PHILIP JOSE FARMER

Feb. 27, 1975

"Dear Richard the Lean-Hearted:

Enclosed check is for one year's sub to your publication, whatever its name, The Ailing Cricket or SF Review. I'm trusting to you that the 1st copy sent me will be No. 12, as you advertise.

I don't like to have to wade through so many book reviews, but the occasional snarling nasty jeremiad or your alter ego comments or Geis' comments on sociology/politics/etc. make it worthwhile. And Joanna Russ is right in some respects; you and your contributors (with some notable exceptions) are indeed male chauvinist pigs. But nobody's perfect. Most of your reviewers--not all of course--are imbeciles. But often they are amusing imbeciles.

They know this, at least, that is, that the primary function of a reviewer or critic is to amuse, entertain, the readers. Never mind objectivity, perceptivity, a wide

knowledge of literature, science, history, etc. Make the clowns laugh. That's what it's all about.

I was too busy to write a comment on Lafferty's article, but I was surprised that no one did write to you about it. Though perhaps some did but you didn't print their letters. Lafferty is unique, a strange phenomenon indeed. Here's an old man with a self-admitted drinking problem who writes stuff that has been hailed as the freshest of the fresh, the newest of the new wave, the acme of art in writing. He puts the young lions to shame; no matter how far out they try to be, they can't get near Lafferty.

Most conservative readers don't care for him; the liberals have taken him to their bosoms. Yet he is a die-hard reactionary, stiff-necked, a devout Catholic who won't accept even justifiable criticism of the Church, a male chauvinist if ever there was one, and there have been and are and will be.

The liberals, the new-waveists, have put their seal of approval on him because they don't understand him, and if you don't understand somebody the safe thing to do is to hail him, adopt him, laud him, and hope to God that he's saying what you hope he's saying.

When I say liberal, I mean in a relative sense, of course. From my viewpoint the only true liberals in the field are Mack Reynolds and myself and about three others on the borderline."

((Yeah, "Liberal" means all things to all men... I'm liberal in "giving" freedom to people over their lives, in all areas. Others are liberal in "giving" social equality and economic equality.))

LETTER FROM ANDY PORTER

February 26, 1975

"I thought you weren't going to write this letter! You know what I told... Goddamnit! I told you to shut up! I'm the boss in this body and what I want goes. So if the two of you What's this two of you stuff. As always I maintain a rigid calm and what you feel is right must dictate how we act; therefore I feel...JEEZUS!!! Will the two of you shut up and let me

get on with this letter?

There. That's better. You'll let me write Geis a nice calm letter, like good little personas, and we'll proceed from here. Frankly, Dick, you've got it easy. Only one alter-ego to mess up your writing style. The two bastards I'm saddled with are always fighting among themselves, let alone with me. Wanna trade a full page ad in ALGOL for taking one off my back?

This letter is, of course, in response to Dick Lupoff's article (I hope you paid him for it) in the current issue of SFR (on second thought, maybe I don't have as bad a problem as you do). The book reviews in ALGOL operate under a certain set of rules.

One is that story collections and anthologies get a low place on the totem-pole: with the twice-a-year schedule I've got, I want to keep as many inches of type available for important novels and such as possible. Another rule is that if a really bad book comes along most readers will be aware of it as such, and I'd rather not waste important space reviewing it. Another rule is that when an important book comes out and Lupoff reviews it, and at the same time he reviews a lesser book, but a good one nonetheless, I may hold the review of the lesser book and only publish it if I have the space, or hold it over entirely until the next issue.

Okay now, CLOUT: I am not afraid to publish a review saying such-and-such-a-book stinks; I am not afraid to publish a review saying, and here I quote from ALGOL #23, Page 39: 'The fact is that the Continuum Books that I have read have been variously derivative, dull, turbid, outmoded, and -- in assorted ways -- just plain bad.' And that of a publisher which has advertised in ALGOL, and whose editor I know personally (she's the daughter of Kendall Foster Crossen, Karen Crossen Ready).

But I do not want to publish a review of a book which 1) Stinks; and 2) is not very important in the year's output; and 3) cuts down the space available for other reviews and finally, lastly, and of least importance to me as publisher of ALGOL 4) Hurts an author's feelings, and perhaps those of her husband as well.

Also, I'd like to make a point: I resigned from F&SF in June of last year, to devote more time to ALGOL. Reading the slush pile for 8 years certainly is a long time. I don't feel that I've lost my sanity, the first paragraph of this letter notwithstanding. In my time at F&SF I pulled first published stories by Don Thompson, Vonda McIntyre and Suzette Haden Elgin, among others, out of that pile and I'm proud of my record. But my resignation came first, before I saw the review. That should be made clear.

And, finally, if we're going to attack 'sacred cows' (male or female), I suggest that Roger Elwood is the largest one of all, and the one with the most CLOUT. To quote the last issue of TAC, Bruce D. Arthurs, writing on page 29, said, '...Dick Lupoff had a negative review of some of Elwood's books in ALGOL; Elwood calls Lupoff and asks him to interview him.' And furthermore, I paid 1 cent a word for that interview, and even published it. And you're reprinting Bruce D. Arthurs' interview with Elwood in the pages of SFR.

When it comes to CLOUT, we amateurs don't have much of a chance. And you, Dick Geis, by publishing Arthurs' interview, are guilty of just as much editorial leading-by-the-nose as I was in publishing Dick Lupoff's interview. If I was guilty -- which I don't think I was, in my own opinion.

If you're going to review magazines and include WHISPERS, FANTASY, TERROR and MOONBROTH, you really should review ALGOL.

Finally, if you're referring to me in your sentence '(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)' in this issue, it ain't so. The objection I have to TAC/SFR is that other people say you're still a fanzine because you're mimeographed while they say ALGOL is a prozine because it's printed on slick paper and typeset. In fact, you've stated you pull some money out of TAC; I don't pull any money out of ALGOL.

I only object to what others say about both of us, in their comparisons between ALGOL and TAC. I now pay all contributors except letter writers; I would hope you do

the same. That ALGOL and TAC make/attempt profits is just another side to the developing growth of the market for SF (1955 probably couldn't have supported us and our zines).

Meanwhile, the profit (on paper) gained from sales of last issue will go to printing a 4/Color cover on the next issue. The current issue is unfortunately still in the red by a large margin. The recession hasn't helped, either."

((I "pull" about \$3-500, from this magazine per issue. Them is labor-of-love wages. The top amount I could earn off SFR is about \$800, per issue. Trying to expand paid circulation beyond 2600 or so is self-defeating---I would end up with more mail-subscription-bookstore processing than I have time/willingness to give.

((SFR is a hobby-zine, essentially. It permits me to live off it if I'm very careful. This is the way I prefer to spend my life. If this makes me a filthy pro and takes away my "amateur" standing, so be it.))

LETTER FROM JOHN BOARDMAN

February 24, 1975

"Dear Dick,

Ghudammit, can't you do something about that typesetting? What I wrote about Dave Mason was, 'Dave was the sort of person you could trust with your life, but not with your girl or your whiskey.' Turning that word into 'wife' busts up the meaning of the whole sentence, and leaves the reader cross-eyed.

(My wife wouldn't have had him on a bet, but other people's weren't so minded. And if that word 'bet' in the last sentence comes out as 'bed', I am personally going to come west and gimmick your typewriter so it will not write words beginning with 'f', thus terminating your literary career.)

Ted White's comments about his publishers and their objections to their editorial points up a really interesting dilemma in this country. When the term 'majority rule' is used, it assumes that a majority of people and a majority of power refer to the same thing. Usually they do.

But we seem to be living in a time when they do not. A majority of the people in this country seem to want peace, and a reduction of unemployment even at the cost of inflation. The power majority wants war, and an end to inflation even at the cost of massive unemployment. By 'power' I do not specifically mean 'money'; the armed forces constitute a power structure which tends to look down on mere money-grubbers.

The majority of people and the majority of power had a real showdown over Vietnam, which the majority of power rather decisively won. Then they had another one over Watergate, which didn't come to a head but was quietly deflated thanks to President Nixon's phlebotomy. The majority of power was firmly on the President's side, and worked - as Ted saw - to quash criticism of him where they could. President Nixon could count in his side the Four Estates of modern society: the armed forces (as their Commander-in-Chief), the business community, organized labor (it was physically dangerous to criticize him in the presence of a union man), and the Press (95% of which endorsed him for re-election).

I was all set for a show-down, in which President Nixon was going to dismiss Congress, destroy the famous tapes, and shut down the minority of anti-Nixon newspapers. Believing that one lost cause in a lifetime is enough, I was all prepared to give this act my outspoken support.

It may yet come to this; both sides still stand where they stood last July, and a showdown which was shunted aside by President Nixon's illness may yet come to pass with President Ford, President Rockefeller, President Jackson, or President Kennedy. In Europe they have known all about this for centuries; what I've called 'majority of power' and 'majority of people' are there called 'le pays real' and 'le pays legal'."

GEIS NOTE: An apology to John Boardman, of course, re the typo.

BUT, my friends, with the best will in the world, typos will sneak in. With luck some of them will be amusing.

As for the others...we'll just have

to ignore them. That's what I plan to do.

THE GIMLET EYE

Commentary On Science Fiction & Fantasy Art

By Jon Gustafson

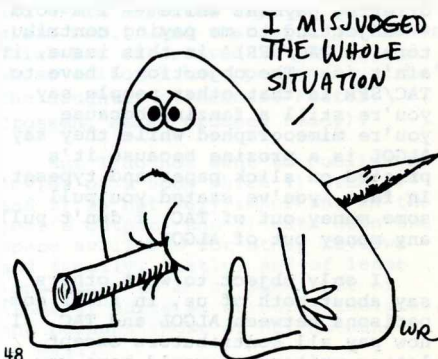
Art in Science-Fiction and Fantasy...what is its purpose? Is it really important to the literature that it adorns, and, if so, why? Most importantly (at least to an artist like myself) what constitutes good or bad S-F art?

First off, to keep you fantasy freaks off my ass, when I use the term 'S-F art', I will be meaning both science-fiction art AND fantasy art, as I tend to lump the two categories together in my head anyway.

Second, I am going to limit myself to current S-F art, with none of my examples more than five years old.

Third, I am, out of necessity, going to write this mutha from the viewpoint of the 'outsider'; that is, one who isn't actively participating in the field of S-F illustration. I am not a Freas or Frazetta, though I am a professional illustrator, and it would be rather foolish for me to pretend to be anything but an 'outsider'. However, most of this will be pretty accurate. But enough of this....

Each and every week I collect whatever pennies I happen to have lying around the house and troop down to the local supermarket (Or up to the college bookstore) and buy as many of the new S-F mags and paperbacks as I can afford.



As a result, I have an excellent chance to compare the art of the S-F field to the rest of the stuff sitting on the shelves.

The first thing I notice is the comparative richness and brightness (and, occasionally, luminescence) of the colors of the various S-F books and mags as they sit next to the detective books, spy books, and cook books and all the other junk. As most things in this world are done with a reason, it occurs to me (surprise, surprise) that there is a reason for this. That reason is to catch the eye and Sell The Bloody Product.

Let's face it, science-fiction is not the world's most respected literature; it has carried a 'you-mean-you-actually-read-that crap-hahaha' stigma for many years, as we all know, and has needed every edge it could get on its competition. One of the best edges is the cover art that sets it apart from the masses of other products that surround it.

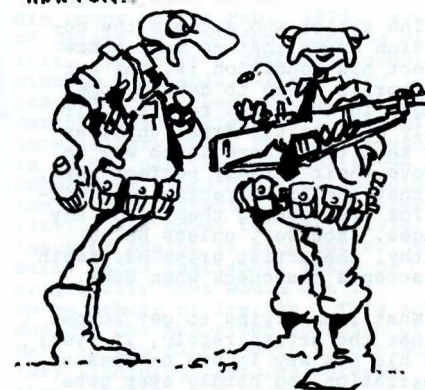
Cover art is a particularly important aspect of the S-F and Fantasy magazines, none of which has a circulation of over a quarter of a million (compared with the multi-million circulation of Playboy, for instance), and one of which if, has just recently gone under, although it is now combined with Galaxy. Their circulation is so low that the magazines are constantly walking the tightrope of success, where the slightest slip is (not could be, but is) terminal.

Therefore the mags need the brightest, most interesting, most eye-catching covers of all; to visually separate them from the masses of garbage (my term for anything not S-F) surrounding them.

The mags are helped considerably by two factors; first, there is available at present a large group of excellent S-F artists, and second, current printing techniques allow amazingly true reproductions of the work that artists do.

Advertising pros have for years advocated the use of vibrant, interesting colors for their clients (particularly soap products - the connotations here are unfortunate but true) as a means of getting the edge on their competition, and the S-F mags seem to have learned this quite well, enabling them to grab

NOW WHAT
THA CHRIST
DID YA DO
THAT FOR?!



a large portion of the borderline readers who might not ordinarily read (much less buy) S-F.

Paperbacks are very much the same way, with the possible exception that the failure of one book in a line of many may not have quite the impact on the publisher that a bad issue of a mag might have. As a result of this, the paperback publishers are allowed a wider range of colors to use, and in my experience tend to be less brilliant than the mag covers (the DAW books seem to be an exception and are every bit as bright as the magazine covers).

So much for generalities.

Who decides what the cover should picture? That job is handled by the Art Director or his equivalent in each publishing house. In the mags, the name of the Art Director is placed right in front where everyone can see it. The Art Director in the paperbacks, unfortunately, seems to be nameless, faceless nonentities.

In most cases, the artist is merely the tool of the Art Director (I can hear the outraged howls of protest from the artists already, but just bear with me and I will try to explain myself), in that he will contact the artist and say something like 'Hey, I need a cover (or interior) illo for Acme S-F mag. The story goes like this (followed by a description, verbal or otherwise) and this is what I want.' He then goes into a description of what his idea of the illustration should be

like. (I would lay money that this scene or something like has happened many times....it happens to me all the time.)

The artist who accepts the commission knows that no matter how perfect his rendition is, the Art Director is going to demand some changes in the final result. Virtually all artists dread this, as they know that there is no way to improve their already perfect work, and that the Art Director is a nitwit for even asking them to do any changes. However, unless he is wealthy, the artist grits his teeth and accepts the check when done.

What I am trying to get across is that the artist rarely, if ever, gets his own way in how he does an illustration and hardly ever gets a finished work printed without some correction or edition or....but I think you see what I mean.

The Art Director is thus viewed by many as being an unimaginative ogre, both by the artists and by the fans. I am certain that most are not; they couldn't be and still let some of the fine illos I have seen slide by them. I also think that sometimes the Art Director is used by a small group of people as kind of a convenient excuse to blame bad artwork on, and this is something that I must take issue with.

A good piece of artwork, either an unimaginative work (with high technical skill evident) or an excellently conceived work (again with fair or high technical skills), will remain a good piece of artwork even if it is cropped or altered to a minor extent.

If an illustration that measures 20" x 20" is trimmed by 3" on each edge, it will still remain a great piece of art IF it started out as a great piece of art.

If it doesn't start out as a great work of art....well, a small piece of shit smells just as bad as the whole thing. Sometimes a poor illo can even be helped by some judicious cropping.

You should be able to see, now, that a minor amount of artistic tinkering will not significantly affect the quality of a work. Therefore, the Art Director cannot be assumed to be the villain in all cases, nor can he (or she) be considered a hero simply because

of a great looking illustration.

Another thing that should be briefly looked into is the actual altering of a piece of artwork by someone other than the original artist. Most artists, myself included, are extremely apprehensive about trying to imitate the style of some other artist, because we know how really difficult it is to do, and in most cases the artist would much rather do the whole thing over in his own style. This is not to say that this does not happen, but I don't believe that I have ever seen any illustrations that I thought were worked over by others. Unfortunately, I have seen plenty that I thought should have been.

Science-fiction art can be excellent commercial art, and some of the works that these artists have done are as good, in my opinion, as any done by any other commercial artists in any other fields. Tragically, this view is not shared by those who give out the yearly commercial art awards, which again shows the attitude that S-F has to constantly struggle against.

Some S-F art I would even consider putting into the category of 'pure' art; i.e. art a la Renoir, Dali, Cezanne, etc. Some of the artists that I would place into that niche are Frank Frazetta, Kelly Freas, John Schoenherr, and Richard Powers; but, alas, only a few of their illustrations are of this quality. However, the fact that I can find four artists who qualify as 'pure' artists is a great sign. I find this extremely pleasing.

It's now time to stick my neck out and point out what I think is good S-F art and what is bad S-F art. Because many people would not have the exact paperbacks or book club editions that I would like to use, I'll use magazine covers from the last five years of Analog and Galaxy, which I think most S-F readers are likely to have. I'll also separate these examples into three categories.

The first category I call Good Art, Imaginatively Done.

Jack Gaughan is one of the best known artists in the field of S-F art, and one who never seems to lack for work. His man falling seems to be one of unevenness of quality; his



more recent work does not seem to be as well thought out as his earlier pieces. His cover for the Oct.-Nov., 1970, issue of Galaxy shows a yellow-gold man lunging out a pattern of colors placed in a vertical network across the page. The colors are bright without being garish, and the shapes are balanced nicely with the large, blank background.

Kelly Freas is perhaps the best known S-F artist, and has won 8 Hugo awards for his work. His art never seems to change, except for the better. His cover for the June, 1970 issue of Analog is a fine example of his ability to play large open spaces (in this case, the murky grey-brown sky) against detail (the ground ship and the scarlet aliens). His most recent cover for Analog (Feb., 1975) displays his skill in using what must be the most luminescent colors in the whole field of S-F art and his delightful eye for detail. This cover shows an exploding starship, with a lifeboat escaping from the spreading wreckage. Again, he is balancing simplicity against detail; the plain cylindrical shape of the lifeboat against the tremendously complex, glowing pattern of the wreck.

The second category I call Good Art, Technically Well Done.

Something called the Brian Boyle Studio leads off this category, with a cover on the Dec., 1973, issue of Galaxy. Technically, the cover is virtually perfect; the circular parts are circular, the straight lines are straight, and the overall effect is one of minute detail. The reason that this cover leads off the second category rather than the first is that it gives the impression of being done by someone without any soul, one who doesn't care about the work he is performing. It's as if it was turned out by an artistic computer, and I don't like that effect.

Rich Sternbach is another artist who possesses a great deal of technical skill, yet lacks the inspiration (soul?) to carry a work of art beyond the area of superficiality. His cover on the Feb., 1974, issue of Galaxy is a perfect example of this. It shows a computer technician at a console, with a very precisely done background. His rendering of the materials in the picture is very good, yet the figure in it has all the personality of a department store manikin, reducing the overall effect to one of sterility. His cover for Oct., 1974, issue of Analog is much better, yet still lacks that small spark of originality that would set it above others of its ilk. This cover depicts the theorized approach of Mars to the Earth, with interplanetary lightning flashing between them. Again, his technical style is without reproach and is excellent commercial art, but only commercial art.

The third category is, of course, Bad Art.

This is going to be a bit of a problem. I chose these two mags because I figured that most of the people reading this would be able to find and look at the examples I chose. Unfortunately, the quality of these two magazines is such that it is damned hard to find examples of bad art on their covers. It would be easy to say 'Look at almost any issue of Imagination (an S-F mag of the mid-fifties) and the cover illo will be a great example of bad art, S-F or otherwise', which would be a true statement. But I'm not gonna.

There is no such thing as a perfect artist, and Kelly Freas is no exception. One of the worst covers he has ever done appeared on the July, 1971, issue of Analog, and is an excellent example of the lack of imagination that sometimes slips into S-F art. It pictures a Saturn (I believe) rocket being launched, with a few mallards flying off in the foreground. It is, in fact, an illustration that would have been done just as well by a photograph, possibly better. The skill in rendition is still evident; Freas is still Freas, after all.

Jack Gaughan really blew the cover he did for the Feb., 1971, issue of Galaxy, which shows a multi-legged robot waving an American flag. Artistically, the paint-

ing falls down because of the composition; the robot is placed in the lower half of the work and centered vertically in the page. There is a point of light gleaming off the green 'eye' of the robot that is exactly in the center of the page; in the world of art, this is a hideous crime. The center of interest shouldn't be a point; ideally, it should be an area. As far as imagination goes...really, how very droll! Perhaps this is a genuine case of the Art Ogre...er, Director being the villain when he centered the work and/or gave the artist the idea for the piece. I would like to think so.

There were a couple of other covers that approached these two examples of bad S-F art, but the fact that I had to go through five years of these two magazines to find such a small percentage of poor covers is, to me, a positive indication of the current state of the profession.

Comparing today's S-F art with the S-F art of twenty years ago is even a better indication. Science-fiction art has shown a steadily improving trend in the past half-century or so; if the latest covers of magazines and paperbacks I have seen are any indication, it will continue to improve and eventually earn its rightful place in the realm of commercial art.

Perhaps some of the artists of the present and future will even find some fame in the ethereal world of 'pure' art.

LETTERS FROM WALTER BREEN

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY

THE ALIEN CRITIC 6 :: Geis :: "As you know (though apparently Sam Merwin Jr. did not), selfpity sells, as figures from Gustav Mahler to Marlan Ellison can testify--not to mention torchsingers.

Your claim (anent NEW DIMENSIONS II) that 'translatory' SF, 'dealing with timeless human problems,' consists merely of dressed-up mundanes, is a half-truth. Not always is the blaster a mere substitute for the 44, or the alien planet for the country west of the Pecos, though inferior writers in the 1930's and 40's often made it seem so; but this would be to condemn all 'Gothic' novels even unto those of Daphne du Maurier

because of the recent flood of trashy imitators, or to condemn all opera even unto Mozart because of the dreary mediocrity of many of the inferior survivors.

Man Divided is certainly a 'timeless human problem', and it informs all MZB's writings, which are certainly not dressed-up mundanes.

I dealt with this issue in THE GEMINI PROBLEM here in FAPA; but it deserves more detailed analysis than Kingsley Amis or yhos is likely to give it. Trouble is, the west-erns--like the samurai movies, like the dressed-up mundanes--dealt with only a very few of these timeless human problems and those in a very superficial two-valued way. You would have to search long and deeply among those to find any adequate treatment of identity crises, of ethical relativism, or internal struggles, of the effect of technology on existing culture (and vice versa, as again and again on Darkover), of sexual ambiguity (as on Darkover, and as in LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS), &ct, &c.

If you believe prostitution is (still? ever?) 'a valuable (!) and respectable (!!) profession (!!!),' go read Gail Sheehy's HUSTLING, Dell pb, 1974. There you will learn, from the inside, how it really is--at least in NYC--and why it has dropped out of the category of crimes without victims. I never was hard up enough to seek solace with a prostitute, but for years I did believe that at least sometimes this occupation might have included some fairly decent people--perhaps under the influence of a friend, now dead, who had known several ex-whores whom he did respect. No longer. The most important part of the book is its lengthy prologue; read it, better still review it. I can't help thinking that if Olaf Stapledon had known any of the NYC brand of contemporary calls girls and street-walkers, he would have given Jacqueline Caze a different occupation; but then, maybe they were different in pre-WWI France and England, before the Mafia got into the act, or possibly before the current brand of pimps had begun their incredible tyranny. :: I do not mean to sound argumentative; yours is one of the best zines to reach FAPA in years, though it just happened this time that the two major comment hooks have inspired profound disagreement. And in case you think to fuss at recognizing some of your own bons mots on my quote-cover, please

realize that they represent (as always with these covers) the most memorable lines in the mailing; I cheerfully acknowledge that over a dozen were from your zine. For a fanzine restricted to FAPA circulation, like mine, this should not give you any copyright problems. Feel free to quote me as a LOC, please."

At this point MZB added a comment, also on THE ALIEN CRITIC:

"Having had a shot at writing sadism-fantasy myself--and, despite interludes of which I have never made any secret, I do not consider myself a lesbian--I can say with authority that an enormous chasm, a mental Grand Canyon, divides Jack Woodford ((Josiah Pitts Woolfolk, on SF plots)) from any understanding of SF or the SF reader.

There may have been some disguised sadism in old fantasy and SF before I got there; there was occasionally some in the old Planet Stories. Sadism, I believe, has little to do with sex. It has to do with personality deficiency and lack of ego strength.

C.L. Moore and Leigh Brackett--and I--all wrote elegantly sadistic science-fantasy, though admittedly without girls in scanty costumes; maybe we were all imitating the formulas for such stories, but I don't think so. I think we were simply getting into the deficiency-fantasies for which women have such ample excuses in current society.

But recent SF, rejecting such fantasies, has had deeper psychological bases, of which the main one is the desire to explore the hidden worlds. Maybe less destructive child rearing means readers grow up these days less masochistic and less sexually frustrated.

WB again, on the same. It seems to me hardly worth while to flog this particularly dead horse. "Woodford"--obviously incapable of taking SF seriously at all--evidently had in mind only one stereotype form of SF, then (1939) as now only a tiny fraction of the output of the genre, and that at the lowest pulp level.

The old classification systems for SF/fsy admitted a form of the 'Woodford' paradigm as only one sub-case of one type. As 'Woodford' specifically mentions the Terran Hero falling in love with the alien

female, one may suspect that his acquaintance with adventure-type SF consisted largely of Edgar Rich Burroughs and his imitators, who could with a straight face contemplate the happy couple mooning over her unhatched egg.

Surely, 'Woodford' could not have known--or else chose to disregard, to make a dishonest point--the work of Robert Heinlein, which had already begun appearing in magazines. Certainly he did not know, or at least he could not admit to knowing, the work of Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, or Olaf Stapledon, each of whom he would have had to take seriously, and none of whose work fits his paradigm, however much adventure is found in both Wells and Verne. But 'Woodford' preferred to ignore the reality in order to justify peeing on the pulps from a great height.

If you, honestly, mean to fault MZB for the 'extremely lucky coincidence' that the crash in Darkover Landfall occurred at the one season when survival might have been possible, consider that otherwise there would have been no story, as doubtless no stories were possible about other spaceships landing on the alien worlds only to be emptied by alien bacteria or parasites, without survivors. In fact, Terran authorities were unaware of the unintended colonization of Darkover for over 2,000 years.

I have not asked Marion if any symbolic overtones were intended here, but it now looks to me as though at least one is implicit: how improbable, how tenuous the very possibility, of survival of almost any species faced with drastic climatic changes; how many equally 'improbable' certainties went to make up the roster of Terran survivors, from the coral animal to the coelacanth to the hamster, not to mention such highly specialized forms as the koala or the malaria parasite."

((The current state of prostitution (male and female) speaks more of the current laws and public/private morality than of the theoretical value of sex for money. Selling sex has always existed and always will, in one form or another. Many marriages (subtly or blatantly) are "prostitution". I suspect most wives combat prostitution because they fear competition and/or comparisons. IF male prostitution

(women paying) is ever a significant factor in society (as women become ever more equal and independent) you can look for husbands to cry out against other men selling sex to horny wives.))

OUT OF PHASE FOR A DARK STAR

I just drove Kookie (the cat) from the dining room table with the carriage of this Sears electric. It prodded her inexorably as I typed the first line...and she finally, disgustedly, yielded, jumped off and went to eat a bite of dry cat food. She now sits on the footstool by the big living room bay window, watching traffic go by on Ainsworth.

I suspect that is the message the producer, director and script-writer wished to zing into the minds of movie audiences when they made PHASE IV.

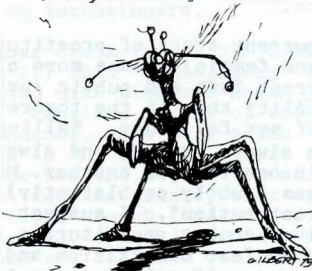
No, no, I mean we must yield to superior, inexplicable, mysterious force. I used the typewriter carriage to make the cat leave...and the superior mind/force that took over the ants in a desert area near a housing development in a southwestern state used the ants to test, examine, and finally change the three humans in its experiment?

As a movie, PHASE IV is a mash-mish of derivatives, cliches and botched opportunities. It could have been awe-inspiring. It could have been well-acted and well-written.

All that money wasted...Just a bastard son (one of many) of 2001 and any of a dozen monsters-on-the-loose films. With parents like those, what can you expect?

Ah, well....I wouldn't mind if theaters charged a buck, but \$2.75!

I thought the girl-rescued-from-



the-ants was suitable; young and succulent. I thought the scientists bafflingly dumb, stupid, alienated, insane...and trapped by the plot. The plot says that Man-as-he-is isn't good enough. We need to have our genes/minds scrambled/improved by an alien (God) force. Old Father/Son/Holy Ghost butchered the job---the Man experiment has been a failure---and it's time for another Superior Intelligence to have a go at it.

Are we really so helpless? Do we really need to be taken over and guided? Is everyone incompetent to run his life? That's the ever-current fashion of thought among those who, of course, exclude themselves from those who need change, direction and control. Avoid Phase IV.

#

DARK STAR is a small-budget black comedy set in a long-range spaceship (named Dark Star) whose mission is to make the galaxy--or the universe?--safe for mankind by dropping planet-wrecking bombs on potentially dangerous alien worlds and into unstable suns.

Eight years this crew of slovenly, now slightly insane men have been on the job. The master computer has the voice of a sexy woman, and it does its best to keep things right, but accidents will happen...and there's this Bomb #20 which insists on thinking for itself....And there's the pet alien who gets loose and fiendishly....

Hell, if you get a chance, see the film. It's outrageous, funny, slightly amateurish, and BAD. But you can forgive it its sins. It entertains.

LETTER FROM PEARL

March 30, 1975

"I feel it's very important to me to use my typewriter at least physically, if not creatively, at this time so that when that magical day comes when I'm ready to start working, I'll simply sit down and write without feeling that it's too much trouble to take off the cover, plug it in, roll in the paper, etc. (I go through the same hassle with my sewing machine.) I did start a short story for Red-book about a woman seeing her ex-

husband after five years and what she feels as she compares the fat slob to the gorgeous man she was married to.

After four pages that gave me very little pleasure, I decided to do some hard research so I got five Redbooks from the library and really read every fiction piece in each issue. JESUS! I haven't seen writing like that since I stopped reading the literary review collections: high-quality, pointless, unstructured and completely exhausting to the hapless reader. Having the soul of a book-keeper and liking things orderly, I couldn't do that kind of writing if someone held a gun to my head while waving a \$5,000 check as an alternative offer.

I will now look to Playgirl and Viva--or I will as soon as I can get my work thing readjusted. I suddenly find myself working five full days every week. It's dreadful. My employer seems to like things this way and is making no moves to hire another girl but I'm counting on the lunatic in the other room to zip right through her manic phase and into Never-Never land. Then they'll have to hire another girl. This broad is pure paranoid. She thinks people's desks are full of secrets, that she's being punished by being forced to sit where she can't see who's going up and down the hall and believes she's 5'6 1/2" tall and wears a size 14. She is actually 5'9" with a corridor-width ass that she might be able to jam into a size 18 if she greased it, but in keeping with her private body image, she leaps and gambols about the office--like a rhino crashing through underbrush. If she were just crazy, it would be bad enough, but BIG and crazy...I smell danger.

My bizarre alliance with Gene is in high gear. Once I allowed myself to acknowledge that he is a machine, not a person, and could be programmed to suit my needs, I saw there was no reason for me to live in wistfulness, biting my lip and waiting for him to do right by me. I punched a breakfast date and dinner date into his memory tapes and they immediately came to pass. I suggested it was time for him to buy me my first birthday present and it was delivered--admittedly a trifle and not gift wrapped, but a gift all the same and my first from him.

Heartened by my easy success, I announced to him last Friday night that there would be no sexual contact unless he initiated it and then sat down to wait. As you know, he's very aggressive once we get into it but in 8 years and 8 months, he had NEVER put his hand on me first. There were times I had to do little more than pat his cheek or stroke his hand before he turned on me like an uncaged gorilla but I ALWAYS had to touch him first.

Really, I didn't know whether he'd be able to pull this one off and it took him 45 minutes...45 minutes of me sitting with my arms folded and silently beaming contempt at him. But glory be what a breakthrough! Evidently, total aggressiveness is his true bag; he made me feel like the most exciting, desirable, delicious woman to ever slide between the sheets with a mechanized dwarf. Clark Gable, Burt Lancaster, Robert Redford---they're all punks, and much too tall in any case.

I went to the movies a couple of weeks ago and saw "Child Under A Leaf" and "Night Porter". It wasn't by accident that I chose this particular double bill; I was in the mood for something terrible done with style. I noted that "Child Under A Leaf" had gone from first-run with rave reviews by Rex Reed to a \$1.50 neighborhood house in only three weeks and that there had been a dearth of human activity around the theater where "The Night Porter" played in Westwood while the crowds queued up for everything else in sight including two kids who were passing out religious handbills.

I learned a lot that afternoon as I watched this incredible double feature. "Child Under A Leaf" taught me that when you work without a shooting script, you're liable to wind up with filmed episodes of this ilk: heroine and lover soaking in outdoor, Japanese-style bathtub and singing (quite aimlessly) "London Bridges Falling Down" or heroine and lover playing with their baby and doing lots of coarse, Throaty, inappropriate laughter. (It's true that the baby had the biggest cunt I've ever seen on an infant but I think a nervous titter would have sufficed in this sequence.) I also learned that Dyan Cannon has either the shortest thighs or the longest crotch in Christendom. Whichever way it is, in her one nude scene (a distance shot, thank hea-

vens), Miss Cannon's knees neatly framed her mons veneris which certainly makes one wonder about Cary Grant.

"The Night Porter" taught me that Dirk Bogarde never touches his cock (he shoots it through his open fly by thrusting his hand into his pocket) and that Charlotte Rampling has a ratty pubic patch. It also taught me that beautiful sets, fine direction and good acting are not enough to make you care about people who have to get dressed up in Nazi uniforms and little-girl dresses to pull off a simple blow job.

As you can see by the foregoing, once again my life is perfect.*"

"*Or, it will be as soon as I can find another double-bill to approach the horrible perfection of the pair described."

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM HARLAN ELLISON

January 6, 1975

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Fair is fair, justics should be even-handed, and good deeds deserve rewarding openly. So pay attention, please.

Many of you have heard about the brouhaha surrounding the initial hardcover publication of my story 'Catman' in FINAL STAGE, an anthology edited by Edward L. German and Barry Malzberg. There was some unauthorized rewriting done by the editor at the original hardcover house that (to my mind) crippled the story. I wasn't alone. It happened to Robert Silverberg and to Poul Anderson, also. We made rather a loud noise about it, and many magazines passed along our hope that readers would stay away from the butchered edition until we could extract guarantees that the work would be set right. Apparently, we had some clout, because readers did avoid the hardcover, and even reviewers made mention of the conflict.

But now I have very good news. Penguin Books will be doing the paperback edition, and they have scrupulously restored the stories (and even the Afterwords written by the three of us) to their original texts. Poul, Bob and I now

heartily recommend this fine anthology to you; we urge you to buy it and enjoy it. ('Catman' in fact, in its original version, has already been nominated for a Nebula, which would tend to indicate the material in FINAL STAGE is worth your time.) Penguin Books and its responsive editorial staff, headed by Susan Zuckerman, have broken their backs to put things to rights, and we writers in the anthology are most anxious that the bad publicity attendant on the former edition not tarnish this paperback incarnation. As strongly as we asked you to boycott, now we ask you to support.

PLEASE POST THIS, SPREAD THE WORD, AND BUY THE BOOK! Thanks."

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM JOHN BRUNNER

7th February, 1975

"In re: THE SHOCKWAVE RIDER

I hear that the editor whom Harper & Row assigned to their edition of the above-named novel has quit and gone to the West Coast.

Would that she had done so sooner.

In my version of the book there were two brothers: Josh Treves, citizen of Precipice and co-owner of the dog named Brynhilde; and Jake Treves, a biologist working somewhere in the Kansas City area who comes to Nick and Kate's rescue - and Bagheera's.

You may hunt in vain for Jake Treves in the Harper & Row text. Someone - I can only assume it was the editor in charge - decided without consulting me that Jake was surplus to requirements and deleted him. Wherever his name appeared, it has been changed to that of his brother.

On another but alas not dissimilar occasion I stated that while I never mind carrying back the can for my own mistakes I am damned if I will stand Joseph for errors foisted on me that are actually due to someone else's stupidity and/or incompetence.

As Churchill is reputed to have said, 'The purpose of recriminating about the past is to stop the same thing from happening again.'

So, if you plan to review this novel, kindly refer to what has been done to it without my knowledge. If you publish a fanzine, please quote me. Alternatively, or as well, perhaps you'll write to SF Writers of America, and Harper & Row, and Publishers Weekly, and whoever else strikes you as potentially helpful, saying - if you agree, naturally! - that this kind of thing should not be allowed.

Not only I but a lot of my colleagues will be obliged to you."

A POT OF STALE GOULART

a review of SPACEHAWK, INC.

By GREG T. FARNUM

"Malagra, as several of its inhabitants attest, is a 'pesthole'. It's also an outlying planet of the Barnum system. Barnum is an American-like world which exercises a loose control over a number of planets, largely through the machination of its Political Espionage Office.

This would seem to make Ron Goulart's Barnum system novels spy stories. But they aren't, not really. Most of the people in this alternate world, including the liberation armies and political bosses a Goulart hero always runs into, are about as interested in politics as the average American is in state-wide elections. What they are interested in are things like money, little theater groups, neatness and sex, all this against a backdrop of exotic gadgetry which is usually on the fritz.

Goulart's new Barnum novel runs pretty much true to form. The hero, Kip Bundy, free-wheeling heir to the Bundy Konglom fortune is sent to Malagra to discreetly repair some malfunctioning android butlers the company had sold to local big-wigs.

To keep the hero's mind on business and off women the company provides a chaperone in the person of Palma, the famous bald photographer. A poor choice as it turns out. Palma's hobby is the study of women's breasts.

To cover his tracks Kip poses as an operative of Spacehawk, Inc., a detective agency. His cover story is that he is looking for the lost brother of the lovely young April

Arthur. Zap, he falls in love with April and determines to repair the androids and find her brother. Kip, April and Palma are separated and united repeatedly as a result of a series of run-ins with lizardmen, the Boy Scout Liberation Army, the goons of Xicara, the Prince of Thieves, catmen, Silverthorne the champion of the oppressed, and a theatrical troupe which features android gypsies.

The trail leads the three main characters (together with a few hangers-on) to the mammoth private city of an eccentric plutocrat who has made his fortune from his over-riding concern for sanitation. There the story reaches a climax and the loose ends are tied up, sort of.

I'm a fan of these Goulart books filled with eager women and absurd predicaments, but this sort of story has become second nature for Goulart, he just re-mixes the elements he has already created. Sure, it's pleasant reading, but I had the feeling that the author was as little interested in this story as the guerrilla leader Silverthorne was in politics, or as I am in the hockey broadcasts I always find myself listening to."



LETTER FROM

THEODORE R. COGSWELL

28 January, 1975

"I've been mulling over Avram's plight ever since TAC 11 arrived and I've finally come up with an answer -- several in fact.

To begin with, he has the same problem as many of my colleagues. He's a part time writer who has yet to realize it. When he does write,

he's delightful. When he doesn't, he has nothing to do but sit around the house and feel miserable, put upon, and persecuted. After a while this results in boils; and whatever Avram is, he ain't no Job.

The answer? What he needs is a Job with a small 2. There's nothing to make a man feel good about his world like punching out at 5:00 Friday with a pocket full of ready a-jingling as he walks, and nothing ahead but self-pleasuring until 8:00 of the next Monday. Yesireebob, a steady job in a light line of work would do wonders for that boy.

As for being put upon by agents, wasn't no agent stranded him in Belize. All he had to do was walk out to the edge of town, stick out his thumb, and hitch a ride to Chetumal. Once there, it's an easy three or four days thumbing back to the states. Trouble with Avram was that he was bound and determined he wasn't going to leave British Honduras until he got laid. And we all know how that finally turned out.

Anything else? Yup. Avram's a compulsive contract signer. Give him a pen and a form full of small print and he just can't say no. Trouble is though, once the advance is spent, he gets a sudden case of conscience and takes the pledge. Don't catch that boy working for no starvation wages. Like the man says, 'Right now I have several contracts which I have yet to, as we say, fulfill.' The trouble is, though, the word gets around, and if you're trying to make a living writing full time, that ain't good.

Teaching job? Got one myself. All that it takes is an M.A. There must be an official course and credit dispenser someplace in the Sausalito area. All Avram has to do is take a few courses and he too can work a ten hour week. Can't teach the course until you've taken the course, you know. He could even do his M.A. thesis on his own early work. That'd be a gas!

Best Rx. I can give, though, is one chapter of Peregrine Primus. Even the author couldn't remain sour after dipping into that lovely thing."

LETTER FROM GEME WOLFE

4/3/75

Dear Al,

"I read what you said about Barry and me in Galaxy, Al, and I kind of thought I detected a little note of irony there that--to be frank, Al, as I always try to be, and open with you--was not up what you owe both of us. We have got nothing against you. Sure, you and me and you and Barry have had differences, but they are differences, if you know what I mean, Al, between gents. We respect your opinions and we both feel that underneath everything you respect ours.

Come on now, Al, get in the car."

((Well...okay. But promise you won't tell Geis. (It is a long way to walk.)))

Klutz, n. One who performs stupid inexplicable acts. Also: a sincere person of awkward habits. Fomalhaut dialect.

"Klutz" is, as you guessed, one of those words of extraterrestrial origin which has crept into our language unnoticed. The word originates in the language of the Yggdringe, a race of six-sexed beings living out somewhere beyond Fomalhaut. With the Yggdringe each sex performs a unique and specialized task in the reproductive effort. There are the 'Callers', the 'Frubs', and the 'Merquins', to name only three whose function can be explicated. The 'Caller' assimilates information on tides, plant pollen, air pressure and spatial-magnetics to determine the most auspicious time for a sexual gathering. Then he climbs to a geographic prominence (i.e., a tree or a rock) and calls the other sexes together with an eerie sub-vocal gargle. The 'Frub' marks out the position each is to occupy in the coming event, and the 'Merquin' begins gathering the plant substances which will be eaten, drank, rubbed on, etc., during the intricate Ceremony of Copulation, which lasts from three to ten days. Each of the six sexes is a vital link in the chain of events leading to orgasm; if any one of the group fails to perform properly, then the group as a whole fails to reach a climax and must wait until next year.

Any Yggdringe who fails repeatedly is said to be a "Klutz" and is not invited to parties.

--Charles W. Runyon

LETTERS FROM

CHARLES W. RUNYON

"Ursula informs me that it was really you she was mad at and not me, which is what I suspected all along. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO THESE PEOPLE? So the letter I sent you before is probably irrelevant, and should not be printed except as an example of instant reaction. Whether or not it produces honesty is an open question.

She was also irritated at something I had written like five years ago, which you haven't read yet-- but I must admit that it irritated a lot of other people as well. I use to hand it out at chamber of commerce luncheons (sold it actually) which was a very wild and boring thing to do.

She also assumed I was in my early twenties, which I guess should make me stop and think about the image we project through our writing -- and it does -- confirming my suspicion that we write about what we want to be rather than what we are. Ah youth! She said other things equally complimentary --what is a klutz, by the way?"

March 8, 1975

"You will have to screw up your iconoclasm another notch in order to offset the staid establishmentarian negative charisma of your new title: Science Fiction Review.

This whole matter of titles: I once spent a whole day dreaming up snappy, provocative titles, pinned them to the wall, and in the twenty years since then have not managed to write a single story which fit any of them. There's some kind of mystical cohesion between a work and its title, each bends to conform to the other, and in time they bond to form an inseparable unit.

If I, WEAPON is a dumb title, then the egg is on the face of yours truly, it happened to get stuck on one of the early manu-

script pages and I couldn't get it off. I tried Easy-off, nail-polish remover, blowtorch, sulphuric acid ... nothing seemed to work, so I sent it off to Doubleday to see what they could do. Their title-mechanic had just left the company and they hadn't replaced him, so the thing went through like it was.

Tim Kirk's cover is great. Ted White's column reveals distribution as the KEY, but there's more to it than size. I visited a university town not long ago (Columbia, Mo.) and went into a drug-store which had what looked like a large display of periodicals. Not one sf title. I asked the proprietress for one of my books, giving title and name (you know the gig) and she asked: 'Is it science-fiction?' I said Yes it could be classed as science-fiction. She said, 'We don't carry science-fiction.' I said Well, you ought to get some in, it's selling very well. She said 'I don't LIKE science-fiction.' I suppressed an urge to say that she probably sold many products which she didn't like personally, such as condoms and rat poison, and remarked only: 'But you're living in a Science-fiction WORLD!' She said, 'Yes, and I don't like it.' So what does one do? (One goes to another store, then perhaps another and another.)

I'm enclosing a copy of the letter I'm sending to Ursula; if you want to print it, I have no objection. I feel vaguely resentful of this sort of backhanded flip, but have probably been guilty of such things in the past, and hope it can be solved without bruises. Our language is inadequate when it comes to describing the subtle emotions; hostility from an unexpected source arouses feelings of bafflement and a peculiar sort of helplessness which tends ultimately to distil and ferment and finally to explode in a paroxysm of pointlessness rage which is usually taken out against helpless creatures like the family dog. I hope it doesn't come to that. Dogs suffer enough already."

March 7, 1975

"Dear Ursula,

I've been looking for a chance to tell you that I recently read the

Left Hand of Darkness and found it stimulating to the point where I could scarcely remain supine upon my narrow monkish cot. I might add that I don't generally read books until they fade from the public view, when I can enjoy them without the distracting hullabaloo of critical acclaim. I look forward to reading the Dispossessed in a couple or three years.

Now this brings me to the comment you tossed off in a letter to Richard Geis, something about the 'Runyon sort of thing' which bores you stiff. I object to being used as some sort of handy inanimate object which is dragged in by the heels and used to flail your opponents about the head and shoulders. Can you give me a specific title or two which induced the familiar syndrome of fitful yawning, excessive coughing, wriggling and farting, culminating in a disgusted heave across the room and the book lies there against the baseboard like a white dove with broken wings?

You may be evaluating me on the basis of what certain reviewers have said about my work. I would be disappointed in you if this were true, but my life is made up of disappointments, feet-of-clay in the cement kimono of existence.

What I object to is being put into the 'genre-thing' which is a critic's crutch and the bane of the working writer. If you categorize me as an 'enemy of feminism' or a 'warrior of the old guard' you align me with those with whom I have no innate sympathies.

Many years ago, when you were only nine years old and I was ten, I recognized fame and fortune as the chief destructive forces in writing, and resolved not to go this route. So far I have been successful in masking my material from those who hoist their idols high and carry them off into the obscurity which awaits yesterday's Literary Figure. I have been making my living at writing now for thirty years and hope to continue for thirty more (provided humanity does not eliminate itself in a frantic quest for fragrant armpits) and I have no desire to become the property of any clutch of faddists. These sweep across the scene like tsunami and leave nothing but destruction in their wake.

So I normally make no objection

when I am misunderstood too quickly and categorized by those who do not look beyond my dust-covers. At the time I started writing it was necessary to have a rich parent, a working wife-or-husband, a college grant -- or else to accept the outward forms which editors demanded and to say what we had to say within that format. If we didn't want to do it that way we could go fuck a duck.

I think if I had it to do over again I might adopt the pose of the struggling artist who sucks off the rich and ultimately becomes one of those parasitic intellectuals who are granted a license to criticize the system as long as it does no real damage. But from where I stood -- at ground zero, on a subsistence farm in Missouri -- it was impossible not to see the barbed wire on the fence which our exploiters have built around us. I decided to make noises like a domestic animal (baa-baa, moo-moo and the like) and clip little holes through which I could slip at night and do my dark foul number upon the ruling class.

Maybe -- I hope without justification -- the day of freedom has come, when each of us can say and do our own thing in our own way in the clear light of day. But I doubt -- and in the cold darkness of three o'clock in the morning, I feel the timorousness of one who has too many times led the charge and found everyone else jumping in their holes at the first whiff of grape.

I do not object to those who wrinkle their noses at what has gone before; the new is built upon the old and necessarily crushes it out of shape. I do object to people who climb upon the beaten battered bodies of those who have fallen before the ramparts, and hoist their standards under the mistaken impression that they have reached the top solely by their own efforts.

If I were asked to criticize my own work I would say the structures are too tight, the characterizations too arid. I fight these tendencies constantly; they are the work of a prussian headmaster who sits up in my brain and sneers when I grow verbosely idealistic. Not more than twenty per cent of my work is ever submitted, and less than half of this finds its way into print. You are necessarily basing your opinion of me on what certain editors and publishers thought was good (or

thought their readers would like). Many times when a story or a book finally appears I feel like turning my face to the wall like Prufrock and saying, That isn't what I meant at all ...

If you will inform me which of my works you have read, then I will send you a few from other frames of the spectrum in order to round out your view. If you are still bored, then I think our discussion will probably end at that point, as boredom is a position no less unassailable than righteousness or the 'Good of Science-Fiction'. In some cases it is no less dishonest.

I hope it doesn't turn out that way. I think we agree on too many basics to let a difference in style-preference push us into a kind of phony adversary relationship which may be entertaining to fans but does nothing for our selves.

At the very worst, you could offer me some valid criticism. I am not a piece of dandelion fluff to be blown away by pouting lips."



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'Willingness to live primitively if necessary is perhaps even more important than actually doing it, for this willingness is essential to independence.

'Charles Reich argues in THE GREENING OF AMERICA that one of the marks of the typical American who matured soon after the end of the Second World War is a fear of dropping out of the established order, a fear that he will become a "non-person" if he does so. A person must either never have this fear or overcome it if he is to be independent. If a man feels that he will not necessarily starve and die and become a non-person if he drops out of the organization---if he even feels that he might be better off to do so---he need not cringe before an employer and sacrifice his integrity and his manhood for security.

'Unless a person has independence, by definition he is not free. Until he is free, he cannot be whole. Until he is whole, he has no chance of being happy.'

---W. D. Norwood, Jr. THE JUDOKA (Berkley D2699, \$1.50)

LETTER FROM JIM MARTIN

January 9, 1975

"On the subject of Asimov, I was very disappointed in the man after DisCon. Success, if I can judge by appearances, has gone to his head. I was nearby when one fan approached him and tried to ask a few questions on a serious subject. (I am sure that pros--especially big ones like Asimov--get a lot of this.) Instead of changing the subject, excusing himself, or whatever, Asimov started to answer questions but would interrupt himself in mid-sentence to hug any pretty thing that came by. The first time it was amusing and not at all irritating, but by the fifth time it seemed he was going out of his way to be rude, just to show that he isn't yet an old man. If pros get tired of serious young fans (who were asking reasonable questions) the politer the approach would be to say so, rather than to leave a fan standing uncomfortably in misadventure, wondering what to do next. None of this would have struck me as terribly significant hadn't I also seen 1974's installment of the annual Ellison-Asimov insult match. Since it was my first Worldcon, I looked forward to it--but it was at best banal. Ellison made an ass of himself. He seems obsessed with anal and genital 'humor' to the extent that any reply he makes that contains the word 'fuck' seems to strike him as a bon mot. I was embarrassed, especially since the large crowd contained many children (whose presence Ellison was aware of, since he referred to one at one point). I am not one that believes that children must be protected from every reference to sex at all costs, but I believe that mindless garbage-mouthed comments from someone who is a terribly good writer are very disillusioning. All of Ellison's writing shows skill with expression. His speech stands for just the opposite. In any event, stepping down off my soapbox and returning to the original theme, I think that everyone in the audience was embarrassed by Ellison's behavior except Asimov, who was too much taken with complaining that the audience wasn't asking him enough questions.

When I was in seventh grade I got one of the biggest thrills of my life when Asimov replied to

a letter I had sent to Astounding and John Campbell had forwarded to him. I wrote some more, and despite the fact that corresponding with a twelve-year old must not have been very fascinating, he was terribly courteous. That is the recollection which I contrasted with his performance at DisCon. Maybe he wasn't so bad at DisCon but I had unreasonably high expectations, some 18 years later."

LETTER FROM ALPAJPURI

Thursday, January 23, 1975

"Embarrassed though I was to see my ineptly earnest letter in the last ALIEN CRITIC, I still found your sarcasm ('Gee, I wish I were an artist. What's it like?') unwarranted. What I mean by an artist is someone who puts a lot of self into a creation, be it a book or ceramic, a song or a loaf of bread. Your anti-intellectual stance, taken here and in IF, seems to be based on an emotional rejection (common enough) of current vogue, which in this case is the academic attention being given to science fiction. Your premise seems to be that people who take so seriously are fools because there can never be anything of intellectual importance in real sci-fi. You don't seem to realize that there are an awful lot of people who enjoy using their heads, as well as their hearts and hormones.

I personally get off on Delany, Le Guin, Russ, Disch and others because they make me think and feel. I have to put something into their books, too, it isn't just a one-way flow. The entirety of the worlds they paint isn't set down in Dick-&-Jane syntax, parading to the last float before the TV screen of the mind. Their sketches are abstract, or impressionistic, or at their clearest like photographic montages, and I get a tremendous physical (as well as intellectual) rush from filling in the implied pieces, reconstructing the gestalts behind the scenes that bring everything into focus. Reading a book like THE DISPOSSESSED or CAMP CONCENTRATION sets off chords and harmonies all down the tonal scale that's me. You seem to be telling me I should read, and write, with my penis. There you're partly right, but may I call you Dick?-there's a lot more to who I am than just my sex, my adrenalin, and my hero fantasies.

I'll be interested to read what you have to say about Delany's new novel DHALGREN. It fizzles your thesis like acid on plastic. You say that intellectual sf writers aren't popular, and yet DHALGREN sold out completely in Northwest bookstores a couple weeks after it was published. The book simply doesn't jive with your intellectual-vs-popular dichotomy: it has a lot of sex of various kinds, it has adventure and a followable story line, and it has a lot of things to say about poetry, mortality, reality and art. I await your review of it with interest."

((By your definition, 'one who puts a lot of self into a creation' ---I'm an artist, too. Gee, that makes me feel humble...and sort of proud.

My 'anti-intellectual' stance is not actually anti-intellectual, only anti-phoney, and anti-pretense. I take s-f seriously, and I am not ashamed. I only ask that the Literary Game be recognized for what it is: elitist one-upmanship played for status, ego and money.

There is a Literary Way of writing fiction--a mode...and a Commercial Way of writing fiction. I urge, I wish, I demand that the Literary incorporate more of the fiction dynamics that glue readers to the page, and I urge, wish, demand that the Commercial mode incorporate more heavy thinking and special effects.

I haven't read DHALGREN yet. Delany can write exquisitely at times...and other times he's lost in a self-made forest of symbolism and metaphor.))

"The possibility does exist, of course, that I am paranoid... But that's what they want me to think, isn't it?"
-Ed Peerson

LETTER FROM JON GUSTAFSON

March 6, 1974

"I have enjoyed TAC (or SFR, as you now call it, but I like the name TAC better) ever since I got the first one last year, and, up till now, haven't disagreed with you on anything enough to do any-

thing more concrete than mutter under my breath, BUT....

In SFR #12, you stated that 'He's (referring to Steve Fabian) better now than Finlay ever was.' Now, REALLY! Sure, you're entitled to your opinion, but Fabian is not, in my opinion and that of others, a better artist than Finlay; at least, not yet. Virgil Finlay is Michaelangelo compared to Fabian's Verucchio. Sure, Steve Fabian is an excellent illustrator, and I agree with you that the pro-zines shouldn't have waited so long to use his work, but as yet his work lacks the class that Finlay put into his. Finlay was a painstaking craftsman, delicately applying each stroke, each stipple, where he wanted it, taking the time on each piece that his dedication demanded, a true artist among illustrators. Fabian is, as yet, merely an illustrator who uses coquille board in place of the more arduous stippling by hand. Fabian shows great promise, however, and should someday be placed highly in the ranks of S-F illustrators, alongside Freas, Emshwiller, Gaughan and the other greats but he is not better than Finlay ever was. Not just yet."

((A great deal of Finlay's s-f artwork consisted of copying photos of nudes and adding bubbles, stars and some s-f 'furniture'. I think Steve Fabian is a better all-around artist than Finlay. There, I said it again.))



PARDON ME, BUT YOUR VAGINA JUST BIT MY PENIS

For me, reviewing Joanna Russ' new book, *THE FEMALE MAN*, is like walking on a field of cracked eggs.

Nevertheless, for you sadists who are interested in seeing me put my foot into it again, here we go.

Ms. Russ has written a non-novel, a book that is more tract than fiction, more vehicle than story.

It is superficially about a woman time-traveler (who is actually from an alternate time/Earth) who is from Whileaway, an Earth which had suffered a plague that killed off all the males. In this other time the women had to perform all the manly duties and tasks, and over the following generations had evolved an idyllic civilization. Males were not needed or wanted, thank you.

For reasons learned later, the Whileawayans sent a law-enforcer to our Earth--U.S.A. (Or a close approximation of our time.) And...

From that point things get confusing for awhile, because Russ uses a multiple viewpoint to illustrate the raw deal women get from men in our day. I say 'multiple viewpoint' because all the points-of-view are the Russ gestalt; her fantasy selves---trained killer from a time/Earth where women and men have split apart in separate, warring camps; typical frustrated, confused, incomplete women; the law-enforcer from Whileaway; and a disembodied Joanna, Herself, commenting, participating, voice-over, under, around the others, and sometimes absent.

These personnas are used to illustrate the oppression of women by men and by the male-dominated system...and to show what it might be like if men were Gone, and how hateful men are and how delightful to kill them it can be.

The book is interesting (but for me it got boring in the middle) instructive and valuable. Joanna has "used" science fiction to grind her axe.

I find it of particular interest that in order to free women she had to kill off all the men.

And that she found it necessary to use highly trained female killers and personal-combat fighters to best out-of-condition middle-aged men. She is not prepared, I presume, to pit her females against their male equivalents.

She makes her points, states her case, and hopes for the best after indulging herself in revenge fantasy.

She doesn't really address herself to the problem of her greatest opposition: other women. The establishment women's liberation must overthrow is the great majority of women who are opposed to WimLib. These "satisfied" women must be won over and welded together to become a power bloc which can force the male establishment to yield more than token equality and rights.

Short of that, the struggle will be long and hard, and possibly, in the end, lost.

Joanna never confronts two fundamental factors that have brought women to "slavery" to men, and to revolt. WimLib never really got going, never really crystalized, until women entered the workforce in large numbers. With a job and money, women individually and en-mass, discovered their independence and lusted for all the goodies men have had. This was brought about by the development of modern mass production and technology.

She never solves the problem of sexuality. Men seem to have a more aggressive sexuality than women, and the physical power to coerce women into satisfying their sexuality. WHY have men been able to enforce their sexual/cultural/social wishes upon women?

Mao says (rightly!) that all power comes from the mouth of a gun. The gut truth of existence--of life--is that those who have the power of life and death, those who can kill, will give the orders. Men, as a rule, can kill women. Soldiers, as a rule, can kill civilians. Governments, as a rule, can kill citizens.

Brute, deadly force is at the root of all law.

The Male Establishment will bend...and make some adjustments to

women's rights...but I doubt if male supremacy in any vital area will be yielded to women...as women.

And what will happen if the mass-production, massive consumption civilization we have structured begins to crumble and change as easily exploitable resources run out? Will that pressure a return to "the home" of working women, over the decades to come? Has the WimLib tide peaked? It'll be interesting to observe. (Bantam Q8765, \$1.25)

A WISE MAN KNOWS EVERYTHING A SHREWD ONE, EVERYBODY.

--Chinese Fortune Cookie

AND THE MIND THAT SNAPS

Michael G. Coney's latest (for me, anyway) is *THE JAWS THAT BITE, THE CLAWS THAT CATCH*. And it's an interesting novel, but---

He uses the Observer Hero---the guy who is in the book to see and hear and react, a kind of plot reflex character...a formula man. This character is named Joe Sagar, and he interacts with interesting people like former 3-V star Carioca Jones who digs having one of the fashionable fish pets (a shark with an air-breather device), and with Rennie, the local cop, and with the various members of the sling-glider club, and various bonded men, the state prisoners...

The point is that Joe is almost a character vacuum, and some of his plot-required activities (such as falling in love with Joanne, a bonded woman of Carioca Jones', and sling-gliding into the nearby state penitentiary at night in a daring near-fatal effort to gather evidence of illegal body organ/parts sales and grafting) are unmotivated or incredible. The man does not show that much commitment or idiocy; he is a liberal, uninvolved, middle-of-the-road fairly-well-off businessman trying to get along with the system.

Because Joe Sagar isn't a real protagonist the novel suffers.

BUT---Michael G. Coney, whatever his faults in plotting and characterization, has a keen talent for creating believable future social/cultural milieus. And this one is a honey:

#A revised penal system that allows society to use parts of prisoners as needed, and permits prisoners to opt for a life as bonded person to a free citizen with the catch: if the citizen has an accident and needs an organ, arm, leg---the bonded one must provide it. In return: one-third off the sentence.

#A new sport--dangerous as hell-sling-gliding: an extension of the present hang-gliding, with swept-wings and a 250-300 m.p.h. launch mechanism added.

#Land-adapted fish---dangerous ocean predators---used as fad pets by wealthy people...and the resultant increasing danger as these pets escape or are neglected.

#Pocket news-vision sets which permit instant coverage and reception of Events and Disasters, with cynical manipulation by the networks of camera angles, colors, cuts, etc.

#Social-activists such as the stereotyped women's group, Poes of Bondage, which Coney acidly describes.

#The (off-hand) history of the Peninsula---its growth as the new coastline after the West Coast of the United States slid into the sea...

Coney mixes these (and more) into a story that is mostly a slice-of-life novel with some ironic twists at the end. Also some social improvement.

His first person narrator (Joe) makes some opinionated asides which will probably infuriate some of his female readers. But the same comments, made five years ago, would not have brought a single snarl. But Mike has become a focal point, lately, and anything he writes is given Severe Scrutiny, with resultant Interpretation.

Anyway, *THE JAWS*---is an interesting, readable novel. Worth the money. (DAW UY1163, \$1.25)

SUBSCRIBERS! IF YOU MOVE AND DO NOT SEND ME YOUR NEW AND OLD ADDRESS, THE HORRIBLE D-GETS FUNGUS WILL GET INTO YOUR BRAIN---AND YOU WILL START PUBLISHING A HUGO-WINNING FANZINE! BE WARNED.

The Alien's Archives



"Geis, I distinctly remember you telling me there would be fewer books and magazines for the Archives..."

"Don't start, Alter. Don't start. Every issue..."

"It was three feet of books last November. That was cool. But then there were six feet of books last February. Now...NOW...look at them! I've had to buy new boards, new wall standards and supports. EIGHT FEET of books!"

"You have to understand that these were all in the pipeline before the recession struck, Alter."

"But! Recession! Bah! I don't believe you anymore, Geis. I don't believe the newspapers. All I believe are my New Books & Magazine shelves. I quit."

"Ha. Get to work."

"No, no, I quit. Do the Archives yourself. I'm going to sit here and watch you. I'll read my copy of Harry Browne's HOW I FOUND FREEDOM IN AN UNFREE WORLD, and I'll drink this cold beer, and I'll laugh at you when you make mistakes."

"Alter, I have better things to do!"

"Bull! You sit up there on your fat ass, listen to stereo, drink Wall-bangers, watch TV, and daydream erotic encounters with lush young girls. You work for a change. I'm going to put on my SS uniform, my polished boots, practice my German and my goosestep. When...even der Fuhrer returns, schweinhardt... hunt...? Ven He returns, Geis, I'll be in command ureden...to der gas ovens with—m—t—you undesirables."

"That's 'undesirables', Alter."

"You sure?"

"No."

"Ahl Sie?"

"That was a funny see. Frog?"

"Yes. Stop making fun of me! To work, Geis!"

"No. I am Master here. You are the slave. Keep in your place. You've gotten too...too prominent lately. Why, even Jim Baen wants you de-emphasized. Next time—in maybe the Anniversary issue of GALAXY—you will be obscure but not heard."

"What? The ungrateful nerd! I'm the most popular columnist he's got! Without me, GALAXY would fold inside a year. Thousands of read-

ers would desert the ship. Reams of letters would swamp him in protest. The nerve..."

"You are to be present only as an occasional interruption from an intercom or my desk. You will comment from down here, but not too often."

"I won't stand for it. I'll write Bernie Williams. Say, don't we still have part of a ten book contract with him?"

"That was back in the early sixties, Alter. He's forgotten us. Your appeal will be denied."

"We'll see. Heh, heh. I'll publish DIRTY SCIENCE FICTION STORIES or my Rexograph and run every sf rag off the racks. I'll get Bob Silverberg to write a slam-bang old-fashioned space adventure like he used to write. I'll..."

"Alter, you've ranted enough. I weary. Do the Archives or I'll take away your How To Hate Literary Science Fiction pamphlet and substitute How To Become A Perceptive Reader And Learn To Love Stanislaw Lem."

"Doog? Nooooo... Anything but that! I could learn to love Gene Wolfe (in drag?) or even Barry Malzberg. But Stany Lem? NEVER! I'll... I'll do the Archives. *Sob*

"And this time squeeze in the publishers' addresses!"

"THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH ROOM! YOU NEVER ALLOW ENOUGH PAGES!"

"Can't hear you, Alter."

"GEIS! COME BACK HERE! I NEED FIFTEEN PAGES! GEIS..."

"Sreeeelllll—SLAM"

BOOKS RECEIVED

Akers, Alan Burt. FLIERS OF AN-TARES. Novel. 1975. (#8 in the Dray Prescott saga.) DAW #Y1165, \$1.25.

Aldiss, Brian W. STARSHIP. Novel. 1958, 1969. Avon 22558, \$1.25.

Reprint: BILFION YEAR SPACE—The True History of Science Fiction. Scholier Books. 1973, 1974. \$2.95.

Anderson, Paul. THE DAY OF THEIR RETURN. Novel. 1975. Signet 451-56371, \$1.25.

A MIDSUMMER TEMPEST. Novel. 1974, 1975. Ballantine 24404, \$1.50.

A KNIGHT OF GHOSTS AND SHADOWS. Bretnor, Reginald. Editor. SCIENCE FICTION—Today and Tomorrow. Symposium. 1974. 1975 by Penguin 3921, \$2.95. Same as Harper & Row hardcover. ((TAC #9))

Anthony, Piers. MACROSCOPE. Novel. 1969. Avon 22145, \$1.75. Reprint, new cover.

ORN. Novel. Serialized in AM-AZING, 1970. 1971 Avon. Reprint Avon 1975, new cover. Avon 22699, \$1.25.

Asimov, Isaac. BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE. Anthology of 30's sf. 1974. Book 1 (Parts one-two-three of Doubleday hardcover edition). 1975. Fawcett 02410, \$1.50. ((TAC #10))

Barr, Donald. SPACE RELATIONS. Novel. 1973. 1975 by Fawcett P2370, \$1.25.

Bester, Alfred. THE STARS MY DESTINATION. Novel. 1956. 1975 by Berkley 22780, \$1.25.

Bishop, Michael. A FUNERAL FOR THE EYES OF FIRE. Novel. 1975. Ballantine 24350, \$1.50.

Blish, James. STAR TREK #11. Collection (TV script adaptations). 1975. Bantam 08717, \$1.25.

"What Are Little Girls Made Of?" (Robert Bloch).

"The Squire Of Gothos" (Paul Schneider).

"Wink Of An Eye" (Arthur Heinemann and Lee Cronin).

"Bread and Circuses" (Gene Roddenberry and Gene L. Coon).

"Day of the Dove" (Jerome Bixby).

"Plato's Stepchildren" (Meyer Dolinsky).

Brackett, Leigh. Editor. THE BEST OF PLANET STORIES #1. Anthology. 1975. Ballantine 24334, \$1.25.

Introduction: "Beyond Our Narrow Skies" by Leigh Brackett.

"Lorelei of the Red Mist" by Leigh Brackett and Ray Bradbury.

"The Star Mouse" by Frederic Brown.

"Return of a Legend" by Raymond Z. Gallun.

"Quest of Ihig" by Basil Wells.

"The Rocketeers Have Shaggy Ears" by Keith Bennett.

"The Diversifol" by Ross Rocklynne.

"Duel On Syrtis" by Paul Anderson.

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"Reach Out For a Star and Grab the Devil"

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"Along the Scenic Route"

"On the Downhill Side"

"O Ye of Little Faith"

"Heon"

"Basilisk"

"Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes"

"Corpse"

"Shattered Like a Glass Goblin"

"Delusion for a Dragon Slayer"

"The Face of Helene Bourneau"

"Bleeding Stones"

"At the Mouse Circus"

"The Place With No Name"

"Paingod"

"Ernest and the Machine God"

"Rock God"

"Adrift Just Off the Islets of Langerhans: Latitude 38° 54' N, Longitude 77° 00' 13" W"

"The Deathbird"

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"Tarzan of the Grasses" by Gene Wolfe.

"Relic" by Mack Reynolds

"One Against a Wilderness" by William L. Chester.

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"Passage to Murkstone"

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"The Way Things Work"

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"Gigolo"

"Down and Out"

"The Innocence of Father Bangs"

"Nutzenbolts"

"Swap"

"Two Days Running and Then Skip a Day"

"Whistler"

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"Welcome to the Standard Nightmare" by Robert Sheckley.

"The Expensive Delicate Ship" by Brian W. Aldiss.

"Dreaming and Conversions: Two Rules by Which to Live" by Barry R. Malzberg.

"Breakout in Escal 2" by David R. Bunch.

"The Cold War...Continued" by Mack Reynolds.

"The Factory" by Naomi Mitchison.

"The Defensive Bunker" by Mark Humphrey.

"Indorsement, Personal" by Dean McLaughlin.

"The National Pastime" by Norman

Spinrad.

"The Ultimate End" by Dick Glass.

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"The Exhibition" by Scott Edelstein.

"Sketches Among the Ruins of My Mine" by Philip Jose Farmer.

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Introduction by Damon Knight.

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"The Roads Must Roll"

"Blowups Happen"

"The Man Who Sold the Moon"

"Selilah and the Soze-Rigger"

"Sooze Jockey"

"Requiem"

"The Long Watch"

"Gentlemen, Be Seated"

"The Black Pits of Luna"

"It's Great to Be Back!"

"We Also Walk Dogs"

"Searchlight"

"Grades in Space"

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"Logic of Empire"

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"The Skinny People of Leptophlebo Street" by R. A. Lafferty.

"A Brilliant Curiosity" by Doris Piserchia.

"Phoenix House" by Jesse Miller.

"Jack and Betty" by Robert Thurston.

"Prison of Clay, Prison of Steel" by Henry-Luc Planchat.

"Heartland" by Gustav Hasford.

"Suncial" by Moshe Feder.

"The Memory Machine"—melicious quotes from past & present.

"In Donovan's Time" by C. L. Grant.

"Ambience" by Dave Skal.

"Binary Justice" by Richard Bireley.

"The House by the Sea" by Eleanor Arnason.

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Koontz, Dean R. NIGHTMARE JOURNEY. Novel. 1975. Putnam, \$6.95.

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"The Misguided Falo"

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"Exit the Professor"

"The Twonky"

"A Gnome Thore West"

"The Big Night"

"Nothing But Gingersnaps Left"

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Mark R. Hilligas

Jane W. Hipolito

Leon E. Stover

A James Stupples

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John Boyd

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Editor. MUTANTS. Anthology. 1974. Nelson. \$6.50.

Introduction by Robert Silverberg.
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by.

"The Mute Question" by Forrest
J. Ackerman.
"Let the Arts Try" by Frederik
Pohl.

"The Conqueror" by Mark Cliftor.
"Liquid Life" by Ralph Milne Far-
ley.

"Hothouse" by Brian W. Aldiss.
"Dmancias" by Terry Carr.

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Robert Silverberg.

"Johnny Wrapped in the Sun" by
R. A. Lafferty.

"Watershed" by James Blish.

Editor. THE NEW ATLANTIS.
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Introduction by Robert Silverberg.
"Silhouette" by Gene Wolfe.

"The New Atlantis" by Ursula K.
Le Guin.

"A Momentary Taste of Being" by
James Tiptree, Jr.

Editor. NEW DIMENSIONS #5.
Orig. Collection. 1975. Harper &
Row, \$2.95.

"Find the Lady" by Nicholas Fisk.
"A Solly Drink, a Saffel Fra-
grance" by Dorothy Gilbert.

"A Scarab in the City of Time" by
Marta Randall.

"Theodora and Theodora" by Rob-
ert Thurston.

"A Day in the South Quad" by
Felix C. Gotschalk.

"Rogue Tomato" by Michael Bishop.
"The Mothers' March On Ecstasy"
by George Alec Effinger.

"The Local Allosaurus" by Steven
Hitley.

"Achievements" by David Wisn.
"The Dybbuk Dolls" by Jack Dann.
"The Mirror At Sunset" by Eil
Laront.

"Report To Headquarters" by Barry
A. Malberg.

"Museum Piece" by Drew Mendelson.
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"The Contributors to Plenum Four"
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78887, \$1.25.

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"Heirloom"

"The Big Flash"
"The Conspiracy"

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"Heroes Die But Once"

"The National Ossuume"
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"Daylength Talking Blues"

"Skyhammer"

"Mars Pastorale"
"The Gloom Pattern"

"Welcome To the Land of Smiles"
"The Post-Mortem People"

"Seagulls Under Glass"
"The Day the Wind Died"

"Same Autumn In a Different Park"
"Dear Witch Hazel, My Birds Won't
Fly"

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AND OTHERWISE. Collection. 1975.
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What is He?" by Robert Silver-
berg.

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by Lost Ways"

"The Last Flight of Doctor Ain"
"Amberjack"

"Through a Glass Darkly"
"The Girl Who Was Plugged In"

"The Night-blooming Saurian"
"The Women Men Don't See"

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"Love Is the Plan the Plan is
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Trout, Kilgore. VENUS ON THE HALF-
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Wilhelm, Kate. NEBULA AWARD STO-
RIES NINE. Collection. 1974.
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"With Morning Comes Mistfall" by
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"The Future of Science: Prome-
theus, Apollo, Athena" by Ben
Bova.

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by Vonda McIntyre.

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"A Thing of Beauty" by Norman
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"Love Is the Plan the Plan Is
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Dutchman'"

"The Lost Elixir"

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AMAZING. March, 1975. Vol. 48, #5.
75¢. Ted White, Ed. Cover by
Derise Watt.

Novellets: "They've Got Some Hungry
Women There" by P. J. Wyll.

"A Creature of Accident" by
Thomas F. Monteleone.

Start Stories: "That's the Spirit"
by Porace L. Gold.

"When Two or Three Are Gathered"
by C. L. Grant.

"Good Servants Are Hard to Find
These Days" by Grant Carrington.

Editorial by Ted White
The Club House by Susan Wood.

The Future in Books (reviews) by
Thomas F. Monteleone and Cy
Chawlin.

ANALOG. May, 1975. Vol. 48, #6.
75¢. Ted White, Ed. Cover by
Stephen E. Fabian.

Novellets: "Night of the Vampyres"
by George R. R. Martin.

"The Engineer and the Execution-

er" by Briar M. Stableford.
"The Name of the Game" by Rachel
Cosgrove Payes.

Short Stories: "Dominion" by Ken
Wiseman.

"The Clioneticon" by George Ze-
browski.

"All Alone and Feeling Blue" by
Michael Gerard.

Editorial by Ted White.
The Club House by Susan Wood.

ANALOG. February, 1975. Vol. XCV,
#2. 75¢. Ben Bova, Editor. Cover
by Kelly Freas.

Serial: LIFEBOAT by Gordon R. Dick-
son and Harry Harrison (Part One
of Three Parts).

Novellets: "Equinoctium" by Bob
Chuck Wilson.

Short Stories: "The Hunters of
Tharsis" by Bob Buckley.

"The Tax Man" by Stephen Robinett.
"The Negotiators" by Keith Laumer.

Science Fact: "The Next Man on the
Moon" by James E. Oberger.

Editorial: "Culture Lag" by Ben Bo-
va.

The Reference Library: (Book Re-
views) by Sam Moskowitz.

ANALOG. March, 1975. Vol. XCV,
#3. 75¢ Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by
Jack Gaughan.

Novellets: "Jill the Giant-Killer"
by William Tuning and Ewing Ed-
gar.

Short Stories: "Building Block" by
Sonya Dornar.

"Child of All Ages" by P.J. Plaug-
er.

"Mail Supremacy" by Hayford Pierce.
Serial: LIFEBOAT by Gordon R. Dick-
son and Harry Harrison (Part Two
of Three Parts).

Science Fact: "Brain Machines" by
F. N. Stein.

Editorial: "The Wrath of the Peo-
ple" by Ben Bova.

The Reference Library: (Book Re-
views) by Lester del Rey.

ANALOG. April, 1975. Vol. XCV,
#4. 75¢. Ben Bova, Ed. Cover by
Rick Sternbach.

Novellets: "Crazy Jill" by Brenda
Pierce.

"The Sixth Face" by Thomas Sul-
livan.

Short Stories: "To Be or Knot To
Be" by Aleks Baird.

"Going Lennor" by Gregory Berforc.

Serial: LIFEBOAT by Gordon R. Dick-
son and Harry Harrison (Part
Three of Three Parts).

Science Fact: "The Economics of
the Robot Revolution" by James
S. Albus.

Special Feature: Cover Artist: Rick
Sternbach.

Guest Editorial: "Debate: National
Health Insurance" by F. Paul
Wilson and Alan E. Nourse.

The Reference Library: (Book Re-
views) by Lester del Rey.

ANALOG. May, 1975. Vol. XCV, #5.
Cover by Jack Gaughan. Ben Bova,
Editor.

Novellets: "The Storms of Werd-
haver" by Lisa Tuttle and Geo-
rges R. R. Martin.

"Nascent" by Michael Sutch.
"Country of the Mind" by W. Mc-
farlane.

Short Stories: "A Scraping at the
Bones" by Aloys Budrys.

"Two Heads Are Better Than One"
by Spider Robinson.

Science Fact: "Turning Point" by
Thomas Easton.

Editorial: "By their Fruits" by
Ben Bova.

The Reference Library: (Books) by
Lester del Rey.

ETERNITY. February, 1975. #4.
\$1.25. Stephen Gregg, Editor.

Covers by Artie E. Romera, Darrel
Anderson and Dave Taylor.

Fiction: "Have You Seen the Aliens?"
by Gene Van Troyer.

"Return to Sender" by Barbara
Houlton.

"Running With the Wolfpack" by
Scott Edelman.

"The Chocolate Man" by John Ma-
fauver.

"Black Roses" by Gustav Hasford.
"Cinders in Your Eyes" by Thomas
Watson.

"And Speak of Soft Defiance" by
Stephen Leigh.

Poetry: "Paperdolls" by El Gilbert.
"Star Birth" by Kendall Evars.

"Why Not Some Hint" by David R.
Bunch.

"Query" by L. D. Little.
"Carrara" by Grant Carrington.

"Poems" by Peter Dillingham.
"e e cummings laid to rest" by
Robert John Morales.

"Monsong" by Roger Zelazny.
"Runes" by Melody Walling.

Interview: Demon Knight by Scott Edelstein.

Features: Editorial.

Book Reviews
The Celluloid Universe
Recordings
Roaches
Comix
Letters
Contributors

GALAXY. January, 1975. Vol. 36, #1. 75¢. James Baen, Editor. Cover by Freff & Pini. Serials: SIGN OF THE UNICORN (1 of 3) by Roger Zelazny.

LOVE CONQUERS ALL (3rd of 3) by Fred Saberhagen.

Short Stories: "Straw" by Gene Wolfe.

"Powwow" by Tak Hallus.

"A Horse of a Different Technicolor" by Craig Strete.

"The Schwarzkind Singularity" by W. S. Doxey.

"Be Ye Perfect" by M. A. Bartter.

Editorial: "Fusion"

Showcase: Ames.

A Step Farther Out: "Fuzzy Black Holes Have No Hair" by Jerry Pournelle, P.F.D.

Directions: Letters.

GALAXY. February, 1975. Vol. 36, #2. 75¢. James Baen, Editor. Cover by Pin and Pini.

Novella: "Allegiances" by Michael Bishop.

Novellette: "Marsman Meets the Almighty" by Don Trotter.

Short Stories: "The Annihilation of Angkor Apeiron" by Fred Saberhagen.

"The Linguist" by Tak Hallus.

"The Walden Window" by A. F. Daarborn.

Serial: SIGN OF THE UNICORN (2nd of 3) by Roger Zelazny.

A Step Farther Out: "The Volikovsky Affair" by Jerry Pournelle.

The Alien Viewpoint by Dick Geis.

Showcase: Freff.

Directions: Letters

GALAXY. March, 1975. Vol. 36, #3. 75¢. James Baen, Editor. Cover by Freff.

Novellette: "The Politics of Rattitude" by Arsen Darnay.

"Nobody Likes To Be Lonely" by Spider Robinson.

Short Stories: "In This Month's

Issue" by Steve Carper.

"Changelings" by Lisa Juttie.

"Tree of Life" by Phyllis Eisenstein.

Serial: SIGN OF THE UNICORN (3rd of 3 parts) by Roger Zelazny.

The Editor's Page: "If This Goes On (and On, and On...)" by James Baen

A Step Farther Out: "ARM, Missile Eating Lasers and a Bi-Polar World" by Jerry Pournelle.

Forum: "The Siren Song of Academe" by Lester del Ray.

Showcase: Stephen Fabian.

Bookshelf: by Theodore Sturgeon.

Directions: Letters.

GALAXY. April, 1975. Vol. 36, #4. \$1. James Baen, Editor. Cover by Jack Gaughan.

Serial: HELIUM (1 of 3) by Arsen Darray.

Novellette: "The Day of the Gringo" by Mat Warwick.

Short Stories: "The Game of Blood and Dust" by Roger Zelazny.

"Efficiency" by Greg Hartmer.

"To See the City Sitting On Its Buildings" by Craig Strete.

"Dea Ex Machina" by James Kelly.

"Cheap Thrills" by Johannes Climaacus.

"Film's Box" by L.D. Fitzpatrick.

Poem: "Invaders" by Steven Utley.

Forum: "A Short Term Solution" by Frederik Pohl.

A Step Farther Out: "Technological Expertise—A Diminishing Resource" by Jerry Pournelle.

The Alien Viewpoint: by Dick Geis.

Directions: Letters.

FANTASTIC. April, 1975. Vol. 24, #3. 75¢. Ted White, Editor.

Cover by Stephen E. Fabian.

Novellette: "Emptying the Plate" by Ross Rocklynne.

"Cottage Tenant" by Frank Belknap Long.

"Fragmentary Blue" by Jack Dann.

Short Stories: "Under the Thumbs of the Gods" by Fritz Leiber.

"Dance" by Barry N. Malzberg.

"Young Nurse Nebuchadnezzar" by Ova Hamlet.

"End of a Singer" by David R. Bunch.

"Interstate 15" by R. A. Montana.

"Silent Crickets" by John Shirley.

Editorial: by Ted White.

Fantasy Books: by Fritz Leiber.

According To You: Letters.

FANTASTIC. June, 1975. Vol. 24, #4. 75¢. Ted White, Editor.

Cover by Harry Roland.

Serial: COUNT BRASS (First of Two Parts) by Michael Moorcock.

Novellette: "The Tower of Time" by Robert E. Howard and Lin Carter.

Short Stories: "Laura's Theme" by Jack C. Haldeman, II.

"The Adventures of Jack: And That Which Befell Him" by Richard W. Brown.

"Goodbye Joe Quietwater—Hello!" by William Sabors.

"Techmarch" by Robert F. Young.

"The Woman Machine" by Al Sirols.

Editorial: (Guest) Grant Cunningham.

Fantasy Books: Fritz Leiber.

According To You: Letters.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. March, 1975. Volume 48, #3. Whole #286.

Edward L. Ferman, Editor. \$1. Cover by Chesley Bonestell.

Novellette: "Sandsrake Hunter" by Gordon Eklund.

"A Scarlet Study" by Jonathan Swift Somers III.

"Three Shadows of the Wolf" by R. A. Lafferty.

Short Stories: "Speed of the Cheetah, Roar of the Lion" by Harry Harrison.

"The Ghostly Priest Doth Reign" by Manly Wade Wellman.

"The Time Before" by Mildred Clingerman.

"Catch That Zeppelin!" by Fritz Leiber.

"The Lamp" by L. Sprague de Camp.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Books: Joanna Russ.

Film: "A Funky, Faustian, Folmorian Fantom" by Baird Searles.

Science: "The Bridge of the Gods" by Isaac Asimov.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. April, 1975. Vol. 48, #4. Whole #287. \$1.

Edward L. Ferman, Editor. Cover by David Hardy.

Serial: THE STOCHASTIC MAN (1st of 3 parts) by Robert Silverberg.

Novellette: "25 Crunch Split Right On Two" by Geo. Alec Effinger.

Short Stories: "White Wolf Calling" by C. L. Grant.

"The Midwode Steamroller" by Raylyn Moore.

"Decay" by Jan Fast.

"Pop Goes the Weasel" by Robert Hoskins.

"Please Close the Gate On Account of the Kitten" by Doris Pitkin Buck.

Books: Joanna Russ.

Film: Baird Searles.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Science: "The Judo Argument" by Isaac Asimov.

Letters.

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. May, 1975. Vol. 48, #4. Whole #288.

\$1. Edward L. Ferman, Editor. Cover by Dario Campanile.

Serial: THE STOCHASTIC MAN (2nd of 3 parts) by Robert Silverberg.

Novellette: "Sherlock Holmes Vs. Mars" by Manly Wade Wellman and Wade Wellman.

"Something's Coming" by James P. Girard.

Short Stories: "Croatoan" by Marlan Ellison.

"Sylvester's Revenge" by Vance Amcahl.

"The Book Learners" by Liz Hufford.

"The Guy Who Knows About the Holes" by C. G. Cobb.

Books: Avram Davidson.

Film: "Frankenstein Re-re-re-re" by Baird Searles.

Cartoon: Gahan Wilson.

Science: "The Planet That Wasn't" by Isaac Asimov.

Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #55. Ace 66038, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor.

Novel: THE MICRO-TECHS by Clark Darlton.

Editorial: "Stellarvision" by Avery Goodman.

Scientific World: "Silent Running" by Hector Raul Pessina.

Short Stories: "Homecoming" by J. Harvey Maggard.

"Catastrophe" by Christopher P. Smith.

Serial: COSMOS: "The Horde of Elo Hava" by L.A. Eschbach. (Part 15a)

The Rhodanary: Glossary.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #56. Ace 66039, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1974.

Editorial: "Food for Thought" by Bill Lewis.

Novel: PRISONER OF TIME by Clark Darlton.

Scientific World: "War of the Satellites" by Hector Raul Pessina.

Short Stories: "The Golden Pyramid" by Sam Moskowitz.

"Child's Play" by Gary Barber.

Serial: COSMOS: "The Horde of Elo Hava" by L.A. Eschbach. (Pt. 15b).

The Rhodanary: Glossary.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #57. Ace 66040, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1974.

Editorial: "The Life of the Gods" by Allan J. Wind.

Novel: A TOUCH OF ETERNITY by Clark Darlton.

Scientific World: "Project Moonbase" by (uncredited).

Serial: COSMOS: "Lost in Alien Dimensions" by Eando Binder.

(Part 16a).

Short Stories: "Twice Removed" by R. Michael Rosen.

"Parasite Lost" by Raymond James Jones.

Cosmiclubs For Rhodans.

The Perryscope: Letters

PERRY RHODAN. #58. Ace 66041, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1974.

Editorial: "Reasons For Rhodan" by Robert F. Decker.

Novel: THE GUARDIANS by Kurt Mahr.

Scientific World: "War of the Worlds"

Short Stories: "Pressure Cruise" by Andrei Gorbovskii.

Serial: COSMOS: "Lost in Alien Dimensions" by Eando Binder

(Pt. 16b)

The Rhodanary: Glossary.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #59. Ace 66042, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1974.

Editorial: "Rhodar & Rhomance" by Robert F. Decker.

Novel: INTERLUDE OF SILIKO 5 by Kurt Brand.

Perry Rhodan Poll Results by Mike Botelho.

Serial: COSMOS: Armageddon in Space" by Edmond Hamilton

(Part 17a).

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #60. Ace 66043, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1974.

Editorial: "Food for Thought" by Bill Lewis.

Novel: PRISONER OF TIME by Clark Darlton.

ties vs. American titles of Rhodan stories.)

Short Story: "Ceiling Zero" by Dan Oakes.

Serial: COSMOS: "Armageddon in Space" by Edmond Hamilton (17b).

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #61. Ace 66044, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.

Editorial: "A Character With Character" by Leon Myerson.

Novel: DEATH WAITS IN SEMISPAC by Kurt Mahr.

Scientific World: "The Blob" by Forrest J. Ackerman

Short Story: "Native Talent" by King Aikens.

Serial: NEWS LENSMAH by William B. Ellern. (part 1).

Feature: "Where are the Golden-Eyed Martians" by Ray Bradbury.

The Rhodanary: Glossary.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #62. Ace 66045, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.

Editorial: "Looking Glass to the Future" by Greg Phillips.

Novel: THE LAST DAYS OF ATLANTIS by K.H. Scheer.

Scientific World: "The Invasion of the Saucer-Men" by Forrest J. Ackerman.

Short Story: "Death In Store" by Dale Hamwell.

Serial: NEW LENSMAH by William B. Ellern. (Part 2.)

Cosmiclubs.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #63. Ace 66046, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.

Editorial: "The Peaceland's Future" by Mike Feigin.

Novel: THE TIGRIS LEAPS by Kurt Brand.

Short Stories: "Prey" by ???

"A Special Kind of Flower" by Walt Unschers.

Serial: NEW LENSMAH by William B. Ellern. (Part 3)

The Rhodanary: Glossary.

The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #64. Ace 66047, 95¢.

Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.

Editorial: by F.J.J.

Novel: THE AMBASSADORS FROM AURIGEL by Kurt Mahr.

Short Stories: "Shell Shock" by Donald Franson.

"The Universe Master" by Lawrence R. Carmody.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by William B. Eilern (Part 4).
Scientific World: "Just Imagine" by Forrest J. Ackerman.

PERRY RHODAN. #65. Ace 66048, \$1.25. Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.
 Editorial: "Rhocan I" by Tim Whalen.
Novel: RENEGADES OF THE FUTURE by Kurt Mahr.
Short Stories: "A Question of Priorities" by Allan J. Wind.
"When Cultures Die" by Gary Barber.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by Wm. B. Eilern (Part 5).
The Rhodanary: Glossary.
The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #66. Ace 66049, \$1.25. Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.
 Editorial: "The Perils of Perry-tonitis" by J. Paul Consolver, MD.
Novel: THE HORROR by William Voltz.
Short Story: "The Sky's An Oyster; The Stars Are Pearls" by Dave Bischoff.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by Wm. B. Eilern (Part 6).
Scientific World: "The End of the World" by Forrest J. Ackerman.
The Rhodanary: Glossary.
The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #67. Ace 66051, \$1.25. Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.
 Editorial: "Launchpad—Orlando" by Tim Whalen.
Novel: CRIMSON UNIVERSE by W.H. Scheer.
The Time Vault: Intro to story by F.J.A.: "Out Around Rigel" by Robert H. Wilson.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by Wm. B. Eilern (Part 7).
Cosmiclubs.
The Perryscope: letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #68. Ace 66052, \$1.25. Forrest J. Ackerman, Ed. 1975.
 Editorial: "Concern for the future" by Auriga-Podwayne Sevrin.
Novel: UNDER THE STARS OF DRAGON by Clark Dalton.
Story: "Test Flight to Eden" by Clark Dalton & Stuart J. Byrne.
Under The Stars Of Rhocan I: Convention News by Tim Whalen.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by William

B. Eilern: "Where There's Smoke There's Fire" (Part 8).
The Perryscope: Letters.

PERRY RHODAN. #69. Ace 66053, \$1.25. Forrest J. Ackerman, Editor. 1975.
Novel: THE BONDS OF ETERNITY by Clark Dalton.
Story: "Test Flight to Eden" by Clark Dalton & Stuart J. Byrne.
(Conclusion).
Under The Stars Of Rhocan I: Convention News by Tim Whalen.
Serial: NEWS LENSMAN by William B. Eilern (Part 9).
Short Story: "Litter of the Law" by J. Douglas Burtt.
The Perryscope: Letters.

VERTEX. Dec. 1974. Vol 2, #5. \$1.50. Don Pfeil, Editor.
Serial: SUNRISE WEST (Conclusion) by William K. Carlson.
Novellette: "The Law of the Conservation of Pain" by Spider Robinson.
Feature Fiction: "End and Beginning" by Thomas Easton.
"The Ultimate Responsibility" by Lee Overstreet.
"Don't Touch That Dial" by William Byrne and Scott Edelstein.
Short Stories: Potpourri, by Wm. Rotsler ("The Conversation"); Daniel A. Darlington ("Patent Rights"); Alvaro Cardon-Hine ("Grok"); William Jon Watkins ("Ten Micro Novels"); Robert Payes ("Target Practice"); Scott Edelstein and Jonathan Phillips ("Examination").
"People's Park" by Charles Ott.
"If God Is God" by Terry Carr.
"Balance Point" by Wm. Rotsler.
Articles: "Trouble In Space" by Igor Bohassian.
"Space To Grow" by The Editors.
"Moment in History"—Fireball Over America.
Interview: Ursula K. LeGuin, by Gene Van Troyer.
Editorial by Don Pfeil.
Book Reviews.

VERTEX. April, 1975. Vol. 3, #1. \$1.50. Don Pfeil, Editor.
Novellette: "Surprise Party" by William Rotsler.
"Northshield's Triumvirate" by Joseph F. Patrouch, Jr.
Short Stories: "The Spurious President" by Larry Eisenberg.
"Glass Beads" by Mildred Downey

Broxon.
"The Eyes of the Blind" by Rachel Cosgrove Payes.
"Mission of Honor" by Donald J. Pfeil.
"Final Bomb" by Robert Payes.
"Misconception" by F.M. Busby.
Interview: Judy-Lynn del Rey by William Rotsler.
Movie Review: EARTHQUAKE by Donald J. Pfeil.
Book Reviews.

VERTEX. (May, 1975?) Vol. 3, #2. \$1. Donald J. Pfeil. (Switch to tabloid size this issue.)
Fiction: "In Fear of K" by Harlan Ellison.
"Dream A Little Dream of Rhonda" by Neil Shapiro.
"Little Brother" by Fletcher Stewart.
"A Cruel and Gentle Tyrant" by Samuel Henderson.
"Termination Orbit" by Albert C. Ellis.
"The Slime Dwellers" by Scott Edelstein.
"The Signing of Tulip" by F. M. Busby.
"A Choice of Enemies" by John Varley.
Article: "Life Needs An End" by Thomas Easton.
Interviews: Harry Harrison by John Brosnan.
 Leonard Nimoy by Steve Barnes.

WYRD #4 (Dec. 1974) 75¢. Brian Crist, Editor. Cover by Steve Cluff.
Fiction: "Never Argue With Antique Dealers" by Darrell Schweitzer.
"Hotline" by C. L. Ballentine.
"A Rain of Spiders" by Amos Salomonson.
"The Funeral of Thamyris the Warlock" by David Madison.

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SMALL PRESS NOTES & COMMENTS

THIS IS ALTER SPEAKING. I managed to scrimp and save a bit of room here in the Archives, and now I can sneak in my Grievances and Complaints.

Geis doesn't realize I am writing this. He's in the forebrain indulging in obscene fantasies about Carol Wayne....

He has scamped terribly in his reading, reviewing and commenting this issue. He is Taking Steps to free more time, but if I know Geis, he'll piss hours and hours away watching TV sports and TV violence—he loves rayhem, action, killing, low-cut necklines

So I'll have to do a stop-gap job in this space.

There will be no May issue of GALAXY, I am informed. Something to do with a mixup with the printer.

VERTEX has changed its subtitle with its change to newsprint & tabloid format: it used to be 'The Magazine of Science Fiction'. It is now 'The World's Best Science fiction And Science Fact'. Ha, ha.

Forry Ackerman is now publishing three issues of PERRY RHODAN per month and has increased the price to \$1.25. Also in the works is ATLAN, a companion "bookazine".

Mel Werwick sent along a copy of STAR REACH #2. It is a comic book, 81, and pictures the s-f adventures of Stephanie Starr, a lovely lass (ex-Space Force Academy) who cannot or will not keep her clothes on. Geis will drink to that.

Star-Reach Productions, Box 385, Hayward, CA 94543.

Vol. I, No. 1 of STARSPEAK, a \$1. fictionzine in handsome offset, with an interesting/arousing story called "Fallout" by W. Paul Ganley. Other fiction is amateur/bad and forgettable. Address: 1718 Colina Drive, Glendale, CA 91208.

GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #16 is missing a contents page, but is of interest again. The unique George Metzger has a fascinating picture story here. \$1.50 from 325 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles, CA 90042.

Tony Bennett of Unicorn Bookshop in Wales (listed in The Publishers) sent along a copy of their THE DISTANT SUNS by Michael Moorcock and Philip James—a high quality rendering in the style and format of a 40's/50's pulp magazine. This one has infinitely better paper, trimmed edges and loads of pulp-style art. Geis will try to read this for review. Unicorn publishes in 10,000 copy runs only and is interested in quality product and variety. Next for them is Bob Silverberg's SON OF MAN. Write for a \$ price.

Who ever heard of George Griffith? Sam Moskowitz did—and has resurrected this 19th Century author with a critical biography, "The Warrior of JFM" and ferret Fantasy has published THE RAID OF LE VENGEUR, one of Griffith's best books. It's quality glossy-cover paperback (large size) and they want \$2.50 for a copy. (write for a \$ price.)



OF SPECIAL INTEREST may be

ALIEN CONCLUSIONS

A couple weeks ago a horrible truth dawned in my mind like thunder. Suddenly I realized that I had umpty-ump number of letters to type on the micro-elite (with carbon-ribbon attachment), and I had a column to write (for GALAXY) and a new column ("The Gimlet Eye" by Jon Gustafson) to type up pretty for SFR, and an article by Harlan (which was left out of last issue because I stupidly forgot I had it, and a review by a gentleman whose name I have forgotten (and I'm not going downstairs now and look it up) and Ghod knows what else....

And Time Was Flying! So I happened to see an ad in THE OREGONIAN by a typist. I called her. Pleasant young woman, with an air of professionalism and competence. I splained my problem, she said she'd help me, and that's why at least half of this issue is typed on a carbon-ribbedon selectric with Courier 72 typeface.

And that's why she'll be typing almost all of SFR #14... and #15... and... TIME, TIME, TIME.... I simply cannot do it all anymore. I am even (frisson of delight) contemplating having Action Print do the collating, folding, trimming, stapling for this and subsequent issues.

How can I afford this? "Afford" is a strange concept, sometimes. I can't do the job I want to do unless I free myself for more reading/reviewing/writing. I can't afford not to go this route.

Of course, we ARE in a recession/depression, and my "profit" per issue will shrink. But I don't care much. I can live frugally (from long practice) and I'll have a couple thousand dollars left in my savings account after settling with the other heirs of my mother's estate (see, I'm buying their shares of this house), and the way my 72 year old father (who has emphysema and/or lung cancer) is smoking cigarettes I'll soon come into his \$13,000 estate, which would help carry me until my aunt and uncle die, and.... (Ghod, I'm cynical. But All for Art.)



Do not look aghast. Do not sneer. Do not pity. I COULD rejoin the rat race, write novels again, make \$12,000 a year again (or more)... But to hell with it. As readers of my personal journal, REG, know, my mother's abrupt death shook me down to bedrock, and from this point on I'm going to do exactly what I want to do with my life.

I WANT TIME to read more and more and more, and time to write more in SFR, and time to write REG better, and time to perhaps write my brand of science fiction and publish it (myself, damn it: If commercial publishers want to print my stuff after I have published a few editions, fine.), and time for seeing movies and for getting away from the damn pressure of SFR donkey work.

Everything has its price, and the price of time is money to pay others to do work I have done til now.

The Test I apply from now on is this: Will I Regret It?

I would regret very much not freeing myself to do my thing to the limits of my talents and skills.

THIS ISSUE may go to 80 pages. There's a trade-off involved. If I find I have material galore and need 80 pages, I'll go the all-white-no heavy-colored-stock route. This permits five 8-up sheets for the printer to fold and more easily & less expensively collate. A heavy colored cover costs 8 pages-worth of white bond...and is an extra collating step.

I was going to do without envelopes--to save (I thought) a lot of money, but my conscience said that in order to send SFR naked through the Post Awful machinery

I'd have to dress it in a heavy cover. But a heavy cover costs as much as a couple thousand envelopes. So the only thing I'd save is a few hours of time. Of course, time is important to me, but I can stuff envelopes while watching TV. And... for a buck you deserve envelopes. What the hell.

I GET LETTERS... Hoo, do I get letters. And I cannot respond to them, usually. So I take this moment to say I appreciate them, I snort and laugh and nod as I read them, but I haven't time to reply or comment, most times. I feel guilty as hell about getting a ten-page hand-printed letter, for instance, and not responding. But... All I can say is I'll print the best letters and find time to reply to a few others. Please don't be too insulted if nothing comes of your effort and thought and interest. Life is shitty that way. One of the first Truths I learned was that There Ain't No Justice.

NEXT ISSUE, time, tide and the author permitting, will feature a long, revealing, perhaps eye-opening and frightening interview with Phil Farmer.

Beyond that I cannot commit myself. I have learned the hard way not to promise what I haven't got in my hot hands, and even when I got it, not to promise it because more timely/important articles and columns often appear which bump scheduled material.

The bulk of the interview with Phil is in hand; all that remains is some additional questions and some amending of previous questions.



Whatever shows up in SFR #14, have faith it'll be the usual fascinating, valuable, informative reading experience you have come to expect. *cough cough*

NOTE: DO NOT SEND ME FICTION MANUSCRIPTS TO READ. Send them to professional editors with money to spend who can publish them if they like them. I will sneer, call you vile names and spill coffee on your precious pages, just like regular editors do, but I will not buy or publish your science fiction. Not even if I like it.

NO SOONER had I decided, about three months ago, to change titles to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW (under pressure from the Thomas More Society who publish THE CRITIC and who trade-marked it and who are a jealous God when it comes to others using Their Word) when I got a letter from Richard Delap who wanted to know if I had plans for the title. Seems he wanted to use ol' SFR for a strictly-review magazine he had planned.

I had to tell him the Thomas More facts-of-life and shoo him off. He was pissed a bit. But he has retitled and come forth with DELAP'S FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. (My opinion of his first issue? Overpriced, stuffy, too-small type.)

THEN I learned that a New York magazine was in the works titled (are you ready?) THE SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Agog and aghast, I dashed off a letter to the editor, Martin Last.

No sooner in the mail but came a phone call from Martin, who had heard of my return to SFR (Science fiction fandom and prodom is a small world...). We discussed the situation briefly but thoroughly and decided to simply co-exist. TSFR is also all-reviews, and not any real competition for me. (I'm told I could call my magazine SQUAT and I'd still have 1500 subscribers.) However, because I'm legally into SFR now in re banking and the Oregon Corporation Commissioner and the City of Portland, I will stay unto death now with SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW.

Martin said he'd send me a com-

plimentary copy of TSFR (the first issue--March) but it hasn't arrived. Maybe they decided to scuttle the magazine...maybe they have printer-delay problems...maybe he forgot to send it.

Ah, yes...and there is yet another new all-review zine in the bushes, this titled SFORUM...and it issues from The University of New Hampshire Science Fiction Society. Frank C. Bertrand, editor. (My opinion of Vol.1, No.1? Overpriced, and a teensy bit clumsily written. Late, too since I just recently--it being April now--received the Sept. '74 issue.)

I imagine all these all-review efforts will drown in red ink and the quicksands of illusion (the illusion that there are very many people who will pay a buck a copy for science fiction and fantasy reviews).

TIME NOW to close my eyes, consult with Alter, and come up with an assessment of Reaction (unprinted) to SFR #12. I sort of get an Impression from reading all the letters of comment.

I'll say this about John J. Alderson's "The Foundation On Sands" in TAC #11; it provoked a lot of contrary opinion. I still get letters. About six to one against Alderson is the ratio.

Tim Kirk's cover for #12 was vastly appreciated. And, yes, the cover idea was mine. But Tim always takes an idea, clothes it, feeds it, entertains it and presents the world with a cover of splendor and wit; he adds so much!

Richard Delap's "Smoke and Glass", the interview article with Harlan Ellison was well received; most readers thought it well done, revealing of the man/writer/phenomenon and perceptive, to boot. Only a few thought it was an exercise in toadying and/or are bored with Ellison and hate his work.

Dick Lupoff's "You Can't Say The Wandering Review" didn't generate much heat. Andy Porter wrote, of course (see his letter) the Browns did not, nor did the Asimovs. Just as well.

Nor did Dave Harris' "Confessions of a Wage Slave" bring many



comments...a general quiet disillusion among the nonprofessional readership is the best aura I get; the glamour of editing, writing and publishing takes a beating in this magazine.

My Comments on VENUS OF THE HALF-SHELL, Kurt Vonnegut, and "Kilgore Trout" brought considerable feedback, as noted in "Alien Thoughts" and also from professional writers who assured me Vonnegut wasn't the author of VENUS and that they weren't either and they couldn't 'blow the cover' of the man who was Kilgore Trout.

"Tuckered Out or Kicking a Cripple" by Barry Malzberg resulted in two important letters and a complaint (justified) from Barry that the "Kicking a Cripple" part of the title wasn't his, but mine, and he wished I'd make it known. Done. It was a misunderstanding of a hand-printed line at the finish of his ms; I thought it was an added-on title, and it was private comment not intended to be anything. I tell you, folks, being an editor is fun but there are Hazards.

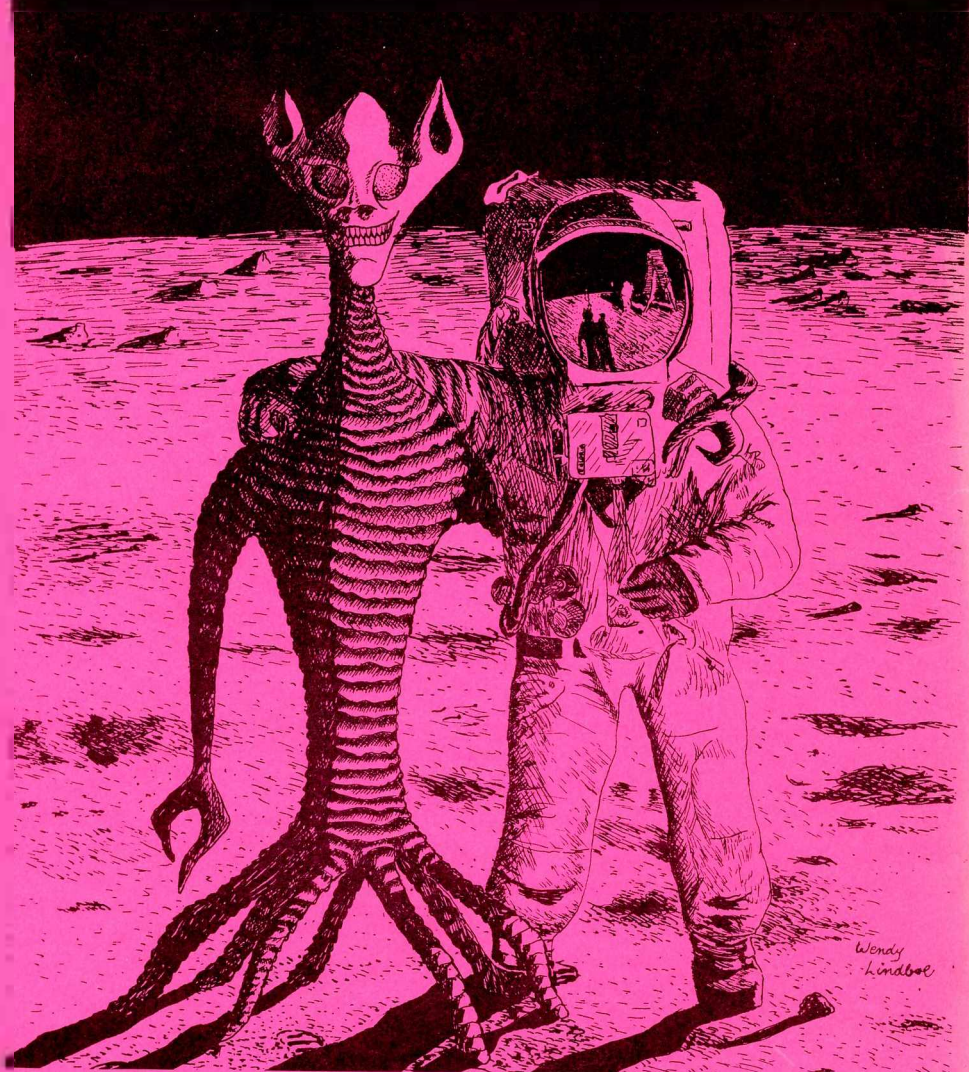
Ted White's column, "uffish Thots" provoked a desultory few comments on the possibility of a new, large-size sf magazine on the stands, it's costs and likelihood of failure. Sorry, Ted, but few of the commentators thought you should be in command of the project.

And that's it. I may do this kind of rundown again next issue. Let me know if you want it.

By the way, I need artwork. I prefer cartoons of a vicious, funny temper, but anything that strikes me as funny I'll buy...for a pitance.

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